

ByCycle Special Ride – Callander to Perth

Sunday 20th August 2017

A Rider's Perspective – Mike Simm

Unlike the forecast of five days previously, the weather was warm, almost windless and no rain was anticipated. We arrived in the South Inch car park much relieved to find that Perth and Kinross Council had allotted us space and the toilets were open. Riders gathered for check-in punctually and, although one coach had broken down on the way to us, we and our bikes left on time for Callander. Riders chatted away to each other as we approached the magnificent scenery of Callander and the Trossachs. We dismounted from the coaches in the Station Road car park and collected our bikes. Some bought coffee and/or visited the super toilets. Riders then started out on their journey home in groups or singly as they wished down towards the Meadows.



Loading the bikes



Callander cycle path

After leaving the very picturesque Meadows we joined the cycle path that runs through woodland with the River Leny and the Falls on our right before the path opened up as we neared Loch Lubnaig and encountered a short sharp climb on a very rough path to the woodland overlooking Strathyre. Successfully negotiated, we carried on towards the new cycle path so sadly missed the superb detour to Rob Roy's grave in Balquidder. Perhaps next time. We caught up with fellow cyclists who had taken advantage of facilities at the excellent coffee stop in Strathyre before riding along the final part of the cycle path and dropping down towards Lochearnhead after a newly constructed viaduct.



New Viaduct at Strathyre

At the base of the descent we met our marshal who ensured that we safely joined the busy A84 before turning off along the South Loch Road. The undulating but not steep Loch road was quieter than usual and we were able to take in the shimmering view of Loch Earn in the sunshine while riding much on recently resurfaced road. We crossed the little bridge by the monument which was being used as a lunch stop by some of our fellow travellers and arrived in St. Fillans.

We climbed up Station Road to the zigzag and the new cycle path. Extremely smooth at first but the latter part to the Dalchonzie turn-off was very rough

and we were glad to get off it. We cruised the remaining couple of miles to Comrie then, finding the chippie closed, we went to the Comrie Hotel which served us an extremely good lunch in an original wire basket. Good service and hospitality. Worth a return visit AND they have a car park which is much to be appreciated in Comrie. On leaving Comrie we travelled the four miles or so to Crieff along a quiet and gently winding road with beautiful views on either side now that the land had flattened out somewhat. In Crieff we encountered much traffic as vehicles were leaving the Crieff Highland games before one of our group got too engrossed in a 5-a-side football match, hit the kerb and fell off his bike; fortunately only his pride was hurt.



Descent to Lochearnhead

With what wind there was behind us, we cruised along the Tibbermore Road and descended to the Inveralmond Industrial Estate as the cycle path along the Almond was difficult to pass due to on-going construction before finally reaching the North Inch and home for the celebrations at Bells. A wonderful day in very idyllic cycling weather (maximum temperature 20 degrees and average 15.8) through fantastic scenery with great friends.

KEY Statistics thanks to Garmin

Distance Travelled 55 miles	Moving Time 5 hrs 17 mins
Elapse Time 7hrs 44 mins	Average moving speed 10.6 mph
Total Ascent 556m	Total Descent 620m



The Final Ride-in along North Inch to Bell's