

IVCA – We'll Meath Again Tour 2021

It was a cloudy and dull morning in Clonee for the first IVCA Leisure League tour since the COVID pandemic had begun, the last one being the 50 in 4 in March 2020.

Six riders signed on in the LIDL car park this time as the Grasshopper car park was shut. The weather forecast was indicating rain but for now it stayed off. Mudguards were visible on almost all bikes, even though it was July.

It was nice to see familiar faces again after such a long absence and there was a bit of chit chat as those assembled caught up after such a long time.

Following the sign on, a short briefing was given by myself, which included a general welcome back to all who had shown up, a mention of adhering to government COVID Guidelines, adhering to the rules of the road and an outline of the route to be taken. Maps were distributed to those who needed them.

At approximately 10.02am the tour set off from the LIDL car park and headed towards Dunboyne, through Dunboyne and out onto the Summerhill road.

The pace was leisurely with an average of 22 to 24 KM/hr. Tony Pearson led the pack for most of this stretch of the route.

When the group reached Summerhill the tour passed through the town and out onto the R158, as per the route map.

After another few kilometres along this road one of the riders, Pat Murphy had to stop with the first mechanical of the season: a frayed tyre. After some toing and froing with the tyre it was deemed to be unfixable, and it looked like the end of the tour for Pat, until Tony Pearson kindly stepped in with a spare tyre he was carrying in his saddle bag. This was duly fitted and inflated and the tour was able to resume. Thanks to Tony for the use of the tyre that saved the day.

Unfortunately at this point the heavens opened and the forecast rain came. Rain jackets were put on by all and a decision was then made to take a detour to the chosen course and not return to Clonee via Kilcock and Maynooth. Instead the tour headed towards Trim where it took a left turn at the roundabout just after Knightsbrook onto the R160. The tour travelled about 5km along this road then turned left and headed towards Rathmoylan, through the town centre, back onto the R156 and towards Summerhill.

Here the tour stopped for a well-deserved tea break, during which some photos were taken, attached to this report.

Following the tea stop the tour headed back onto the R156 and followed this road back to Dunboyne and then Clonee.

Overall the distance was just under 70KM. thanks to all who showed up for this tour.

The next tour in the calendar is the 100 in 8 on August 8th from Clonee at 09.00am

Brendan Johnston.

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