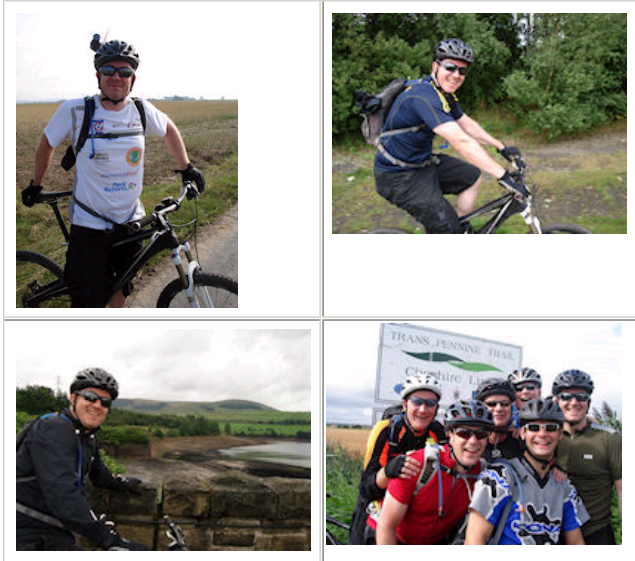


## Craigs Account

### FOUR DAYS IN THE SADDLE

Wow!



Probably not a good idea to do it in the first place (that would be my fault) but a fantastic achievement made by all 6 riders Chris (Crazy) Broadhurst, Damo (the snorer) Morrison, Danny (in the shower) Stainton, Karl (I cant stop touching my bike and parking it where i shouldn't) Nicholas, Mark (Scott is dead!!) Thompson, me, and of course our team Driver / organiser / Photographer / Gofer and general top guy Keith (How are your legs today Sarge) Hughes.

The original 215 miles although extended to 225 miles actually ended up as over 245 miles but to be honest it didn't really matter. I won't go into too much detail about the areas of our anatomy that hurt (because my mum will read this) but needless to say the part of your body that meets the bike (and not your hands or feet) endured more pain than a human being should really have to endure.

Having said all that the 4 day tour from West coast of the UK to East didn't go without other incidents. Mark went up to his room on the first night to find his bed and a lamp in the hotel corridor!!!!. In terms of the cycling - Torrential downpour and flooding to deal with on day one.

Day 2 saw continued rain and our first major problem was when Mark's brakes failed and he sailed past us at 30 mph on a downhill road section of the Pennines with one foot on the ground, sparks flying, enduring what is known in MOTO GP terms as a "Tank Slapper" and trying desperately to stop. Fortunately a quarter of a mile later he managed to do so without injury or damage. However at this time the spare bike had to be used, to Mark's humiliation and our laughter.

Karl tried desperately to get out of the last 2 days by stinging himself on the forearm with a wasp and rubbing it with dirty Liverpoolian mud causing cellulitis but a trip to A+E with Driver Keith (whilst we all relaxed in the bar) had him prescribed the necessary antibiotics and the swelling (Popeye style) started going down.

Our accommodation on the last night in Howden caused some titillation as Chris and Danny found their shower was a glass cubicle in the middle of the bedroom next to the TV!!!!. Im not convinced Indian was a good choice for the last night as well!!!! A spate of "bike decorating" occurred the next morning whilst people were in for breakfast. Mark had been chuckling all week telling us he had a children's horn for Damien's bike which he wanted to sneak on without him knowing. Little did Mark know I had a whole bag full of goodies to put on his bike, including England flags, pink tags and padlocks, marshmallows for the spokes and scented furry dice for the handlebars. Ha Ha. A couple of punctures some gearing issues and 250 miles or so later and we arrived at the finish line at Barmston to a wonderful reception, families, friends, warm showers, BBQ and beer.

I would like to thank each and every one of you who has donated to St Leonard's Hospice in memory of my dad. (if you haven't you still can at [www.justgiving.com/craighopwood](http://www.justgiving.com/craighopwood) ); so far we have raised over £8000.00 and still rising. I am not ashamed to admit there was a tear rolling down my cheek at the finish line because for all the week someone must have been watching over me. I didn't have to sleep in the corridor, my bike didn't break ('cos it wasn't made by Scott), I didn't have to go to A+E, no one messed with my bike, I didn't get told off for parking my bike in the wrong place all the time, I didn't have to keep "tampering" with my bike, when I woke up there wasn't furniture in front of my bedroom door, my friends didn't leave me because I snored and I didn't have to shower naked in front of my mates.

Special thanks to our corporate sponsors

- York City Football (Paula Stainton)
- Thai Boxing Store and York Thai Boxing (Dave Agutter)
- Park Resorts at Barmston for BBQ and showers (much needed) organised by David Stainton
- Workwearhouse.co.uk who sponsored our TShirt printing (Donna)
- MBA Solicitors (Damo and Tommo)

Also many thanks for the team at St Leonards Hospice who have given advice and support throughout.

A very special thanks to my fellow riders Chris, Damo, Danny, Karl, Mark and of course Keith. Couldn't have done it without you guys. We shared some laughs and I have some memories to last me a lifetime.

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