

Ride On: Fort Phoenix Bike ride a success in spite of weather



The weather didn't hold back the highly motivated bikers!

Cyclists on today's Bay State Bike Week Ride ignored the clouds and showed up in droves at Fort Phoenix this morning to ride. It was chilly and there was a stiff breeze off the water, but headwinds are tailwinds on the way back, said Jackie Schmidt, Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District bikeway coordinator.

Bob Espindola, Fairhaven Bikeway Committee chair and South Coast Bikeway Alliance member, was busy getting riders lined up for their rides. Helmets checked and bikes ready, about 50 cyclists of all ages pedaled off into the wind.

The 8.9-mile beginner's ride on the Fairhaven Bike Path included five kids and three adults from the Fall River Trips 4 Kids group.



The sure sign of a successful event: smiles like the one on Julie Kelly's face!

Julie Kelly, Healthy City Fall River coordinator and one of the chaperones said that the national Trips 4 Kids organization offers five free bikes and helmets to new chapters.

"New Bedford has had a Trips 4 Kids for awhile. I'm really excited to see a chapter in Fall River as well," Kelly said. The Fall River Boys and Girls Club sponsored Trips 4 Kids ride today.

Jack Dean of Mattapoissett bought his hybrid Trek about ten years ago, hoping to get back to riding. Now that he's retired, he decided to take it out for a spin on the bike path, too.

"It's good exercise," said Dean, who also kayaks.

"I was on the Swansea path yesterday and saw the South Coast Bikeway Alliance sign for the ride," Liz Young said. She and her husband Wayne Young of Dighton traveled to do the 20.4 mile intermediate ride down Sconticut Neck.

The 33.8-mile advanced ride took cyclists to the Mattapoissett Bike Path, up and around Sniptuit Pond and back. John Sullivan of Fairhaven planned to do a 50-mile Westport ride tomorrow with the Narragansett Wheelmen, a Rhode Island-based cycling group.

“Next year I’m riding cross-country,” Sullivan said. He plans to cycle 1,200 miles from Jacksonville, Florida to Austin Texas in 30 days without a support team. A little rain won’t slow him down there, either.

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