

Donald's 2024 PMC Full Ride Report

PMC 2024 was a fabulous return for me to the 2-day ride all the way to Provincetown; it was the first time I did this route since 2019. The camaraderie of the other riders, the support of the volunteers and cheering spectators just cannot be beat.

The weather turned out to be a bit of a challenge both days. Though cooler and cloudier both mornings, it was unbelievably humid and then despite forecasts, cleared up and got sunny making the last half of both days a challenge you wanted to get through. This too is just part of the name after all it is called the Pan Massachusetts Challenge. Even though the weather was tough, it was not too hard, and good pre-training and supporters along the way got me through.

I started my Saturday ride at 6:15am at the Framingham/Natick line riding on a bike-path through the Natick Mall, to the MathWorks parking lot (memories there of the old Prime Park where I swam in the reservoir after biking to work before the gym with showers was completed). Then onto the beautiful Cochituate Rail Trail for a bit before cutting across downtown Natick onto Union Street in South Natick, joining the PMC Route from Wellesley in Dover with only 1 more mile travelled than the 6-mile-mark from Wellesley. Average mph riding alone ~12mph, after joining the other riders ~15mph, so much more energy riding together. Reached the first waterstop in Wrentham (1/4th done) at 8am drenched after riding in 84% humidity at 79°F.



Here is a photo of me riding into the Dighton-Rehobeth lunch stop at 10am (45.4 miles in). Made sure I greeted Larry and Linda Wise serving lunch as volunteers since 1997. Despite being within 15 feet of each other, managed to miss meeting up with my old group of Holliston riders.

By noon, instead of rain, the cloud cover cleared and it just felt hot. Made the break a bit longer and slowed down the pace because it's not a race. At the Lakeville waterstop 59.3 miles in, I refilled my 3 liter hydration pack with ice and water. In addition to ice-cold water to drink, the pack gets stored in the seat webbing just behind my back providing some extra cooling relief. Stopped at the last waterstop a bit over an hour later to reapply sunscreen. My laid-back position on the recumbent, means lots more sun, so even with reapplying sunscreen 4 times, I got a bit too much sun with the high humidity and sweat diminishing the sunscreen effectiveness.



By 2:30pm, I completed my 85 mile ride for the day. Wasted a bunch of time going back and forth between information and the day-rider luggage drop, as they goofed slightly having both my Sunday and Saturday bag available. Problem was that I found only my Sunday bag first and was worried that my Saturday bag was lost. Felt much better after a shower.

Another nice treat was the free 15-minute massage, this year with two masseuses, one doing my legs and the other the top of my body.

Met up with 14-year rider and recent cancer survivor Larry Ziegler for dinner and the Living



Proof picture at MMA at 6pm. The arrow points to me in this picture of most of the >1100 survivor riders and volunteers. This number keeps growing every year, a testament to the

improvement of cancer treatments.

I rode a few blocks off the MMA campus to meet Nancy who picked up me and my bike for a ride to Mashpee staying with friends. Surprised myself and ate a second dinner, as I had burned plenty of calories. Slept for around 5 solid hours (which is better than I did on the ship in the past).

Sunday, woke up ~4am, ate breakfast, got my bike ready, applied sunscreen, filled up hydration bag and water/juice/electrolyte bottles, and was off at 5:15am. Sun wasn't up yet, but already 75° with 94% humidity. Had to start riding very slowly because it was still dark, eerie, and lonely riding on such empty streets on the Cape. After 13 miles I joined the PMC route on the climb to the Route 6 service road. The next 6 miles are the rollers, my favorite part of the ride on my recumbent bike. There are big downhills where with light pedaling I go 35+mph gaining precious momentum that brings me $\frac{3}{4}$ to all the way up the next hill before going down again, so much fun!

By 7am, I was 24.3 miles in at the Barnstable water stop. The PMC cape supporters have a long tradition and were out in full force even at these early hours. I had missed the bell ringers on the top of the Bourne Bridge at 5am, but I passed the first bagpiper, the lobster costume with accordion accompaniment and lots of ordinary folk cheering us on.

By 8:30 am, I was at the Nickerson stop which is super crowded with fun music and a party-like atmosphere. The clouds and threatening rain had cleared and it was hot again. Took over a 30-minute stop which worked out well as the crowd of riders was thinner as the route switched to the Cape Cod Rail Trail for a bit. When crowded with more riders it is even harder to keep pace and deal with riders of different speeds as passing can be difficult with walkers and riders

coming the other way. Unfortunately, the extra bit of speed made me miss the Merker family who camp near the last section of the rail trail we ride on and got to our meeting spot probably minutes after I passed by (I'm not sure where the meeting spot is, seeing them waiting on the trail is my marker).

At 10:15am I pulled into the last water stop in Wellfleet with 58 miles done. Cloudless sky and very hot, more sunscreen! Finally met up with 24-year, from-Holliston rider, Paul Gillespie, who I traditionally ride with from the Wellesley start. We rode together for over 6 miles, then somehow missed each other when I stopped at the top of a hill for 10 minutes worrying where Paul was, and he simply rode past me without us seeing each other. Missed meetings was a theme for my PMC this year, but I met up with others unplanned, like a fellow recumbent rider who I met a few months ago in a PMC rider event in NYC.

At 12:23 I crossed the Provincetown Inn finish line happy to be done and feeling great, especially after a shower that cooled me off. Enjoyed a nice chat over my first dinner with a first-year PMC volunteer who was also a new researcher at Dana Farber. Chatted with many other riders and volunteers before riding 2 miles to a remote parking lot to meet Nancy for the ride back to Mashpee.

And of course, there is the fundraising. The PMC is at the \$64 million mark of its \$75 million 2024 goal, having achieved over \$1 billion raised for Dana Farber since 1980. My 121 sponsors to date have raised for the PMC a current total of \$23,313.05 just \$2700 short of my ambitious 2024 goal, which I'm still hoping to reach with my ride report reminder to past donors.

Gratefully,
Donald