



Advocate: Martina Condell

Age: 48

Province: Munster

Club: Limerick Ladies
Cycling Club

Discipline: Road Cycling

What age did you get involved? I started cycling about 7 years ago. Had absolutely no interest until I saw an advertisement from Limerick Sports Partnership about a programme they were running (Women on Wheels, WOW) to get women involved in cycling. I went along and was absolutely hooked!

Why did you start cycling? I did a Road Captains course with Cycling Ireland which enabled me to help out with the WOW programme. I have been a road captain with them since and it involves me and other road captains to take new women from being able to cycle around a car park, to taking them out on the road for leisure cycles. Usually at the end of the 12 week programme we have the ladies ready to take part in a sportive that suits their ability, such as Turas na mBan or Tour de Burren. We stay with them and encourage them throughout the cycle and the sense of achievement and delight when they cross the finish line is the reason we love what we do.

What has been your involvement in cycling, your story? A group of us formed our cycling club in January 2020. We are like minded women who love cycling but more importantly we love the social side and the chats as well. We always go for a coffee when out and it gives us the chance to have a natter. We try to do as many sportives throughout the year as possible such as Great Dublin Bike Ride, Ring of Kerry, Ring of Beara etc. I never thought I would manage such distances but once you have trained and you have your support with you everything is possible. We usually go away for the weekends for these cycles and it is a great social event.

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What is your favourite thing about cycling? I absolutely love cycling and even if the others aren't around, its great to just get on the bike and go for a spin.

What have been your cycling highlights? One of the highlights for me was last year, when the Road Captains of the WOW programme won the Volunteers in Sport Awards presented by the Federation of Irish Sport. We were presented with our prize in Farmleigh House and it was such a huge honour to accept this. We were all truly delighted.

Do you have a quote that you live by or inspires you? 'The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.'

How do you feel cycling has benefitted you? Cycling has benefitted me enormously, from keeping active and exercising to having loads of friends. I would say to any female that is thinking about it, to just do it! It doesn't have to be a high end bike, as long as it has two wheels and in good working order there is no excuse. There are loads of clubs throughout the country and they are always so welcoming and patient with new members. We leave no one behind!



What would you say to other females who may be interested in cycling? All you need is a good bike in good working order and there is absolutely no stopping you. Go out on your own at first or with a friend, pick a good location that's not too busy, stop for a coffee and head home. Take your time, enjoy the fresh air and the freedom.

How do you feel about becoming a Bike Like Me Advocate? I am delighted to have been chosen to become a Bike Like Me advocate. I am passionate about cycling and would love to pass on the enthusiasm and love for it. I am looking forward to the next challenge! Bring it on!

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