

SUSAN KENNELLY



Age: 42

Club: Galway Bay Cycling Club

Discipline: Leisure

Started Cycling at the age of: 41

Why did you start cycling:

After stepping down from competitive rowing after several years I wanted something that would keep me physically active but without the same training commitment as rowing. A friend suggested I join GBCC and I instantly knew this was right for me! I loved getting out in the open air and the sense of comradery and security with group cycling but at the same time I didn't have to worry about letting a crew down if I couldn't make a spin.

What is your favourite thing about cycling?

The freedom of it - I love how you can just hop on your bike and can get to see so many beautiful places just powered by your own legs (and core!).

What have been your cycling highlights?

Cycling the Tour de Burren in June 2019, participating in a charity cycle in August 2020 between cycles of chemotherapy, training spins through Connemara and the Burren

A
D
V
O
C
A
T
E



A D V O C A T E

What has been your involvement in cycling, your story?

My involvement with cycling has been somewhat limited by initially a global pandemic and also by personal illness. I was diagnosed with breast cancer in April 2020 and am still having treatment for same. Luckily, being physically very fit entering into Surgery and Chemotherapy helped me a lot and treatments have been going well so far. I was able to continue some training spins with the club when restrictions were lifted and could go off for a solo head-clearing cycle when they were still in place. The support and friendship offered by so many members of the club has been incredible.

How do you feel cycling has benefitted you?

Particularly this year I really appreciated how normalizing cycling could be-I had no hair because of chemo, no eyebrows or eyelashes and had lost weight but hopping on a bike with my helmet and cycling clothes meant I really looked no different to anyone else.



This was really helpful for me-when you're dealing with a serious illness and having to undergo harsh treatment and all its side effects you can feel really helpless. Your identity can become suppressed and overtaken by cancer so much so that it can be hard to see your old self underneath it all. Feeling that I didn't stand out as a cancer patient and cycling as normal really boosted my morale through some dark days.

What would you say to other females who may be interested in cycling?

Go for it-no matter what your fitness level you can enjoy it. Your body adapts and it brings so many health benefits-both physically and psychologically.

How do you feel about becoming a Bike Like Me Advocate?

Excited! I have always been an advocate for regular physical exercise for everyone. In my work as a GP I encouraged my patients to move as much as possible and cycling is a great way to achieve this.

One trend I really see is the level of inactivity in many young women-they may have been discouraged from cycling to school or participating in regular sport and they carry this forward into their 20's and beyond. I feel if we can get more women out cycling and they start to see the benefits I have-both physical and psychological, they will continue to embrace the sport.



A
D
V
O
C
A
T
E