

"This trip is not so much about having fun as it is about transforming your new body with something you can work with the rest of your life, " - Capt. Ferris Butler

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gfpaoGlot8>

http://www.beloblog.com/WCNC_Blogs/blogger/2008/05/greg-bailey-kin.html



Before



After....new leaner, more mobile, and confident Capt. Butler

Sunday's ride from Asheboro to Charlotte was the perfect capstone event for our seasoned team. We had to get to Lowe's Motor Speedway before 1200, and failure was not an option. Our Director Sportif (John Wordin) and team leader (Wayne Stetina) calculated that we needed to sustain a rate of 15.5 mph (including rest stops) to reach the objective. Accomplishing the task took a total team effort. Everyone started the ride and we seamlessly transitioned riders from the road to the van, swapped flattened wheels, and provided the occasional push necessary to help the newer riders keep pace over the continuously rolling hills. The team time trial to Charlotte reflected just how efficient we had become.

I have already remarked about Sergeant Audry Webb's progression through the week, but the most improved rider award has to go to Staff Sergeant Kai Cavalie. Kai is an Army Reservist whose injuries in Iraq have not dampened her spirits. Despite missing a hamstring in one of her legs, she went the distance on Sunday. Kai had participated in spinning, but never cycled before this week. She started the ride wobbly and timid, toppling over in her pedals on more than one occasion (a slow-motioned event that borders on comical), but she never quit. On Sunday, I watched her slip into a single file pace line and confidently sit on a wheel at 20+ mph for several minutes. You've come a long way, baby.



A cycling contingent from Fort Bragg joined us in Asheboro and we welcomed their addition to the team. Lieutenant Colonel Patty Collins was an avid cyclist before losing her leg below the knee and she joined right in to our peloton. Her cheerful personality was overwhelming. She told me that her life was actually better after the accident than before. "I appreciate every moment now," she said with a grin. George lost his sight when a battery exploded in his face in Iraq; he rode a tandem with the help of Bob. But George wasn't just out for a stroll. The tandem hammered so far ahead that I barely got to say hello. Captain Kent Solheim was another remarkable addition from the Bragg group. He rode as strongly as anyone, despite having a paralyzed calf, he stuck with the group and finished in Charlotte at the front of the pack. My only regret

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Justin Clark lost more than 10 pounds and some of his stutter with Olympian Wayne Stetina

The inaugural Road 2 Recovery East Coast Ride culminated with a victory lap around the track at Lowe's Motor Speedway, as thousands of fans filed in for the Coca Cola 600. The crowd cheered and waved, but my focus was on the team; their faces radiated with accomplishment. Justin led the charge on his trike, waving and ringing his bell, just as he'd done for the supportive people we'd passed along the way. Kai continued to bark warnings of upcoming obstacles, just as she'd done for every mile along the route (even when there was no one behind her). Then, we pedaled down pit row and filed into the victory circle for photos.

In an instant, it was over. We exchanged contact information and congratulatory hugs, and then the team divided and parted ways. There were no goodbyes. Because in the Army we don't say "goodbye," only "until we meet again."

The R2R West Coast ride begins Sept. 28 at the San Francisco VA so you can sign up now at road2recovery.us.com



Presenting a jersey to Humpy Wheeler

Therefore, I'd like to conclude with a message to the Road 2 Recovery riders, staff, and supporters. Happy trails, my friends... I pray that each of you gets a tailwind on your road to recovery.

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