

2011-07 Focus on Members

This month's Focus is on Liz Usmani who recently shared the story that follows with us. To quote our President: "The story is so full of good news and positive that it gives every one of us a reason to feel good - despite the suffering you have endured." Not to mention the familiarity of her accident!



Dear Princeton Free Wheelers: I recently graduated from Rutgers and I moved back to Robbinsville to live with my parents while I look for a job. I knew there were plenty of beautiful roads to ride on nearby so that definitely helped with the moving home part :) I bought a used road bike in the fall, took spin class in the winter and couldn't wait to start riding on a regular basis. I joined PFW last

month and I don't think a day went by that I wasn't skimming through the ride list figuring out which ride I could attend. I was nervous, I didn't know what level I fit into, and I was not confident in my amateur abilities.

I am so happy I joined PFW because the people I have met have been so kind and reassuring that I fell in love in cycling. I rode with the guys leaving Etra Park one Friday morning and they were so encouraging and informative. They drafted the wind for me the last 5 miles of the ride because my legs cramped up, and the following day Al wrote me an email saying that I did a good job and that pretty soon I would feel under challenged riding with them. He signed the names of all people who rode with me that day. I also rode with the group leaving Bruno's bike shop Sunday mornings because it is so close to where I live and they were amazing also. Jim the owner at Bruno's fitted my bike for me in the spring, told me about PFW and was a great mentor to me. I felt so comfortable and safe riding with him because he knew I was new and was always checking on me and giving me advice.

Two weeks ago, I joined the Bruno's group for a Thursday evening ride and within 1/4 mile of our start I fell going past the bridge where they are doing construction in Allentown. I believe a car came too close to me causing me to swerve and loose control, but my memory is hazy.

I suffered a concussion and broke my right clavicle in three places. Jim and Tom came and stayed at the hospital with me and called me after to see how I was feeling. I had surgery and a metal plate and 8 screws put into my bone. I am feeling much better now.

I am writing this email because I just want to say how grateful I am to Princeton Free Wheelers and it's members. It really has meant the world to me. I can't wait until I feel better because I am getting back on that bicycle and I am going become a great rider. It may be past the deadline for something to be printed in the FreeWheel, however, if possible I was wondering if you could put a short line in there from me. It can be very small so you don't have to worry about space. Can you write in something that says thanks to Jim at Bruno's bike shop for being so compassionate to a new rider. I would really really appreciate it! If it weren't for Jim I would have given up on cycling. Thanks for your time and for everything!

Hope to see you on the road again
soon, Liz

Liz has added this recent update: I am feeling much better, starting to do exercises and can't wait to ride again in July. I definitely learned the importance of wearing an ID bracelet and a good helmet :)

Thanks for all your help and the well wishes!