

~ Since 1936 ~

Albany, Barton, Beebe, Brighton, Brownington, Charleston, Coventry, Craftsbury, Derby, Derby Line, Evansville, Glover

# The Newport Daily Express

Greensboro, Holland, Irasburg, Jay, Lowell, Morgan, Newport City, Newport Town, North Troy, Orleans, Troy, Westfield, Westmore

## Tour de Kingdom Bigger In 2009



Monday, 08 June 2009



Shannon Williams, from Burlington, took advantage of the tour to spend some special time with her father, Peter Williams from New Market N.H. (Photo by Christopher Roy)

By CHRISTOPHER ROY  
Express Staff Writer

DERBY — Bicyclists from across the United States came to the Northeast Kingdom this weekend for the third annual Tour de Kingdom, benefitting the Indoor Recreation of Orleans County (IROC) Healthy Changes Initiative.

The two-day event included a 100-mile competition each day. Shorter, noncompetitive routes, were also available throughout the weekend. This year brought a total of 185 bicyclists – up from 77 last year. IROC President Phil White, when interviewed Saturday afternoon, didn't know how many riders were in each loop. However, he did say more than half were involved with the 100-mile loop and over half would ride the second day.

"They're recreational riders," said White of the bicyclists. "They like the distance and heard about the Northeast Kingdom. The word is getting out that this is a well-organized and well-supported event."

Burlington resident Shannon Williams, who did the 50-mile ride with her father Peter Williams from New Market N.H., said this is the largest ride she's ever done.

"To come up here and see the hills was kind of a surprise," she said. "I'm use to riding on the bike path which is easy going, but it was a great ride."

Peter Williams said being able to ride with his daughter was cool.

"We got out in the country and you'd think we were in Ireland," he said. "It was absolutely gorgeous. The Northeast Kingdom is like Vermont was 30 years ago."

Mark Premo, from Winooski and Eric Scheer from South Kingstown, R.I. decided that two wheels were just a bit too much so they rode unicycles instead. Premo rode the 27-mile loop and Scheer rode the 50-mile loop.

Premo, who has been riding for three years, said riding on a flat surface is easier than up and down hills. This is because, unlike a bicycle, a unicycle doesn't have gears to change. His bike does have brakes, but he only used them once.

His average speed was 11 miles-per-hour while the bicyclists had an average speed of 18 miles-per-hour. Next year will be easier now that he knows the terrain, Premo said, adding he hopes more unicyclists will take part in 2010.

"It's more fun to ride together," he said.

Scheer, who would take part in Tour de Kingdom again, has plans to ride his unicycle up Mt. Washington Aug. 15. Not all of the weekend's bicyclists are recreational riders. Ryley Walker from Derby, who is a member of the Barebones Racing Team, said he felt tired after riding the 100-mile loop.

"I feel really tired," said Walker who rode the 100-mile loop for the first time. "It's good a good cause and it's really a good workout."

White said between \$10,000 and \$20,000 was raised by the event.