



It was a Great Day to Pedal and Play in 2025

Pedal and Play in Paradise is a yearly TEAM Punta Gorda biking celebration, attracting hundreds of riders of all ages and abilities. This signature event offers multiple “rides” exploring bicycle-friendly Punta Gorda. Breakfast, lunch, beverages and entertainment are all part of the experience, staged at Laishley Park on the shores of Charlotte Harbor.

2025 Pedal and Play Chair Darcy Hanley reports on the amazing contributions of dozens of volunteers who contributed significantly to the event's success, with special thanks to a few who played key roles. The safety team led by Dan Kain and Ride Director Brian Blankenship managed the course effectively. Deb Hoyt and Dave Aberhalden created a fun mystery ride based on intriguing clues.



Barry Simescu organized various aspects of the program to ensure an enjoyable day, including music, yoga and the energetic “Yaya Diamond” on the microphone. Betsy Spagnolo headed the food committee, with Dave Aberhalden ordering lunch from Jersey Mike’s, and breakfast donated by SpringHill

Suites. Sandy Dressler coordinated with vendors who support the event each year, such as Harbor Scoops, Suncoast Beverage, Waste Management, and Sunstar Remodeling (Jim Sanders). Photographer Jim Austin provided gorgeous images of the event, available on www.teampuntagorda.org. Vicki and Bill Welsch handled communications.



The 2025 committee played a crucial role in managing details and logistics for the event's success. Kim Koch handled tasks related to the cool morning weather, including making multiple trips to Dunkin’ Donuts. Gayle Ross and Joyce Stanley facilitated registration and sign-ups efficiently. Kevin Hogan managed the permitting process. Bob Bechtold provided ideas for the T-shirt, and Carol Moore served as the rest stop hero.

Thanks to the City of Punta Gorda for assisting with EMTs and police safety at crossings. Pedal and Play attracted over 300 riders and proved to be an outstanding community event. The weather was sunny and cool. Just perfect!

Next year's date is March 21, 2026. TEAM is in the process of recruiting 2026 event co-chairpersons. Any interest? It's great fun as well as rewarding. If you are looking to get connected in Punta Gorda this is the place to network. Contact team@teampuntagorda.org.