

## 8th Annual Triathlon

September 23, 2014

*Bruce Julian*

At least this year we did not have two armed guards waiting at the gate of Back Bay Wildlife Refuge, stopping everyone because our Government could not get their act together, therefore closing down the National Parks. Actually no one was at the gate this year; so we rode our bicycles right through it and headed south to False Cape State Park.

I had sixteen Tuesday Groupers for this year's 'Triathlon', and what a group they were. All but two were there before their leader, who for some reason had a very slow driver, a school bus, and a stoplight working against him. I know there is no reason for being late, you just have to leave earlier from home, right? We were able to ride our bicycles out of the parking lot at Little Island City Park at 9:45 A.M., and be on our way. The weather was not the best that we've had over the past eight years, but it was not half-bad. The clouds overhead kept the sun off of us, and the wind kept us cool all day. The wind was out of the N.N.E. at about 15 to 18 miles per hour and the bicycle ride of 6.5 miles seemed to go very fast. We had no blowouts, and only one stop at False Cape Gate to take a picture, and by 10:30 A.M.; we were on the water paddling south in the State Park's kayaks. Out of the sixteen participants, we had seven new people, whom had never been on this Triathlon. They certainly were not sure of what they would find around the next bend. All of them stayed right with the group for the biking, kayaking and hiking; so as to not get lost. I want to THANK ALL for staying close together!

The wind at False Cape Landing was behind us, and 11:40 A.M.; we were hiking towards the ocean, where we would stop to take a break to eat our lunch. Walking on the deserted beach, we saw only one truck south of us, heading north. The wind was blowing between 18 and 22 miles per hour by that time, which kept all the birds away on this day. We retreated back into the Live Oaks Trees at the campground and used their tables, for lunch.

By 12:20 P.M., we were back at the boats and heading north into the wind, but hugging the shoreline as much as possible. When the last boat pulled in to the pier, it was only around 1:30 P.M., and after replacing all the boats back onto the racks, and placing the paddles and PFDs inside the Boat House; we headed back towards the park's office. As we reached the office, we found that it was closed. However, we did see the Park Manager Kyle Barbour. We asked him to take a picture of our group, standing beside a newly painted buoy. It was 2:10 P.M., and we were on the last leg of our 20 mile trip. John F. headed out first, and everyone followed, peddling a little harder. We had the wind in our faces, but still as Nancy P. said; "We all were back in the parking lot at 3:00 P.M. as promised".

The first timers for this trip were: Nancy P., Milton B., Gayle O., Kama M., Tom R., Diane L. and Jack S. The old timers were: Richard T., J.P., Bob S., John F., Jane O., John O., Ken V., Super Woman Dottie A. and the No. 1 guide Bruce J. I want to Thank All for a great, fun and safe trip.

On the way home, ten of us stopped at Pungo Pizza for a little snack, and it was so, so good.

Thanks Everyone,  
Bruce.

