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## Tournament Showcases Skills and Paragon Park Pumptrack

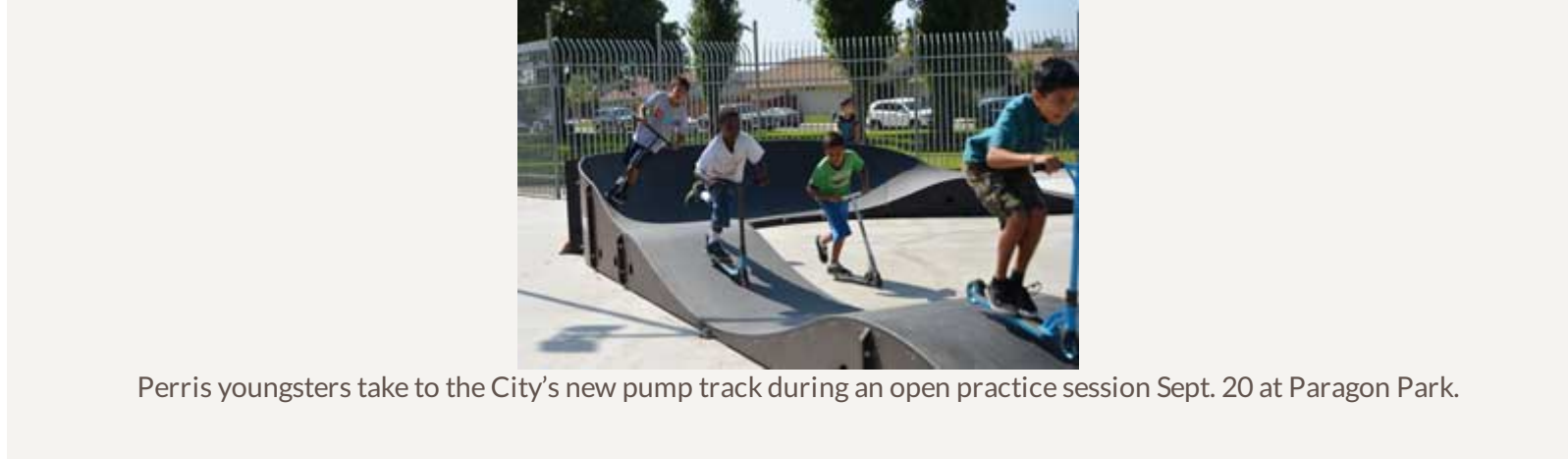
The Live Well Perris skating extravaganza Sept. 20 at Paragon Park served three purposes.

The park hosted the City's first-ever "grind skate tournament," which drew 45 novice and expert skaters who completed for trophies and gift cards. The City also took the opportunity to unveil its just-completed pumptrack, which drew 120 skaters on all sorts of wheeled-vehicles—bicycles, roller skates, scooters and skateboards.

And the day also featured a skating-skills clinic which drew about a dozen newbies learning how to navigate on skateboards. Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez hosted the event. Rodriguez said he was pleased with the turnout and particularly delighted that members of the City's Youth Advisory Committee helped organize, plan and staff the skating show.

### Media Contact

Joe Vargo  
Public Information Officer  
951-956-2120  
jvargo@cityofperris.org



Perris youngsters take to the City's new pump track during an open practice session Sept. 20 at Paragon Park.

"This is a great example of youth helping youth," Rodriguez said. "I am really excited to support this skating tournament. It's clear from today's turnout that this is the kind of place Perris kids want to see and use. Cities are always talking about ways to get youngsters off the streets and into productive activities. This park provides one answer."

The installation of the pumptrack cost \$50,000 and was part of Paragon Park renovations that also included fresh paint for the existing skating facility, resurfaced concrete to make for a smoother-skating area and enclosing the entire skate park.

Recreation coordinator Josh Estrada, who helped organize the event, said the pumptrack fits in nicely with the City's continuing Live Well Perris program, which promotes active living through exercising and health eating. It also provides a safe place to prove their skating prowess.

"It's not safe to ride in the streets," Estrada said. "The skate park is the place to go."



A skater shows off his skills by flipping his board during the skateboard completion at Paragon Park in Perris.

Workers completed installing the oval-shaped pumptrack the day before the skating tournament. The pumptrack represents Phase II of the City's skating facility at Paragon Park, with the first phase being the skateboard park that opened several years ago. The actual grind tournament took place on the skateboard park. Prior to that, the adjacent pumptrack was opened for the first time.

Skaters loved it. The banks, berms, turns and rises meant that once they got going, the track's configuration would keep them rolling with little additional muscle-power. Even professional BMX rider Victor Salazar came away impressed. Salazar was part of a team of pros who put on a demonstration at Paragon Park.

"I've never ridden anything like this before," Salazar said. "This is the next level. This is sweet."



A skateboarder flies through the air during the competition Sept. 20 at Paragon Park in Perris, which drew 45 participants.

Mike Parenti, a world-class BMX rider who earned a Silver Medal at the X Games, predicted Perris youngsters will burn plenty of calories on the pumptrack.

"It's perfect for kids," Parenti said. "You get a great workout. It's an awesome track."

Joseph Ponce, 11, called the pumptrack "fast and smooth" and said he would use it often. He practiced on the pumptrack in a scooter, declaring it an ideal venue to perfect tricks like tail whips, bar spins and X ups.

"I love it," he said.



Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez (green shirt, center) with novices skateboarders learning new skills.

Raemond Bustos, 14, said he felt a little anxiety when he first got onto the pumptrack. Soon, that turned to excitement and fun.

"It's fast," he said. "You can catch speed without peddling."

Monica Tinoco came to the park with her son, Angel, 12. She likes the new pumptrack because it will keep her son from riding on the streets. She said she frequently exercises in Paragon Park to help stay in shape.

"I can walk, I can walk my dog and keep an eye on the kids at the same time," Monica Tinoco said. "One of the good things about living in Perris is that the City cares so much for its kids."



A professional BMX rider completes a back flip to the delight of the crowds that gathered Sept. 20 at Paragon Park in Perris.

The day of fun ended with the skateboard grind tournament. Guillermo Onate, 18, captured the advanced-skating portion of the show. Onate said he skates at Paragon Park daily and will make use of the new pumptrack as well.

"It was a great day and I enjoyed myself," Onate said. "I appreciate the City making a great skating park for all of us to use."

Alex Guevara finished second in the advanced competition and Ryan Carrell took third. In the novice division, Deshaun Holmes captured first, Jahir Kirkwood took second and Chris Molina finished third.



Perris City Hall  
101 N. D Street  
Perris, CA 92570

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