



Wind Challenges Tour de Perris Cyclists

Tour de Perris riders who took part in the third annual City of Perris signature event agreed on two things: the wind was strong, very strong, but not powerful enough to take away from what rider after rider agreed was a great bicycling experience.

The 2013 Tour de Perris bicycle ride drew more than 300 riders from California, Arizona and Mexico who took part in one of four well-designed and laid out courses—100-miles, 62-miles, 30-miles and 8 miles.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch kicked off the Oct. 5 festivities by welcoming the riders moments before the first group took off from City Hall at 7 a.m. Busch presented a check for \$2,000 to Gail Oyler, manager of the USO Center at Ontario Airport. The United Service Organization provides recreational, welfare and morale support to American troops around the world. Proceeds from the Tour de Perris made the donation possible.

"It is important to support our veterans in service," Busch said. "They make events like the Tour de Perris happen."

Oyler said the City donation show Perris is committed to supporting the men and women who defend American freedoms in far-flung corners of the world. The USO survives on donations, she said.

"It's obvious Perris cares about the military and that makes me feel great," Oyler said.

With the check presentation complete, Busch began the Tour de Perris with a blast from an air horn, the signal for the cyclists to begin the 100-mile "century" rider. The course took them through Perris, to the Lake Perris State Recreation Area, into Menifee, Murrieta and Temecula, where lunch at a winery awaited them. Then it was back on the road through Sage, Winchester and the San Jacinto Valley before returning to City Hall.

Strong winds buffeted the riders, who included experienced "centurions" and those making their first attempt at the 100-miler. Perris resident Matt Schmidt was among the first to finish, reaching City Hall 5 hours and 56 minutes after the start. He burned 5,000-calories and consumed more than a gallon of water.

"The wind was relentless," Schmidt said. "It just kept turning and blowing in our face. It seemed like we were climbing the whole day. An epic ride."

Wind aside, Schmidt called the 2013 Tour de Perris "an awesome event for the City." He said he appreciated the support volunteers who worked the many roadside stops, providing snacks and liquids for riders. Other participants praised the courses created for this year's rides as well marked, easy to follow and said the Tour de Perris was exceptionally well-organized.

Cliff Miller and Ross Beck competed in the Tour de Perris ride for the first time in 2013. The pair usually takes part in several rides each year and are veterans of century-rides in Palm Springs and Big Bear. Miller and Beck with work for a Riverside plumbing company that has worked on the Mercado Apartments and the Perris Station Apartments. Both said the City's commitment to renovating D Street and other Downtown areas leave visitors with a strong and positive image. Beckwith said the Tour de Perris was great.

"We came to Perris to try out the ride," he said. "We will most likely be putting it on our calendars next year."

Mark Trahanovsky, of Yorba Linda, rode the Tour de Perris on a bicycle configured like an elliptical machine. That meant no seat. No problem. Trahanovsky is a competitive stair-climber, ascending some of the country's tallest buildings, including the Empire State Building in New York and the Sears Tower in Chicago. He climbed the 86-flights of stairs in the Empire State Building in 14-minutes 15-seconds; the 103 stories in the Sears Tower in 16-minutes 15-seconds and the 75-stories in the U.S. Bank Tower in Los Angeles in a mere 11-minutes 27-seconds. The Tour De Perris provides great training for the stair climbs.

"I love this ride," he said. "It's beautiful out here. I love the views. They are spectacular!"

Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough promised himself he would complete the 100-mile course. He overcame tire problems and the strong winds, fell one time and found himself looking face-to-face at a dead rabbit and finally rolled across the finish line almost 10 hours after leaving. He was ecstatic.

"One of the most difficult things in my life," he said. "It took me to the limit. I have never ridden or trained in such conditions."

Yarbrough said he talked with many riders along the route, who said they were challenged and inspired by the variety of the course, which included the lake, city streets, steep hills, long downgrades, rural communities and wineries. He thanked the scores of City volunteers and staff who pitched in to make Tour de Perris 2013 an unforgettable ride.

"It was nothing short of spectacular," he said.

Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez spent Oct. 5 on the City Hall campus, supporting the riders and the ride. He said the tour continues the City's "Live Well" Perris initiative by encouraging hard-core cyclists, novices and families to exercise and stay healthy.

"It's a great event and I am incredibly proud of this City's focus on living well and staying active," Rodriguez said. "I am thankful for the success this event has enjoyed in the past and look forward to its continuing success in the future."



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Manager Richard Belmudez present a \$2,000 check to Gail Oyler of the USO Center in Ontario. The USO provides support services for American military personnel around the world.



Riders take off from Perris City Hall seconds after the start of the third annual Tour de Perris bicycle ride.



The front pack of riders makes its way up Ramona Expressway before entering the scenic Lake Perris State Recreation



The steep hill on Goetz Road south of Perris can challenge the most experienced and prepared cyclist.



Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez prepares to talk about the Tour de Perris as videographer Marden De Castro captures the moment.