



Tour de Tots Encourages the Little Riders

The third annual Tour de Perris attracted hard-core riders from Southern California and beyond, all determined to conquer the course as quickly as possible with little rest and respite.

Then there were folks like the Orozco family from Perris.

For them, the Oct. 5 Tour de Perris was really about spending time with their children and getting a little exercise. They completed the 8-mile "family ride" portion of the Tour de Perris, which featured 100-mile, 62-mile and 30-mile segments for more accomplished cyclists.

Eloy and Elizabeth Orozco rode with their son, Jorge, 9, and daughter, Savannah, 6. Savannah pedaled a two-wheeler this year. Last year, she rode on a tricycle.

Mom and dad beamed.

"We had so much fun last year we had to come back and do it all again," said Elizabeth Orozco. "Last year it was more of an adventure. This year we know what to expect. The kids are so excited. This is a great event and a great time. I love it. It's amazing."

The Orozcocos were so impressed by the Tour de Perris and its accompanying Tour de Tots, they invited their cousins from Tijuana to join them for the 2103 show. The family of Luis and Marcia Siordia, along with their children, Luis, 8, and Emily, 2, also completed the family ride. The visitors too were impressed.

"Very well organized—we even had a police escort," said Luis Siordia. "We will be back next year!"

Event organizers went out of their way to make the Tour de Perris a family event. Besides the 8-mile family ride, City Hall became a hub of family-friendly activities. The "Tour de Tots" bicycle-safety program taught youngsters basic rules of the road. Bicycle raffles took place as well. There were professional stunt riders who wooed the audience with an assortment of flips and other bicycle tricks and martial artists who put on demonstrations. A trailer brought to campus allowed video-game enthusiasts to ply their craft. A healthy-drink vendor provided samples of water flavored with fruits as an alternative to sugary soft drinks.

Perris Public Safety commissioner Bob Turner took part in the family ride with grandsons, Austin, 9, and Titus, 5. They rode on a bicycle built for three. Turner said he was pleased the City of Perris donated \$2,000 to the USO, which supports recreational, morale and welfare services for American military worldwide. He son is an Iraq war veteran.

"This makes me proud to be a Perris citizen," Turner said. "It really is a community-wide event."

Residents Edward Maszczak Jr. and his wife, Stepahnie, brought their daughters to ride in the Tour de Tots. Both Kylee, 7, and Emily, 4, won medals for participating in the Tour de Tots. That made mom and dad happy.

"The City is promoting healthy living and encouraging young people to get some exercise," Stephanie Maszczak said.

Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough, who completed the 100-mile portion of the Tour de Perris, said bringing families to the event is just as important as attracting world-class cyclists.

"This event is about bringing families together to enjoy each others' company, get a little exercise and take advantage of a great event which encourages them to live healthy and happy lives. It doesn't get any better than that."



Perris Public Safety Commissioner Bob Turner and his grandsons, Austin, 9, and Titus, 5, take part in the 8-mile family ride as part of the Oct. Tour de Perris.



Perris Public Safety Commissioner Bob Turner and his grandsons, Austin, 9, and Titus, 5, take part in the 8-mile family ride as part of the Oct. Tour de Perris.



The Siordia family from Tijuana crossed the international border to take part in the Tour de Perris family ride.



Perris residents Emily Maszczak, 4, and her sister, Kylee, 7, hold the medals they won for taking part in the Tour de Tots, a bicycle-training exercise for youngsters.