

## A Safe, Successful Ride for the 3:10 to Yuma 2015



About 215 riders participated in the 2nd Annual 3:10 to Yuma Charity Bike ride on Saturday, February 28, 2015, up from 86 in the inaugural event last year. The riders were treated to great conditions for a 30- or 60-mile ride, with 15-25 mile per hour tailwinds from the west south west.

Although the event was not a race but a charity ride to raise money for the Cancer Resource Center of the Desert, many riders used the occasion to test their strength. A four-man breakaway completed the 60 miles in 2:15 minutes, an average speed of 26.6 mph. The group was led by Juan Carlos Sanchez of Mexicali, Samuel Bell of Yuma, Javier Urias of Mexicali, and Jose Castillo from Imperial, CA.

Other notable Imperial Valley Velo cyclists were Brandon Ashurst of Brawley and Jose Moreno and Todd Hansink of El Centro. These three finished in the “fast bunch” in the time of 2:20, or an average speed of 25.75 mph.

Velo riders Jesse Zermeño, Ben Brock, Jesse Flores, and Ray Soto finished in 2:45, or 21.8 mph average speed. Soto happens to be a very fit 81 years old.

Eight riders from the Southwest High School Cycling Club completed the 60-mile event coached by science teacher Dennis Price.



This year, the ride included a 30-mile option for the novice cyclists. Finishers of the 30-mile event seemed to be among the happiest and proudest of all riders. Virginia Mendoza of the Imperial County Transportation Commission rode a "cruiser" type bike on her first long ride. "I did it!" she yelled at the finish.

The event was put on by the Imperial Valley Velo Club of El Centro, California. Club president and event director Brian McNeece said, "Many riders thanked me for putting on the event. That's always gratifying. But the best feeling is to see novice riders giving themselves a challenge and completing it. Their joy and pride is infectious."



In the past the IV Velo Club has put on many criterium style races in Imperial and Brawley. These were nationally sanctioned races that included paid judges, licensed riders, and considerable prize money. McNeece explained that since few local riders participated in these events, the club decided to change its format and put on "fun" rides instead. Now, over 90% of the riders are local instead of from out of town.



McNeece said he hopes the ride continues to grow to bring more people to the healthy pastime and sport of cycling.

McNeece wanted to thank the American Red Cross for their invaluable help in providing first aid and support stops for the cyclists. Major donors to the event to defray costs were Ashurst Pollination, Burgers & Beer, Hutchinson &

Bloodgood CPA's, Strahm Farms, Sanders Architects, Swain & Kennerson Accountancy, Emerald Seed, McNeece Bros Oil, Stills Electric, El Toro Exports, Matt Littrell, Vons, Wal-Mart, Costco, and Imperial Valley Shrine Club. Thanks to IV Transit, Gold Cross Ambulance, Conveyor Group, and Xavier Outdoor Advertising for donating their services. Guadalupe Marcial provided the portable toilets.