



# More Than \$900,000 Raised: Wide Range Of Participants Take Part In Bike MS Event

by Brandon Harris

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ALTON – Lewis and Clark Community College recently hosted a Bike MS event on their beatifically picturesque campus. Riders had choices to ride routes that ranged from 25 to 100 miles. No matter how far or how fast riders completed their route, all the Bikers were in the event to raise money and awareness for Multiple Sclerosis.

This year, 1,029 participants raised \$922,560 to fight multiple sclerosis. Participants took part in 25, 50, 75, or 100-mile treks along the Mississippi River and nearby rural countryside.

According to Trey Hogan, Director of Hogan Truck Leasing and Cycling Team, “It's like a grassroots bike ride but also a fundraising event. You could have a guy with a \$15,000 bike rolling up next to a guy with a \$5 bike from Goodwill and they are out there for the same cause. On top of that, you can not have a bad time riding a bike, you know? It's just so fun!” Hogan said.

According to the host organization's website, “Bike MS is the largest fundraising cycling series in the world. Each year, nearly 75,000 cyclists and more than 6,000 teams ride together to change the world for people with MS.” While MS is the route of the ride, each cyclist has their own unique story.

For Joe Mooney, Mud's Mob Rider, he said: “I write this email to myself about what my inspiration for riding for the year is going to be. It always goes back to my aunt's 25-year struggle just to get out of bed in the morning, hug her grandchildren, eat her breakfast, go to the bathroom, everything is hard for her. This... the ride is nothing

compared to what she must do every day. Keeping that in perspective is how we have been able to inspire people.”

Trey Hogan got inspired by a fellow riding friend who was diagnosed with MS. “I started riding as something to do to stay fit after college. Then I met some friends and there was this woman who we rode with named Val. She was a beautiful young mom with MS. The next time I saw Val, she was on canes. The next summer, she was in a wheelchair. That progression just broke my heart.”

Many cyclists have been riding for years, the first year riding with relaxing COVID-19 restrictions was a special one.

“I was wondering if it was going to feel weird,” Mooney said. “It honestly felt a little more sparse on the road, but the energy from the fans and riders was the same. People were encouraging riders on, in high spirits, and the fact it felt relatively unchanged was a real positive.”

Trey Hogan is no stranger to the annual Bike MS event at Lewis and Clark. “This is our fourth year at the Gateway Getaway, 15th year for Bike MS as a team, and my 17th year riding in a row, he said.

Due to his commitment, prowess, and leadership skills, Hogan has turned into a pillar for Bike MS. “Now, I am on the board of Bike MS and the chairman of the ride. It is a fun event and extremely rewarding!”

“Team Hogan just eclipsed the \$1,000,000 mark raised in our last 15 years of service. We are so proud about that and that we have raised about \$100,000 a year for MS. It's exciting that we have our little claim on this ride,” Hogan said.

The friends and family team of the Mud's Mob also make significant contributions to the cause! “At our height, we were 60 strong, raising \$50,000, and one of the top fundraising friends and family riding team with no corporate sponsorship. That was fun and rewarding.”

Years later, Mooney has found and solidified his niche in the cycling community. “I ride with one of the biggest friends and family teams for years called Mud’s Mob. I started riding about 10 or 12 years ago. The last couple of years were rough, but we still managed to compile a 14-person team. We are happy to have something to collect around.”





Two of the consistent themes and overall vibe of the event are growing the event and comradery. For Hogan, “I want to keep growing the ride. I want to bring more people in to let them represent their companies, their friends, and their families. It means so much to our family and this could be another family’s thing too.”

As for Mooney, he enjoys the social aspect of the event more than anything. “I used to work at a brewery, the overlap between cycling and beer is awesome.” Said Mooney. “It is a very symbiotic relationship and I love that connection. If it were not for this team tent village, this event would be a shadow of what it is. The people who come here and mingle for hours, that is what makes this even what it is. A lot of my teammates choose to not ride the distance they are capable of because they would rather get back with energy to hang out with their friends and drink beer.” And who wouldn’t?

For future cyclists considering getting into riding, both Hogan and Mooney say there is nothing to fear.

“It doesn't matter what kind of bike you have; nobody cares. Everybody is out here for the greater good. It's just so fun to see faces that you might only see three days a year!” said Hogan.

As for Mud Mob Rider, Joe Mooney, “Anyone interested in riding has a home somewhere. My team is a perfect place for that. If you want to join a team, if you want to ride, if you want the structure of a team with a tent with chairs & community, sign up with Mud's Mob. We take one and all. It's a family feel, and people are very welcome.”

The event was a huge success, and the positive energy was very welcome during the September 11th weekend. Riders enjoyed sunny conditions, smiles were everywhere you looked, but most importantly, awareness and funds were raised for Multiple Sclerosis.



