

# 170 Volunteer: BuseyBank Edwardsville Rotary Criterium Festival Bike Race Big Success

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EDWARDSVILLE - The BuseyBank Edwardsville Rotary Criterium Festival bicycle road race series in Edwardsville was once again a community success.



The race takes an abundance of volunteers and crew and once again they all came through like clockwork. There were 170 volunteers who took part this year.

The records set in both pre-registration and racers competing are a great testament to the growing popularity of the event, and Race Director Brian Mulhill has a theory on why.

"You know, I think it's just delivering a consistent, safe course," Mulhill said, "year in and year out. And the riders, when they know they show up, they're going to be treated professionally and with great courtesy, and efficiency and the crowd's going to be huge. They'd rather have that than the payouts. And I've learned that in the last year, listening to a lot of meetings with directors, these racers anymore are much more about the environment than they are about winning 50 bucks, or even the pros, maybe winning a thousand bucks. They won't turn \$1,000 down, but that isn't what drives them anymore. So, the Rotary Club has, for 12 years now, just delivered a solid product, rain or shine, in extreme heat, or really nice temperatures. We have a really beautiful day, today. This is one of our nicer days we've had in years."

Things are starting to get back to normal, with the festival returning last year after sitting out the 2020 edition, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, which turned everything chaotic.

"Yeah, I think you see people trying to be normal as possible," Mulhill said, "hugging, shaking hands. We are outdoors, but you know, the environment boasts a great entertainment zone, of course. It's in the middle of the course, we've got live music, we've got two food trucks, we've got a beverage truck that all money's donated to Rotary, which is fantastic, all sales. The kids' zone is top-notch. It's games for the kids, a helmet giveaway while supplies last. And, of course, the four free kids races are personally, sometimes, when I'm really trying to put this together and struggling and saying my task list is this long, I think of the kids. And I really do. My girls were raised in this community, so it's really special to see them come down the street."





The planning for the 2023 edition of the Criterium Festival begins soon and Mulhill plans on having a bigger and better event.

"We'll start planning next year's Criterium, which is the third Saturday in August, it's always it," Mulhill said. "We'll start planning it as early as September. So there are things we can always do better. As a committee, we sit down, what we have done different and so, it starts. It starts that early and I think that's why we keep just delivering a great product for the spectators and for the racers."







[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)