

Published May 15th, 2019

## Cyclists endure 335-mile bike ride to help stamp out hunger

*Edited by Jennifer Wake*



From left: Tom Naab, Mike Stewart, and Rich Thurman. Photo provided

In the early morning hours of March 23, Moraga resident Tom Naab and two other brave souls, Mike Stewart and Rich Thurman, showed up with their bikes at the base of Tunnel Road in Berkeley to start what Naab had named Dihamumtam - a bike ride that covers the four major peaks in the Bay Area: Diablo, Hamilton, Umuunhum, and Tamalpais. The 36-hour clock was started at 6 a.m. that day as they began the 335-mile 36,000-plus foot journey, which was a way to kick off the team's fundraising efforts for Chefs Cycle - a three-day 300-mile bike ride May 14-16 that benefits No Kid Hungry.

Using the two-day adventures of the Hells 500 as an inspiration (Hells 500 is a group of cyclists from Australia who invented the Everest Challenge - a simple and brutal challenge on a bike where you find a hill, any hill, and do repeats on the same hill until you climb the height of Mt. Everest or 29,029 feet), Naab spent hours on Map My Ride trying to safely link all four of the peaks on a single

ride and get 10,000m of climbing in along the way.

"Until that morning all the long rides I've done have been solo," Naab said. "It's hard to find people crazy enough that want to and can do a ride like this." What started off as seven people soon became five, Naab said, and eventually only three of them were there with their bikes that morning.

"We rode up Tunnel Road into Pinehurst Canyon and through Moraga in darkness and a steady rain," Naab explained. "With the winter we've had rain; wasn't a huge surprise, but what was supposed to be cloudy conditions were most certainly wet. (If I had a wish list of things to happen when starting a ride like this, getting wet at the start would be below the bottom.) Regardless, the clock was running and off we went."

First up was Mt. Diablo. They climbed over the 3,200-foot summit, then down into Livermore. "After Livermore we rode out Mines Road and grabbed a bite to eat at the Junction Caf . After another half hour or so we were at the base of the west side of Mt. Hamilton." The west side of Mt. Hamilton is roughly a seven-mile climb with a steady 11 percent grade, Naab said. "It isn't especially hard or technical, but it feels like you are going up a roller coaster without the steady clicking noise reminding you the top is getting closer. At the top we grabbed a cup of coffee from the observatory and bundled up. The view from the highest point in the Bay Area was stunning, but also freezing cold. We weren't about to stay up there any longer than necessary."

Next, the three dropped down "the elevator like" Quimby Road and were on the east side of San Jose with a decision to make. "One of the details that went into planning the ride that I left out before is that some of these peaks are closed at dark," Naab said. "Mt. Diablo, Mt. Umuunhum, and Mt. Tamalpais are closed to traffic at night. They have rangers that don't care who you are or how far you are riding." They needed to find the fastest way to get to Mt. Umuunhum so they ended up cutting through south San Jose on a combination of busy roads and bike paths. "It wasn't our first choice, but it was more direct," Naab said. "This also made the ride more difficult because of all the stopping/starting we had to do at stop signs and traffic lights."

They skipped the last climb of the day, headed to a hotel, and decided to find the missing elevation the next day on Mt. Tamalpais.

"Going over the Golden Gate Bridge was probably the sketchiest part of the entire ride. It wasn't the wind, the height above the water, or the cars going 65 mph towards you on the other side of a fence, but the other cyclists," Naab said. Soon they were at the base of Highway 1 and Mt. Tamalpais, and after that, all that was left was the 20-mile pedal back to the Ferry Building in San Francisco. "Just thinking of the cold beer awaiting our arrival was more than enough inspiration. After our frothy beverages we jumped on the BART (train) to Rockridge and had about a ten-minute spin up Claremont to where we began the prior morning. In total we rode over 335 miles and climbed almost 37,000 feet in under 36 hours."

Naab says the plan is to make this an annual ride to raise money for Chefs Cycle for No Kid Hungry, which connects kids across the country with healthy food where they live. Chefs Cycle, a three-day 300-mile bike ride in Santa Rosa, is happening right now, May 14-16.

"If you feel inspired or are in awe of the ride, don't buy me a beer; help us get kids breakfast so they can have a better future," Naab said. "As hard as this ride was, it's harder for the one out of six kids in America who face hunger daily."

Info: Naab's team donation page can be found at: [www.sommcycle.com](http://www.sommcycle.com).

You can learn more about Chefs Cycle/No Kid Hungry at: [www.chefscycle.org](http://www.chefscycle.org).

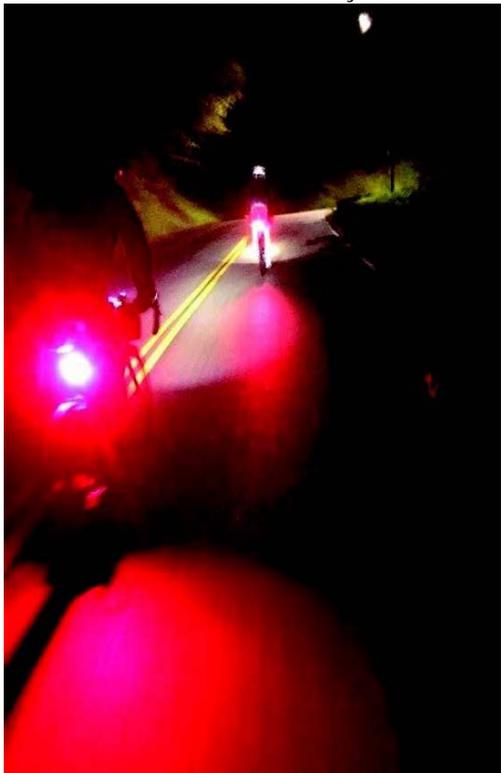


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