

# Camera Work



About 1,000 bikers — some from as far away as France, Guatemala and Manitoba — rolled out for the Almanzo 100 gravel road race, which was held May 14 and began in Spring Valley. About half of those riders completed the race.

## ALMANZO 100

# DOWN COUNTRY ROADS

Text and photos by Elizabeth Nida Obert  
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About 1,000 riders swarmed Main Street in Spring Valley for the start of the Almanzo 100 last Saturday. Only 504 of them completed the ride, crossing the finish line anywhere from five to 13 hours later.

Nicknamed the “granddaddy of gravel road races,” the Almanzo 100 is not for the weary.

“Today will be tough because of the gravel. It’s going to be slow and windy,” said a bundled Peter Maves, of Woodbury, before he began the ride. “I’ve got a lot of food, a lot of water.”

“It’s going to be a long day. Hopefully not too cold,” echoed Stephen Brown, of Rochester, who was attempting his fourth Almanzo 100.

“The roads are great. There’s a few sections with a lot of pea gravel on it, but mostly, there’s a good line, and it’s hard-packed,” said Darian Nagle-Gamm, of Iowa City, at the checkpoint in Preston. “Yep, the roads are in good shape.”

The race, which began in 2007 in Rochester, drew both local and international participants.

“I try to find a good race,” said a smiling Thib le Guen, of France, who noted they don’t have gravel road races in his country. “And now, I’m here. We’ll see what happens during this long day.”



ABOVE: The Spring Valley VFW Color Guard presents the colors for the national anthem at the beginning of the Almanzo 100 Saturday morning in downtown Spring Valley. RIGHT: “Oh, it’d be better if the wind weren’t blowing,” says Nate Eide, of Two Harbors, of the riding conditions. Standing while their dad tended to his bike in Preston are Iver Eide, left, and Levi Eide.



“Mixed drinks are the best,” says rider Andy Tettmeyer, center, of St. Paul, who indulged in a whiskey Coke. Ben Cunningham, of St. Paul, left, and Dan Gaz, of Rochester, also are pictured.



Cue sheets for the route of the ride are a necessity for bikers.



“Pocket sandwiches. That’s what we call them,” says Jeremy Staff, of Nodine, between bites that included peanut butter and bananas.

### Send us your photos

For the monthly pages of reader-contributed photos, we are planning:

**June 25:** Family pets, due June 17

Send high-resolution photos to [images@postbulletin.com](mailto:images@postbulletin.com).

Include caption information, including names and hometowns, plus your name and contact information. For details, call Photo/Multimedia Editor Germaine Langer Neumann at 285-7708.



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Riders traverse the terrain just west of Fountain. Nicknamed the “granddaddy of gravel road races,” the Almanzo 100 began in 2007 in Rochester and has since exploded and moved to Spring Valley. Included in the route were the towns of Preston, Forestville, Cherry Grove and Wykoff.



About Elizabeth Nida Obert / [enida@postbulletin.com](mailto:enida@postbulletin.com)

We made a pit stop at the Spring Valley Bakery before my husband/navigator and I drove the country roads in search of bikers. The southeast region is special, which is

evident when cruising those twists, hills and valleys. My husband spotted a bald eagle in the trees just outside of Wykoff, and I circled back to snap a few frames. The eagle was still there but, after a few clicks of my camera, soon soaring the beautiful terrain.

**Photographer’s tip:** There are only so many ways to make biking look interesting. It is important to include some of the other event aspects — such as map details and refueling — to create a good variety of images.