



Gran Fondo NJ 2014 is the First Cycling Event to Earn Gold Certification from the Council for Responsible Sport

Eugene, OR—December 11, 2014—Gran Fondo NJ, an all-inclusive endurance cycling event held in northern New Jersey in mid-September, has achieved Gold Level Certification from the Council for Responsible Sport. Organizers earned credit on 51 out of the 61 best practice standards offered in the Council’s certification program for social and environmental responsibility at sporting events.

With help from Sustainable Morristown, the 2,000-plus participant event diverted 92 percent of the waste generated through composting and recycling facilities. For 2014, the event directly donated \$12,500 to each of its five beneficiaries: New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition, Sustainable Morristown, the Seeing Eye Inc., Homeless Solutions Inc., and Grow it Green Morristown.

Since its inaugural year in 2011, Gran Fondo NJ opened the event to charitable organizations and teams as a fundraising venue. Through these initiatives the event has raised over \$600,000 for charity, including over \$165,000 donated directly by Gran Fondo NJ.

“When we started Gran Fondo NJ in 2011, our primary objective was to put on a world-class Gran Fondo for cyclists in the tri-state area, and to try and implement the principles of sustainability in the process.” said Marty Epstein, Founder of Gran Fondo NJ, and owner of Marty’s Reliable Cycle. “Little did we know at the time the beneficial impact the event would have on our community.”

Other highlights of the social and environmental initiatives included:

- Active promotion and support of local small businesses from whom the event sourced goods and services.
- Introducing the option of a non-competitive ‘breve’ distance (18 miles) for people who wanted to participate but could not ride the next shortest distance of 42 miles..
- Promotion of a ‘kid fondo’ with no entry fee, where young riders learn about cycling safety and the importance of warming up before exercise.
- Collection of waste water from the WD-40 Bike Clean, Lube Protect station for processing through water-treatment facilities, rather than draining directly into the aquifer.
- Sourcing over 50 percent of food served at rest stops and finish line expo from local and regional suppliers.
- Sourcing from local companies all printed materials on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper and with low volatile organic compound solvents and locally manufactured inks without toxic chemicals.
- Calculating the carbon footprint (or total greenhouse gas addition to the atmosphere attributed to the production of the event) and investing in a carbon offset to make Gran Fondo NJ a ‘carbon neutral’ operation.



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Certification director for the Council, Shelley Villalobos, said, “Rarely does the Council see an event jump so fully into the certification process and all the work that goes into it as has Gran Fondo NJ. The charitable donations, the broadened participation of the community by removing barriers, and the zero waste effort are all amazing achievements in themselves—this Gold Level Certification is a badge of honor that was well earned.”

About the Council for Responsible Sport:

Our vision is a world where responsibly produced sports events are the norm. Our mission is to provide objective, independent verification of the socially and environmentally responsible work event organizers are doing, and to actively support event organizers who strive to make a difference in their communities. The current version of the Council’s Certification standards (v.4.1) was developed by an outside working group of both sustainability and sport industry experts, reviewed by a wide range of stakeholders throughout 2013 and implemented in January 2014. www.CouncilforResponsibleSport.org

About the Gran Fondo NJ:

Gran Fondo NJ is a fully supported endurance cycling event with routes of 18, 42, 62 and 107 miles through the scenic Morris, Somerset and Hunterdon counties in Northern New Jersey. The event begins in Morristown and winds its way to the Delaware River and back. The Piccolo, Medio and Gran routes feature timed hill climbs with KoM, QoM and team awards. The ride features a classic “Mass Start”, themed rest stops along the routes, and a finish-line Expo and Locavore Food Festival to greet riders at the end. In keeping with an underlying theme of sustainability, Gran Fondo NJ is proud to be affiliated with five local charities, The Seeing Eye, Inc., Grow it Green, Morristown, Homeless Solutions, Inc., Sustainable Morristown and The New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition. <http://www.granfondonj.com>