

Awesome autumn

October is cycling's prime time in Northeast Ohio

BY CHARLES HOWE



Winters in Northeast Ohio may be cold, dark, and snowy, but at least they are buffered by autumn's extended splendor. Indeed, with average daily high temperatures still in the 60s for most of the month, and plenty of sun before the arrival of November's leaden skies, this is arguably the best time of year to ride a bike. Here are several non-competitive tours in the area that showcase the season's beauty:

Sunday, October 12 – 30th Fall-N-Leaf (Bellville)

Past riders have called this full-service tour through hilly portions of Knox and Richland counties the most scenic they have done. Routes of 62 and 34 miles are offered, with four snack stops (two on shorter route) featuring hot sandwiches and homemade cookies, plus hot and cold drinks.

For more information, visit <http://midohiobikers.org>

Sunday, October 19 – 5th Garrett Wonders Birthday Ride (Warren)

All levels of cyclists are welcomed on this full-service tour with route choices of 62 and 31 miles, plus a 6.2-miler for kids on the Trumbull County Bike Path. Door prizes, raffle, and special prizes for early entrants, plus the best homemade

cookies on any ride, anywhere. "Nobody goes away hungry or unhappy!" Proceeds benefit the Garrett Wonders Memorial Fund, which supports scholarships and cycling advocacy.

Contact Jesse or Jay Wonders at info@garrettsride.com or (330) 647-4343.

Saturday, October 25 – 32nd FFF/FFFF: Friendsville Freebie Fifty/Fall Foliage & Frostbite Frolic (Medina)

A no-frills, freebie ride offering map, cider stop, and greetings from the esteemed "Count Dracu-Lou." No other services offered, but the route passes through several small towns where additional food may be purchased.

More information at <http://lrbcg.com>

Sunday, October 26 – 1st Highland Ride for Health (Hinckley)

Another full-service tour (SAG support, food at start/finish, and t-shirts to the first 200 riders), with 35- and 10-mile routes, as well as a 3-mile option on the all-purpose trails that encircle Hinckley Lake; the 35-mile route offers optional add-on hills. Organized by the Highland Health Care Outreach, a non-profit outreach initiative that supports healthy lifestyles for children and families of the Highland School District.

Contact Barb Wright at bwright@bwrightlaw.com or (330) 721-8009.

Sunday, November 2 – 34th Red Flannel Metric Century (Oberlin)

Homemade soup, cookies, and a raffle highlight this traditional end of the cycling season, which offers a 55-mile route to historic Milan and back, or a 32-mile tour of rural Lorain County.

For more information, visit <http://lorainwheelmen.org>, or call (440) 775-1501.

