



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tour de Bloom adds Leavenworth race to its 2016 lineup

Riders to race in Tumwater Canyon, finish in the Bavarian Village

WENATCHEE — The Tour de Bloom Stage Race and Omnium is going Deutschland.

The longtime Wenatchee Valley cycling event, being held May 6-8 this year, is adding a Leavenworth Road Race that will have riders racing on Highway 2 in Tumwater Canyon and starting and finishing in the town's famous Bavarian Village.

The Leavenworth race on May 6 is the first of four stage races geared for top riders, including pros. Besides the Leavenworth stop, the Stage Race includes a Hill Climb Race on May 7 from Squilchuck State Park to Mission Ridge Ski & Board Resort near Wenatchee; a Twilight Criterium in historic downtown Wenatchee on May 7; and a Waterville Road Race in neighboring Douglas County on May 8.

The Omnium for amateur riders will be held May 7 and 8 and will include the Hill Climb, Downtown Criterium and Waterville Road Race. For the first time, Tour de Bloom is offering free entries to all junior Omnium participants.

"Adding the Leavenworth race is going to really put Tour de Bloom and the Wenatchee Valley on the national cycling map," said Ace Bollinger, Tour de Bloom race director. "Leavenworth is known worldwide for its Bavarian Village. To have racers finish in such a setting, with the Cascade Mountains towering above the town, and after having raced up and down Tumwater Canyon with the Wenatchee River a few feet away, well, I don't think you are going to find a more spectacular race anywhere."

The 2015 Tour de Bloom attracted 350 riders from around the Northwest and British Columbia. The addition of the Leavenworth Road Race is expected to attract another

125 to 150 riders, making Tour de Bloom one of the Northwest's largest cycling race events. It is held during the Wenatchee's Apple Blossom Festival.

The host organizing group, Wenatchee Valley Velo Club, is giving away a record \$15,020 in cash and prizes to top riders in the Stage Race and Omnium combined. The payouts to the pro men and women categories will be the same, with \$1,000 in cash going to the top pro male and pro female riders each.

"This is one of three main cycling race in the state — the other two being Tour of Walla Walla and Tour of Enumclaw — and we are thrilled about what should be three great days of racing," Bollinger said. "This is going to be one great time for riders and spectators."

The Apple Blossom Festival Grand Parade is held the morning and early afternoon of May 7. Once it ends, the Downtown Criterium begins. Tour de Beer, a series of craft beer gardens along the Downtown Criterium course, will be held that day as well. This festive scene proved to be a hit last year for spectators and brought a lot of energy to what organizers dub, "The Fastest Crit in the West."

"People can enjoy a craft beer or two, get some food at the Apple Blossom Festival's Food Court, and socialize with friends and family in an incredible setting," Bollinger said. "We see it as an outstanding way to cap the two-week run of the Apple Blossom Festival and to bring people downtown in the late afternoon and evening hours."

Online registration for Tour de Bloom Stage Race can be found at <https://www.usacycling.org/register/2016-824>. Online registration for the Tour de Bloom Omnium can be found at <https://www.usacycling.org/register/2016-630>.

Funds raised from Tour de Bloom go toward kids biking safety programs (including 500 bike helmets given free to kids at Apple Blossom), a sustainable trails network in the Wenatchee Valley, and bicycle advocacy programs and outreach.

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