

Challenged Athletes Foundation - Million Dollar Challenge

What an incredible week. Hard to explain really. So much more than a bike ride. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity that I will never forget. In fact, I had such a great time the first time, I decided to make it a twice in a lifetime opportunity. It was absolutely magical on both occasions.

The Million Dollar Challenge had been on my radar for about four years. I really wanted to do the ride for several years, but up until last year, I just wasn't physically ready for it. The COVID year made it possible. I spent that entire year training more than I ever had before, while also making adjustments to my diet. In the end I was stronger than I had ever been before, and lighter than I had ever been before. It was exactly what I needed to take on the challenge.

When I applied to participate in the ride, I had no idea if I was physically equipped to complete such an enormous challenge. I knew I would be fine mentally, the question I had was could my body handle such a huge workload for seven straight days. I had never done anything close to the amount of work it would require. The mileage alone, no big deal. However, the mileage in combination with the climbing was a place I had never been before. It wasn't until about half way through day three, that I was one hundred percent confident that I would be able to complete the challenge.

Each day started with a 5:30 wake up call, followed by breakfast at 6:30. By 7:30 each morning I was on the bike headed to the next city. Everyday came with its own new challenges. If it wasn't a sustained climb on a steep grade that lasted for thirty plus minutes, it was wind, cold, or extremely rough road conditions. I spent just over six and a half hours riding each day, and averaged about 85 miles a day. I climbed about twenty four thousand feet over the course of the week, averaging a speed of about thirteen miles per hour. With lunch stops and rest stops, I spent over eight hours on the bike on two occasions.

No matter what's been achieved before, or what will be achieved after, the Million Dollar challenge will forever be the greatest experience I've ever had on the bike. But no one does something like this alone. There were literally hundreds of people working together to make this extraordinary adventure a truly magical week. Thanks to everyone who provided support before, during, and after the ride. The people and their support was the biggest part of what made the experience so great. Seeing everybody come together to support the cause in their own way was awesome. The environment was one like no other. The Challenged Athlete Foundation community is just something you have to experience for yourself to truly understand. In the end, we raised over 4 million dollars in 2 years. That money will be used to fund the athletic goals and dreams of challenged athletes around the world. I am proud to have been a part of this for so many reasons.