



EMS Cyclists Go The Distance

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IPMBA members as far apart as Los Angeles and London report tremendous success in providing medical support for marathons.

The London Marathon was held on Sunday, April 26. According to Ashley Sweetland of St. John Ambulance (SJA), this was the largest deployment of bike medics for event support to date. Twenty-two SJA bike medics, including a mobile cycle mechanic, worked in partnership with 12 London Ambulance Service (LAS) cyclists. All riders had received training through IPMBA and/or PSC. Ashley was the SJA officer responsible for cycle response unit (CRU) operation, working in conjunction with Mark Scott from LAS. The 34 EMS cyclists worked the entire 26.2 mile route and the surrounding area, providing care to runners and the public. There were 50 ambulances and 53 treatment centers. In total, 1500 St John Ambulance members attended to 6038 runners and took 68 to hospital, an increase from the 4068 runners treated in 2008. 128 members of the public also needed treatment.

The Los Angeles Marathon was held on Monday, May 25. Joe Couce of the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) reports that the members of the LAFD Bike Team were out in force. Nine bike teams and three Gators worked the event, which drew more than 20,000 participants, for a 12-hour period. The LAFD team was supplemented with nine riders from the Pasadena Fire Department in exchange for the support provided to Pasadena for the Rose Bowl Parade and game. The medic worked in teams of three: two from LFD and one from Pasadena. Joe's team worked the first four miles of the Marathon, the 5K Run, and then followed the Marathon route to Mile 22, where they provided support for the runners who "hit the wall." His team alone handled ten runners. The bike teams ran 54 calls, the Gators ran 20, with no full cardiac arrests. It was a perfect day for a marathon, resulting in few weather-related medical situations.

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