

Nexen employee Reg Holmes spent eight days last August travelling 3,900 kilometres from Calgary to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - on his bike. Reg is the general manager of Engineering and Construction within Technical & Operational Services.

He was part of a 30-member team who made the journey as part of Cancervive, an organization that raises money to help cancer patients. All the money raised through the ride went to Wellspring, a Calgary organization that provides programs and support for current and former cancer patients.

Although Reg is a long-time cyclist and four-time Ironman triathlete, this was his first cross-country cycling trip.

"A friend of mine did the trip in 2007 and convinced me to do it in 2008 with him," Reg explains. "Unfortunately he passed away in the spring so I did the ride without him. It made me feel even more committed to it."

"You have to raise a minimum of \$10,000 to participate," Reg says. "That's the hard part. The ride is the reward!"

The 2008 Cancervive Peloton was divided into five groups of six. Each group rode as far as they could, along a set route, for six hours.

"The first few days we had a tremendous tailwind and some of the teams rode nearly 200 kilometres," Reg says. "Basically we cycled until our six hours were up and then the next team took over."

That meant riding at night several times, but Reg says it was a peaceful experience and he enjoyed the lower volume of traffic.

"The team dynamics were pretty interesting and there were lots of practical jokes played," Reg says. "When we were finished riding, we had to decide how to get to the next stop. Our team didn't always have the same priorities. Some people wanted to go to a hotel, others would want to get groceries. We had to come up with a group plan for the next 24 hours until it was our turn to ride again. On three nights we ended up sleeping in the van! On the whole, we got along and had a really strong team."

The team timed their arrival in Philadelphia to coincide with cyclist Lance Armstrong's LIVESTRONG event which features an opportunity to ride with Lance.

One of the ways Cancervive works to make the experience more meaningful is by sponsoring current or former cancer patients, called 'Warriors' to attend LIVESTRONG with the team members.

"If you raise the required amount of money, you can sponsor a Warrior,"

says Reg. "I got my friend Mark Wrightson to come to Philadelphia and we cycled with Lance Armstrong. Mark had cancer five years ago. It really makes you feel grateful for your health when you see some of the Warriors at this event - many of them are children undergoing chemotherapy."

Reg found the event so rewarding that he plans to do it again in 2009 and ride from Calgary to San Jose, California.

"Why do it again? I guess I feel I haven't done enough," Reg muses.

"There's no reason I shouldn't give back. It's not easy raising the money, but the ride at the end is a lot of fun."

For the 2008 ride, Reg was able to raise \$25,000. You can help him beat this amount in 2009 by making a donation in his name on the www.Cancervive.ca website. The site should be ready for online donations early in 2009. Or, you can contact Reg directly.

Reg Holmes

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