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Hero Thrill Show starts with noon parade today in S. Philadelphia

By TOM ROWAN JR. Philadelphia Daily News

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The 56th annual Hero Thrill Show will kick off today at noon with a parade of about 500 motorcycles rolling up to the stadium complex in South Philadelphia.

Among the bikers will be 90 to 100 uniformed officers on the department's Motorcycle Drill Team and Police Strike Force Bicycle Stunt Team who will perform daredevil stunts outside the Wells Fargo Center (formerly the Wachovia Center). Another 400 off-duty policemen from across the Philadelphia region will also participate.

Lawyer Jimmy Binns, event chairman, is expecting thousands of spectators to attend.

The Hero Thrill Show raises money for college scholarships for family members of deceased police officers and firefighters.

"This event demonstrates a devotion on the part of the city to the families of the fallen heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice to our city," Binns said. "And what better way to honor them than to guarantee the education of their children."

The event also will feature crime-fighting demonstrations, displays of equipment by the Aviation Unit and Bomb Squad, mixed-martial arts and Sambo demonstrations, and amusements such as games, dunk tanks and face-painting.

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