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S.F. skateboarders transform 'hill bomb' with relocation, new sense of purpose

By **Brooke Park**, Staff Writer

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Skateboarders prepare to descend San Francisco's Twin Peaks during the annual "hill bomb," which took on added significance in its new location this year as an act of solidarity with Palestinians.

Stephen Lam/S.F. Chronicle



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Dozens of skateboarders bombed down the hills of San Francisco's [Twin Peaks](#) on Saturday afternoon in a gathering that avoided the injuries and police confrontations of the past.

Saturday's "hill bomb" sought to clearly distinguish itself from the previous infamous Dolores Street events, which have sparked police skirmishes and led to the death of a cyclist who collided with a skateboarder in 2020.

Ciaran Trevino, who conceived Saturday's event both as an extreme-sports stunt and a rally for Palestinians in Gaza and other social justice causes, emphasized order in his planning. Twenty-five "spotters" in yellow vests and walkie-talkies monitored the 3-mile route, from Christmas Tree Point through Noe Valley and the Castro district. Organizers obtained permits, crafted a safety plan that included medics on standby, and blocked off roads.



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'Hill bomb' skateboarders head down SF's Twin Peaks

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Skateboarders head down San Francisco's Twin Peaks to kick off Saturday's hill bomb in support of Palestinians.
Stephen Lam/S.F. Chronicle

This year's hill bomb served as a symbol of solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza, more than half a million of whom are enduring famine, according to a recent report from the [World Health Organization](#).

"The Twin Peaks Hill-bomb for Palestine is a coalition united for an unambiguous, public demonstration of solidarity with the Palestinian people against the ongoing genocide and engineered famine in Gaza," reads the [San Francisco hill bomb's website](#), which was designed with the colors of the Palestinian flag. "We are transforming the San Francisco tradition of a 'hill-bomb' into a powerful act of collective resistance."

Organizers estimated that 100 people had gathered for the event, which drew a mix of skateboarders, bicyclists and roller skaters, as well as spectators cheering them on. Three police cars and six officers on motorcycles stood by the road waiting as the hill bomb began.

Gabriel Wassmer, 25, of San Francisco has participated in protests against Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as well as "No Kings" and pro-Palestinian rallies, and came to the Twin Peaks hill bomb to continue showing support for Palestinians, who were [returning to North Gaza ruins](#) Saturday as the Israel-Hamas ceasefire held. Wassmer didn't expect the chaos of previous hill bombs on Saturday's ride.

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“Comrades, skaters, cyclists, over 60 organizations have been a part of this to help out today, and for once, we might have something to cautiously cheer for,” Trevino said before skaters bombed the hill. “After two years of continuous genocide, the ceasefire has been declared. That means that for the first time in a long time, children in Gaza might wake up ... without the sound of bombs.”

Three police officers on bikes rode down the hill as the event began, passing a skateboarder holding a Palestinian flag.

Richmond District resident Peggy Lau, 27, participated in their first communal hill bomb. They began skateboarding when they were in the third grade but felt alienated in the community.

“Back then there was a lot of misogyny around skateboarding, I didn’t feel comfortable continuing it as a sport,” Lau said. “Now out as a queer and there’s a huge community of others that are around, so I feel comfortable now getting back.”

This year’s hill bomb emerged after two years of chaos at the event around Dolores Park.

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In 2023, more than 100 people were arrested or cited on allegations including assaulting officers, setting off illegal fireworks and trashing Muni trains. In 2024, in an attempt to prevent the previous year’s chaos, police dispatched dozens of officers and erected barricades, which were ignored by skaters, who followed an alternative route on Church Street while others laid flat on their board to ride underneath police cars.

Leon Baunach, 14, of Berkeley said recent Dolores hill bombs “look horrible” with the number of people who have been injured. Leon, who has bombed Twin Peaks more than 10 times, witnessed a car collide with his friend there nearly three years ago. But he pushes those thoughts out of his head when he rides.

“I don’t really think about it when I’m on the hill,” he said. “I don’t think about eating dinner, like anything stupid. I just think about what I’m doing. It takes a lot of focus.”

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