

Revelers drink up Oktoberfest

BY RASHA ALY
THE DESERT SUN

Stein-carrying and pretzel-eating contests, an oompah band, the chicken dance, and of course beer.

Cathedral City's first Oktoberfest had all that's "gut" for Oktoberfest.

The festival, organized by the Cathedral City Chamber of Commerce, was Friday and Saturday.

"I'm so excited the community is putting on something like this," said Lindsey Allen, 28, of Cathedral City.

Eating and watching the entertainment was almost like being back home in Germany, said Susanne Radzinski, 43, who now lives in Los Alamitos. She moved to the United States in 1982.

"It's almost there," she said. "I'm just waiting for the real German music."

Not long after, the 20-piece German-American Brass Band of Southern California began to oompah.

Some people tried to eat their way to a free beer by taking bites from a swinging pretzel with their hands behind their backs.

At the end of the pretzel-eating contest, all four were deemed winners.

Ismael Gasper said he was a winner just by participating. He got to stand by the "Warsteiner girls" during the contest.

"That was the booster," he said.

Warsteiner beer made 125 kegs of its Oktoberfest brew for Southern California, said Jennifer Santo, spokeswoman for Warsteiner Importers Agency.

Beer drinkers at Cathedral City's Oktoberfest finished off the last three kegs, she said.

Watch festival video



For video footage of the Cathedral City Oktoberfest revelry go to

thedesertsun.com



LUIS OCHOA, THE DESERT SUN

Ursula Henry of Palm Springs celebrates Oktoberfest at the Cathedral City Civic Center on Saturday afternoon.



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Members of the German-American Brass Band of Los Angeles do the "Chicken Dance" on Saturday night during the Oktoberfest celebration at the Cathedral City Civic Center.



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The German-American Brass Band plays Saturday night during the Oktoberfest celebration at the Cathedral City Civic Center.