



*Excerpted from*

## 'Unbroken' Olympian Louis Zamperini memorialized at Rose Parade with riderless horse



USC's Traveler 9 is led riderless in honor of Rose Parade grand marshal Louis Zamperini, who died last year. *Photo by Ringo H.W. Chiu*

**PASADENA, CALIF.** — Fans who lined the Rose Parade route Thursday bundled in blankets, hats and gloves and sipped steaming cups of coffee and cocoa as the day dawned unusually frigid.

A cold snap that hit the West had temperatures a notch above freezing hours before the start, but not cold enough to break the 1952 record of 32 degrees.

"I dressed in four to five layers," said Paul Josephson, a volunteer who cleaned up after the horses. "The problem with LA is that it's cold in the morning, then hot. So you're going to want to strip out of that down coat after a couple of hours."

Spectators may have shed some layers as the sun lit up the bright floats woven together with roses and carnations and other plant material, but signs of the chill were abundant as marching bands, and color guards danced their way past thousands of spectators and a live TV audience.

The University of Southern California mascot, Tommy Trojan, wore a long coat over his Roman armor and gladiator sandals. Members of a high school color guard from Hawaii wiggled their hips in pink skirts and bare shoulders. Florida State University Seminoles dancers looked freezing in their tights and leotards.

The 126th Rose Parade, around the theme of "Inspiring Stories," featured a riderless horse that represented grand marshal Louis Zamperini, a World War II hero and former Olympian, who died in July. Zamperini is the subject of a best-selling book and the movie "Unbroken," now in theaters.

"He really is the embodiment of inspiring stories, and there was no way we were going to change that," said Richard Chinen, president of the 2015 Tournament of Roses.

Zamperini's son, daughter and other family members rode in a car in his place.

Accompanied by a soundtrack from marching bands and entertained by different dance routines, spectators enjoyed 39 eye-popping floats decorated with fresh-cut flowers highlighting historic figures, celebrities and popular culture.

Cast members from "The Love Boat" rode on a Princess Cruises float, waving as if the ship were pulling from the dock in the show's opening scenes.

Crowds roared as a giant pink hippopotamus float twitched its ears and belched blue and white balloons from its mouth.

For the first time, the Sikh community entered the parade with a float replica of their 100-year-old place of worship in Stockton, California. The AIDS Healthcare Foundation float honored doctors and nurses who went to Africa to help Ebola victims.