

CLIMBING EVEREST. ON BIKES



PEAK FITNESS Everest challenge Picture Getty Images

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Superfit cyclists take on fearsome challenge

In the world of endurance sports, there's always a bigger adventure on the scene.

But they don't come much bigger than the latest cycling challenge – Everesting.

The aim is to ride a hill anywhere in the world to reach the total vertical height of Mount Everest – 29,029ft.

Cyclists must complete the feat in a single, non-stop outing, although food breaks are allowed. And Scots enthusiasts have been quick to jump on the bandwagon.

Everesting is the brainchild of Australian Andy van Bergen, who completed his initial challenge on Mount Buller in Victoria in February

■ **Fiona Russell**

“By 30 climbs, I was on auto-pilot and it felt really sore. I was physically and emotionally shattered.”

Two months later, London cyclist Kevin Connors took just over 18 hours to do 15 reps of the Bealach-na-ba mountain pass, Ross-shire.

And last month, he took on the other side of the Bealach with friends Matt Ray and Charlie Sanders.

The team recorded 13 reps in just less than 20 hours to raise money for the dZi Foundation charity, who support a Nepal earthquake fund.

Matt says the fundraising helped motivate the three cyclists to keep going.

He said: “While it was undoubtedly physically challenging, it was the mental challenge that tested us most.”

“Passing car drivers helped by shouting out encouragement and we were also keen to make as much money as we could for the charity.”

The only other Scottish hill to be Everested is Harden's Hill, near Duns, Berwickshire.

Berwick Wheelers rider Andy Waring endured 53 ascents and descents in just over 16 hours last November.

Next month, Everesting is joining with global sports movement More Than Sport and app firm Strava to launch a \$1million charity bid.

ClimbForNepal calls on thousands of cyclists and runners to ascend the total height of Everest over one month.

Van Bergen said: “Everesting has such an incredible global community and it is growing fast.”

“It is inspiring to think that together, all over the world, we can ride and run in solidarity for Nepal.”

To take part see www.morethan sport.org/athlete/climbfornepal



HIGH HOPES Falkirk cyclists' attempt

2014. A month later, the first UK hill, Edgehill, in Warwickshire, was conquered by cyclist Pierre Guern.

And last June, the first Scottish event took place on the Crow Road, Lennoxtown, near Glasgow.

Nine riders from Falkirk Bicycle Club slogged up and down the two-mile climb 42 times for 19 hours to reach their 29,639ft target.

Rider Gemma Gilvear became only the second female in the world to enter the Everesting Hall of Fame.

Group leader Ian MacGregor said: “The Crow Road is an iconic climb to cyclists from Central Scotland.”

“It's fairly even in ascent and never too steep so I thought Everesting it would be achievable.”

Another rider, Craig Moffat, said:

“By the end I was on auto-pilot, it was sore



Taggart write at home

Taggart creator Glenn Chandler is to share secrets of the hit detective show with fans from his hometown.

The crime writer is heading to the Leith Festival for a question and answer session at the Malmaison Hotel on June 19. Chandler said: “I was

born and brought up in Edinburgh but ironically ended up writing about a Glasgow detective.

“I did bring him to the capital sometimes – so you could say Edinburgh was the guest star of the show. I'm looking forward to being back.”

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