

OUTDOORS



KIT OF THE WEEK

SHOWERS PASS CROSSPOINT WATERPROOF SOCKS

These socks promise to keep you dry while walking, cycling and running in wet weather. They feel like normal socks on the exterior thanks to an outer "knitted" layer.

Then there is a waterproof breathable Artex membrane and a Coolmax FX moisture wicking anti-bacteria lining.

The result is a sock that feels like a normal sock but protects like a waterproof jacket.

The socks also have a high breathability rating so you will not suffer with sweaty feet whatever activity you are doing.

The Crosspoint socks come in three versions – Waterproof Wool, Waterproof and Hi-viz.

■ Priced from £26. See www.showerspass.com

TRADE IN YOUR OLD OS MAPS

Ordnance Survey are offering walkers discounted maps when they trade in their old ones.

Depending on the number of maps returned, customers will receive a voucher up to the value of £15 to spend in the online OS shop.

The initiative follows the success of a similar scheme in 2014, when OS had 10,601 outdated paper maps returned to them.

The offer finishes on March 20.

■ See www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk



RUNNERS REACH FOR THE SKYLINE

This summer will see the launch of two new high altitude races in Scotland.

The Mamores Vertical Kilometre and Ring of Steall Skyrace take place on September 16 and 17.

Race director Shane Ohly said: "The Vertical Kilometre will be an incredible leg-burning and lung-busting ascent of 1000m in less than 5km"

"The Ring of Steall Skyrace is 25km and 2500m of mountain running."

Shane is also behind the notorious Salomon Glen Coe Skyline 2016 on September 18, which is already fully subscribed.

■ See www.skylinescotland.com

Run & ride is double the fun



FIONA RUSSELL

Dunoon Run & Ride event is a cycle and running event designed to give participants the thrill of racing in shorter time sections then slow down and enjoy the untimed sections in between with friends as you take in the beautiful landscapes

Advice and ideas

DUNOON RUN & RIDE

What is it?

A multi-stage cycling and running challenge with shorter timed sections.

Tell me more:

The first Run & Ride took place on the Cowal Peninsula in 2015 and thanks to popular demand, the unique event returns to the town of Dunoon on April 2.

The format is similar to enduro events – non-timed and timed sections combine to form one race. It is organised by No Fuss Events and starts with a 31-mile road cycle.

Participants can set off any time up to a cut-off point and cycle a sportive-style 31 miles.

During the ride, which can be at any pace, there are four time trial sections.

There will be a King of the Mountains climb of two miles, followed by a three-mile and five-mile "flatter" time trial. New for 2016 is a flat three-mile sprint along the esplanade before entering transition. After a break to regroup with friends and competitors, the run starts.

The 9.1-mile route has road, trail and track and includes four times stages – a flat 2.8 miles, 0.8 miles undulating, an 800m sprint and a 2.6 miles hilly section. The race is designed to give participants a real flavour of the Dunoon area. It includes a fantastic esplanade, many seascapes, hidden country lanes and secret beauty spots.

What's it like to race?

Friends Stephen MacIntyre and Sean Webster, both of Glasgow,

Join me on my adventures in Scotland's great outdoors by checking out my award-winning website at www.fionaoutdoors.co.uk – you'll find lots of great information about walking, cycling, running, other outdoor activities and kit reviews.

PACE YOURSELF

Run & Ride is a mixture of time trials and more relaxed sections



Have you tried?



PRETTY One of the Run & Ride trails set in a beautiful landscape

enjoyed the relaxed format of the Run & Ride.

Sean said: "We knew that only three sections of the ride were timed so we decided to start a bit later and enjoy the experience.

We were certainly more relaxed than many others because we started the event last."

The men, who are both members of Glasgow Triathlon Club, rose to the challenge of the timed sections.

Sean said: "It was great that we could ride along together in between the time trial sections, chatting and enjoying the views, then really push it to get a good time for shorter sprints."

Stephen thought the hill climb was a "real killer" but he added: "The view from the top over the peninsula made it worth it."

After the ride, the friends changed into running kit and set out on foot.

Sean said: "It is a really good format. The break between the cycle and the run allowed people to regroup and then set out together again."

Stephen added: "Like the ride earlier in the day, the entire run is split into a few timed sections.

I liked the variety with different surfaces and terrains to run on, including some tricky trails up through a caravan park before a longer non-timed section to the Dunoon Stadium."

Sean added: "It is a brilliant way to race with friends because you can catch each other up in the non-timed sections. We plan to take part again in April."

Anything else to know?

Dunoon is easily accessible by ferry from Gourock with two ferry companies, www.western-ferries.co.uk and www.argyllferries.co.uk

What kit do I need?

Your own bike – road or hybrid – and comfy cycle clothing. You will also need clothing and trainers for running. Keep in mind that there will be a mixture of hard surfaces and trails. The weather could be changeable so prepare for wet and cold as well as sunshine.

How to enter:

The minimum age of entry is 16. You can enter the run only, the ride only, the ride & run, as a team or on a tandem.

Contact: Dunoon Ride & Run at www.nofussevents.co.uk