

Have  
you  
tried?



## DOWNHILL ALL THE WAY AT UCI WORLD CUP

Hundreds of the sport's biggest stars will race at the prestigious Fort William leg of the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup next month.

Taking place on June 4 and 5, the Highlands event is the only UK round of the World Cup 2016.

Spectators can expect to see many of the 2015 world champions racing, including British rider Rachel Atherton.

Another favourite of the fans, Steve Peat, a former Downhill World Champion, will also compete.

Organisers of the event at the Nevis Range Mountain Resort have been working hard to create new technical features and jumps to the infamous 2.8km downhill course on the slopes of Anoch Mor. The weekend will also include the BUFF 4X Pro Tour.

Alongside the downhill action, Scottish trials rider and YouTube record breaker Danny MacAskill will be showcasing his talents with his Drop and Roll Street Trials team.

More than a quarter of a million fans have descended on Fort William since the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup came to the Highlands 14 years ago, delivering a £30million boost to the Highland economy since 2002.

The event, which is supported by EventScotland and Highland Council, is the third stage on the UCI World Cup Downhill calendar.

Prices remain unchanged from last year's event, with tickets costing from £14 for adults and £8 for children aged six to 17. Family tickets start from £36.

■ See [www.fortwilliamworldcup.co.uk](http://www.fortwilliamworldcup.co.uk).

## KIT OF THE WEEK

**Salewa Pedroc PTC Alpha jacket**  
Italian outdoors brand Salewa have launched a jacket for people who like to move fast in the mountains.

With a body-mapped design, the Salewa Pedroc PTC Alpha jacket offers a combination of weather resistance and breathability.

The latest Pedroc jacket also includes Polartec Alpha, an advanced insulation fabric that regulates core body temperatures.

The Alpha, for men and women, boasts water-resistant fabric on the shoulders, front and back areas.

Another fabric creates highly breathable side and back panels.

It has a front zip with internal full-length windproof flap, two zipped outer pockets and an athletic fit.

■ Priced £150 from [www.salewa.co.uk](http://www.salewa.co.uk)



Advice  
and  
ideas

## TILLER THRILLER

Anyone of any age can learn to sail at one of the centres taking part across the country



# Find your sea legs



**FIONA  
RUSSELL**

If you've always hankered after a chance to try watersports but didn't know where to start, now's your chance to have a go for free or at a very low cost at 26 venues taking part in this brilliant, hands-on initiative

## PUSH THE BOAT OUT

**What is it?** Push the Boat Out is a have-a-go initiative to encourage more people to try watersports.

**Tell me more:** The Royal Yacht Association are behind the annual UK-wide Push the Boat Out programme.

The campaign offers the chance to try watersports such as dinghy sailing, windsurfing, keelboat sailing and kayaking for free or at low cost.

In Scotland, people of all ages and abilities can attend sessions at 26 venues nationwide from now until Sunday, May 22.

Liza Linton is RYA Scotland's development manager. She said: "This year, we've doubled the number of clubs and centres involved in the initiative so there are even more opportunities for people to try our sports."

"We really hope that we will be able to turn some of the first-timers into lifelong participants of our sport."

Gordon Smith is the principal at Whiteadder Watersports Centre, near Duns, Berwickshire.

He said: "The scheme lets first-timers see a little of what sailing involves and will enthuse them to take up a new sport."

Strathclyde Loch Sailing Club are offering free dinghy sailing taster sessions. They said: "The sailing session will be led by an experienced sailor and they will include lots of fun and games."

Montrose Sailing Club have two-handed dinghy sessions



**OPEN TO ALL** Experience is not necessary, just a willingness to try

with an experienced club member for beginners.

There will also be dinghies, keelboats and powerboats available for taster sessions at Oban Sailing Club.

And a spokesperson for Prestwick Sailing Club said: "We plan to take people out dinghy sailing in Prestwick Bay in our club Bahia sailing dinghies and other two-man boats."

**Why try watersports?** Marc Turner is a keen sailor and works with RYA Scotland to promote the sport.

He said: "The sport can be as physically demanding or as gentle as desired, so depending on what you are looking for there will be health advantages."

"These include better fitness and strength as well as de-stressing and relaxation."

The sport is also good for co-ordination skills and for communication when working as part of a crew and you can be

as competitive, or not, and at all levels of the sports.

Marc added: "We have many high-achieving Scottish athletes to be proud of. For example, two Scots, Luke Patience and Charlotte Dobson, will compete in Team GB at the Rio Olympics this year."

"There are also lots of national and club-level competitions for all ages and in a variety of classes. Then again, you can simply see sailing and watersports as a way to get away from everyday life and chill out."

"I think we are blessed in this country and everyone should try taking to the water to find out for themselves what it's about."

**Anything else to know?** More than 65,000 people have taken part in Push the Boat Out since its launch in 2012.

Last year, almost 28,500 newcomers attended events across the UK. For more info, visit [www.rya.org.uk/go/ptbo](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/ptbo)

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