



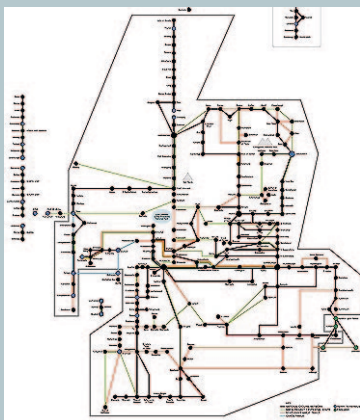
## LIGHT UP THE NIGHT

The theme of this year's **Woodland Light Experience at Balfour Station, Stirlingshire, is "Transitions".**

The night-time light-and-sound display runs from November 4 to 20 with lighting effects and projections featuring the natural landscape, light, music and water.

The display is in 14 acres of woodland owned by North Ballochruin Farm on the edge of Loch Lomond National Park. The event is aimed at families and starts at 4.30pm each day.

■ Book tickets at [www.woodlandexperiences.co.uk](http://www.woodlandexperiences.co.uk)



## TAKE TUBE TO RIGHT PATH

A new Tube-style map, showing paths where walkers and cyclists can link up routes throughout Scotland, has been published by Scottish Natural Heritage.

With just a quick look, it's easy to see existing routes across Scotland and planned routes that will link to even more paths, cities and places of interest in the future.

The map is part of National Walking and Cycling Network's programme to connect Scotland's paths across the country.

■ See [www.snh.gov.uk](http://www.snh.gov.uk) for the Tube map and further information.

## GEAR OF THE WEEK

### Salomon Drifter Mid Hoodie

This new jacket offers versatility of looks and weather protection.

It is reversible and is insulated with lightweight but warming Primaloft.

The jacket is sold in male or female designs for £130. ■ For stockists see [salomon.com/int](http://salomon.com/int)



Advice and ideas



### SUMMIT'S UP

Hugh, centre, leads his friends and club mates on the long climb up Tak Ma Doon

# Hugh's tall order



**FIONA RUSSELL**

Cyclist completes latest craze to ascent to the height of Mount Everest while still on two wheels and on home turf – but without a Sherpa to carry your gear

### A cyclist has ridden into the prestigious Everesting Hall of Fame on a notoriously tough Lanarkshire hill.

Hugh Wardrope rode the Tak Ma Doon, Kilsyth, 34 times non-stop to achieve the required total ascent of 29,029ft (8848m), the same height as Everest.

His feat earlier this month took 19 hours over 176.5 miles.

Hugh, 52, of Kincardine, said: "It was a very tough day and after just 11 laps I really started to doubt if I could do it."

"But I somehow managed to keep going and when I finished the ride at midnight, it is something I will never forget."

The aim of Everesting is to ride a hill anywhere in the world to reach the total vertical height of the famous mountain.

Cyclists must "Everest" in a single, non-stop outing, although food breaks are allowed.

In testament to the sport's tough credentials, only 1300 people have Everested worldwide and just a dozen in Scotland.

Everesting is the brainchild of Australian Andy van Bergen.

In 2014, Andy, of Melbourne, was looking for a new challenge "having already ridden everything long and hard on my bike that I could think of".

He said: "First I rode every sportive I could find and the harder, the better. Then in 2009, I formed a group called Hells 500, which annually rides tough routes of 500km. But still I wanted something more epic."

He came up with Everesting after reading about George Mallory, the grandson of the mountaineer with the same name who was part of the first

British attempts to summit Everest.

He said: "Mallory's training to climb Everest 20 years ago involved cycling hill repeats."

"One time he rode the equivalent of Everest on Australia's Mount Donna Buang."

"Suddenly I had my new idea for a huge new riding challenge."

Andy's own Everesting success was recorded on Mount Buller in Victoria. Each hill climb was 10 miles with 3261ft elevation.

He said: "While I rode only nine repetitions to achieve 29,315ft in total elevation, each climb in itself was tough."

"The very day I did it word got out and overnight Everesting was born."

The growth has been helped by activity recording GPS app Strava, which is used to officiate Everesting attempts.

The statistics of Scotland's latest Everest record by Hugh are painful to read.

It took him 15 hours and 32 minutes of non-stop cycling on the Tak Ma Doon.

The average gradient of the hill is 6.3 per cent with a steepest gradient of 20 per cent.

He burned more than 12,000 calories and lost 8lbs during the huge challenge.

Hugh said: "I used to live in Kilsyth and back then I cycled the hill many times on a mountain bike so when I decided to do the Everesting challenge I knew there could be only one hill."

"I wanted to claim it for my cycling club, Arria Wheelers, and to personally achieve my place in the Hells 500 site for first Everest of the hill."

Hugh reports that the first six or so repetitions felt fine but from

11 laps onwards it became extremely tough.

He says: "It was dark and the car convoy in front of me made it seem like fun. But when daylight appeared, it got tougher. I could see the hill and the magnitude of the task became clear."

Other Everesting cyclists reckon the most difficult part is from 7000m (21,000ft) but for Hugh, it came much earlier.

He says: "At 11 laps, some 8000ft in, I was so far from the prize and having cycled for five hours I was beginning to despair."

"So many people had turned up and cycled alongside and the summit was filling with cars and well-wishers but I was doubting if I could finish."

"I went through a difficult mental period. Physically my climb times were fine but deep down I felt dread."

"This was the toughest part for me so early in the challenge. It floored me mentally for an hour or so until I got my head back into the task in hand."

Around 50 people turned out to support Hugh, including his wife and young daughter.

Another supporter, Phil Jones, also of Arria, said: "He ended up reaching saturation point and then he just had gels, along with water bottles made up with isotonic powders."

"It's incredible to think he lost so much weight in just one day."

Riders from Arria Wheelers and other clubs, including RCCCK, Lenzie Velo and Stirling BC, cycled alongside Hugh all day.

As Hugh finished he heard the cheers and clapping of everyone at the Tak summit car park.

He said: "I will never forget that moment. I know I couldn't have done it without them."

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.