

Special delivery



BICYCLE BELLES Event is in May

ON YER BIKE FOR CAKE

Entries have opened for a women's cycling event called Belles 'n' Buns on May 13.

The event starts and finishes at Progression Bikes in Dunkeld, Perthshire, with three routes to choose from – 16, 32 and 64 miles. Entry starts at £20.

A spokesperson said: "This is friendly event for women who like cycling and eating cake."

Bring your own bike or hire one from the Coupar Angus Cycling Hub.

■ For more info see cacyclinghub.com/belles-and-buns/

GEAR OF THE WEEK



Osprey Sirrus rucksack

The popular Osprey Sirrus walking rucksack has been revamped for 2017.

It includes an AirSpeed ventilated back system, padded shoulder straps and an easily adjustable hip belt. The women's version has a female-specific

Sirrus back system to give a better fit. Other features include external hydration access, rain cover, sternum strap with emergency whistle and Stow-on-the-Go walking pole attachment.

There is one main compartment and various zipped pockets.

The Osprey Sirrus comes in four sizes, 24 litres to 50 litres. It is priced from £95. See www.ospreyeurope.com/gb_en

GLAMP IT UP

Tent brand Robens have added a selection of new glamping tips to their Outback range.

The new Prospector takes inspiration from early American pioneers with modern technical materials and features. Made from HydroTex Polycotton to help to stabilise temperature and stop condensation. It has a steel A-frame and ridge pole, large mesh windows, two-door front panel and elasticated stovepipe port.

■ From £489.99, see robens.co.uk



MOUNTAIN MARATHON
Friends and family supported former postman Charlie Campbell during his record-breaking Munro trip in 2000



FIONA RUSSELL

Conquering all of Scotland's 3000ft peaks non-stop and entirely under your own power – that means cycling or even swimming between them – is a huge feat. One mountain man has finally told his record-breaking story – nearly 17 years after his epic journey

It took Charlie Campbell a record-breaking 48 days and 12 hours to complete a non-stop self-propelled round of the Munros.

Then it took almost 17 years for his book about the journey to be published.

But despite the delay, his account of the walk, run, cycle and swim of the 284 peaks is still impressive.

Indeed, Charlie's Munro round in June and July 2000 is all the more incredible because it was completed without the mobile and GPS technology that many hillwalkers now rely on.

This Friday, the former postie from Anniesland in Glasgow, will finally launch his much-anticipated book, *Millennial Munros*, in the city.

Charlie, 47, will give a presentation, sign copies – and explain why the book took him so long to write.

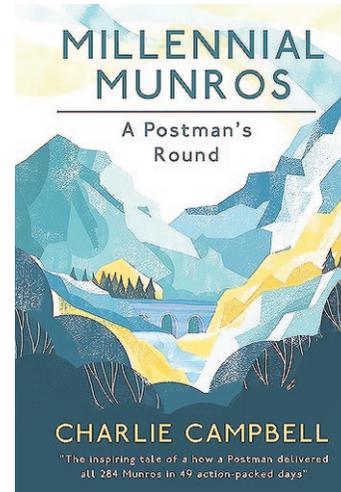
He said: "It's ironic that I broke the record for the fastest Munro round, yet it has taken almost two decades to publish my story."

"I guess I find writing a lot harder than bagging Munros and the whole publishing process seems to take a very long time. But my story is still relevant and it might inspire others, even if they walk only one or two of the Munros."

It was in 1993 that Charlie, a member of Westerlands Cross Country Club, was first inspired to attempt his round.

He said: "I saw a programme about the Munros and something clicked in my head. I decided this was an adventure I had to do."

Charlie spent the next seven



BAGGING A BOOK DEAL
Charlie's launch is on Friday

years training and planning. Then, according to his website Munro Run 2000, he began his quest on May 29, 2000, with Ben More on Mull.

At 4.15pm on July 16, Charlie stood on his last summit, Ben Hope in Sutherland. He'd broken the previous non-stop record by almost three days.

Over the 48 days, he had swum 2.33 miles, cycled 764 miles, walked and run 893 miles and climbed a total of 411,717ft.

He bagged 284 Munros, which was required at that time to complete the round. Two of the peaks have since been demoted to Corbetts after re-measuring.

Charlie averaged six summits a day and faced days of up to 16 hours on his feet. He spent his nights in tents, hostels or a motorhome driven by a support crew of friends and family.

He said: "Although the round was so long ago, much of it is still very vivid to me. The weather

was very testing at times and it was psychologically tough getting up early day after day to walk. There were mornings when I thought, 'What on earth am I doing this for?' I wished many times I could give up."

"But I had a goal and I didn't want to let myself down."

Charlie recalls many highlights as well as hardships, including his favourite part of the round – on Skye.

He said: "I was lucky with the weather and traversed the epic Cuillin Ridge in one day. That is something I will never forget."

Charlie held his record for a decade before Stephen Pyke, from Staffordshire, recorded a round in 39 days, nine hours and six minutes.

But in one way, his epic effort has never been matched.

While others who do a non-stop self-propelled round use kayaks or boats for the water sections, Charlie swam his.

He said: "I wanted my round to be as pure as possible. And that, to me, means swimming rather than kayaking."

"But swimming is not my strongest discipline at all and I found it challenging and frightening at times."

"The 1.5-mile swim across the Sound of Mull to the mainland was particularly difficult for me. I also swam between Skye and the mainland and across Loch Lomond. No one has done the same since."

■ **Charlie's book launch is on March 3 at the Dram Bar in Woodlands Road, Glasgow, from 7pm. Admission is free. Visit www.ringwoodpublishing.com to order a copy of the book.**

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 and other outdoor activities, as well as kit reviews.

Advice and ideas