



2011 WEEK 9

ADVENTURE 52™

THE WEEKLY ADVENTURE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

Jumping **OFF EVEREST**

*Squash Falconer
and her plan to
paraglide off the
summit of Mount
Everest!*

Welcome

TO WEEK 9



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IT was only after finishing this week's issue when I realised that all of the features - apart from Triumph's new motorcycle - don't involve the use of an engine. It wasn't planned, it just kinda happened. What it shows though is that we can still get out and about without resorting to petrol power to take us places. But boy do these sports take some effort and fitness. Take Sarah Outen's row from Australia to Mauritius for instance. This stands out simply for the sheer physical effort that she had to go through to wake up each day and row 4000 miles over 124 days. Her book tells the whole story but a simple fact tells it straight; even though she ate hundreds of Mars Bars she still lost 20kg of body weight by the end of it. Her book is life-affirming, poignant and best of all, funny.

There's another amazing woman in this week's issue - Squash Falconer. I've not asked her how she got her name yet because I was too busy being absolutely blown away by her plan to fly a paraglider off the summit of Mount Everest in a few weeks time. As well as smiling non-stop, Squash truly embraces the Adventure Fifty Two lifestyle; she runs, climbs, cycles, flies and rides motorbikes as well. But more importantly she has fun doing these things. Her Everest flight is going to be epic but something tells me that even after doing that, she'll have plans for other adventures...and you can bet she'll be seeking out the fun times in every one of those too. If you only take one thing away from this week's issue, then take the lead from Sarah and Squash - in whatever you're doing be sure to laugh and smile a lot more.

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RUN & HIKE

RIDE & DRIVE

SKI & BOARD

FLY & SOAR

SWIM & DIVE

LIVE & EAT





M

UDDY
mayhem.

That's what it's like to take part in one of the UK's longest running mountain bike challenges. The 24-hour race, now in its 14th year, is part of a bigger weekend festival which in June will have more of a family-focus. The idea is to encourage families to come along for a weekend of camping and cycling activity at Eastnor Castle in Ledbury, Herefordshire.

Patrick Adams of Pacific Edge Events, owners and organisers of Mountain Mayhem says, "The ORIGINAL SOURCE Mountain Mayhem is evolving into a true festival of family fitness and fun. This year expect surprises, excitement and one of the best Mountain Mayhems to date with something for everyone all weekend."

The mountain bike race is the main focus and riders repeatedly lap a nine-mile course – which gets muddier as time goes on throughout the 24 hours. Entries cost £215 for teams of four to five riders, £291 for teams of ten or £67 for soloist entry, which also includes a goody bag of freebies on the day and a medal for competing.

Even if you don't want enter the race, you can still go along and camp for free all weekend.

This year the organisers are also

inviting runners to join in with a run around the nine-mile lap on the Friday evening and on the Saturday, anyone will be able to come along to the largest mountain bike demo in the country to try out the latest bikes from all the top manufacturers on a specially created Dirt Demo course, all for free. There's also an expo village where you can shop and browse the stands.

Best of all, there are plenty of activities for children, including a Bedtime Ride on the Friday night. This is a special event for younger Mayhemers who must be wearing their pyjamas while they ride their bikes. As well as a hot shower afterwards they'll also be hot chocolate. On the Saturday morning there's also an ORIGINAL SOURCE Saturday Morning Kids Race, organised especially for Mountain Mayhem by British Cycling. Throughout the weekend there will also be a Mini Mayhem bike skills course for children to help them improve their riding.

Entry information for the Friday night run and the Sunday Sportive will be announced soon but for now you can download entry forms for the 24-hour mountain bike race from midnight on 28th February 2011 at

www.osmountainmayhem.co.uk ■



“ENTRIES ARE NOW OPEN FOR THIS AWESOME ADVENTURE FESTIVAL TAKING PLACE ON 17, 18 AND 19 JUNE AT EASTNOR CASTLE”

TRIUMPH'S **TIGER** 800XC



MAIN Triumph's first adventure focused machine certainly looks the part

TOP RIGHT Using the Tiger 800XC in anger



TRIUMPH'S motorcycles have been ridden on countless adventures over the years but the Tiger 800XC is the manufacturer's first true adventure machine. It uses a three-cylinder engine with a 19-litre fuel tank giving a range of about 230 miles. With an adventure bike though, you want toughness as well as good fuel economy and the Tiger 800XC has a steel chassis to take the knocks. However, what we really want are engine protection bars and a sump guard but we'll have to fork out a little extra on top of the £7,749 OTR price to get them. In defence, Triumph has come up with some other really nice features on the 800XC.

Someone has done their homework on how we actually use adventure bikes and they've fitted a souped-up alternator to provide additional electrical power for accessories like heated grips, auxiliary lights and, of course, satellite navigation equipment. No doubt this'll also have its uses for charging up a mobile phone and iPod too. There's even a switch that adjusts the angle of the headlight if you have a pillion onboard and a simple lever adjusts the seat height quickly too. There are both soft and hard luggage options (again at extra cost) with plenty of bungee points. Adjustability in seat height, handlebar position and the touring screen all come for free.

Those well versed with adventure bikes will know that it's the tyres that make the difference and the 800XC comes with a Bridgestone Battliewings compared to the road-going 800 version of the bike which has Pirelli Scorpions. For real off-road action you can also fit the chunkier Metzeler Karoos.

The bike is on sale now and demo rides can be arranged at dealers around the country. If we want a bit more of a test to see what the bike is like then we can join in on some of Triumph's Adventure Tours organised especially to show off the bike's capabilities. Five tours are planned lasting from 11 to 16 days and are guided by Edelweiss Bike Travel.

All include the use of a Tiger 800XC as part of the package (apart from the Austria tour). ■

www.triumphmotorcycles.com

VDLR

Victor De Le Rue's riding style is sending ripples through the European snow scene

VICTOR'S hat and goggles come flying off as he eyes his landing spot in the photo below. Says it all really. The 23-year-old delivers incredible riding on all kinds of terrain but it's his freestyle skills which have really caught the imagination of snowboarders around the world: he nails street rails, park jibs, halfpipes and monster kickers making it look easy.

During the last few seasons, Victor has placed on podiums in competitions and featured in films including a star section in Hara Kiri Productions' Pan Pan. If the De Le Rue name is familiar that's because his eldest brother Xavier is already famous for his gnarly freeriding in videos and films all over the net and on DVD.

Victor - aka VDLR - is the youngest of the five De Le Rue siblings and started snowboarding aged 6-years-old. He's due to have a busy year ahead as he's just been taken on by Relentless Energy who will, no doubt, be showcasing his incredible riding in some epic new films just as they have with his brother Xavier. VDLR will be travelling the globe with his French crew Hara Kiri and when not on the road he'll be riding the park at his hometown of Saint Lary, in the Pyrenees.

"Victor is a fantastic and talented addition to the team," says Relentless Energy's Steven Ruhl. "After Xavier's pioneering freeride adventures in Antarctica and Greenland for our 'Lives of the Artists' films, Victor perfectly complements his brother's talents with his freestyle approach and extends the Relentless athlete family further in the international scene. We look forward to following his trips and working with him this season and beyond."

With a season of filming ahead expect to see more big smiles from this bright new star very soon – especially if he lands his favourite trick: a naked double backflip. ■

www.relentlessenergy.com



LEFT Victor shows why his freestyle riding is so good... and the 23-year-old makes it look easy too



Jumping OFF EVEREST

29-year-old Squash Falconer will climb Everest then fly off the top using a paraglider this March, becoming the first woman to do so

By Dan Tye

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IGHER, Further, Funnier is an appropriate strapline for 29-year-old Squash Falconer. We all know that expeditions and world travel can be harsh and sometimes downright unenjoyable at times but Squash fully embraces the idea that they should also be fun, full of laughter and where possible, made more bearable with clever preparation. On past expeditions she's found that not all advice is good advice and that just because there's a set way for doing something, it definitely doesn't mean that's how it should continue to be done.

It's refreshing to see this approach. Squash calls it the 'Knickers Philosophy' and it can be applied by men as much as it can by women. On her last expedition she took 28 pairs of knickers saying it's a real thing of hers to have a clean pair on every day. "If your knickers are right, everything goes right!" she explains. "As daft as it sounds, I think people are put off from trying adventurous activities because they don't have access to the normal day-to-day luxuries, but you can definitely make things more comfortable for



ABOVE Squash unfolds her wing as she prepares to fly off Mont Blanc



ABOVE Squash also runs, cycles, climbs and rides motorcycles

LEFT It's easy to launch the wing here but it will be so much harder from the summit of Everest

RIGHT Squash is always smiling

yourself. I totally respect that the non-knicker changing, let's get filthy approach, is 'what it's all about' however, if you care to be a little cleaner and more comfortable then it can make all the difference between suffering or enjoying."

And enjoying is high on the list for her trip to Everest this March where she plans to become the first woman to solo paraglide from the summit. She has already climbed Cho Oyu which is only 600 metres lower than Everest. After this an acquaintance said to her, "You've climbed Cho Oyu? The 6th highest mountain in the world, that qualifies you to climb Everest doesn't it? Are you going to?" It was this that made her think it might just be possible. A year later, Squash rode her motorbike to Mont Blanc, climbed it and flew off the top. It was only after this that she found out she'd become the first woman to do so. The idea to fly from the top of Everest then came during a radio interview about Mont Blanc where she was asked the question "what next?"

Flying paragliders off the summit of Everest goes back to 1998 when the first man to try it was Frenchman Jean-Marc Boivin. He launched on 26 September in a gusty 40 km/h wind and his flight down to camp II at 19,400ft took just 11 minutes. Other tandem attempts have occurred since with husband and wife, Roche Bertrand and Claire Bernier Roche, launching in a specially designed Ozone tandem paraglider weighing only 5.3 kg from the summit on 21 May in 2001 and landing on the Rongbuk Glacier.

Ten years later, Squash wants to be the first woman to do it solo. She originally learnt to paraglide with Irwyn Jehu, Mark Hayman and Kath Staniland in Annecy, France in 2006. She plans to launch from the safest place that is as close to the summit as can be with a landing site at Base Camp or lower.

"My flight and landing will totally depend on the conditions," she says. "But it is important that I try to land on the route or at a camp for safety reasons. If I were to land away from either I then have to get myself back to a camp and that could take hours and be incredibly dangerous."

Squash is preparing herself to cope with any potential danger by doing some advanced flying. "Before Christmas I was in Nepal for six weeks where I did lots of flying training in Pokhara and a lot of hiking carrying weights," she explains. "I have also been in Tignes in the French Alps in recent weeks where I've practiced many take-offs and landings. Being able to train at altitude is ideal, especially when walking up peaks with the paragliding kit on my back."

Squash touches on an important point here. The practicalities of carrying the extra paragliding kit on top of the kit used 'normally' to climb Everest must be considered. When asked if she is dreading the extra weight on her back, Squash jokes, "I'm dreading carrying anything at all! However, the Ozone harness turns inside-out into a comfortable backpack which I can carry the paraglider in but because I will also have other kit to carry I might just put the paraglider inside my expedition backpack. I'm going up with a climbing Sherpa so I will have help with some of my kit if I need it. I have tested a few options but I plan to do further testing and modification, if that's needed, during the spare days that I will have resting at base camp."

The actual paragliding kit she will use is a 19m Ozone Ultralite mountain wing and a light-weight Ozone Oxygen

harness which has been developed especially for alpinists. The total weight is just 6kg – most standard paragliding kits weigh in at 12kg to 22kg – a fantastic development in the technology of paraglider design.

For now, Squash's focus is on preparing for Everest but she is also giving some thought to what the experience will be like too.

"I think the magic moment will be landing safely having summited the mountain, taking off successfully and flying down to basecamp," she says. "Sometimes the magic moments are unexpected though and happen when you are least expecting them. You never know what will happen on an expedition and how it will affect you. On Cho Oyu during the summit push I was almost at Camp 3 and I looked back and was overwhelmed by the spectacular views, I felt a calmness, a quiet strength inside and it was just a very personal very magical moment."

Here's to those magic moments then Squash. We wish you higher, further and funnier. Come back smiling and laughing...oh, and wearing clean knickers. ■

www.squashfalconer.com



ABOVE Video stills of Squash flying off the summit of Mont Blanc. We can't wait to see the same after she's flown from the top of Mount Everest

EAT.ROW.SLEEP.ROW

23-year old Sarah rowed her tiny boat, *Dippers*, across 4,000 miles of ocean

By Dan Tye

EVER noticed how some rhythmical and repetitive movements have a way of quieting the mind? I find swimming does it for me. Sure, for the first 15 minutes or so my head rushes through the million thoughts I've taken in to the pool with me but after some exertion, it's funny how I settle on my stroke and the things which have bothered me suddenly have clear answers.

No doubt the routine of eating and rowing and sleeping and rowing helped Sarah Outen not only cope with losing her father but also with achieving an ambition to row an ocean – all 4000 miles of one. In April 2009 she set out – alone – on 124 days of extreme physical exertion to row across the Indian Ocean. Setting out from Australia, along the way she broke two oars and lost 20kg of bodyweight before eventually arriving in Mauritius. In doing so, she became the first woman and the youngest person to ever row solo across the Indian Ocean.

Sarah has since written a book 'A Dip In The Ocean' which gives us an insight into what it's like to be 23-years-old, recently bereaved and facing 4000 miles of sea. But what her book really shows is that sometimes all we need to do is live in the present and take each day as it comes.

Sarah didn't just jump in her boat and go for it though. She spent three years preparing and the idea for it first came to her in an email whilst she was studying biology at university. "I smiled as I read the subject line, Ocean Rowing Races," she writes in her book. "Rowing and Oceans were two of my favourite words and I was sure that if I could put the two together they would make an incredible adventure."

Sarah then decided that after she graduated she'd go row an ocean, somewhere, anywhere. But in June 2006 her Dad passed away after suffering from rheumatoid arthritis. This is one of the worst forms of arthritis as it causes the immune system to attack itself. Sarah had told her

Dad about her plans to row the Indian Ocean and so she put all her efforts into making it happen. In her book, she writes freely about the physical training she went through, the hundreds of emails to secure sponsors and of course, the building of a rowing boat that would take her safely over the 4000 miles.

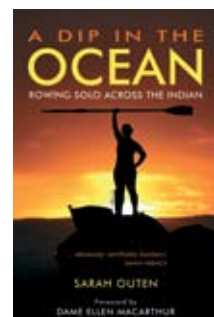
Cut off from the rest of the world at sea, Sarah was no longer open to any distractions and the rowing was a therapeutic way of dealing with the grief. She writes, "It all came crying out until there was no more cry inside and nothing left to do but row. Solitude and sea salt lay ahead and I needed to embrace it and relax into it if I were to make it to the other side."

Although alone at sea, much support came from a Portugese sailor, Ricardo Diniz, who from his office in Portugal stayed in contact with her throughout the adventure and had the task of guiding her to Mauritius. In the book she writes, "He was already more than my weather man; he was my right hand man and we were about to embark on the most incredible adventure together."

Sarah made it to Mauritius on August 3rd 2009. Her book will make you feel like you're at sea with her; letting you ride every wave of emotion she went through from the infectious laughter to the deep sadness to the pure exhilaration. A Dip In The Ocean is more of a dive into Sarah's life than a dip. And just like a swim, you'll come out feeling refreshed, invigorated and wanting to do more with your life after reading it.

Sarah is now preparing to set off in April on a two-and-a-half-year expedition around the world from London-2-London using only her own physical strength. This new solo journey will involve rowing, cycling and kayaking. Adventure 52 is all about getting the most out of each week. Well Sarah, you'll certainly going to be doing that for the next two and a half years. We wish you all the best. ■

www.sarahouten.co.uk



ABOVE 'A Dip In The Ocean' is published by Summersdale (paperback, £8.99) and available through all good bookshops and internet booksellers

RIGHT Sarah rowed for 124 days....gloves were essential



52

WEEKS

IN A YEAR

USE!

THEM!

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