FIRST TRI FOR ISLAND EVENT

The inaugural Hebridean Triathlon is urging athletes to sign up.

The event on July 30 includes a 1.5km swim in Loch a' Bhaile on the western side of the Isle of Lewis. The bike ride is a 40km out-and-back route from the loch, followed by a 10km run.

Wetsuits and cycle helmets are obligatory and neoprene swim caps are recommended.

Places are limited – email hebtri@gmail.com. Next year, an open public entry triathlon will be held on the same course. See www.hebtri.co.uk

KIT OF THE WEEK

Helinox Chair One Mini
Helinox have launched a children's version of a popular camping chair, the Chair One Mini.

It uses the same materials and construction as the original award-winning Chair One, but in a smaller, more lightweight package.

The Chair One Mini is very simple to construct thanks to a one-piece aluminium frame that is held together by shock cord.

The breathable mesh fabric is tough and comfortable and the chair comes with a zipped carry case that has grab handles.

■ **The Helinox Chair One Mini costs £65 from selected UK retailers. For more information and details of stockists visit www.helinox.eu**

ROUTE TO SUCCESS Volunteering

ADOPT A PATH

Walkers are being asked to adopt paths in Scotland's two national parks.

The Mountains and the People project will also create 36 traineeships as part of a £6.1million scheme to improve routes in the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs.

The Adopt a Path scheme needs volunteers to inspect routes and paths to spot areas requiring maintenance. It aims to improve over 78 miles of paths and offer more than 1000 days of volunteering. The paid traineeships will offer a chance to gain qualifications for work in the conservation sector.

■ **See www.themountainsandthepeople.org.uk**

CAPTIONS Text ere

Go with the flow

Have you tried?

FIONA RUSSELL

If you've taken the plunge and tried white water rafting, daredevils might want to get on board to try a new sport where you wear a wetsuit, helmet and fins to surf over rapids

RIVERBOARDING

What is it?
A crazy way to descend a white water river by surfing on a foam board.

Tell me more
A high-adrenaline outdoor sport import from New Zealand, riverboarding takes sea surfing boogie boarding to fast flowing rivers.

Participants wear wetsuits, buoyancy aids and helmets to surf-ride down river and over rapids lying prone on large boogie boards.

Fins are also worn on the feet to help with forward momentum on sections of water that are flatter or slower.

Phil Robinson, of Outdoor Pursuits Scotland, leads riverboarding on the River Tay in Perthshire and taster sessions at Pinkston Watersports Centre in Glasgow.

He reckons it's a great thing to try if you have enjoyed white water rafting.

He said: "Participants need to be game for getting into the water and being fully immersed.

"They need to be able to deal with having pretty much no control whatsoever as they descend the rapids.

"This activity is fast and furious and tons of fun. Everyone who does it says it offers a real buzz of adrenaline."

For people who are not so sure about a big river environment, you can try riverboarding on Pinkston's purpose-built kayaking water flume.

Phil said: "We are very safety conscious when doing this in the rivers and we have instructors leading the group and kayaks as back-up where required.

"However, Pinkston is a great place to try riverboarding first before going wild on the river.

"The switchback flume still gives a charge of adrenaline fun and is perfect for beginners."

Anything else to know?
On the Tay, a riverboarding trip heads 3.5 miles from Stanley to Thistlebrig.

There are five main rapids, including those named hell-hole corner, wee stinker and the weir.

To finish, riverboarders can try the ultimate challenge of the trip – navigating the fastest and longest rapid, with the biggest waves.

But this is nothing compared to the record-breaking riverboarding descent claimed by South African-born adventurer Mike Horn. It's said he descended a 22m (72ft) waterfall on the upper reaches of the Pacuare River in Costa Rica on his board.

Anything similar?
Riverboarding has two sibling sports, white water sledging and hydrospeed.

Another Scottish outdoors provider, Boots 'n' Paddles, guide white water sledging tours on the fast-flowing River Garry, near Loch Ness.

This is particularly full-on when the dam higher up the river is released.

More sedate outings take place on the River Feshie, near Aviemore.

Who can riverboard?
Lower age limits of around 14 apply and boarders need to be good swimmers.

Find out more
www.outdoorpursuitsscotland.co.uk and www.boots-n-paddles.co.uk

RAPID LEARNERS Riverboarders at Pinkston Watersports Centre, Glasgow

Advice and ideas

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.