

## Scotland



### 1- Short introduction to geography

Scotland has an area of 80,000km<sup>2</sup>, namely 1/3 of the United Kingdom of which it's a part, or 1/8 of France, twice Switzerland, three times Belgium,...

Physically the « continental » Scotland is made out of 4 big areas, from north to south: North West Highlands in the extreme north, Grampian Mountains (Aberdeen), Central Lowlands (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee) and Southern Uplands (Ayr). Here there are 82 out of the 100 climbs selected.

The 18 others are situated on islands: the northern archipelagos (3 on the Isles of Shetland, 2 on the Isles of Orkney and 3 on Lewis and Harris) and the western isles (3 on Skye, 3 on Mull, 1 on Jura, 1 on Islay, 1 on Arran and 1 on Great Cumbrae).



## 2- Tourism

Scotland has two National Parks: Cairngorms in the north, where 5 BIGs were already selected (Cairn Gorm, Lecht Road, Tom Dubh, The Strone and Devils's Elbow) and Loch Lomond and The Trossachs (with Loch Arklet and Dukes Pass).



Loch Arklet

3 other climbs are connected with UNESCO sites:

### Edinburgh Castle

The climb is rather easy (35m elevation gain), but the quite steep (14%) and cobbled Ramsay Lane links the Scottish National Gallery to the castle perched on a hill.



### Falkirk Millennium Wheel

It is a rotating lift, built in 2002, which helps boats to pass from one canal to the other above a hill. The climb (1.5km-54m elevation gain) runs along the inclined plane and goes through a narrow and small tunnel.





Industrial art is emphasized in **New Lanark**, a unique village sitting, built in the 18th-century near cotton mills by the River Clyde. Like in Edinburgh and Falkirk, the easy climb (80m elevation in 1.5km) is a pretext to discover the Scottish heritage.



All in all, about thirty places of interest are highlighted:

\*prehistoric sites: Wideford Hill Chambered Cairn (Orkney), Caterthun Forts and White Castle.

\*historic sites: Stirling and Hume Castles, Sheriffmuir Battlefield, Balmerino Abbey (at the bottom of Coarse Brae), Dunrobin Castle.



Stirling Castle



Panorama from Struie Hill

\*a few scenic roads: Ord of Caithness, Struie Hill, Quiraing (on Skye), Glen Docherty and Scott's View (with an explicit literary reference).

\*water is very present in the Scottish list: a lot of coastal climbs, valleys (called « glen ») and lakes (« loch »), among which the Loch Ness, seen from General Wade's Military Road and MacBain Hill.



### 3- Media climbs

The traditional Anglo-saxon National Hill Climb is usually programmed in autumn. Up the Kirk (1<sup>st</sup> part of Sheriffmuir in the list) is very much appreciated, like Stow, Purin Hill and Fairlie Moor. Crow Road was also used in the Robert Millar Sportive. The Wall of Talla is unavoidable and the hairpins of the Serpentine in Rothesay aren't difficult, but funny.



Purin Hill



Wall of Talla

From the sportives we've also selected the Ross on Arran, Tak Ma Doon, in a circuit with Crow Road, Leithen and Note o' The Gate.

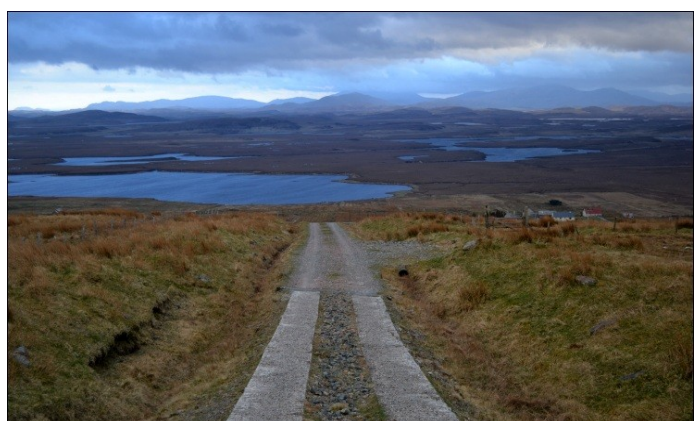
In Glasgow, Cathkin Braes was the site of the mountain bike race during the Euro 2018. One side is asphalted, but the other climbs the hillside on a (rideable) track.

### 4- Sport

The average Scottish climb in the list measures 4,9km for a 210m elevation gain and has 179 europoints. Hardest in europoints: Bealach na Ba (583pts), Lowther Hill (493), Bealach Feith (486), Mull of Kintyre (450), Glen Quaich (447). Among the new ones: General Wade's Military Road. (349), Cairn O'Mount (342),...



Descent down to Mull of Kintyre



Eitshal TV

As far as elevation gain is concerned, the best are BIGs: Bealach na Ba (614m), Lowther Hill (597), Glen Quaich (427), Cairngorm (411m). The best new ones: Ben Lawers (355m), General Wade Rd. (346m above the Loch Ness), Cambret Hill (335),...

2 bombs stand out: Bealach Feith (38pts) and Mull of Kintyre (37). Then Bealach na Ba and Eitshal TV (30), Bealach na Ratagan and Glen Quaich (29), Craigowl and Collafirth Hill (28),...