

**Coverage**

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**INSIDETRACK**

**Samantha Ryder** reports on sailing, skiing, cycling and crunch-defying store openings

♣ It's a gripping month for sailing, with two round-the-world races in action – the fully-crewed Volvo Ocean Race and the single-handed Vendée Globe. A quarter of the latter's field are British, among them Sam Davies, Dee Caffari and our best hope, Mike Golding. Also there is the dogged Steve White, who has mortgaged his house to take part because he could not find a sponsor. Follow the race at [www.vendee-globe.org](http://www.vendee-globe.org). For some boating action closer to home, don't miss the Sail, Power and Watersports Show in London's Earls Court which ends tomorrow. Details at [www.earlscourt2008.com](http://www.earlscourt2008.com).

♣ For the skier whose legs become tired halfway down the slope, the answer to your prayers may have arrived. Forget training with squats: cheat with the "ski-mojo" (£289; [www.skiallday.co.uk](http://www.skiallday.co.uk)), a kind of shock absorber that straps onto the side of your thigh underneath your ski pants. Described as "the skier's Viagra", it is claimed these magic charms (mojo's literal meaning) reduce the



Negotiating a world of water: single-handed sailor Sam Davies and Roxy

amount of impact on thighs and knees by a third, meaning you can ski harder and longer.

♣ The evenings are getting shorter by the day, but

that's no excuse for staying indoors, not with the series of nightrides just launched by Evans Cycles. The bike store plans to add rides in the dark to its popular series of mountain bike

rides. The next one is near Dorking on the South Downs on December 6. Riders will set off on a 12-15 mile route at dusk and enter woods in total darkness, following reflective arrows around a pre-marked course. For £10, riders can hire amazingly powerful Exposure head-lights which should turn the experience from a ride of terror to one of great fun. More details at: [www.evanscycles.com/rideit](http://www.evanscycles.com/rideit).

♣ **What credit crunch?** Three major outdoor brands have just opened flagship stores in the capital. Berghaus has opened a three-storey outlet in Covent Garden. At the launch were Sir Chris Bonington and Leo Houlding, who couldn't resist taking a friendly swipe at his climbing hero. "We don't all have beards," he said. More store details at [www.berghaus.com](http://www.berghaus.com). This follows the first international shop from running specialists Asics, which also opened in London recently ([www.asics.co.uk](http://www.asics.co.uk)). And Victorinox, best-known for its Swiss Army knives, has also opened its first European flagship store, in Piccadilly. The shop will stock a range of men's and women's sportswear, watches and travel gear. Plus – for the boy within – a huge range of Swiss Army knives ([www.victorinox.com](http://www.victorinox.com)).

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