

## 59th Grandfather Mountain Games Underway

Written by Steve Frank  
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So what is that sound, and what are thousands of kilt-clad folks doing in Avery County and spilling out across the High Country. Well, if you've missed it in the past, the 59th Grandfather Mountain Highland Games kicked off last night with the Running of the Bear from Linville to the top of Grandfather Mountain. Games get underway today at McRae Meadows today with traditional Scottish competition such as tossing of the caber—think of throwing a telephone pole—sheaf toss—think of tossing a hay bale—along with their own traditional versions of the hammer toss, wrestling, track events and more. But there are also competitions for dance, Scottish music—fiddling, piping and drumming—and more. Early Saturday, runners will take to the roadways with the Mountain Marathon.

About 120 different clans are represented, occupying most of the 170 tents that ring the track at McRae Meadows along US 221 at Grandfather Mountain, and along with the clans in attendance, some 30,000 folks are expected. So expect some traffic issues, watch for kilt-clad folks making their way to and from the events, and maybe take in a day in a different culture in a place that looks—especially this weekend—like the Highlands of Scotland.

Photo: Tom Lanier