

TRAVEL | 52 PLACES TO GO

No Olympics or World Cup, but Plenty of Sports to Cheer On

By ELAINE GLUSAC JAN. 4, 2017



The Women's Rugby World Cup will take place in Ireland in August. Tommy Dickson, via INPHO

Sailors, skiers and fans of activities such as tug of war and rock 'n' roll dancing — the competitive kind — will find much to cheer on the global sports circuit in 2017.

[Super Bowl LI](#), or 51, is scheduled in Houston on Feb. 5. Lady Gaga will appear at halftime.

Held every two years, the [Alpine World Ski Championships](#) head to St. Moritz, [Switzerland](#), Feb. 6 to 19. Men's and women's super-G, downhill, slalom and combined (downhill and slalom) medals will be contested on Corviglia Mountain. The men's downhill run starts out at a 45-degree angle, pushing skiers to a speed of 87 miles per hour in just six seconds.

Winter athletes will also seek speed, though on flatter terrain, during the [FIS Nordic World Ski Championships](#) in Lahti, [Finland](#), Feb. 22 to March 5. Taking place during the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence, the Nordic meet will amplify its entertainment offerings, from circus artists to tango shows, and staging races in 21 disciplines, including ski jumping.

It's an off year for the Olympic Games and soccer's World Cup, but the international matches will be on for the 2017 [Women's Rugby World Cup](#) in Ireland. England's women will defend their title in the 12-team rugby tournament, Aug. 9 to 26. Pool play will take place in [Dublin](#) and move to Belfast for the semis and the final.

Global teams will play for the [International Cricket Council Women's World Cup](#) in England and Wales, June 26 to July 23, with the final to be held at the historic Lord's cricket grounds in [London](#).

London will host [two track and field competitions](#), the biennial World Para Athletics Championships, July 14 to 23, and the International Association of Athletics Federations World Championships, Aug. 4 to 13. Both will take place at the site of the 2012 Olympic Games in East London, Elizabeth Olympic Park, much of which has been repurposed for public use, including the aquatics center pool.

It's a big year among sailing fans as the 35th [America's Cup](#) sets up course in [Bermuda](#)'s Great Sound. Defending champions Oracle Team USA will take on a field, including boats from Britain, France, Japan, [New Zealand](#) and Sweden, with qualifiers beginning May 26 and the final head-to-head races running from June 17 to 27. With giant screens broadcasting all the action near and far, America's Cup Village at the Royal Naval Dockyard will provide official viewing as the swiftest, most high-tech boats at sea tack around the nearby buoys.

Four-meter, single-handed sailing vessels will race in Barbados during the [OK Dingy World Championship](#), May 24 to 31, and the [2017 Finn Masters World Championships](#), June 2 to 9. Candidate sailors are ages 40 and up for the Finn Masters.

Some 25,000 similarly “mature” athletes are expected to compete in 28 sports at the quadrennial [World Masters Games](#) in Auckland, New Zealand, April 21 to 30. There are no qualification criteria for competitors other than age, which is generally 30, though the minimum age drops to 25 for swimming and goes up to 35 for baseball, squash and weight lifting. Athletes represent themselves, rather than their countries, and the 10-day event has a very social side, with entertainment, art shows, food and wine on the festival grounds at Queens Wharf.

Featuring sports like billiards, tug of war, water-skiing, jujitsu and “dance sports” — including salsa and rock ‘n’ roll divisions — the World Games take place every four years, a year after the Summer Games. Catch the 3,500 medal contenders of the [World Games 2017](#) in Wroclaw, Poland, July 20 to 30.