Cilcain and the Vale of Clwyd

This mountain bike route of just over 18 miles takes in the low trails to the east of [Moel Famau](http://www.moelfamau.co.uk/), on the way to Cilcain. After climbing to the ridge of the [Clwydian Range](http://www.clwydianrangeaonb.org.uk/) the second half follows trails used in my 'Moel Famau and the Vale of Clwyd' route. The ride is more challenging than the Moel Famau route as the trails to Cilcain, and the descent into the Vale of Clwyd, are a bit trickier. It's also 2 miles longer. Pretty much rideable all year round but muddy when wet.

1. Start from the Moel Famau lower car park [(GR172611)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/newmap.srf?x=317190&y=361145&z=3&sv=317500,361500&st=4&ar=Y&mapp=newmap.srf&searchp=newsearch.srf). Follow the trail out the back of the car park, signed as a cycle route, almost opposite the entrance barrier. Follow it around to the right, past a junction with a footpath on the left, to where it meets a fire track on a bend. Climb straight up the firetrack. Go straight on at the first junction and again at the second junction, on the crest. Keep to the main trail and descend past a junction with a track on the left. Continue descending the main track through a long left hand bend, then at the bottom bear right to a junction [(GR176621)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317625&y=362165&z=120&sv=317625,362165&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=317625&ay=362165&lm=0).

2. Turn right and climb the firetrack. Bear left over the crest and descend the trail that, at the bottom, turns sharp right down to a gate [(GR174625)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317455&y=362565&z=120&sv=317455,362565&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=317455&ay=362565&lm=0). After the gate follow the grassy and usually muddy trail through a small ford then on to another gate.  Go through the gate and climb the grassy and muddy double track to a junction.  Continue climbing straight on to the next gate. After the gate follow the track over a crest and descend right to a rocky ford. After the stream climb the muddy double track to a gate [(GR178630)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317785&y=362985&z=120&sv=317785,362985&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=317785&ay=362985&lm=0).

3. After the gate go a short way along the track to where it ends at a junction with a lane. Go straight on and descend to the next junction with a wide concrete track on the left, just after the road steepens [(GR184634)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=318370&y=363450&z=120&sv=318370,363450&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=318370&ay=363450&lm=0). It can be easy to overshoot, but if you come to a right hand bend you have missed it. Turn left and climb the broken track to a house on the left. At this point keep to the right and follow the thin muddy double track through the line of trees. The track eventually opens out at a farm. Go straight on to a gate, don’t drop right to the farm. After the gate follow the trail as it bears left then climbs to a gate at a junction [(GR176637)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317690&y=363755&z=120&sv=317690,363755&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=317690&ay=363755&lm=0).

4. After the gate take the right hand track and follow it through the top of a field to a gate by a house on the left. Go straight on through the gate and down the track between the bushes. Go over very muddy section of trail beneath the trees. After the mud go straight on across the grass, then over a small stream to follow the rooty singletrack trail as it bears left through the trees. After going through a gate the track soon bears left before dropping right over some roots to a tricky rock section then some planks. After the planks the track comes to a gate. Go through and down the steep descent. Halfway down go through a gate and a ford then continue descending straight on along the wide track all the way to where it ends at a T-junction at the bottom [(GR168646)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316820&y=364640&z=120&sv=316820,364640&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=316820&ay=364640&lm=0).

5. Turn right and follow the double track to where it ends at a junction with a lane [(GR172647)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317195&y=364777&z=120&sv=317195,364777&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=526&ax=317195&ay=364777&lm=0). Turn left and follow the lane through a dip. Climb right then, a short while later, left to a junction by the church in Cilcain [(GR176652)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317600&y=365177&z=120&sv=317600,365177&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=843&ax=317600&ay=365177&lm=0). Turn left then climb the lane through a right hand bend to a junction with a lane on the left, at the end of the houses on the right. Turn left and climb the lane to the houses where the lane gets steeper and climbs through a couple of bends. The lane soon flattens off, goes past a parking area on the right before coming to a crossroad junction [(GR166653)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316580&y=365345&z=120&sv=316580,365345&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=316580&ay=365345&lm=0). Turn left for a gentle climb up the lane. In a short while descend to a junction in a dip with some tracks on the right and bear left to stay on the tarmac. Climb to a farm on the left and continue straight on, where the lane changes to a rocky double track [(GR160651)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/newmap.srf?x=315995&y=365120&z=3&sv=315995,365120&st=4&ar=Y&mapp=newmap.srf&searchp=newsearch.srf).

6. Stay on this track and climb for just over 1 mile, going through a gate on the way up. Follow the track all the way to a gate at the top of the climb in the saddle on the ridge [(GR145641)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314560&y=364140&z=120&sv=314560,364140&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=314560&ay=364140&lm=0). After going through the gate there is a great view over the Vale of Clwyd, which makes a good spot to catch your breath and have some food. It is then time to start the best descent of the ride. Go straight on, down the rocky double track.  As the descent drops through a number of corners the rocks increase until eventually it becomes covered in course, deep gravel. At the end of the gravel the track becomes fast hardpack that leads to a gate [(GR168633)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=313970&y=363380&z=120&sv=313970,363380&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=313970&ay=363380&lm=0).

7. Go through the gate and descend the lane. Keep your speed down as the next junction isn't far down the road and it's quite easy to overshoot. In the first bends take the track on the left, signed as a bridleway, on a left hand bend next to a house [(GR138633)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=313805&y=363335&z=120&sv=313805,363335&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=313805&ay=363335&lm=0). Follow the dirt track as it climbs through the bushes to a gate. Once through the gate turn immediately right and follow the fence line down to a small gate in the bottom corner of the field. Go through the gate and descend between the fences. As the trail descends it becomes a sunken trail through the trees. At the end go through a gate to a junction with a lane. Go across the lane and continue descending along the bridleway on the opposite side. This is a nice fast trail but be careful of the stream in the deep gulley. The trail comes out onto a lane at the village of Gellifor [(GR126626)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=312635&y=362595&z=120&sv=312635,362595&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=312635&ay=362595&lm=0).

8. Go straight on past a lane on the left to the next junction at the end of the lane. Turn left and follow the road to another junction and turn left again. Follow this lane for a couple of miles and after the second crossroad take the dirt track on the right, just before a house on the right [(GR133603)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=313335&y=360285&z=120&sv=313335,360285&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=313335&ay=360285&lm=0). Follow the muddy double track between the hedges. When the double track eventually gives way to tarmac, continue straight on to where the lane ends at a junction on a bend in the main road [(GR141588)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314165&y=358850&z=120&sv=314165,358850&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=314165&ay=358850&lm=0).

9. Carefully cross the main road and follow the lane on the other side. Go right at the next junction a short distance later. Follow the lane ahead for about 1 mile to a junction with a lane on the right signed to Ruthin, next a house on the left. Go straight on to a junction with a lane on the left immediately after, signed as a bridleway [(GR142573)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314240&y=357365&z=120&sv=314240,357365&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=314240&ay=357365&lm=0). Turn left and follow the lane to a farm. Go straight on through the farm then climb towards the trees. At the first small junction follow the lane to the left. Go up the steep climb to the next junction, by a house on the right [(GR155576)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=315500&y=357645&z=120&sv=315500,357645&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=782&ax=315500&ay=357645&lm=0).

10. Go straight on and climb the dirt track into the woods. Go through the gate then follow the main track ahead through the trees, ignoring the tracks on either side. At a junction at the top edge of the woods, where the right hand track leads to a house, take the left hand track that leads to a forked junction shortly after. Go through a gate on the right to exit the woods. Climb the track, keeping the trees on the left then go through a left hand hairpin at the house and climb back into the trees. After the trees bear right through a field then follow the track ahead, past some houses, to a junction with the A494 by the Clwyd Gate Hotel [(GR163581)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316385&y=358135&z=120&sv=316385%2c358135&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=822&ax=316385&ay=358135&lm=0).

11. Turn right and descend the main road a short way then, just after bollards, take the track climbing away on the left [(GR166582)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316676&y=358242&z=120&sv=316676,358242&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=773&ax=316676&ay=358242&lm=0). At the houses follow the track right and go over the cattle grid then follow the double track as it climbs steadily across the side of the hill. At the junction at the end of the gorse hedge on the left bear left up a short, steep grassy climb to a gate [(GR170589)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317030&y=358970&z=120&sv=317030%2c358970&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=822&ax=317030&ay=358970&lm=0). After the gate follow the singletrack into the trees. On the other side of the trees keep going straight ahead through the gates and fields. After a while the grassy trail descends to another gate. Go through the gate then on to a junction in the bottom of a dip. Turn left and climb the steep, grassy track along the edge of the field to a gate at a farm [(GR172597)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317200&y=359725&z=120&sv=317200%2c359725&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=822&ax=317200&ay=359725&lm=0).

12. Once through the gate turn right and go through two more gates set close together. Continue climbing, on a gentler incline, along the double track as it follows the drystone wall. At the top the track bears right and flattens off, still following the wall. The track then bears left before coming to a junction with the grassy, rutted double track. Continue straight on and descend to a gate. Go through the gate then after a short distance go through the next gate to a wide hard pack track. Bear right and descend the wide track. Keep descending the track ahead, which soon bears left. Go through the gate about 1/3 of the way down and continue descending ahead on the increasingly rocky trail that ends at a gate and a junction at the bottom [(GR179611)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317905&y=361115&z=120&sv=317905%2c361115&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=822&ax=317905&ay=361115&lm=0). After the gate turn left on the lane then follow it through a right hand bend to where it ends at a junction. Turn left and follow the lane to the lower Moel Famau car park on the right to complete the ride [(GR172611)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/newmap.srf?x=317190&y=361145&z=3&sv=317500%2c361500&st=4&ar=Y&mapp=newmap.srf&searchp=newsearch.srf).