North Wales Coast to Coast – Day 1

The North Wales Coast to Coast is a four day, 181 mile mountain bike route through the [Cambrian Mountains](http://www.cambrian-mountains.co.uk/), the [Berwyn Mountains](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berwyn_range) and the [Clwydian Range](http://www.clwydianrangeaonb.org.uk/). It follows the continuous chain of peaks from Aberystwyth to Prestatyn on challenging trails and quite country lanes. There are only a few short sections of main road to disturb the tranquillity of the ride. At the end of four days you will have climbed higher than Everest (approx 29784ft) but by finishing at the sea you will have descended the same amount as well, and there are some great descents on this route.

This route was first ridden on '[A Big Ride for little lives](http://www.flattyres-mtb.co.uk/galleries/big-ride-little-lives)'.

Day 1: 41.9 miles and 6633ft of climbing from the sea at Aberystwyth to Machynlleth, via the Syfydrin Trail at Nant-yr-Arian and the Mach 3. It’s one of the most off-road days with a good mixture of riding in the Cambrian Mountains with rocky trails, manmade singletrack and big grassy mountains.

1. Start from the beach in front of the Cardigan & Celtic Bay Guest House [(GR582822)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258255&y=282260&z=120&sv=258255,282260&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=258255&ay=282260&lm=0). After dipping your rear wheel in the sea return to the promenade road and turn right. At the next junction, in the middle of the promenade road, turn left and ride into the town. Go straight on until the road finishes at a one-way road where you have to turn left. Turn left and follow the road until it merges then get in the right hand lane and ride past Summit Cycles. At the following junction turn right then, at the junction with a road from the left, turn right again. Go straight on at the roundabout and past the Railway Station on the left. At the roundabout just after the station take the first turning on left. Continue along the road until just after the Police Station and pick up the start of the Cycle Route on the right [(GR588811)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258770&y=281155&z=120&sv=258770,281155&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=258770&ay=281155&lm=0).

2. After a short distance follow the track around the back of the houses. Follow the cycle route straight on out of Aberystwyth. On the edge of town, immediately before a junction with the main road, follow the cycle track right to ride underneath the road. Continue along the cycle track until it comes to a road at an industrial park. Follow the road right to the next junction and turn right. Go through the industrial park to a junction just on the other side, where the road climbs off to the right [(GR616804)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261665&y=280430&z=120&sv=261665,280430&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=261665&ay=280430&lm=0). Go straight ahead along the singletrack lane. Follow this up the valley for some distance until it comes to a junction by a railway crossing. Bear left and cross the railway and follow the road to a crossroad junction with the A44 in Capel Bangor [(GR652803)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=265265&y=280355&z=120&sv=265265,280355&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=265265&ay=280355&lm=0).

3. Go straight on over the main road and climb the steep lane out of the village. At the top of the climb go through a dip to a crossroad junction at a farm [(GR650810)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=265075&y=281065&z=120&sv=265075,281065&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=265075&ay=281065&lm=0). Turn right and climb the lane to a gate. Go straight on through the gate and follow the tarmac double track to the next gate at a farm, on the right. Go straight on through the gate and climb the track through the fields. At the end of the track go through a gate to a junction with a lane [(GR674822)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=267475&y=282225&z=120&sv=267475,282225&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=267475&ay=282225&lm=0). Turn right, then immediately after go straight on at the next junction. After a while follow the lane around a left hand bend to another junction [(GR682827)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=268210&y=282700&z=120&sv=268210,282700&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=268210&ay=282700&lm=0).

4. Turn right then immediately after, at the next junction, go straight on and climb. When the lane turns into a rocky track continue climbing straight on. At the next junction take either track as they soon meet back up, but the steeper one on the left gives better views. After the tracks meet back up descend left then right to a junction at the edge of the forest [(GR697824)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=269725&y=282430&z=120&sv=269725,282430&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=269725&ay=282430&lm=0). Stay on the main trail and bear right into the trees to join the Syfydrin Trail. The wide rocky track soon comes to a marker post on the right. Turn right down this manmade singletrack and follow the Syfydrin Trail all the way to the Nant-yr-Arian visitors centre [(GR718813)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=271845&y=281375&z=120&sv=271845,281375&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=271845&ay=281375&lm=0).

5. Leave the visitors centre and follow the Syfydrin Trail to the Nant-y-Moch Reservoir. Continue along the waymarked trail when it turns left away from the reservoir to climb the wide rocky track. Continue straight over the hill and go down a fast rocky descent to a junction [(GR726869)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=272705&y=286930&z=120&sv=272705,286930&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=272705&ay=286930&lm=0). Keep following the orange arrows and go straight on. Climb over the saddle between the hills then go down the long Bwlch Glas decent. At the bottom of the descent go across the ford and follow the rocky track to where it finishes at a forked junction with two lanes [(GR695873)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=269500&y=287305&z=120&sv=269500,287305&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=269500&ay=287305&lm=0).

6. Take the right hand lane to leave the Syfydrin Trail and descend to a junction at Cwmere. Turn right then a short distance later at the next junction by a small post box, turn right again. Climb the lane and bear right to the next junction [(GR691885)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=269115&y=288505&z=120&sv=269115,288505&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=269115&ay=288505&lm=0). Take the right hand lane and continue climbing up the valley. Stay on this lane and, after some distance, climb past the old mine works on the right. The lane then bears left across the valley and comes to a junction [(GR712879)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=271220&y=287955&z=120&sv=271220,287955&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=271220&ay=287955&lm=0). Turn left and follow the bridleway sign down a short rocky double track descent then climb to a house. Directly before the house turn right and follow the very vague track around the right hand side of the building. Bear left around the corner of the house then go straight on across the boggy stream to climb a grassy track that follows a line of trees, on the left. At the top of the climb follow the bridleway marker and bear slightly right and descend to a gate at a stream crossing [(GR707884)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=270725&y=288420&z=120&sv=270725,288420&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=270725&ay=288420&lm=0).

7. After the stream bear left up the steep grassy climb, following the line of trees on the right. Directly after the end of the trees turn sharp right and climb a short way to a gate. Go through the gate then turn right and go through the gates of the sheepfold. After the sheepfold turn left and climb steeply through the grassy field towards where the fence on the left disappears from view on the ridge. Go through the gate on the ridge then turn right and go through the next gate [(GR706888)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=270695&y=288825&z=115&sv=270695,288825&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=270695&ay=288825&lm=0). After the gate bear slightly left and climb diagonally across the field. Cross the stream in the middle of the field and head straight on towards the mast at top of the hill. Go through the gate at the top of the field then turn left and go through the next gate a short distance later. Traverse the hill to a gate at the saddle on the next ridge. After the gate follow the muddy double track for a short distance then, where it bears left, turn right and go through the small gate in the fence on the right [(GR709896)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=270960&y=289665&z=120&sv=270960,289665&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=270960&ay=289665&lm=0).

8. After the gate climb straight ahead through the field, just to the right of the ditch filled with marsh grass. After the crest descend to a gate. Go through the gate and bear left through the short boggy section to pick up the grassy singletrack, just below the plateau of bog on the right. At the other side of the plateau go up though the rocks to pick up a well defined singletrack trail at the top [(GR717897)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=271670&y=289680&z=120&sv=271670,289680&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=271670&ay=289680&lm=0). The track soon drops off the right hand side of the ridge to climb high above the valley on the right, following the line of the ridge now on the left. After the track crosses some bed rock it comes to a boggy section. At this point turn right and drop down the grassy bank and cross the stream. After the stream bear left and continue climbing until the track bears right for a nice bit of singletrack that traverses the head of the valley. Bear left to the top of the climb then, after a gate, descend the double track to a junction at a lane [(GR727904)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=272755&y=290410&z=120&sv=272755,290410&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=272755&ay=290410&lm=0).

9. Go straight across the lane and descend the rocky track to a ford. After the ford bear right around the derelict buildings and climb the loose rocky track to a junction at the top [(GR732911)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=273205&y=291170&z=120&sv=273205,291170&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=273205&ay=291170&lm=0). Turn right and descend the wide gravel track to a gate at the edge of the forest. After the gate go straight on at the first junction and straight on again at the following crossroad junction. At the next junction turn left [(GR747908)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=274730&y=290805&z=120&sv=274730,290805&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=274730&ay=290805&lm=0), if you miss this junction you will come to a river crossing at the edge of the forest. Follow the trail through a few big puddles to a stream crossing [(GR751914)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=275160&y=291457&z=120&sv=275160,291457&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=275160&ay=291457&lm=0). Go straight across the stream, keeping to the right, it is a lot deeper on the left. I’m just over 6ft and when crossed it in Dec the water came up to my knees for a short time, in a dry June it was shallow and rideable.

10. On the far side turn left and follow the rocky track along the right hand side of the stream. The track soon turns right into the trees. There are more big puddles to negotiate before the track comes to a gate at the far side of the forest. Go straight on through the gate and up a wide and rutted section of gravely track. A short distance later bear left and continue following the eroded rocky track across the side of the hills. (Although it is water eroded it has always been dry when I have ridden it. While there may be a stream here if it’s raining heavily you will still be able to get through). As the track undulates across the hills it goes through a number of tricky eroded sections and a number of small stream crossings which are all rideable. The track eventually climbs steeply to a junction with a track on the left.

11. Go straight on to a gate a short distance later. After this gate go straight on to the next junction and turn left to the next gate [(GR764938)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=276470&y=293897&z=120&sv=276470,293897&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=683&ax=276470&ay=293897&lm=0). This gate has a ‘Mach 3’ route marker attached to it. Follow the waymarked ‘Mach 3’ Trail all the way to where it finishes at the clock tower in the middle of Machynlleth. Turn right and follow the A489 through the centre of town, past The Holey Trail on the left, to the Maenllwyd Guest House on the right, opposite the hospital.

[North Wales Coast to Coast - Day 2](http://flattyres-mtb.co.uk/route-guides/north-wales-mtb-routes/north-wales-coast-to-coast-day-2/)

[North Wales Coast to Coast - Day 3](http://flattyres-mtb.co.uk/route-guides/north-wales-mtb-routes/north-wales-coast-to-coast-day-3/)

[North Wales Coast to Coast - Day 4](http://flattyres-mtb.co.uk/route-guides/north-wales-mtb-routes/north-wales-coast-to-coast-day-4/)