The Rhydcriw Round

This is a mountain bike route of 19.3 miles that starts near Barmouth, in Snowdonia. It heads south from the Mawddach Estuary on the trails over Rhydcriw in the hills to the west of Cadair idris. The trails are mainly rocky double track with a nice bit of singletrack and steep, technical rocks to spice things up. It’s essentially two ‘big’ climbs and descents. While the climbs contain have some very steep gradients they come with a big dollop of pretty to help take your mind off it.

1. Start from the railway station car park on the southern end of Barmouth bridge [(GR628140)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262856&y=314086&z=120&sv=262856,314086&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=262856&ay=314086&lm=0). Exit the car park on the Mawddach Trail, heading in the Dolgellau direction away from the railway. The trail bears left through a gate before straightening out and heading inland along the southern edge of the estuary. After the trail emerges from the trees it comes to a gated junction with a lane, by a small car park on the right [(GR640148)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264021&y=314811&z=120&sv=264021,314811&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=264021&ay=314811&lm=0). Go through the first gate then turn right and follow the lane to a junction with the main road [(GR642144)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264201&y=314481&z=120&sv=264201,314481&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=264201&ay=314481&lm=0).

2. After the gate turn right and follow the main road through Arthog to a junction with a thin and very steep lane in line of cottages on the left, directly after a layby on the right [(GR641144)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264126&y=314416&z=120&sv=264126,314416&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=264126&ay=314416&lm=0). Turn left and climb the long, brutally steep lane. After emerging from the trees the lane comes to a junction with a gated double track bridleway on the right, note this for the return journey [(GR645140)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264546&y=314016&z=120&sv=264546,314016&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=264546&ay=314016&lm=0). Follow the lane left and continue climbing. Go through the next gate and past a house on the left then up through the following right hand bend. Continue climbing the lane until it comes to a crossroad junction with a gated rocky track ahead [(GR648133)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264816&y=313316&z=120&sv=264816,313316&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=264816&ay=313316&lm=0).

3. Go straight on through the gate and climb the steep, rutted track to the next gate at a junction with a hairpin bend, again note this for the return journey [(GR648129)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264846&y=312891&z=120&sv=264846,312891&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=264846&ay=312891&lm=0). Go through the gate and bear right to climb the broken tarmac. Climb this wide track to a gate at the top. Go through the gate and down a short descent before the final section of the climb on a much easier gradient. The views across the mountainous coast on this section are fantastic. Continue all the way the gate at the forest at the top [(GR637117)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263706&y=311716&z=120&sv=263706,311716&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=263706&ay=311716&lm=0).

4. Go through the gate and follow the track as it bears left. At the next junction go straight on then follow the track through a dip. The track soon exits the trees and leads on to a fast descent down the left hand side of a high valley. At the bottom go through a right hand hairpin bend then over the cattle grid by the gate. Keep following the track along the flat, as it bears slightly left, to a forked double track junction [(GR628096)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262881&y=309641&z=120&sv=262881,309641&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=262881&ay=309641&lm=0).

5. Take the right hand fork and descend the increasingly bouldery double track. The track turns left at the bottom for a short flat section before bearing right and climbing very gently across the left hand side of the valley. Go straight on through the gate at the sheep fold and continue up the climb, which finishes with a steeper loose, rocky incline. Go straight on over the top for a long rocky, eroded descent. At the next junction, with a double track leading off to the left, continue straight on [(GR600080)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=260076&y=308016&z=120&sv=260076,308016&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=848&ax=260076&ay=308016&lm=0). After a numbers of bends the descent finishes at a gate. Go straight on through the gate and up a short climb. Continue following the double track ahead, which soon begins descending, to where it ends at a junction at a lane, by a barn and derelict house on the left [(GR588072)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258801&y=307216&z=120&sv=258801%2c307216&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=258801&ay=307216&lm=0).

6. Turn hard left and go through the gate on the grassy track leading to the derelict house. Directly after turn square right and follow the track down the left hand side of the barn. Go straight on and descend the track, along the fence on the right, towards the sea. After the next gate the track becomes muddy singletrack that can be quite slippery in the wet. Halfway down the track comes to a junction with a gated, muddy double track on the right [(GR589067)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258926&y=306716&z=120&sv=258926,306716&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=258926&ay=306716&lm=0). Go straight on past this down a steep, grassy and muddy track, which then bears right to a gate. Go through the gate for more muddy singletrack that descends through the gorse. The track ends at a gate by a house that leads on to a lane [(GR592064)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=259236&y=306421&z=120&sv=259236%2c306421&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=259236&ay=306421&lm=0).

7. Go through the gate and follow the lane ahead to the next junction then follow the lane right. After descending through a number of bends the lane bears left past a cemetery before coming to an end at a T-junction [(GR597057)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=259771&y=305781&z=120&sv=259771%2c305781&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=259771&ay=305781&lm=0). Turn left and climb the lane to the next junction with a tarmac track on the right signed as a bridleway [(GR599059)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=259881&y=305941&z=120&sv=259881%2c305941&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=259881&ay=305941&lm=0).

8. Turn right and descend the track to a house. At the three-way just on the far side of the buildings take the thin grassy track ahead and descend through the bushes to a gate a short distance later. Go through the gate and into a field. Stay high and go across the field to the second gate in the fence on the right [(GR602061)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=260267&y=306086&z=115&sv=260267,306086&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=567&ax=260267&ay=306086&lm=0). Go right through the gate then down through the field keeping to the fence on the right. At the bottom of the field go straight on through the gate, past a farm on the left, and follow the double track to a junction with the lane at the bottom [(GR605058)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=260531&y=305801&z=120&sv=260531%2c305801&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=260531&ay=305801&lm=0).

9. Turn left and follow the road along the bottom of the valley to the next junction, with the white stones [(GR610060)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261026&y=306036&z=120&sv=261026%2c306036&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=261026&ay=306036&lm=0). Turn left to start the longest climb of the ride. It is a tarmac climb all the way to the top. About halfway up the lane bears right then goes over a cattle grid before coming to a forked junction [(GR623073)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262346&y=307291&z=120&sv=262346,307291&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=262346&ay=307291&lm=0). Go straight on, past the track descending to the right, and continue climbing the lane. After bearing left the climb finishes with a long right hand bend that leads to a small stand of trees at the top [(GR625088)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262571&y=308776&z=120&sv=262571%2c308776&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=262571&ay=308776&lm=0).

10. Follow the lane left past the trees then go straight on over the top and descend the gravel double track. The track descends to the previously visited junction on a right hand bend [(GR628096)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262881&y=309641&z=120&sv=262881,309641&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=262881&ay=309641&lm=0). Bear right and retrace your wheel tracks. Follow the double track along the flat then through the left hand hairpin before climbing to the forest at the top. At the top continue straight on along the wide track all the way back to the gate at the edge of the trees, with the stunning view across the Mawddach Estuary. Go through the gate to start the long, fast double track descent.  After going through the second gate on the descent, at the top of a small rise, descend the broken tarmac to the previously visited gated junction on a right hand bend [(GR648129)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264846&y=312891&z=120&sv=264846,312891&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=849&ax=264846&ay=312891&lm=0). Go past the gate and descend through the right hand bend. Continue descending the track through a number of gates to where it ends at a junction with a lane [(GR656133)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=265596&y=313356&z=120&sv=265596%2c313356&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=265596&ay=313356&lm=0).

11. Turn sharp left and climb the lane to the next junction, with a grassy double track leading to a gate in the wall on the right [(GR654134)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=265446&y=313391&z=120&sv=265446%2c313391&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=265446&ay=313391&lm=0). Turn right and follow the double track through the gate. Directly after the gate descend the double track left then right, past the small stand of trees, before coming to a house. Follow the track right, around the back of the house, to a junction at a ford. Turn left directly before the ford and follow the double track along the left hand side of the stream. After passing a stone bridge on the right the track goes up a short climb to a gate. Go through the gate and on to where the track ends at a junction with the previously climbed lane [(GR648138)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264821&y=313831&z=120&sv=264821%2c313831&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=264821&ay=313831&lm=0).

12. Turn right and descend the lane, going through the gate halfway down, to a junction with a gated double track ahead where the lane descends steeply to the right [(GR645140)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264536&y=314016&z=120&sv=264536%2c314016&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=264536&ay=314016&lm=0). Go straight on through the gate then at the forked junction directly after take the right hand track. Descend gently to the next junction and go through the gate on the right that leads to a cottage. Go straight on past the cottage, where the trail steepens and comes to a gate. Go through the gate for a very steep, rocky and tight winding trail down through the trees. Keep to this trail all the way down, going past a gate on the right on the upper section. Lower down go through a few gates to eventually reach the end of the trail at a junction with a lane. Turn right and descend a short distance to a junction with the main road [(GR637141)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263741&y=314121&z=120&sv=263741%2c314121&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=263741&ay=314121&lm=0).

13. Turn right and follow the main road for a short distance to a junction with a track on the left, near the end of a right hand bend in the road [(GR638143)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263836&y=314311&z=120&sv=263836%2c314311&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=263836&ay=314311&lm=0). Turn left and descend through the gate then follow the grassy track to a crossroad junction with the Mawddach Trail [(GR637144)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263761&y=314436&z=120&sv=263761%2c314436&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=837&ax=263761&ay=314436&lm=0). Turn left and follow the Mawddach Trail all the way back to the station car park to complete the ride.