Moel Famau Circuit

This is a 10 mile mountain bike route around [Moel Famau](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moel_Famau) in the [Clwydian Range](http://www.clwydianrangeaonb.org.uk/), a chain of hills just inside the North Wales border near Chester. The riding on this route, although not very technical, has some fast descents and some very steep grassy climbs. It’s a beautiful route the second half of which is on a permissive bridleway. With the amount of grassy trails on this ride it is best tackled on a dry day.

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, signed as a cycle route, out the back of the car park almost opposite the entrance barrier. Follow it around to the right, past a junction with a footpath on the left, and straight up to where it meets a fire track on a bend. Climb straight up the fire track. Go straight on at the first junction to the second junction, at the crest [(GR178616)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=317865&y=361630&z=120&sv=317865,361630&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=822&ax=317865&ay=361630&lm=0).

2. Turn left up a short climb then bear left to a junction. Go straight on at the junction and follow the trail as it contours around the eastern slope of Moel Famau. Keep to the main trail as it climbs and descends through a number of bends. The fire track finishes on a descent where it turns into a thin rocky track with bushes on either side. This turns left after a short distance and climbs to a gate [(GR169633)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316970&y=363340&z=120&sv=316970,363340&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=822&ax=316970&ay=363340&lm=0).

3. After the gate turn left and climb towards the trees on the grassy trail by a drystone wall. At the top bear right to a gate. After the gate follow the usually boggy section of trail that follows the line of trees on the left. The trail starts becoming firmer before coming to a crossroad junction [(GR163633)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316345&y=363315&z=120&sv=316345,363315&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=822&ax=316345&ay=363315&lm=0), with a steep trail on the left leading to the summit of Moel Famau. Go straight on along the singletrack through the heather. This track soon bears left up a short, steep climb. After reaching the top descend the singletrack that eventually jinks right through a drystone wall. Continue straight ahead after the wall to some rocky sections a little further on. The track then comes to a junction with the choice of climbing straight on or turning right [(GR156630)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=315665&y=363025&z=120&sv=315665,363025&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=822&ax=315665&ay=363025&lm=0).

4. Climb straight ahead, following the line of the drystone wall on the left, up a section that can be a bit wet and muddy and is usually a push. Fortunately this is only a short section. Near the top go left across the fallen section of wall then turn right and follow the wall up to the gate at the top of the hill [(GR156629)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=315634&y=362887&z=115&sv=315634,362887&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=315634&ay=362887&lm=0). Go through the gate then go straight on at the crossroad junction with Offa's Dyke path, that follows the ridge, and descend the long grassy trail that drops into the Vale of Clwyd. Follow the trail as it bears right and flattens out then turns left and steepens dramatically for the main part of the descent. Quite some way down at a forked grassy junction with a marker post bear right. A short distance later go through the gap in the dry stone wall then bear right to a junction with a double track at the bridleway marker post [(GR143627)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314297&y=362720&z=115&sv=314297,362720&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314297&ay=362720&lm=0).

5. Turn left and follow the double track across the field. A short distance later, where the double track becomes a thin grassy track, continue straight on and descend diagonally across the field to a low bridleway marker post. Continue following the trail as it contours along the side of the hill in the direction of the wall below on the right. At the end of the wall turn left and follow the track up the left hand side of the stream gulley. At the following junction take the right hand fork to continue up the left hand side of the stream. Not long after bear right through a ford and climb to a gate [(GR146622)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314629&y=362254&z=115&sv=314629,362254&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314629&ay=362254&lm=0).

6. Go through the gate and climb the track straight on, going through a small boggy patch, to a bridleway marker post in the bottom of a grassy field. Bear right and climb diagonally across the field to a junction near a gate in the wall ahead. Turn sharp left and climb the very steep grassy double track to the next marker post. At the post turn square right then head just to the left of the tree to climb the steep grassy slope, bearing slightly right across the gradient, to another marker post that soon appears on the crest [(GR147619)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314724&y=361944&z=115&sv=314724,361944&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314724&ay=361944&lm=0).

7. At the marker post turn right and descend the steep grassy double track towards the line of trees. At the trees continue descending the lumpy sunken trail in the direction of the trees. The trail soon bears left where it becomes a gradual, straight climb that finishes at a gate [(GR146617)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314654&y=361709&z=115&sv=314654,361709&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314654&ay=361709&lm=0). Go through the gate then turn right and descend the steep, grassy sheep track by the wall on the right. Be careful with your speed as the track soon comes to a square left hand turn leading onto a wide rocky track. Follow the rocky track down through a couple of loose hairpin bends to a junction at a marker post at the bottom [(GR145615)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314554&y=361576&z=115&sv=314554,361576&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314554&ay=361576&lm=0).

8. Turn left and follow the grassy track along the field boundary on the right. The track soon becomes rocky and descends through a right hand bend to a junction [(GR148613)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314786&y=361306&z=115&sv=314786,361306&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314786&ay=361306&lm=0). Turn sharp left and descend the track up the gulley to a stream crossing. Follow the loose, rocky track right over the stream then head back out of the gulley on the flat double track. The track bears gently left around the hill to a junction at the line of trees ahead [(GR147611)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314698&y=361175&z=115&sv=314698,361175&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314698&ay=361175&lm=0). Turn sharp left and climb the steep track, along the fence line on the right, to a gate at the top [(GR149611)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314945&y=361175&z=115&sv=314945,361175&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314945&ay=361175&lm=0).

9. Go through the gate then turn right and descend the wide, steep grassy track by the fence on the right. The track bears left and soon comes to a bridleway marker at a gate. Go just to the left of the gate to continue straight ahead along the fence line on the right. At the end of the fence the track goes up slightly through a rocky right hand bend before coming out to a marker post at the top of a field. Bear right, slightly sharper than the arrow is pointing and descend to another marker post at the bottom of the field [(GR147606)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=314757&y=360662&z=115&sv=314757,360662&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=314757&ay=360662&lm=0).

10. Turn left on the grassy double track by the wall and go through the gate. Continue straight ahead along the grassy double track for a long steep climb. At the junction directly at the end of the field boundary on the right continue climbing straight on. After going through the following gate, some way up the climb, the track become loose and rocky before reaching a junction with the Bwlch Penbarra road. At the junction bear left and follow the rocky track on the left of the wall, parallel to the road, to the entrance of the top Moel Famau car park [(GR161605)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316152&y=360577&z=115&sv=316152,360577&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=316152&ay=360577&lm=0).

11. Directly before the car park entrance turn right and cross the road to the track between the walls on the other side. At the junction on the other side of the road turn left and follow the track into the other part of the car park. Head away from the road to the back of the car park then turn left to the first gate on the left [(GR162604)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316249&y=360477&z=115&sv=316249,360477&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=316249&ay=360477&lm=0). Go through the small wooden gate with the cycle sign on it, to the left of the main gate, then descend the forest track through the trees. At the bottom the track bears left to a forest gate. Go past this gate to a junction with the road [(GR169609)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=316904&y=360942&z=120&sv=316904,360942&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=746&ax=316904&ay=360942&lm=0). Turn right and descend the road past the layby and toilet block. Directly after turn left into the lower Moel Famau car park to complete the ride.