

White Peak Mountain Biking

The Pure Trails



Written by
Jon Barton

White Peak Mountain **Biking**

The Pure Trails



Written by
Jon Barton

White Peak MountainBiking

The Pure Trails

 Copyright © 2014 Vertebrate Graphics Ltd.

 Published by Vertebrate Publishing.

First published in 2006 by Vertebrate Graphics Ltd and reprinted in 2009.

This second edition first published in 2014 by Vertebrate Publishing,
an imprint of Vertebrate Graphics Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part of this work covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means – graphic, electronic, or mechanised, including photocopying, recording, taping, or information storage and retrieval systems – without the written permission of the publisher.

ISBN 978-1-910240-05-2

Front cover: Kim Russon on the Calver Circuit, near Hassop. Photo: Tim Russon.

Back cover: Singletrack above Coombs Dale on the Great Longstone ride. Photo: John Coe field.

Photography by John Coe field unless otherwise credited.



All maps reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey
on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

© Crown Copyright. 100025218



Designed by Nathan Ryder. Produced by Rod Harrison.

www.v-graphics.co.uk

Printed in China.

Every effort has been made to achieve accuracy of information in this guidebook. The authors, publishers and copyright owners can take no responsibility for: loss or injury (including fatal) to persons; loss or damage to property or equipment; trespass, irresponsible riding or any other mishap that may be suffered as a result of following the route descriptions or advice offered in this guidebook. The inclusion of a track or path as part of a route, or otherwise recommended, in this guidebook does not guarantee that the track or path will remain a Right of Way. If conflict with landowners arises we advise that you act politely and leave by the shortest route available. If the matter needs to be taken further then please take it up with the relevant authority.

PLEASE GIVE WAY TO HORSES AND PEDESTRIANS.

Contents



Introduction	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
How to Use this Book	x
A Note on Trail Resurfacing	xi
Rights of Way	xii
The Bike	xii
Essential Kit	xiii
Night Riding	xiv
General Safety	xiv
In the Event of an Accident	xv
Rules of the (Off) Road	xv
Planning Your Ride	xvi
Maps & Symbols	xvi
White Peak Area Map & Route Finder	xviii

SECTION 1 – CLASSICS

Classics Introduction	xx
1 ▲ The Quarry Trail – 10.5km	5
2 ▲ Shillito Woods – 14km	9
3 ▲ Ashover Singletrack – 13km	13
4 ▲ Dark & White – 13.75km	17
5 ▲ Grangemill – 17km	21
6 ▲ Bakewell Circuit – 17km	25
7 ▲ Middleton Circuit – 17.5km	29
8 ▲ Linacre North – 23km	33

SECTION 2 – ENDUROS

Enduros Introduction	38
9 ▲»▲ Calver Circuit – 20km	43
10 ▲»▲ Eastern Moors Tour – 20km	47
11 ▲»▲ Cheedale & the Wye Valley – 21.5km	53

12 ▲»▲ Great Longstone – 18km	59
13 ▲»▲ Cromford Circuit – 21km	63
14 ▲»▲ Buxton & the Goyt Valley – 25+15km	69
15 ▲ Holymoorside – 21km	75
16 ▲ Bakewell Slice – 25km	81
17 ▲»▲ Manifold Valley – 24.5km	87
18 ▲ Gradbach – 26km	91
19 ▲»▲ South Buxton Circuit – 15/26km	97

SECTION 3 – EPICS

Epics Introduction	102
20 ▲ Macclesfield Forest Classic – 23km	107
21 ▲ Five Dales Circuit – 36km	113
22 ▲ Linacre Classic – 35km	119
23 ▲»▲ Hope Valley Circuit – 45km	125
24 ▲ Rowsley Circuit – 38.5km	131

SECTION 4 – BONUS SECTION

Bonus Section Introduction	136
Hollinsclough Descents	140
The Pennine Bridleway	143
Family Rides	144
Top Ten Downhills	148
Top Ten Climbs	150
Top Ten Singletracks	152

APPENDIX	154
----------------	-----

ROUTE GRADES

▲ = EASY ▲ = MEDIUM ▲ = HARD (see page xi)



LIMESTONE, CHARACTERISTIC OF THE WHITE PEAK

Introduction

It would be a real shame if the White Peak, an area so full of potential, of deep valleys, high limestone hills and thick, leafy woodland, were not also full of legal trails. Happily enough, it's laced with them. Not only that, but they're some of the best trails in the country, the sort that leave you wondering 'who built this, and if it were not specifically for mountain biking, then why?'

Whether you like to ride smoothly and delicately, flitting through the trees and over roots, or in a less subtle manner, being knocked sideways by a big block of limestone whilst pinballing downhill at mach 39, there is a contender for your personal favourite piece of trail in the White Peak (I know everyone says this, but it's true, honestly!).

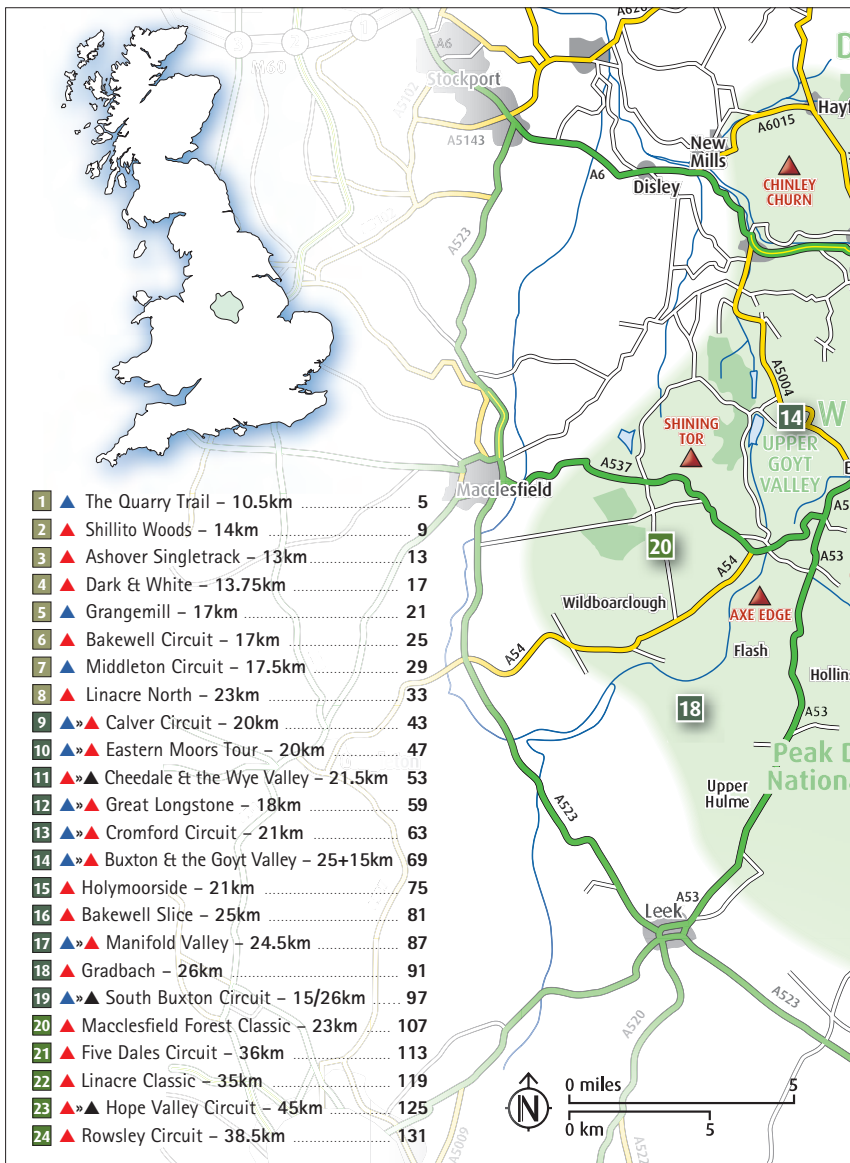
Although less well known than the more barren Dark Peak, the White Peak boasts some tremendous riding and, for some, its relatively unspoilt aspect is of great appeal. This guide complements its companion, *Peak District Mountain Biking – Dark Peak Trails*, describing all of the excellent biking in the southern half of the Peak District National Park, and also providing a little reminder of what's further north, in gritstone land.

The routes cover not only the limestone plateaux and dales, but all the idiosyncrasies of the area as well: the upper reaches of the River Dove and its rocky byways, the intricate singletrack traversing the open moorland of the Eastern Edges, and the magnificent vista of the River Wye, as it carves its way through the beds of limestone. It ventures upon the industrial relics of the Peak – the abandoned railway lines, viaducts, disused (and active) quarries, mines and waterways.

This new edition features four new routes, numerous tweaked routes and untouched classic routes. And of course the now standard OS maps. Indeed, researching, re-riding and re-writing this second edition has been very rewarding; a fine reminder of the wonderful landscape, wildlife and mountain bike action in the White Peak. Enjoy.

Jon Barton







SECTION

1

Classics

A quick blast after work, a night loop you can finish before your lights run out, or a ride to squeeze in when you're short of time and energy. That's a classic. Relatively low on distance and never taking you too far from home, these are still good, solid rides – kind of like Fawltly Towers – highly entertaining, but not running for too long.



JOHN HORSCROFT AND TOM FENTON ON CARTLEDGE LANE







DESCENT TO MIDDLETON DALE

01 The Quarry Trail

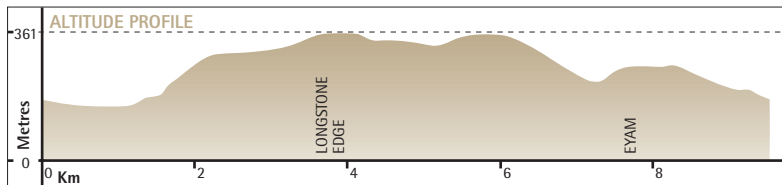
10.5km

Introduction

The Peak District National Park is a very busy place; there is a balancing act between tourists, recreational users, agriculture and industry. This short ride gives a flavour of everything that the White Peak stands for. Essentially a circuit of several huge quarries, it also takes in the plague village of Eyam, with its doilled tea rooms, the rough and tumble of proper mountain biking on the high farming pastures of Middleton Moor, and of course mineral and limestone workings galore. This route is ideal as an introduction to mountain biking and a great night ride.

The Ride

Starting from the large lay-by-cum-car park at the western end of Stoney Middleton, just opposite the Lovers Leap Garage, the ride heads down the dale, before traversing the Longstone Edge ridge, following a vein of fluorspar. The route then briefly leaves the quarry-scape behind, crossing the delightful Coombs Dale. It climbs back up then descends fast back to Stoney Dale before a final loop around Eyam drops you rapidly back to Stoney Middleton.



THE QUARRY TRAIL

GRADE: ▲

TOTAL DISTANCE: 10.5KM » TOTAL ASCENT: 355M » TIME: 1-2 HRS » START/FINISH: STONEY MIDDLETON
START GRID REF: SK 227757 » SATNAV: S32 4TF » PARKING: LAY-BY ON A623, 50M EAST OF LOVERS LEAP GARAGE
OS MAP: EXPLORER OL24 THE PEAK DISTRICT - WHITE PEAK AREA » PUB: THE MOON, STONEY MIDDLETON TEL: 01433 630 203
CAFÉ: PEAK PANTRY, EYAM TEL: 01433 631 293.

Directions – The Quarry Trail



- 1 Turn **R** out of the lay-by and ride downhill on the A623 through the village of Stoney Middleton. Turn **R** at the traffic lights at Calver crossroads. After about 500m, just after a lane joins on the left, turn **R** through a gate onto a track.
- 2 The track zigzags up, and up and up, eventually levelling out. Keep **L** at a vague fork, on the main track. Continue on to a track junction and turn **R**, keeping to the good track (ignore the tracks leading left and watch out for the big hole on your left). Keep **SA** on the main track for about 1.5km, until a bridleway joins from the right – take this. (If you start climbing past a big open quarry on your right, you've gone too far.)
- 3 Fun descent on stone and grass singletrack to Black Harry Gate. Bear **R** at the bottom to join the wide track and go **SA** up the steep, narrow climb opposite. Continue **SA** over the brow, **SA** across the lane and onto a descent past yet more quarries. Towards the bottom, heed the *Footpath/Bridleway* signs though the quarry and emerge, brakes permitting, slowly on to the busy A623.
- 4 Go **SA** across the main road and up the minor road to Eyam. In the village, take the first **R**, Lydgate, and follow this to where the tarmac path forks either side of a row of houses. Fork **L** onto a fast, sweeping descent, through a few gates. Meets tarmac at a gate near houses and drops into the maze of back streets of Stoney. Follow your nose back to the main road and turn **R** back up to the lay-by.



Making a day of it

Roll down the road to Calver (GR SK 239748) and pick up the Calver Circuit (see page 43). Follow it in reverse until you meet the Great Longstone ride (see page 59) near Rowland (GR SK 213721). Reverse this and return to The Quarry Trail at Black Harry Gate (GR SK 206743).



01 THE QUARRY TRAIL

© CROWN COPYRIGHT AND/OR DATABASE RIGHT. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. LICENCE NUMBER 100025218.