

Lake District Mountain Biking

ESSENTIAL TRAILS



Richard Staton & Chris Gore



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Front cover: **Ewen Turner (front) and Pete Archer on the descent from Nan Bield Pass heading towards Kentmere (route 22) © James Vincent.**

Back cover: **Ullswater singletrack (route 7).**

Photography by John Coefield, unless otherwise credited.



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PLEASE GIVE WAY TO HORSES AND PEDESTRIANS.



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ROUTE GRADES

▲ Easy ▲ Medium ▲ Hard (see page xi)

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GATESCARTH PASS



Classics

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Bonus section

B1	Grizedale Forest	162
B2	Whinlatter Forest	163



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AREA MAP & ROUTE FINDER

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TOM FENTON DROPPING BACK INTO KENTMERE FROM THE GARBURN PASS



Introduction

Welcome to the third edition of this guidebook to mountain biking in the English Lake District. It's been a few years since we completed the first and second editions and, going off sales, thousands of mountain bikers are getting out there and enjoying the ride!

There's no doubt that mountain biking has changed. There is now a proliferation of 'trail centres' where you can park up, go for a ride on a fully waymarked trail which returns you back to your car and usually a cafe where you can sit and enjoy a pleasant latte. Nothing wrong with that, but hopefully this book will inspire riders to look beyond the obvious and go and do something different ...

The routes are graded, but not just for technical difficulty and length. We have also considered how much navigation is required and how serious the mountain environment is through which the route passes. For example, we have given High Street a double black grade, not because the route is highly technical but because of the potential difficulties which could arise from poor navigation or rapidly changing weather conditions. For navigation, GPS devices have developed considerably and continue to do so; however, be aware of their limitations and get to know your unit! We recommend you still carry a good old-fashioned map and compass, especially useful if GPS batteries go flat!

On a less serious note we have maintained a good mix of rides, taking in the honeypots of Ambleside, to the magnificent forests of Whinlatter and Grizedale. But we were always keen to encourage exploration away from these areas, for example Miterdale and Whitbarrow Scar. Hopefully there is something for all tastes and abilities from short and technical to big mountain, singletrack to forest road – it's all in here!

We have revisited all the rides here and found them to be still as great now as when we first rode them. In terms of new additions we have added new routes at Nan Bield Pass and Grizedale. We've also recognised that riders are choosing ebikes and gravel bikes more and more so you'll find some guidance to suitable routes.

Richard Staton & Chris Gore



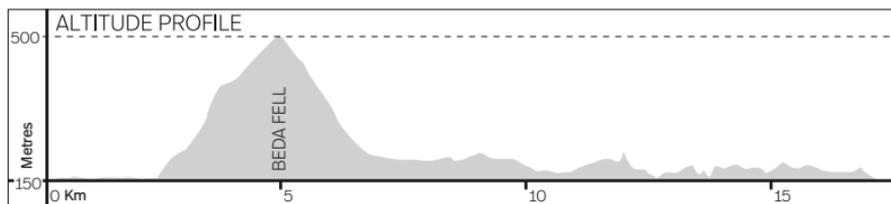
NEAR SILVER POINT

Introduction

For the technically able, this is an awesome little ride. Using mainly stone-based tracks, it's also a fairly all-weather loop, although it can get a little boggy higher up. You might want to choose a different route on a sunny Sunday, as the superb track alongside Ullswater (the highlight of the ride) can get crowded with walkers. Never climbing to the high fell-tops that characterise many routes in the North Lakes, the route avoids forcing you off the bike for a long portage. Don't underestimate it or make the mistake of deciding it's an easy ride though: there's still a (very) steep climb to be conquered; and the wide stone singletrack along Ullswater that seems tantalisingly doable – and yet often proves to be a little too technical to be cleaned.

The Ride

A quick spin along the road takes you on to a bridleway through fields at Bridgend. Cross the river on to a wide stone track and head steeply uphill, climbing 200 metres in just over a kilometre. Take a breather(!) at the top and admire the views out across the valley towards Helvellyn. Cross the plateau on vague trails and pick up the fast and swoopy singletrack descent into Martindale and on to tarmac. Roll down the road to a short grassy bridleway and then on to Sandwick. A grassy bridleway just before the car park starts innocently enough, soon becoming rocky and heading downhill before turning into a mega-technical undulating trail running along the shore of Ullswater. If you can clean this, you're doing well!



ULLSWATER SINGLETRACK

GRADE: ▲

TOTAL DISTANCE: 18KM/11 MILES » TOTAL ASCENT: 720M/2,362FT » START/FINISH: CAR PARK IN PATTERNDALE
 START GR: NY 397159 » PARKING: PAY AND DISPLAY IN PATTERNDALE » TIME: 2-3 HOURS » SATNAV: CA11 ONW
 OS MAP: LANDRANGER 90 » PUB: WHITE LION INN, PATTERNDALE, TEL: 01768 482 214 » CAFE: NONE.

Directions – Ullswater Singletrack



- 1** Leave Patterdale on the A592, heading south, away from Ullswater towards the Kirkstone Pass. After 1.8km, turn **L** on to a signed bridleway, just before the last house in Bridgend. If you reach a red phone box on the right, you've gone too far.
- 2** Follow the bridleway through gates and fields, crossing the river and meeting a wide track. Turn **R** and then sharply back **L** after a short distance to climb steeply up a wide track towards Boredale Hause.
- 3** After a very steep section the gradient eases as the track swings to the right and reaches a plateau. Head for the ridge on the east side of the plateau. **Ignoring** obvious tracks to the left and right, the bridleway heads **L** at a 45° angle on a vague grassy trail, before cutting back **R** and up to the ridge. As you reach the far side of the plateau, the track swings left (north-east) as it climbs up on to the ridge and turns to perfect singletrack.
- 4** Summiting the ridge, go **SA** over a crossroads of narrow tracks (bearing slightly to the **R** and then back **L** as you start to descend). Awesome singletrack descent into Martindale. Stick to the 'main' track all the way (anything else is a sheep track). Pick up the road at the buildings at Dale Head and follow it down the valley.
- 5** Turn **L** on to a grassy bridleway just before a farm and a bridge. Follow it to the road and turn **L** (**SA** in effect). Descend round a hairpin, following signs for *Sandwick*. Turn **L** immediately before the car park on to a bridleway signed *Bridleway to Patterdale*.
- 6** The track turns to technical singletrack which undulates along the side of Ullswater. Stick to the main obvious track and **ignore** all turnings. The track eventually widens after a final climb and becomes a well-made track.
- 7** Go **SA** through the gate at Side Farm and **SA** through the next gate on to tarmac. Follow the road round to the right and out to Patterdale.

Making a day of it

This route is right beside the **High Street North** ride (see page 121), and adds a little technical spice to that route.



07 Ullswater Singletrack

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