

Blackdown Beauty – 2021 - Short Route

Leg 1 - Hemyock School to Half Moon – 3 miles

1. Leave the school grounds and head through the housing estate to the road you came in on (Culmstock Road). Turn right and run down the road to a footpath on your left. Take this footpath and turn left when you get to the road (Station Road). Follow the road going over the long wooden footbridge and carry on until you turn right down Lower Millhayes.
2. Follow this road for about ½ mile until you come to a footpath on your left. Go over the stile across 3 fields on to the road. The last stile is hard to see but is across the field.
3. Turn left taking the 3rd right turn part way up a steep hill which takes you along a farm road. Keep following the farm track looking out for a footpath on your right just in front of a hedge. Take the footpath down to a footbridge over the river where it's a bit overgrown. Follow the footpath going over stiles as necessary. Then skirt round left hand side of wood barn.
4. You will come to fairly open heathland. The official footpath takes you to the left but you need to go directly up to a bench at the top. There is then a good track to your left (don't come out of the Heathland). Take the better lower track rather than the one next to the hedge. Follow this track to the end and you will see a footpath sign taking you directly to another footpath sign which takes you directly up a really steep field.
5. You then enter a farmyard with buildings on your right. You will go through a couple of gates and pass a couple of small old lorries and an old caravan before coming to a stile taking you on the road.
6. Turn left and almost immediately right. Go down this track past the house on the right and then it turns into a loose chipping track with a large house in front of you. Before you get to the house, turn right across a grassy area to the bridleway sign which takes you past the Old Rectory.
7. Turn right to the road and turn left. You will see the Half Moon in front of you.

Leg 2 - Half-Moon to Pear Tree Cottage ~ 2.8 miles

1. From pub go 100m to Smiths Farm. Take FP to rear of farm buildings and follow left down to gate.
2. Turn right down edge of field to stream and second gate. Then up boggy track through field to right-hand corner and wood. Up through wood to gate.
3. Turn right on road 50m and take FP left up drive to gate into field. Chain unhooks.
4. Follow edge of horse exercise area round to hedge then right along hedge to two gates into v. large grass field. Cross bearing slightly right towards right side of field and eventually a gate. On through next field and gate to left of buildings and then down to road.
5. Through gate opp. farm and down field to next gate. Then follow boggy path down to small lake and on out of the trees.
6. Bear left up the hill to rt of half-dead tree . Go round trees then left up to gap. **DO NOT head for the small building.** Go through gap and over boggy ground up to a field with fence and hedge on your right. Follow hedge line straight ahead to wooden gate. Carry on ahead alongside hedge through fields to road.
7. Turn right on road and follow for half mile down hill and over stream.
8. Just round the bend from stream turn left up bank to stile and FP.

9. Follow hedge to left and on up to top of field and road. Follow road left past house and up the hill to Court Farm.
10. Opposite the farm go over the stile by the left gate and follow the grassy track to hedge then follow hedge line left up to road.
11. Over road onto FP. Follow hedge to stile. Go straight over field towards 2 gates. Go through right-hand gate and follow track down to Stapley Farm (Dave's Dairy) and road at Stapley. Turn left and follow to Pear Tree Cottage (CREAM TEA!)

Leg 3 - Stapley to Hemyock – 5 ½ miles

1. Turn left on leaving Pear Tree Cottage and run down the road past the dairy taking the footpath on your left (very hidden sign) and it starts as a drive. Follow this track down and go straight over the stream bearing right (ignore left footpath). Keep following this footpath which takes you straight across a track on to a hedge bank and then becomes quite narrow and steep going up some steps to a stile.
2. Once over the stile, bear left taking you through a farm. Keep on the substantial track until you come to a sharp corner with a footpath marked in front of you. Cross this field and then another taking you to the road.
3. Turn left and first right. Run for about ¼ mile and then take a footpath just after a farm building to your right. Keep following this footpath – lots of nettles in places - all the way along for quite some way passing some farm buildings on your right (the other side of the hedge) until you get to a field with farm buildings directly in front of you. Head for the top of the farm building and you will see a gate. This footpath is not well marked.
4. Go through the gate and turn left and then bear left and then right through the farmyard and continue to follow the path which is also not well marked but it is the most obvious route. Keep high with the hedge on your right – don't go down through the actual field.
5. Once you reach the road, turn right up the hill. Continue along this road for about ½ mile ignoring a footpath sign to your left and also ignore the road to your right. You will come to a road junction marking Hemyock 2 1/4 miles to your right. Ignore that but instead bear left marked to Bolham Water. Go along a lane for about 50m then take the upper track signposted Linhay.
6. Keep going straight along this track until you come to a point where footpaths are marked to your left, your right, where you have come from and straight in front. Keep going straight bearing right rather than going downhill to the farm. Cross a narrow lane taking you to a farm when a footpath is marked in front of you just before a house and one is marked through a gate down hill to your left.
7. Bear right down this hill through a field – you will see 2 gates in front of you – aim for the lower one. Once through this gate stay in the next field towards a farm at the bottom.
8. Pick up the concrete farm track through the farm and follow this track to the road past some chicken sheds on your left.
9. Turn right on the road going uphill and run until you pass a cottage on your left. Immediately after keep an eye out for a hidden stile on your left and follow the direction of the path parallel to the river.
10. Head for a building with a lot of wood outside and go through this wood right by the building looking out for a footpath sign. Follow the footpath to the road and turn left.
11. Keep on this road going straight when given a choice (Hemyock is marked ½ mile). Keep going along this road until the Catherine Wheel pub is in front of you and bear right. Keep going until the road to the school is on your left. Take this and you have made it!