

# BLACKDOWN BEAUTY 2019 LEGS 1–6 inc 4b

## LEG 1 - Priors Park to Queen's Arms ~ 3.0 mi

1. From Priors Park Farm follow marked route across fields down to gate. Through gate then turn left onto track. This track is steep & very muddy for ¼ of a mile; treat with caution.
2. Carry on along track down the wood for ¼ mile. The track opens out with a pronounced track coming from your right – ignore. Go past the pile of logs and keep going for about 300 metres – keep an eye out for a narrow path off to the right (before a field – if you get to the field, you have gone too far)!
3. **Turn right** on the path and on up the grassy path and after about 200 metres go left just before a stile (ignore path directly beside the stile).
4. Follow FP through the wood for half mile (**ignoring right fork**) to track junction
5. **Turn sharp left** (down hill) and follow down to stile. Exit wood into field.
6. Follow left side of field to road & stile, then turn right to Woodram Farm
7. Follow FP round left of farm (muddy & slurry) and then follow FP straight on to Pitminster Church (spire is in front of you).
8. Take 2nd entrance into churchyard and go through and on to the Queen's Arms.

## LEG 2 - QUEEN'S ARMS to MERRY HARRIERS ~ 3.3 mi

1. From pub take road (left) to Blagdon Hill for 100m to FP on left by large tree – run on left track (not in field with cattle).
2. Follow FP through 2 fields with hedge on your left (may be cattle in any of these fields).
3. In the next field aim to go through the middle of the 2 pylons (bearing right) opposite to entrance of field.
4. Go straight across the next field then follow right hedge in next field to corner.
5. Follow rough track, then turn right to road to Blagdon Hill village.
6. **Diagonally right** across busy road to FP to playing field. Follow FP down side of playing field, though kissing gate and on path and then on to large field. FP goes straight up field to road.
7. Left on road and follow to a T-junction.
8. Turn right towards Lowton. **After 0.4 mi take left turn (straight ahead at bend)** towards Higher Wood Brook Farm.
9. Follow up road and round to the right then to sharp right turn. Don't go right but go ahead through gate. Go to the left of the field and half way up there is a clear path to the right. There is a lone group of three trees in the hedge at the end of this path and amongst them there is a hidden overgrown stile. Go over stile and turn left on road.

10. Follow road up the hill to **angled road on right. Follow this** past Leigh Hill Cottage to junction.
11. Across junction & through **left-hand gate into Quants Wood (sign).** Follow FP up through wood (ignoring Rt turn) to road.
12. Rt onto road up 400m to the old site of the Merry Harriers pub (burnt down). See photos.



## LEG 3 – Merry Harriers to Half Moon ~ 2.9 mi

1. Take minor road at side of site for 300m. Turn left onto FP then immediate right through woods. Follow path past campsite down to lane once through campsite.

2. **Turn left then turn immediately right onto hidden path** (FP post obscured by undergrowth). Go down through wood and over nice new wooden footbridges (no more bogs!) bearing right to stile.
- 3a. Follow FP down to gate (has to be climbed) then up to large tree (go the right of the tree) & down to 2nd gate. Open & close with care. Go straight along top of field by hedge to footbridge. Across footbridge then follow FP (left) through reeds up to gate. 3b. Keep left of fence to new wooden gate . **Avoid public footpath thru five bar gate ahead as this goes through dog and horse area.** Go over bank and then through another new gate. Go straight ahead and follow fence round horse exercise yard –Go through gate in fence opposite then ahead across field to gate and narrow track. Turn right onto Laurel bush covered path and follow path up to lane.
4. Turn left up lane and then right at footpath and up to road and turn right. (LEG B to Stapley goes left along the road at this point)
5. Follow road ahead for 500m towards Wiltown, then left at farm yard on FP and straight across small yard through gates.
6. Follow FP straight across fields to road (Red Lane) at Ashfields.
7. Straight across road and follow FP on left of house to field. Over fields to house. Go diagonally across horse field opening and closing electric fence when necessary.
8. Go over stile and straight across to next stile. Go past house on gravel track and bear left following footpath (goes around back of holiday homes – not front). Straight ahead to stile.
9. Go through stile following hedge on the right for 30m through field. Go straight at corner (not the obvious track) and go through gate (hidden under trees).
10. Keep right along the hedge to stile on right just before the end of the field (quite hidden). Carry on FP to church and Half Moon pub.

#### **Leg 4a (part 1) - Half Moon to Brimley Cross ~ 1.7 mi**

1. From pub follow road left 100m to Smiths Farm. Take FP to rear of farm buildings and follow left then 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 200m to Cordwents Farm. (ignore footpath that goes left before you reach the farm - Leg 4b)
4. Through farm and onto FP across common through gate. Straight along top of common to gate at far end. Continue on FP to gate.
5. Down track 100m then right at FP sign. Keep RT round fence and follow track to gate, and go down FP through rough boggy ground then angle right through more bog to gate in the hedge.
6. Turn RT, go through 2nd gate then left to 3<sup>rd</sup> gate & follow hedge line down field to road at Bellet's Farm. Straight across road to FP down side of house. FP goes through gates into field (please open then close gates – ignore path in front and to the right) and take the left gate and then sharp rt. down hedge line. New walkway over bog then follow FP to road.
7. Left at road 400m uphill then right at junction, sign posted to Churchinford.

#### **Leg 4a (part 2) -Brimley Cross to Pear Tree Cottage~ 2.4 mi**

1. Follow road uphill for 300m to FP down track on right. FP post missing.
2. Follow lane down to gate but not through gate. Turn left along narrow, shady, very boggy path to FP sign on right.
3. Over stile and down fields (broken stile) to stepping stones (chance to wash your shoes) and follow FP up to Biscombe Farm and the road.
4. Straight across road through smart white gates & new FP sign and up drive for 100m to bend. Go straight ahead on uphill track.
5. Up track 40m to small footpath post and turn left (**ignore yellow arrow on post pointing ahead**) along narrow track with low branches to driveway below Biscombe Hill House with round tower.

6. Cross the driveway to track on the other side, then on through woods and across top of fields to road.
7. Cross road and go over stile.
8. Go across the field past chicken shed and through metal gate and then bear left of farm buildings through 2 metal gates then another gate through woodland.
8. Go through nettle field for about 50m then bearing left to stile and down steps.
9. Follow path (takes you on top of hedge line) to track –cross track and go down.
10. Go over stream (note unsafe bridge).
11. Follow path up bearing left to driveway and then go up drive to road.
12. Turn right for about 200m to Stapley and the cream tea at Pear Tree Cottage!

#### **Leg 4b - Half-Moon to Pear Tree Cottage ~ 2.8 mi**

1. From pub go 100m left 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 (Leg 4a continues up the road) 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 at far edge and gate. On through next field and gate to left of barn and then down to road.) Joins Leg B at this point.
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. Cross new wooden bridge, follow track up hill, 100 mtrs. to new sign post on right, **DO NOT continue to the small building**. Turn immediately left as signed path. Go through tree gap to second new sign post keeping it to your right 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 and bridge.
8. Just round the bend from stream and bridge, 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 Grabham Fm (gate was blocked off when route reced due to cattle but can get through) and road at Stapley. Turn left and follow to Pear Tree Cottage (CREAM TEA!)

#### **Leg 5 - Pear Tree Cottage to The York Inn ~ 2.1 mi**

1. Turn left and retrace steps and left down FP. Go right by side of cottage to footpath junction just below the cottage.
2. Go straight ahead over stile.
3. Follow narrow overgrown track to small footbridge meandering through woods.
4. Continue to follow track and take a right fork when there is a choice up hill out of the trees into bracken. Eventually come to a stile (white drawing pin).
5. Over stile and continue ahead over wide track into rough ground opposite and another stile.
6. Follow footpath ahead to field. Continue up right-hand side of field to road.
4. Right on road 50m then left on track 600m to track T-junction.
5. Turn right then follow FP through gate.

6. Keep right across next field to stile, then diagonally left across next field to stile in middle of hedge. May be large pigs in this field go steady & they will ignore you.
7. Turn right and follow hedge line through 2 fields to double metal gate on right. Go straight across track and through gate into field.
8. Go diagonally left across field to steps over wall onto road. There may be frisky young horses – take care and please walk around the field. **CARE fast traffic**
9. Follow road opposite, half mile into Churchinford.

#### **LEG 6 - THE YORK to PRIORS PARK FARM ~ 3.5 mi**

1. Take Bishopswood Road (Royston Rd) for 300m then turn left up farm track under trees. Hopefully tape will mark this path. FP post is now missing.
2. Go straight through 2 gates and onto track taking you into field and follow left edge of field into next field. Follow the hedge line to end of field and go over stile in hedge on left (concealed).
3. Into next field and follow hedge on right to gap in hedge in front and into next very big field.
4. Path goes diagonally right through the crop to far corner but go around hedge to the right unless a path has been cleared.
5. Then follow footpath and wide track down through wood, cross first track (directly opposite – very narrow path) and turn right at next track by building until you reach a bridge and the upper lake (ignore footpath signs to the left and right).
6. Route continues on up the track rising above lake towards lodge and road. Just before road, turn right into carpark and then out onto road.
7. Left on road down to Otterford church.
8. Take FP on right of church, through churchyard to middle top and to field then 600m to road.
9. Right (straight ahead) onto road and a mile to junction. Cross junction to Holman Clavel.
10. Just past the pub cross road (CARE) and into track(on right). Go over gate by Forestry sign then on a short way, turn left over bank (signed) onto temporary route into field. Follow hedge line down to Priors Park Farm. YOU MADE IT!