

Blackdown Beauty 2021 – Long Route

Leg 1 – Hemyock Primary School to The Beacon – 5 miles

1. On leaving the primary school, head down the hill towards the Catherine Wheel pub but take the footpath on your right which takes you beside the stream and the castle. At the end of this path, turn right and run along the road for about 400 metres.
2. Take the footpath on your right and go up the field. Follow the footpath signs until you come to a narrow lane. Turn right on the lane which turns into a track straight ahead of you (right fork) and follow the track. The track will divide quite soon and you need to take the left turn going up hill – do not take the footpath straight ahead of you. Follow this track and the footpath signs until you come to another road. **DO NOT CROSS – THIS SEEMS THE OBVIOUS ROUTE BUT IT IS NOT A PUBLIC FOOTPATH.**
3. Instead, turn right and after about 200 metres you need to take a footpath on your left. Follow this footpath which takes you through a field, a wooded area and on to farm tracks. You need to go over several stiles. Once you have gone over the final stile, there will be a good track in front of you to the right of open pasture and you will see a wooded area in front of you. After about 50 yards **YOU NEED TO GO DOWN TO THE RIGHT – KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED THIS IS EASY TO MISS!** Once on the correct path, you are taken through the woods and after a while the footpath is well defined.
4. You will go downhill to a building in front of you with footpaths marked. Follow the footpath to the left on a narrow grassy track. This will take you to a stile to your right which will take you on a marked off path beside a field. You will reach a road.
5. Turn right and after about 100 metres you will see a bridleway downhill to your left. Take this and then take the first footpath marked to your right taking you across a field. Keep left in this field. You reach a concrete drive. Go left to the end of this then cross the road and go on the footpath directly in front of you.
6. Go through the grounds of the house and bear left, running beside the house. The path is well marked.
7. You will reach a field with the footpath marked which takes you into another field when you will see a footbridge across a river diagonally to the right of you. Head for this, cross the bridge and then head diagonally left to the top corner of this field. Follow the footpath to the road and turn right.
8. Very soon you will see a footpath taking you up the hill towards The Beacon on your left. Follow the path and you will reach a field with buildings directly in front of you. Head between the buildings to the white metal gate and then on the farm track turn right. When the lane comes to an end go up hill bearing left following the footpath signs. You will go through a metal gate into a field – go directly left to the next gate. The path is diagonally straight across this field but depending on crops, you may need to skirt around the right following the hedge.
9. There will be 2 footpath gates. Go through this and you will see the footpath has been re-routed. You may feel you need to follow the arrow but **DON'T!** You need to follow the hedge line in the field to your left up the hill. After about 400 metres you will reach an obvious path to your left with a gate at the end. You will come to a hilly field. Follow the left hedgerow at the bottom and you will head up towards the Beacon itself.

10. Follow the most obvious track **UP** (zigzagging), then bear left up the moorland. This will take you to the trig point. Once you have taken a photo or two, keep the trig point and stone building on your left and head along the obvious track. Keep on this track until you have a choice (pond on your right) and then take a right and then bear right close to a hedgerow (on your right). The track leads to a proper path downhill and then onto a quiet road (used by cars to park when walking the Beacon).

Leg 2 – The Beacon to Half Moon, Clayhidon – 5 miles

1. You then come to a main road straight ahead of you **TAKE CARE**. Keep an eye out for footpaths on your left and take the second after about 300 metres (ignore the first bridleway). It is **just before the bend in the road and quite hidden**. If you get to the bend, you have gone too far.
2. Enter the field, over the stile and you will see the Monument to your right. Head up the field following the hedgerow, bearing right and heading to the Monument. Go over a stile and along a track to the monument. Another photo opportunity! Follow the track to the road.
3. Turn left **TAKE CARE** – a main road. After about 100 metres, turn right down the road.
4. After ½ mile, in Symondsburry, take a footpath down a very steep drive to your left beside a house called The Old Chapel. Follow the well marked footpath (it is probably boggy)! You will come to a private road (it is a footpath). You will see a very attractive house with a footpath sign just before it – ignore this footpath. Carry on the drive/road – it gets quite steep until you get to a proper road.
5. Turn left and then take the next footpath marked on your right (about 200 metres). Follow this footpath which will shortly take you up the drive of holiday letting cottages. Bear right. If you have done the Beauty route before you will have approached these buildings from a different angle. Head to the left of the garages (footpath is well marked) and go through a gate taking you along the hedgeline of a couple of fields that usually have horses in. Continue to follow the footpath and you will reach Culmhead Church and the Half Moon Pub!

Leg 3- 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 4 - 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!