

Christmas Cracker ride, Yat Rock, Gloucestershire, Sunday 29th December 2024

Ride information

Welcome to Offa's Dyke 2024 Christmas Cracker social ride. We hope you have a lovely ride. Please check your email, Clubhouse and/or our Facebook page the evening before the ride as weather is unpredictable at this time of year.

The venue

Yat Rock Car park map ref SO564160

What3Words *divorcing.noun.trap*

The postcode for Yat Rock visitor attraction is GL16 7NY: the car park is a little walk away.

Please make sure you arrive from the Coleford (south) side and **do not try to access it from the Huntsham (north) side** as the road here is very narrow, single track, and you may well get stuck!

Riders can start any time between 09:30 and 11:00 hrs.

Do not arrive before 08:30 am as we will not be ready.

Directions:

From the West:

From the A449 Monmouth traffic lights take the A4136 towards Coleford. After about 5 miles (8km) go left at a crossroads towards Christchurch and Symonds Yat East.

After just over 1/2 a mile (1 km) turn oblique left onto Ross Road towards Yat Rock and Symonds Yat East. After another 1.9 miles (3km) the venue is on your left. If you go under a footbridge you have just missed it (**and will struggle to turn round as it gets exceedingly narrow beyond this point**).

From the East:

Take the A4136 towards Staunton. Just past a garage on your right is a cross roads. Turn right towards Christchurch and Symonds Yat East ... and follow the directions as above.

Covid-19

Please do not attend if you, or anyone in your household has tested positive for Covid-19 in the last 10 days or if they or you have any symptoms of Covid-19. The full Endurance GB guidance on COVID-19 can be found at

<https://www.endurancegb.co.uk/Cms/Spaces/RULES/Covid19+Guidance>

Parking and the venue

We will be parking away from the general public, in the lower part of the car park for health and safety reasons. Symonds Yat Rock is a popular visitor attraction and is expected to be busy. For this reason we are limiting the number of vehicles to 40, and no larger than 7.5 tonnes. Our vehicles will need to be parked in one area only, under supervision from parking assistants.

Please wait to be directed by the parking stewards. If you are hiring transport please ensure your driver complies with the parking steward's directions.

It is a great car park with permanent loos, and a one-way system. The phone signal at the venue and in the Forest is generally poor. You will need to pay for car parking. (£3 up to 2 hours, £5 up to 4 hours, £7 all day) The machine will only accept coins, but you can pay online in advance with RingGo. Ensure you download the app to your phone before you visit as the phone signal may not be enough to download it at the venue. According to their website 'You

can also use RingGo by pre-booking online or calling 0203 046 0063 with location code 31043 (cars) or 31044 (minibus or motorhome). There is a small convenience charge for using this service. See RingGo online for full terms and conditions and VAT receipts.'

Emergency number for the day is: Belinda Stewart 07980 188376

On arrival

Please collect your own number bib from the ride office, and leave the bib in the designated pocket after your ride. You must adhere to COVID guidelines in place on the day. As this is a social ride there will be no vet or farrier present and no trot up or heart rate check. There will be first aid and the venue has permanent toilets.

Forest rules

Remove all horse droppings from the car park and leave the area clean and tidy.

Forestry operations will be active and riders must stay away from timber stacks and respect safety signs.

Show courtesy and consideration to other users of the forest

Keep dogs on leads or under tight control at all times

No smoking or lighting of fires in the forest

Hazards

- Parts of the route are narrow and there are some steeper slopes. The long route has a muddy section with two fallen logs (the same ones as last year!), but these are small and you will be able to walk over them.
- Wild boar are active in the forest and it is possible that you might see them. You may also see deer.
- Mountain bikers use this area.

Horse and rider combinations should be sufficiently experienced to cope with these and other typical outdoor hazards.

The route

Please use the main Symonds Yat entrance drive as the route through the site, not the main path through the hill fort or the public footpath between the staff/ disabled car park into the main car park.

The route options are approximately 12km, 22km and 28 km. The ride is entirely off-road.

Note that the ONLY markings are wood shavings: there are NO SIGNS so please read the route description. We will be marking the route clearly, but please read the description so that you can be sure you do the distance you wish to do!

The route will be marked clearly with sawdust blobs at regular intervals ON THE LEFT (except that a right turn will be marked by 3 markers on the right). 3 blobs on the left means turn left. It is mostly all-weather forestry tracks. At the first river junction, we will mark the turn towards home (taken by the 12km riders first time and by others the second time) HOME. Any track that has a straight line of wood shavings across it should NOT be ridden. Forestry England says that there should be no trotting or cantering on soft rides. Walkers and cyclists use the forest too, and riders should walk past them. The track along the river is particularly popular with walkers.

All routes set off onto the 12km loop from the venue. Note that the first part of this track is now a two way section as we have removed the road section used in previous years.

12km route:

When you reach the river, the 12km riders turn RIGHT, up river, towards HOME. Follow the track along the river for a short distance and then take the next track right. This track takes you back onto the outward track and back to the venue. The last part of the route is therefore a 2 way section.

22 km route:

Follow the same route as the 12km loop, but when you reach the river you turn LEFT, down river. **DO NOT HEAD TOWARDS 'HOME' at this point as this will take you back to the venue via the 12km loop!** Follow the track along the river until you reach the markings indicating a left turn, heading up and away from the river. Keep following this track along the tall deer fence (which is on your left) all the way to the junction with the main forestry track. You will pass the turn off for the 28km route (on your right, marked with wood shavings and we are hoping to mark the split with signage): keep going straight up the track, over the main forestry gravel road and turn left. Follow this track until you reach a right turn, shortly before the end of the main forestry track. The right turn takes you up a small partially soft track. Keep going straight ahead until you get to a split in the track. Turn left and follow the forestry track along the deer fence, ignoring two turnings on your left. The last part of this track runs between two tall deer fences. When you reach a junction with the main track, turn left. Keep following the markers and eventually you will be going down a steep stoney track and find yourself back on the main gravel track that you initially followed down to the river. Ride back down to the river, and this time head right for HOME when you reach the river. Proceed as for 12km loop, back to the venue.

28km route:

Follow the same route as for the 22km loop, down river, and then left up from the river. When you get to the split where the 22km riders head straight up for home, take the right track, marked '28' with wood shavings and proceed along the muddy trail. This track is quite muddy in sections so take care going down the hill. **NOTE That we have been given special permission by Forestry to use this soft track and it is absolutely essential that we don't churn it up or cause any damage. The entire soft track is a COMPULSORY WALK SECTION all the way to where you rejoin the main forestry (gravel) track. Anyone caught doing anything other than a walk along this downhill partially muddy track will be eliminated and reported to EGB. Please help us remain in Forestry England's good books so we can keep using this track!**

Ignore all turns until you get to a 4 way cross road of gravel tracks where you will take the left and follow the winding wide track up through the woods. Again, ignore all turn offs until you reach a wider T-junction part of the track where you take the left down a gentle hill. Keep following this track until you rejoin the 22km track and head up the soft track as described for 22km route. Proceed as for 22km and then 12km above.

Loading your horse after the ride

The organisers are unable to take responsibility for this. It is essential that you are able to load your horse efficiently after the ride as it will be dark soon after 4pm and the forestry will expect us to lock the barriers by nightfall. If your horse can be difficult to load this may not be a suitable ride for you.

Disclaimer

This ride is run under Endurance GB Rules. Save for death or personal injury caused by the negligence of the Organisers or anyone for whom they are in law responsible, neither the Organisers of any event to which these rules apply, nor the Endurance GB, nor any agent, employee or representative of these bodies accepts any liability for any accident, loss, damage, injury or illness to horses, owners, riders, spectators, land or any other person or property

whatsoever whether caused by their negligence, breach of contract or any other way whatsoever. The Organiser has the right to cancel the ride, alter the advertised times; refuse any entry.