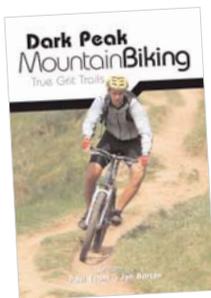


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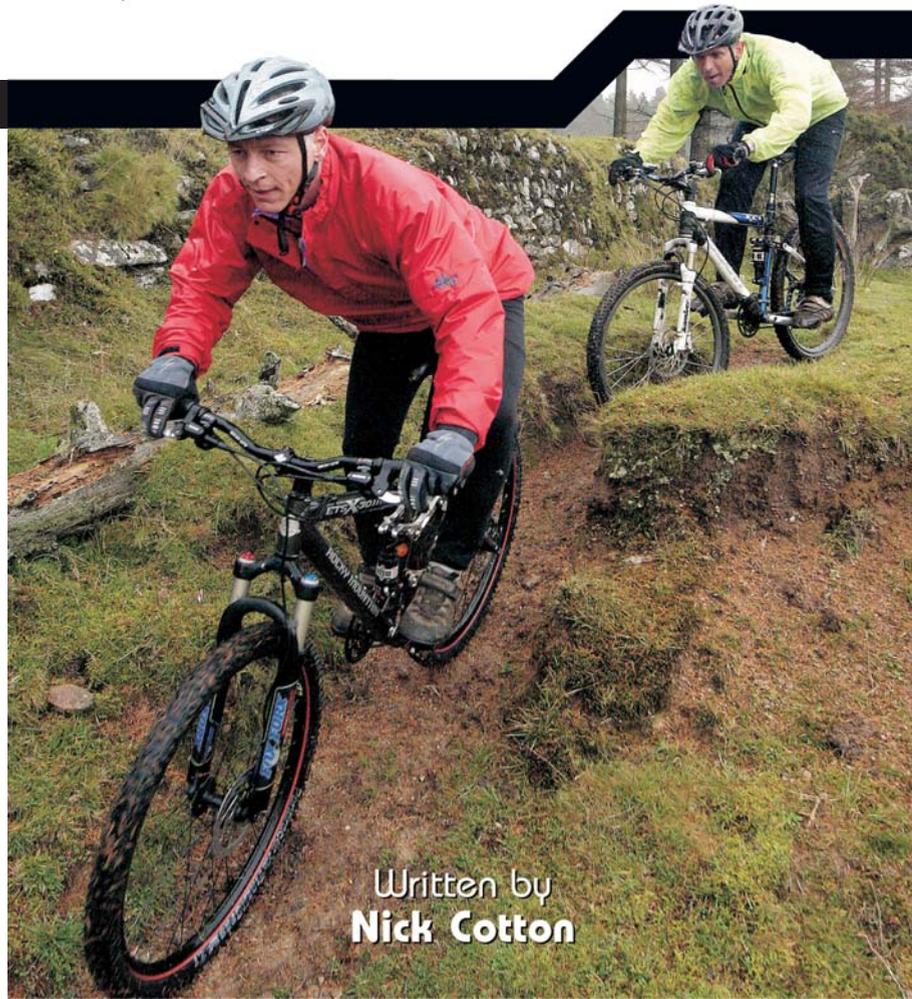
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Written by
Nick Cotton



Dulverton to Winsford – Exmoor

Introduction

With the exception of the towns on the north coast (Lynton, Lynmouth and Porlock) Dulverton is the largest settlement on Exmoor, with several pubs, shops and cafes and the Exmoor National Park HQ. The ride has a bit of everything - good stone tracks, easy climbs, impossible climbs, hair-raising descents, breezalong descents plus a bit of tricky route finding. And a good pub and tearoom in Winsford.

The Ride

The stone-based 180m climb from Dulverton north to Higher Broford is largely rideable with ever better views opening up into the Exe Valley to the east and towards the heart of the moor to the west. Finding the route past Highercombe Farm to the B3223 can be a bit tricky but if you keep heading west you'll get there. You may find similar problems locating the start of the bridleway that drops down to Winsford but it is worth finding! Testing singletrack through woodland leads on to a stone rollercoaster after Yellowcombe Cottage into the pretty village of Winsford. The climb up Edbrooke Hill is so steep that you might as well eat and drink well in Winsford - you won't be able to ride up it. More tricky route finding brings you to some atmospheric ruins down in the valley near the thud thud thud of a water pump. Climb back to join the outward route but take a different, long, wonderful enclosed stone descent back to Dulverton.

DULVERTON TO WINSFORD

GRADE: ▲

DISTANCE: 26KM

TOTAL ASCENT: 470M

START/FINISH: DULVERTON

GRID REFERENCE: 912279

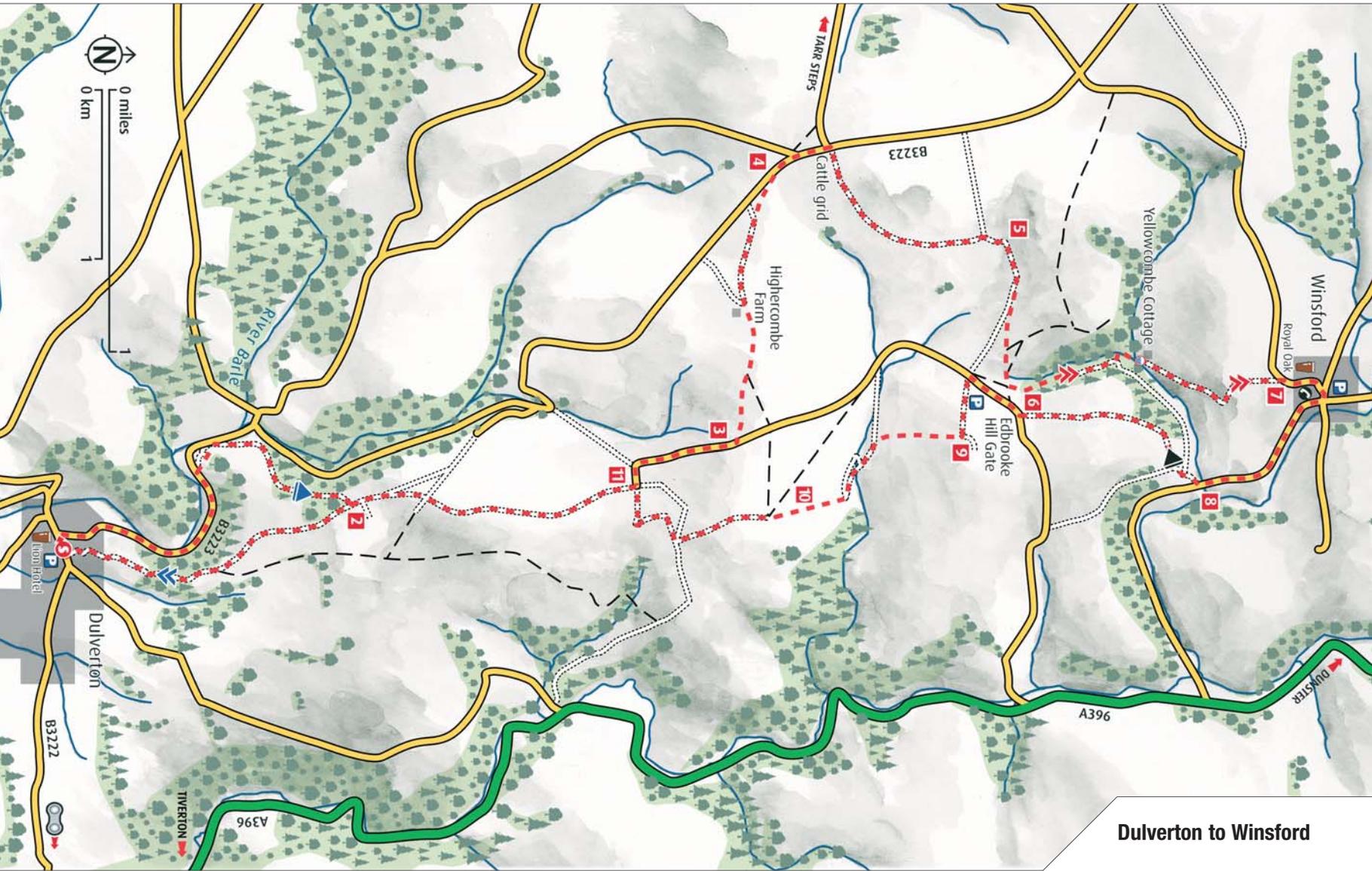
PARKING: MAIN PAY & DISPLAY CAR PARK IN DULVERTON AT GR 912279

CAFÉ: BRIDGE COTTAGE TEAROOMS, WINSFORD Tel: 01643 851 362

PUBLIC HOUSE: ROYAL OAK, WINSFORD Tel: 01643 851 455

Making a day of it

In Winsford you can link to the Winsford & Exford ride and the Winsford & Wheddon Cross ride; less than 3km on lanes heading east from Dulverton brings you to Bury and the Wimbleball Reservoir ride at GR 945275.



Dulverton to Winsford

Directions – Dulverton to Winsford

- 1** From the *Lion Hotel* in the centre of *Dulverton* take the *B3223* towards *Lynton* and *Exford*. **Easy to miss:** after 1.6km bear **R** onto a no through road by a house sign for *Sweetoaks* signposted *RUPP to Court Down*. Shortly fork **R** (ie do NOT go over the cattlegrid). Climb on a stone-based vehicle track with a canopy of trees overhead.
- 2** At a T-junction of tracks at the top of the climb turn **L** signposted *Winsford*. Go through a gate onto a broad stone track and shortly fork **R** onto the upper track by a severely pruned oak tree. Shortly after the summit, at a X-roads of tracks turn **L** onto tarmac signposted *Winsford*.
- 3** **Easy to miss:** after 800m keep an eye out for a blue paint waymark on a bridlegate off to the **L**, set back from the road, adjacent to a metal field gate (GR 908316). Go through the gate onto a climbing grassy track with ever better views. Go through a bridlegate after passing *Highercombe Farm* buildings to your left and follow signs for *Tarr Steps* diagonally **R** on a grassy track.
- 4** Follow the track to the road, turn **R**, cross the cattlegrid then opposite the second road on the left (to *Tarr Steps*) turn **R** downhill onto a grassy track, with a line of trees to your **R**. There is the occasional blue paint waymark on trees.
- 5** Follow to the wall corner and continue downhill towards woodland on a better red gravel track. Follow with a line of trees to the left. At a metal gate go into the field to the **L** via a bridlegate, leaving the main stone track. Follow the **left-hand** field edge around two sides of the field, **ignoring** two bridlegates in the corner of the field. Take the **next** gate on the **L**, opposite a *Week Lane / Tarr Steps* signpost.
- 6** Descend on a steep, at times narrow track signposted *Bridleway* through a pheasant-rearing area and down through woodland, deciduous then conifer. You are aiming towards *Yellowcombe Cottage*, tucked away in the woods. Ford the stream near the footbridge and turn **R** through a gate to join a wider track. Climb then descend on a bedrock rollercoaster track.
- 7** At the T-junction with the road turn **R** down into *Winsford*. At the T-junction just past the *Royal Oak PH* turn **R** then shortly **R** again in the centre of the village signposted *Dulverton, Minehead*.

- 8** On a left-hand bend at the start of a sharp climb turn **R** onto a track by a house signposted *RUPP to Edbrook, Hill Gate*. Very steep climb. At the fork bear **R** signposted *Week Lane*. At the T-junction with the road turn **R**. Climb. **Easy to miss:** shortly after the summit turn **L** through a gravel parking area and a metal gate onto a wide grassy track (GR 906329).
- 9** At the end of the field turn **R** through a gate signposted *Bridleway*. Amazingly overgrown enclosed track OR use the field edge to the **R** of this, dropping down to a broad stone track with a stream in the valley below. Turn **L** then fork **R** by the ruin onto the lower track. Cross the stream near to the pumping engine. Climb then leave the main track and turn **R** uphill through a gate into field by a *Bridleway* signpost.
- 10** Follow the **right-hand** field edge to the top, turn **R** through the gate then **L** onto a broad stone track. At the junction of several tracks by a farm turn **R** onto a level track to go past a large tree. Go round a sharp left-hand bend, climb, then at a T-junction with a similar broad track turn **R** to continue uphill.
- 11** At the X-roads turn **L** signposted *Dulverton* to rejoin the outward route. Continue on the main track, **ignoring** the track to the right you climbed up from *Dulverton*. Great descent, some muddy patches. Emerge at *School Lane* by *Rock House Inn*, and turn **R** to return to the start.

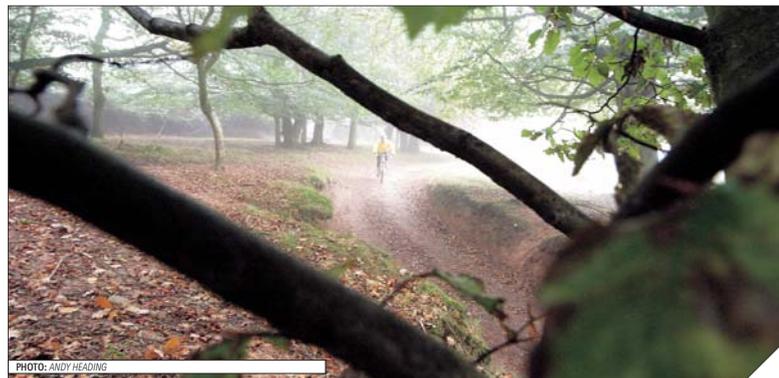


PHOTO: ANDY HEADING