

Old Northern eMTB'er

Trans Cambrian Way 15th – 17th Oct 2018

If you are going to do this (And you should), autumn is the best time simply because the scenery in autumn because of the colours are amazing. Summer would be dull, green is just boring green. Plus, it could be too hot and you would need lots of water and more water equals more weight and more weight equals more battery usage. Wales has proper hills so you would need lots if it were hot.

Bike & Set-up

- **Bike**

Haibike xDuro Allmntn 9.0 (XL)

- **Bars**

Standard Haibike 780's.

Will now swop back to my usual Renthal Fat Bars (30mm rise and 770 wide)

- **Grips**

REVGRIPS. These are amazing. From the states and expensive then you will get hit for import tax and Post Office handling fees (Cosy me £23) but well worth it. Billed as 'Suspension for your wrists' and its true. No wrist ache, no arm pump, just lovely comfy fat grips. I went for the thick ones and what a good choice that was. Don't be put off by the price, seriously, they are amazing (In my personal opinion). Was trying out Brendog Death Grips before and hated them. www.revgrips.com

- **Bar Mounts**

Mobile phone mount for the navigation system. Need to find something that fits 35mm bars as the standard ones vibrate loose and go everywhere.

Torch mount – just in case it got dark after any wrong turns (Night's drawing in).

Mini USB chargeable rear light on the seat post (See above).

- **Mudguards**

Fitted Mud Hugger FRs with the extension piece front and rear. These stay on the bike all time for that full Moto look cos it's all about the look right? ☺

- **Tyres**

Bike comes with Magic Mary 3.0. Changed these for a set of Mavic Crossride Quests 2.4s to help with overall battery management (Less rolling resistance). £23 delivered for the pair from Chain Reaction and I have to say they were fantastic for this ride, I actually thought they would be wrecked by the end, hence going for a cheap set but I was wrong! These will be the tyre of choice for all future rides like this.

They are tubeless ready but I ran them with the following:

- Tubes with 3 teaspoons of glitter (Pink, Green and little shiny discs) (As if that matters) poured (Carefully) down the Schrader valve (I could unscrew the valve top).
- 1 x Sachet of Peaty's Tubeless sealant in each tube.
Saw this hack on You Tube and it works! I took a puncture about 6 miles in on day one the middle of nowhere in rubbish weather but it sealed fine. At the halfway point, I just topped up the minor air loss and it stayed up for the remainder of the 3 days and the tyres took some hammer! This hack will work with tubeless too.

- **Saddle**

Standard Haibike saddle I will look at using a padded gel seat as I will be doing lots more multi-day rides. My ass was in bits!

▪ **Battery Management**

Took a spare Powertube 500wh battery and the Bosch 'Compact' charger which is 44% smaller/lighter than the standard charger but takes longer to charge but that's not an issue as you plug it in soon as you get to the accommodation. Charged battery up at the B&Bs. Will always take a spare battery on long rides purely for peace of mind. Always nice to know you have a full tank of gas to call on if needed!

If there was no need to use pedal assist, I switched the system off and used leg power – why use it, battery management was key! It's like switching the big light on in the middle of summer.....why??

Day 1 Knighton to Rhayader - 25 miles

Pretty difficult on day one as it was very wet, really soggy and slippery going uphill going. Made it to Rhayader with 1 bar left. Bear in mind I did this on the back of storm Callum which totally battered Wales and the ground was very wet all the way through.

Day 2 Rhayader to Llangurig – 44 miles

Plenty of chances to run the system on 'Off' so I managed to make it to Llangurig without a battery change, 1 bar left.

Day 3 – Llangurig to Dovey Junction 30 miles

I abused the fuck out of the available battery power, it was the last day so let's go for it. Changed battery with around 10 miles left to go.

Note: If the ground was firm, it would have been easier on the battery.

▪ **Mapping & GPS** (Have good mapping)

Bought all of the 1:25K Memory Maps.

Plotted routes on the PC, saved routes as GPX files.

Used an old Android phone as my mapping device (LG G3). Nice large screen and good battery life.

Deleted all the unwanted apps off the phone to make space for the memory maps.

Installed the map files.

Installed the free MemMap App onto the phone then transferred the GPX files.

Phone's GPS system then took over – pinpoint 1:25k accuracy.

The App does use power and the phone battery didn't last the whole day so from day 2 onwards, I was opening and closing the App to check my location. Have now ordered a spare battery for the phone just in case.

I also took screen shots of the stages and printed them off and they came with me – just in case.

Note:

The forests are 'working' forests and as such, some of the routes on the map may not be there due to the foresting. This happened to me on stage 2. Had a plot a new route once I got to the top, no major drama but be aware.

▪ **Video & Cam**

The new GoPro Hero 7 Black took care of the POV shots with a chest harness.

Used a 64GB memory card with 2 x 32GB as spare. Had 2 spare batteries and a double charger.

Nikon Coolpix S9200 for talky bits to camera as I was riding along to save taking the GoPro out of the chesty.

Took 2 spare Nikon batteries.

Mobile phone for random pics.

GoPro 3 way extension handle.

Kit & Clothing

All clothing was rolled up as tight as possible and wrapped in sandwich bags. Total weight of rider and pack – 16st 2oz

Let the weather determine your choice of kit – Wales can be unpredictable!

Kit/Clothing etc.	Take Again?			Comments
	Yes	No	Maybe	
Clothing				
Rucksack XLC Allmnt e23	✓			Loads of room for kit, battery slot and tool section. Let down by the rubbish shoulder straps. Very thin and no padding whatsoever. Really cut into the shoulders, very painful. Tried a few fixes during the ride to pad them out but no joy. I will do a proper job with some left over carpet underlay cut to fit the straps to give more padding.
Waterproofs Rab Charge jacket	✓			A brilliant lightweight jacket – Get one!!
Rab lightweight over trouser	✓			The weather can change in the Welsh hills and in October, anything can happen. Best to be safe than cold and wet.
Shorts DEKO ¾ MTB shorts	✓			Great shorts, very comfy. Used them for the 3 days.
Riding tops 2 x thin tops (1 x Long sleeved	✓	X		Karrimor running tops. Used only 1 thin long sleeved top for the 3 days so would not take a spare as it was thin enough to dry in the B&Bs.
Gloves Pair of full finger gloves and a pair of cut off fingers	✓	X		Did not use the full finger gloves so would not take them again.
Helmet Fox Metah	✓			
Eye Protection Clear lens glasses and sunglasses	✓			Didn't wear either – lost the clear lens glasses on day 1 (Doh!).
Buff	✓			Always handy
Thin zip up running top as a spare base layer		X		Didn't use it.
4 pairs of socks and pants	✓			Used the following day's socks/pants for that evening.
5/10 shoes	✓			The only shoes I took. Feet got drenched so I was able to just wear socks down for evening meals in the B&Bs. Covered feet in Sudacream before putting on the next day's socks to protect against the wet shoes.
Shirt/top for the evenings. Thin lightweight long trousers	✓			Lightweight shirt which would double as a base layer if needed and thin lightweight long trousers. Got to have some un-stinky gear to eat in. Both had to be able to be rolled up small.
Tools& Spares				
Topeak Pocket Pump	✓			
Topeak Survival Gear Box	✓			
Mech hanger	✓			
Chain link	✓			
Gear cable	✓			
Puncture repair kit including Instant patches.	✓			
2 x CO2 Gas bottles	✓			Got these from Wilco, much cheaper than from the big named shops.
Tyre levers	✓			
1 x Tube	✓			
Multi Tool Pen Knife	✓			Mother told me take one – and I'm bloody glad I did!! Needed it twice.
6 x Cable Ties	✓			
Emergency Kit				
Vango 2 Man Bothy bag strapped under the saddle	✓			Definitely. If you were to get injured, you would have somewhere to shelter from the elements. They are excellent bits of kit and save lives. Have now ordered a new one which packs up even smaller - Summit Shelter 2 Bothy Bag.
Survival bag	✓			Nice and small and goes with the Bothy bag – warmth = life.
First aid kit	✓			Nice and small, just the essentials.
Whistle	✓			
Glo-sticks		X		
Torch + 1 x spare battery	✓			Would take a head torch next time. The regular torch would have been used in the bar mount just in case.

Misc Bits 'n' Bobs				
Loo roll	✓			Took a small pack of tissues – just in case you need to evacuate the previous evening’s meal.
Small tub of Sudacream	✓			Chaffing is not fun - Lube up!! Also for the feet before putting dry socks into wet shoes.
Nitrile gloves	✓			For lube application and if you needed to do any work on the bike.
Small 2 point extension lead	✓			Just in case the B&Bs have limited plug points. Lead was very short.
6 Port USB charger	✓			Everything is charged by USB now. Ebay, cheap as chips.
5 x USB cables	✓			Phones etc.
1 x USB-C cable	✓			For the GoPro double charger.
2 x 750 mil water bottles	✓			One in the rucky side pouch, one on the bike.
1 x 300 mil Thermos flask	✓			A hot tea is always welcome mid-day.
Oaty crunch bars and Toffee Crisp	✓			A couple to much daily.
Glucose/Fructose sweets	✓			A little bit of an energy top up.
Tooth brush, tooth paste, shower gel	✓			Used travel sized tooth paste and shower gel. Didn’t need it because the accommodation supplies this but I wanted that Zing from minty gel.
Accommodation				
Day 1 Knighton to Rhayder The Crown Inn, Rhayader In the middle of town.	Really nice place, bike friendly. Great rooms. Can pop down the bar in socks (Wet shoes) for some great food – I had the lamb steak, Oooooo, LUSH!! Breakfast is at Ty Morgan’s, 2 mins away, they own the Crown. Breakfast not included in the room price. Top Tip – at Ty Morgans, buy one of the Minted Lamb slices for lunch, they are gorgeous. If you Google the Trans Cambrian Way, you may see reference to Beili Neuadd . This is a bunk house, much cheaper than the Crown but 2 miles outside of Rhayader so you have to walk into town for food, then walk back. Can't be doing with that, I'd rather pay a bit extra and stay in town.			
Day 2 Rhayader to Llangurig The Blue Bell Inn, Llangurig	This place always gets mentioned in the Trans Cambrian. Bike friendly – a big lock up to store bikes. Nice and cheap, basic rooms but perfect for what you need then downstairs for great food – I recommend the lamb shank, mash and peas, the best I've ever had!			
Day 3 (If you choose to stay over in Machynllth, I did) Meanllwyd Guest House	Very well priced. Lovely accommodation. Sit down chippy down the main street from the B&B, crispy chips and crispy fish - Lovely!! Bike storage. Great rooms and great breakfast			
Food en-route				
Rhayader	Spar and local shops. Minted lamb slice from Ty Morgans!!!			
Llangurig	Post Office 2 mins from the Blue Bell. The homemade Welsh cakes and Oggies are a must for lunch.			
Other Stuff				
Bike cleaning	As you come into Machynllth, go straight on past the main right turn. Follow the road round and you will see the train station on the right and opposite trhere is a Texaco garage and Coop. £2 will get you 4 mins of warm low pressure washing to remove all the sheep sh!te. No need to buy tokens from the garage, just have pound coins ready.			
Train	Cost me £18.50 single from Mach to Leominster. Looked on Trainline a few weeks before and it was coming up as £44 – OK, trains are expensive. Checked at the station in Leominster to ask about bringing a bike back and asked to confirm price – the said £18.50!! Book a ticket at your local station beforehand. I got the 10:08 with a 15 min wait at Shrewsbury for the next one.			

Pics

Bike



Revgrips



Water Bottle

Full sus carrier. Inner tube cut and wrapped around and taped to top tube then cabled tied into position – didn't budge at all.



Rear Light

USB chargeable. Charged up before I left. Ebay, cheap as chips and bright as hell.



Extension Plug

For the 6-Way USB charger and battery charger just in case there were plug shortages in the accommodation (Rather be safe than uncharged).



USB 6-Way Socket

Ebay, cheap as chips.



Topeak Tool Kit



Wilko Gas Bottle

(They come as a pack of 3)



Bothy Bag

Orange - Vango 2 Man / Yellow is the new Summit 2 Bothy. Glove to show size.

