



## The Peak 500m Trigs

The idea of this round was fairly simple. The aim was to have:

- clear criteria for what was in and what was out, hence the idea of linking all the trigs in the Peak District over 500m above sea level.
- no trespassing: the height of the trigs places them all in open country, and there's no need for sneaking across farmers' fields or climbing fences and walls.
- a good challenging length, at 75 miles with around 4,000m ascent, but well do-able in a day.
- most importantly, good running in between the trig checkpoints!

There were a few dilemmas in choosing the basis for the run. Would it be better to include the actual summits of Kinder and Bleaklow? What about other high points like High Stones? What about Dead Edge End trig, at 499.5m? In the end I opted for simplicity, having decided that in a moorland area, the trigs give something definite to aim at, and places like Higher Shelf Stones and Kinder Low are more scenic and inspiring than the highest points. Dead Edge End was omitted being slightly short of the mark (and sea level is only going one way) and difficult to bring into a logical traverse of the trigs. I also chose to start the clock at West Nab and finish at the Roaches. (After completing the run and sending it to *gofar*, Tony Wimbush pointed out John Fyne's peak traverse - a similar idea almost 30 years ago, with more high points and slightly fewer trigs.)

Originally I had planned to make this a loop (more accurately it looked like a pair of wobbly tramlines), but the distance of 95 or so miles was a bit long, and there were troublesome out-and-backs at the northern and southern ends. In any case, there's a good round been created by James Lowe and Stuart Walker, so I was happy to have something linear and different (though it does cover some of the same ground).

The run was completed on 19 September 2020, an idea formed in Covid-19 lockdown and carried out in a suitably socially distanced manner. I had a few rests with road support, and running support for the last 24 miles or so from Dove Holes into the evening and darkness. A bright but windy day, after a short dry spell meant the moors were drier than average, but I still disappeared up to my thighs between Outer Edge and Margery Tor, as happens every time I'm up there.

The route starts at West Nab, with distant views over Yorkshire. A gentle jog along a road leads to the flagged Pennine Way path over Black Hill, then at Laddow Rocks take a bearing towards Featherbed Moss - undoubtedly the least visited place on this run. From there, several options exist on the passage to Higher Shelf Stones; I headed towards Crowden then crossed Torside dam, up the Pennine Way then straight across the moor to reach the trig.

The descent of the upper Alport Valley is delightful; at some point leave the valley to reach Alport Trig. This section, crossing the Derwent valley and following the high ground over Outer Edge, Margery Hill (bog peril) and Back Tor is common with the Dark Peak 15 Trigs. But then at Back Tor you can forego the pleasures of Wet Slack Ridge and instead have a really lovely and scenic run down to Fairholmes.

Good trails lead past Lockwood Farm to Rowlee Bridge, from there it's a steep pull up to Madwoman's Stones and then Blackden trig. The beautiful and quiet northern edges of Kinder follow, then I cut straight across the plateau from Fair Brook to Kinder Downfall (there's a helpful but vague trod) to reach Sandy Heys. Very popular paths, with great views lead all the way via Kinder Low and Brown Knoll to Mam Tor.

From there, you have options. Roads can be avoided by skirting Peak Forest and following footpaths past Barmoor Farm, but you might set a world record for stiles crossed in a day. Minor roads or trails from Peak Forest to Dove Holes are longer but maybe easier. To avoid trespassing, get to Castle Naze hill fort then follow the moorland path to Black Edge.

It's then tricky to reach and cross the A5004 - my route took me via White Hall and a short road section. Then get to the old railway line and up to Burbage Edge. Easy from there to Axe Edge, then minor roads to the Cat & Fiddle pub (closed). A short out-and-back gets you to Shining Tor. The quickest route from there follows minor roads again, but you could alternatively go via Bottom of the Oven or Cumberland Cottage to reach the excellent summit of Shuttlingsloe.

There's now a sting in the tail, only 4 miles to the Roaches but also 400m ascent. The route goes via Wildboarclough and Gradbach Mill, before a final climb through beautiful woodland up to the final trig on the Roaches. Just like the start, you're now on the edge of the Peak, this time looking south-west over Staffordshire, the end of a varied and enjoyable journey through the national park.

I'd be interested in hearing of other completions - [richard.kendall80@gmail.com](mailto:richard.kendall80@gmail.com) Have a good time out there! Here's my schedule:

	Grid ref	Height (m)	Actual time	Leg time	Cumulative time
West Nab	SE076088	500	05:25	00:00	00:00
Black Hill	SE078046	582	06:07	00:42	00:42
Featherbed Moss	SE046011	545	06:50	00:43	01:25
Higher Shelf Stones	SK089948	621	08:32	01:42	03:07
Alport	SK128933	505	09:13	00:41	03:48
Outer Edge	SK177969	541	10:34	01:21	05:09
Margery Hill	SK189956	546	10:52	00:18	05:27
Back Tor	SK197909	538	11:35	00:43	06:10
Fairholmes (arrive)	SK173893		12:05	00:30	06:40
Fairholmes (depart)			12:20	Rest 00:15	06:55
Blackden	SK129878	590	13:20	1:00	07:55
Sandy Heys	SK076894	624	14:23	1:03	08:58
Kinder Low	SK078871	633	14:51	00:28	09:26
Brown Knoll	SK083851	569	15:10	0:19	09:45
Mam Tor	SK127836	517	15:52	0:42	10:27
Mam Tor NT car park (arrive)	SK123832		15:57	0:05	10:32
Mam Tor NT car park (depart)			16:10	Rest 0:13	10:45
Black Edge	SK062770	507	18:06	1:56	12:41
Burbage Edge	SK029732	500	19:24	1:18	13:59
Axe Edge	SK035706	551	19:51	0:27	14:26
Cat & Fiddle (arrive)	SK001719		20:20	0:29	14:55
Cat & Fiddle (depart)			20:35	Rest 0:15	15:10
Shining Tor	SJ994737	559	20:52	0:17	15:27
Shuttlingsloe	SJ976695	506	21:51	0:59	16:26
Roaches	SK001638	505	23:20	1:29	17:55