

Trip Report: The Moelwyns

Date: 19th April 2015

Group: Mike A (leader), Lesley, Tony, Mike H, Sue, Colin

Route: Croesor - Cnicht (2260ft) - Moelwyn Mawr (2526ft) - Moelwyn Bach (2329ft) - Croesor

Total Distance: 9.1 miles

Total Ascent: 3694 ft

Weather: Dry and fairly sunny but with biting easterly breeze

Time: 6 hours

It has been a long time since the BUMS tackled this route, and as far as I can remember it has always been a failure, with the clag coming out as the winner. This time the gods were with us, as we had clear summits all day and we were able to complete the planned itinerary.

A 07.00 start was made, in view of the longish journey, but it was trouble free, and we started the walk well before 09.30.

Cnicht is known as "The Welsh Matterhorn" due to its pointy shape and from Croesor we had the perfect view of this. The nice Welsh national park people have put up lots of new waymarkers since I was here last, including at least 3 huge "This way to Cnicht " signs, so coupled with the tremendous views, the climb to the summit couldn't have been easier to navigate. It is a fairly stiff climb with an easy scramble towards the top and the squad took a well- earned coffee break just below the summit in the sunshine, enjoying views of the coastline. After the break we stuck our heads over the summit "parapet" and descended north east along the ridge in a really chill wind which had everyone scrabbling for hats gloves and extra layers of clothing. At this point, Tony was probably regretting his choice of legwear (shorts) but of course he is dead hard and wouldn't complain.

We continued to a col where we turned south for a couple of kms until we reached the ruined quarry buildings which seemed to be an ideal lunch spot until toilet rolls (or were they tissues?) were spotted in various corners. We will never know what they were exactly, because we exited the buildings and enjoyed lunch on a sunny sheltered bank behind.

The route to Moelwyn Mawr was not obvious from the quarry but we took a route south, climbing a spoil heap, emerging at the top to find the mountain exactly in the right place. We picked our route and started the long flog up the grassy north ridge to the trig point at the summit. The next target was Moelwyn Bach to the south. The leader had earlier made a strategic error in mentioning that there were possible short cuts back, one of which was an escape off this summit. At this point Lesley tried to

suggest that was a good option, until it was pointed out that it was only 1.15pm and it would remain light until 8.30pm. Objection overruled!

This next section actually involved interesting rocky terrain as we descended the south ridge, crossing the subsidiary summit of Craig Ysgafn to the col of Bwlch Stwlan, from where we made the short steep push to the summit of Moelwyn Bach. Finally, the grassy west ridge was descended to a plantation, full of wind damaged and fallen conifers which were quite tricky to negotiate, but we shortly reached a narrow gated tarmac road and it was 1.5km back to the car park to conclude a great mountain day out.

Later than usual, but not too late, rehydration took place at the Yew Tree, where we were not joined by Lynn, possibly due to an unforeseen football result.

Mike A