

Scouting Ireland Sionnach Adventure

Mourne Mountains, 22/23/24 October 2004

INTRODUCTION

The 2004 Mournes Sionnach takes in many of the Mournes' best-known features, including the Trassey Track (a former smuggler's trail), the Mourne Wall (built 1904-1922) and views of the two large reservoirs (Ben Crom and Silent Valley). The route ascends several peaks and skirts impressive cliffs, making it a spectacular setting for the last Sionnach of 2004.

The Mournes is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and should be treated as such. Teams should minimise their impact on the hills and all litter must be taken home.

The landscape is rugged and we will be carrying full packs at all times, so our skills will be tested if the weather turns bad. Take time to make a route card. Use map and compass on the route, even if the weather is clear. The staff may change the route if circumstances demand, so you should be familiar with the surrounding area, as well as the route itself.

Do follow any instructions given by staff, don't stop for lengthy periods between checkpoints, and don't be afraid to ask questions. Above all, enjoy the adventure, have fun and learn lots.

MAP

Mourne Country Outdoor Pursuits Map

Scale 1:25000 (4cm = 1km) - Grid letter J - Magnetic variation 7 degrees

GETTING THERE

If travelling from the **south**, leave Newry on the B8, following signs for Hilltown. After Hilltown, take the first right, the B27 Kilkeel Road. Follow the B27 for 1 mile, then turn left onto the B180 for Bryansford. Continue for almost 6 miles, before taking a sharp right onto Trassey Road at 318 323. The check-in is at the car park is on this road at **J 312 315**.

If travelling from the **north**, leave the A1 at Banbridge and take the A50 through Castlewellan. About 1.5 miles after Castlewellan, turn right onto the B180. Continue along this road for 3 miles and then turn left at 318 323 to car park.

Check-in is between 8pm and 11pm on Friday night. If you arrive earlier, wait for staff. If you arrive later, make your way to base camp and check in with staff on Saturday morning.

There will be a gear check at check-in. Teams with inappropriate gear will not be allowed to continue, so make sure you have all the essentials and that your transport does not leave until you are cleared to start.

If you are leaving a car in the car park for the weekend, ensure there are no valuables left in obvious places, as there have been break-ins in the past. Make sure you park close to your neighbour's car as the car park is a small space used by many other hill-walkers.

(THERE IS NO NEED TO TAKE THIS PAGE ON THE HILLS FOR THE WEEKEND)

FRIDAY

Car park (312 315) to base camp (312 303)

Turn left out of the car park and go through the gate at 311 313. Follow the track to another gate and sheep pens along the wall at 313 303 (Note: some of the forest marked on the map has been felled). Use the gate – do not climb over walls. The campsite is on the right.

SATURDAY

7.30am wake-up! Make sure everyone has a good breakfast and is ready to leave by 9am.

Base camp to Hare's Gap (323 287)

Follow the Trassey track to Hare's Gap, where you use the stile to cross the Mourne Wall.

Hare's Gap to Slievenaglogh (327 291)

Keep the wall to your left on the steep ascent to the summit of Slievenaglogh at 586m.

Slieveaglogh to Slieve Corragh (337 286)

Keep the wall on your left and follow the ridge across spot height 573m to Slieve Corragh.

Slieve Corragh to cairn on wall (344 284)

Pay special attention on this leg as there are steep drops on the northern side of the wall to the Pot of Legawherry. Continue to the cairn and stile at the bend in the wall at 344 284.

Cairn to Slieve Commedagh (346 286)

Leave the wall and head for the summit of Slieve Commedagh at 767m. If the weather is bad, be extra careful with your bearing and pace this leg.

Slieve Commedagh to col (346 291)

Take extra care on this leg as there are steep cliffs to your right, dropping into the Pot of Pulgarve. Descend the narrow spur until the ground flattens out at the col. **Listen carefully to staff instructions on the day.**

Col to spur (346 294)

Use a dog-leg here, as a direct route will take you down very steep ground. Follow your bearing closely and pay attention to how the slope changes

Spur to River Bend (340 293)

Aim off to hit the river and then it down to the junction at 337 296.

High camp (337 296)

Check in with staff and follow their advice on where to camp. Pitch tents, have a good meal and take a well-earned rest. Weather permitting there will be some camp entertainment!

SUNDAY

8am wake-up, Scouts Own at 9am. Patrols should be ready to leave afterwards.

High Camp to Luke's Mountain (J 327 304)

The ground here is craggy and difficult to navigate - good teamwork will make things easier!

Luke's Mountain to col (328 301)

Drop down into the col below Luke's Mountain to join the river.

Col to river bend (321 303)

Keep the river on your right-hand side and follow it to the clear right-angle bend at 321 303.

River bend to base camp (312 303)

Take a direct bearing or aim-off to hit the wall and follow it back to the sheep pens.

Track to finish (312 315)

Follow the Trassey track back to the car park at 312 315 and check in with staff. **Well done!**