

Gold Mountain Biking Expedition

Is it for me?

Choosing Mountain Biking as a mode of transport for your 4 day gold expedition will enable you to travel in remote and normally unreachable areas of the UK, covering vast amount of distance. You will acquire a new set of transferable life skills, such as communication, planning, trust, endurance and physical fitness in a unique environment.

More details on the award scheme can be obtained from the Duke of Edinburgh web site www.theaward.org

Course Content

The following skills are essential to the final venture and will be taught over a number of training days. (Normally 2 weekends)

CYCLING SKILLS

Manual Handling

- Demonstrate the lifting and carrying techniques which enable safe carrying of bikes over obstacles.
- Load and secure bikes into a box trailer/onto a car rack.

Generic Cycling Techniques

- Conduct pre-ride checks.
- Use gears and brakes effectively
- Manoeuvre the cycle to avoid obstacles.

Road Cycling Techniques

- Be aware of everything that is going on around them, including behind.
- Signal intentions to other road users.
- Understand how to ride on a road as a group.
- Turn left and right into major and minor roads.
- Negotiate cross roads and small roundabouts.

Off-Road Riding Techniques

- Braking
- Gear Changing
- Steering & cornering

- Choosing a line
- Balance
- Climbing
- Descending

Maintenance

- Clean and oil their bike.
- Mend a puncture with patches and a spare tube
- Adjust and replace brake blocks and brake cable.
- Adjust the chain tension and repair a broken chain.
- Adjust derailleur gears which have been knocked out of line and replace a snapped gear cable.
- Remove and replace a broken spoke.

Hazards and Risk Assessing

- Relate weather forecasts to observed conditions, looking for signs which will indicate changes in weather.
- The ability to conduct a dynamic risk assessment.

The Codes

- Understand the spirit and content of the 'Countryside Code'.
- A thorough knowledge of the sections of the Highway Code relevant to cyclists.

COMMON TRAINING

First Aid

- The Primary Survey: DR ABC
- The treatment of minor and major bleeding
- The recognition and immediate treatment of breaks and dislocations
- Treatment of Shock
- The prevention, recognition and treatment of Hypothermia
- The prevention, recognition and treatment of heat injuries (sunburn, sunstroke, heat stroke)

Preparatory Map Skills

- The nature of maps – OS 1:50,000
 - Map direction
 - Scale and Distance – measuring distance and estimating time taken to travel
- WHEN CYCLING**
- Conventional signs
 - Marginal Information
 - Grid references
 - An introduction to contours in relation to the environment the venture is taking place in.
 - The ability to give a verbal description of a route linking two places from the map.

Practical Map Skills

- Setting the map by inspection.
- Relating the map to the ground.
- Determining geographical direction and direction of travel from the map.
- Checking the direction of river channels etc with the map set.
- Planning a route and preparing a route card.
- Estimating speed of travel and arrival times FOR A CYCLING VENTURE.
- Following a planned route yet understanding when to use alternative/escape routes.

Compass Skills

- The care of the compass and the influence of ferrous objects on its accuracy.
- Magnetic variation and the relationship between true, grid and magnetic north's.
- Setting the map using the compass.
- Determining the direction of river channels etc using the compass.

Campcraft

- Choosing a suitable campsite.
- Pitch and strike tents.
- Practice no trace camping with appropriate methods of disposing of waste.
- The safe use stoves.
- Cooking substantial meals under expedition conditions

Programme

The course will consist of at least 2 training weekends, 1 practise venture and 1 qualifying venture. Additional training hours may be bolted on to the course in order to gain the necessary skills, depending on previous qualifications or experiences.

The Venues

Initial training days will take place at Danbury Outdoors utilising the local trails, campsite and bike workshop.

Practice ventures will take place in locations (peak/lake district) relevant to the final qualifying expedition. This will include wild camping and technical riding skills pulling a trailer. Qualifying ventures will take place in remote areas such as North Wales, Scotland.

Instructional Staff

Our instructors are qualified and experienced MIAS instructors or SMBLA Mountain bike Leaders with an excellent knowledge of the sport. They have a great depth of experience instructing novices and experts and will be keen to pass on that knowledge to you. Our low staff to student ratio allows you to progress at your own pace and get the most from the course.

Kit List

All Mountain bike equipment with the (exception to clothing) will be provided by Danbury Outdoors. We do not advise you purchase any equipment specifically for this course,

until after the training. Rather use it as an opportunity to find out what best suits your needs. However please feel free to bring any biking equipment you already have, in particular:

- Helmet, gloves, eye wear
- Water Bottle, small Rucksack hydration system.

The clothing that you bring with you will need to be suitable to off road cycling such as:

- Padded Shorts
- Cycling top
- Trainer/cycling shoes

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD EXPEDITION TRAINING EQUIPMENT, CLOTHING & PACKING A BIKE TRAILER

The following has been written to help you choose your clothing and equipment for your expedition. Please read in conjunction with the kit list provided.

- **Bob Bike Trailer:** one large 100 litre waterproof canoe bag, fits into the trailer, this is big enough to fit all of your kit in, but do not try and fill it with unnecessary equipment as you will have pull it. The waterproof canoe bags do not require liners. However it is good practice to ensure that all your items are in waterproof bags just in case the bag gets damaged. Liners can be purchased from outdoor shops.
- **Cycling shoes:** If you are use to using cycling shoes then it is a good idea that you use them during your expedition, this will increase your efficiency on route but do remember that if others do not have them you will need to allow for this.
- **Waterproofs:** Gore-Tex/other high quality breathable fabrics are ideal but are expensive. Probably a compromise for D of E is a breathable waterproof somewhere between a Pack-A-Mack and a Gore-Tex. A good hood is invaluable!
- **Warm Gear:** You will generate a lot of heat when cycling so remember to dress for this but also carry enough to keep you warm when you stop at night and during breaks. Base Layers & Fleeces! Base layers wick sweat away from the skin (cheap t-shirts now available) while fleeces provide warmth. They are warmer when wet compared to a cotton sweater/hoodie and are lighter than traditional wool. Think about having a spare thick fleece for the evening. Remember woolly/fleece hat and fleece gloves plus spares at any time of year!
- **Trousers:** Cycling shorts or trousers are the best thing for this with over trousers for when it's cold or when you stop. Anything but jeans!! Walking trousers are good, being quick drying. Tracksuit bottoms are fine.

- **Sleeping:** When selecting a sleeping bag consider the season rating (2-3 season is ideal), compressibility and weight of the bag. Down bags are warm, light and compressible, but are expensive, difficult to wash and ineffective if they get wet. Synthetic bags are probably more appropriate for D or E being cheaper and still functional if they get wet. A sleeping mat (roll mat through to posh inflatable mattress e.g. ThermoRest) is an essential addition. It insulates you from the ground resulting in a warmer nights sleep as well as reducing back pain!
- **Cooking:** Trangia & Meths is the only stove option – Essex CC policy. Mug, spoon, matches/lighter, Swiss army knife and pan scrub is the only other cooking equipment you need!
- **Food:** Food ideas and menu suggestions will be discussed during your training. Think about lightness, packability, ease of preparation, amount of washing up, calorific value and whether you like it! Emergency rations are also essential. Power & energy gels are also a great way of getting a quick boost!
- **Water Bottle:** Bottle or Bladder? Plastic or metal (e.g. Sigg) water bottles are ideal. 1 litre is the absolute bare minimum during cooler months while 2 litres + is essential during hot weather. Hydration systems (e.g. Platypus or Camelback) are good for remaining hydrated while on the hill because you consume more water, but it is often difficult to manage your intake and people end up running out of water during the day. They are also not as durable as a conventional bottle.
- **Tent:** 2/3 man backpacking tent split between everybody in the party. Tents will be discussed during your training.
- **Navigation:** 1:25,000 OS Explorer Map (laminated or in a waterproof map case), Silva Compass (Type 7 is the most basic Silva compass but totally adequate for Bronze & Silver, Type 3 is more appropriate for Gold – look for something with a clear base plate and Romer). A watch with a stop watch facility is essential for timing navigation legs as well as ensuring you are on time to meet your assessor!
- **1st Aid:** Individuals should carry a small first aid kit each. The contents of these kits will be discussed during your 1st Aid training. A notepad and pencil should be included in any 1st Aid Kit to record casualty details for Mountain Rescue as well as for observations during an Exploration.
- **Survival Bag:** The big orange plastic bag used in an emergency!
- **Expedition Safety Card:** Found in your Entrance Pack. This can be kept in your 1st Aid Kit because it contains Emergency Procedures information as well as contact details for your supervisor and assessor.

- **Headtorch** (with spare batteries & bulb if not an LED torch): Do not use a handheld torch! Any outdoor task undertaken at night requires a headtorch allowing you to use both hands.
- **Whistle:** For attracting attention in an emergency.
- **Mobile Phone:** These are now considered standard emergency equipment when out walking in upland areas. However for the purpose of D of E expeditions these need to be switched off and sealed in a bag. This seal should only be broken (and the phone used) in an emergency.
- **Toiletries:** Toothbrush, toothpaste, wet wipes and toilet paper. No more!!

Packing Bob Trailer

- Pack your trailer evenly so that your bike remains balanced.
- Remember to keep your water proof, first aid, lights and snacks to hand.
- Items you need during the day (map, compass, lunch, hat and gloves, water, headtorch etc) should be kept in a small bag attached to the outside of a canoe bag.
- Keep the weight down! Ask yourself do I really need that? Tea towels, bowls knives and forks are not essential and should be left at home. Additional items not listed on the kit list will not increase your safety but slow you down, add discomfort.

Top Tips!

- DO NOT hang anything off the outside of the trailer Items are easily lost if not stowed inside.
- **Always Remember: Justify all you carry, be ruthless with your packing. Light is Right!** Once the essential items are packed, extra 'luxury items will not add to your safety, rather they will increase the load you will have to pull leading to fatigue and possible exhaustion.

Programmes

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD EXPEDITION PROGRAMMES GOLD BIKE TRAINING AT DANBURY (ONE)

Saturday

09:00	Participants arrive at Danbury Outdoors
09:00 – 09:30:	Introductions to the Centre, Staff and Expedition Section
09:30 – 10:00:	Ice Breakers, Team Work skills for expeditions
10:00 – 11:00	Bike set up & checks

11:00 – 12:30	Bike skill course
12:30 – 13:00:	Lunch selection of hill/trail foods for expeditions, re-hydration and calorie intake
13:00 – 14:00	Equipment selection and packing a rucksack for riding
14:00 – 16:30	Local ride using Ordnance Survey Maps: Lingwood and surrounding areas. Teaching Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientating the Map • Tick off Features • Catching Features • Time & Distance • Map Reading on a bike (map memory) • Use of cycle computers
16:30 – 17:00	Return from ride, Clean & Maintenance of bikes
17:00 – 17:15:	Group Debriefs. Hand out equipment from stores
17:15 – 18:00:	Tents: Selection & erection. Campsite Management
18:00 – 19:30:	Dinner Using Trangia Stoves – Stove safety. Selection of dinner foods for expeditions

Sunday

07:30 – 09:00:	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:00:	Bike Maintenance (Basic trail Repairs) punctures
10:00 – 11:00:	Route planning for a 3 hour local ride using OS Maps
11:00 – 14:00	Local ride planned by group focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday's map reading tools • Basic Trail Repairs(chain) • Lunch
14:00 – 14:30:	Return from ride clean & Maintenance of bikes
14:30 – 16:00:	First Aid (if not covered by school)
16:00 – 16:30:	Return equipment to the store
16:30 – 17:00:	Route planning in preparation for the 2 Training weekends

17:00 – 17:30: Weekend debrief and briefing for 2 Training weekends

17:30: Participants depart / are ready for collection

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD EXPEDITION PROGRAMMES GOLD BIKE TRAINING AT DANBURY (TWO)

Saturday

09:00 Participants arrive at Danbury Outdoors, intro to the weekend

09:00 – 09:30: Hand out equipment from stores.

09:30 – 11:00: Review of the route planning exercise

10:00 – 11:00 Bike set up & checks introduce the trailer

11:00 – 12:00 Skill course with & without trailer (un-laden)

12:30 – 13:00: Lunch selection of hill/trail foods for expeditions,

13:00 – 14:00 Equipment selection and packing the trailer for riding

14:00 – 17:00 Local Ride (the planned route): Teaching Focus:

- Riding with the trailer
- Trail side repairs (gears & brakes)
- Riding a prepared route.
- Navigation
- Emergency procedures
- Time & Distance
- Map Reading on a bike (map memory)
- Use of cycle computers

17:00 – 17:30 Return from ride, Clean & Maintenance of bikes

17:30 – 18:00: Group Debriefs.

18:00 – 19:30: Dinner
Using Trangia Stoves – Stove safety.
Selection of Dinner foods for expeditions

Sunday

07:30 – 09:00: Breakfast

09:00 – 16:30: Long Ride (Full Loaded) trailer focus on

- All training
- Especially fitness & endurance

16:30 – 17:00:	Return from ride, Clean & Maintenance of bikes
17:00 – 17:30	Return equipment to the store
17:30 – 18:00	Route Planning in preparation for the QV
18:00 – 18:30:	Weekend Debrief and Briefing for the QV
18:30:	Participants depart / are ready for collection

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD EXPEDITIONS PRACTICE VENTURE – (Mountain Biking)

Learning Outcomes for the Participants

- Opportunity to practice 'hard' expedition skills, particularly navigation and campcraft.
- Determine a speed of travel appropriate to the conditions likely to be encountered on the Qualifying Venture.
- Determine the suitability of equipment and eliminate any unnecessary items.
- Find out how much food and fuel will be necessary to complete the Qualifying Venture.
- Appreciate the levels of fitness required to complete the Qualifying Venture and any further fitness training that may be necessary.
- Practice using any skills appropriate to an exploration or the presentation to be given post-expedition.
- Bond as a team!

Learning Outcomes for Supervisors

- Provide additional tuition.
- Evaluate the competence of the group and their ability to fulfil the requirements of the Award.
- Help with the team building process.

Programming

Friday

19:00:	Participants arrive at the venue.
19:00 - 19:30:	Introduction to the weekend. Stores.
19:30 – 21:00:	Route Plans checked and finalised.

Saturday

Expedition commences. Participants follow their planned route ACCOMPANIED BY AN INSTRUCTOR AT FIRST. The instructor must ensure that:

- Participants have a sound grasp of all aspects of the syllabus.
- Participants receive extra training in the parts of the syllabus they are weak in.
- Participants are bonding well and any conflicts won't prevent them completing a Qualifying Venture.

As the day progresses and if it is safe to do so, the instructor should slowly withdraw from the group to allow participants to undertake unaccompanied journeying.

Sunday

Expedition continues. As much as possible this should be an UNACCOMPANIED day with supervisors meeting groups at prescribed checkpoints and shadowing the groups from afar if this is possible. Further training should be provided if required.

At checkpoints, supervisors should set scenarios that require the group to think about the problems they might face on an expedition and how to cope with them. Examples include:

- Bike problems and repairs
- Dehydration: Participant feeling faint and weak.
- Getting lost
- Major medical emergency requiring 1st Aid and emergency procedures.

15:00 – 16:00: Stores

16:00 – 17:00: Debrief and preparation for Qualifying Venture