

Killyleoch Hill (27C)

Report of survey carried out by Alan Dawson on 28 August 2013

1. Introduction

The purpose of this survey was to measure the height and drop of Killyleoch Hill, a marginal Submarilyn near Dumfries with 149m drop, based on a height of 240m and col estimated at 91m. Ordnance Survey maps indicate that the critical col is at NX 8732 8616, where the 90m contour just fails to be continuous around Killyleoch Hill. There is however a large area north of this point with no contours, and an 89m spot height at NX 87295 86255, so it seemed distinctly possible from the map that the col could turn out to be 90m or lower. Heights were measured using a Leica Geosystems 1250 GPS antenna and controller, with subsequent processing by John Barnard of GJ Surveys, using OS Rinex data to obtain precise measurements. Conditions for the survey were excellent: dry and clear with a light breeze and no midges.

2. Summit survey

The hill lies about 2km south of the village of Dunscore in Dumfries and Galloway. OS maps show a 240m spot height at the summit, at the edge of a line of trees. The summit area is fairly easy to approach from a track to the south, starting at NX881801. The summit itself is a well-defined grass-covered rock a few metres from the edge of the trees. As the area was open and the grass short, a survey pole was not required, so the GPS antenna was placed flat on the grass on top of the rock. It was far enough away from the trees to enable a good set of satellite signals to be received. Result:

Summit: 60 minutes at NX 87857 82037, height 239.66m \pm 0.01m

3. Col survey

The col separating Killyleoch Hill from higher ground is about 4km north of the summit, in square NX8786. The OS Landranger map shows the col to be between two 90m contours that just fail to meet at NX 8732 8616. This point is near the southern edge of a large undulating grassy field populated by grazing cattle. Large-scale maps give a clue to the complexity of the terrain in this area, which has a large number of grassy mounds, ridges and hollows. Even so, it is apparent on the ground that the contouring does not accurately reflect the intricate detail of the landscape. A wall runs along the top of a grassy ridge at NX 8731 8614, where the large-scale map correctly shows a 90m contour ring around this ridge. The ground slopes away to the north of this wall, and it is clear that there is lower ground well to the north of the point at NX 8732 8616 that the map suggests is a col. The map is correct to show the 90m contour lines as discontinuous at NX 8732 8616, but incorrect in not showing a 90m contour line further north. After detailed visual inspection of the col area, a survey point was set up in a mini-col to the south of the 89m spot height at NX 87295 86255, which is on a small grassy mound. It is possible, though unlikely, that there is even lower ground much further north near the fence at NX 8722 8643, which is not visible from the col survey point owing to intervening mounds. This alternative potential col was not surveyed, as it was thought to be higher and would have made little difference to the eventual outcome. Result:

Col: 60 minutes at NX 87253 86209, height 88.08m \pm 0.2m

4. Summary and conclusions

Hill name:	Killyleoch Hill, section 27C
Summit:	239.66m at NX 87857 82037
Col:	88.1m at NX 87253 86209
Drop:	151.6m
Outcome:	Promoted from Submarilyn to Marilyn

Killyleoch Hill therefore becomes the 1218th Scottish Marilyn, taking the total number of Marilyns to 1557, with the number of Submarilyns being reduced to 204.

5. Access

The ascent of Killyleoch Hill is fairly easy with no tree or access problems. The 1:25000 map shows a track starting at NX881801, which avoids the farms, houses, notices and quarry that may impede other approaches. This track leads easily to NX877811, where a gate leads over a burn, through a gap in the trees, and into an open field. It is then possible to follow the western edge of the trees all the way to the summit. There are four walls to cross, all with reasonable crossing places near the edge of the trees. There is some rough bracken and vegetation between the first and second walls, but otherwise the route is straightforward and reasonably dry underfoot. The summit is a pleasant and spacious, with good views north and west.



Summit of Killyleoch Hill

Survey point on summit of Killyleoch Hill, looking north-west



Survey point at Killyleoch Hill col, looking north

Survey point at Killyleoch Hill col, looking south. The wall runs along a small ridge with a 90m contour ring. The col implied by OS maps is much nearer this wall than the survey point.

