

## BE-144 Horntube

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***Summary: Use extreme caution when activating this summit during the winter. If conditions are good, though, it's not far to go.***

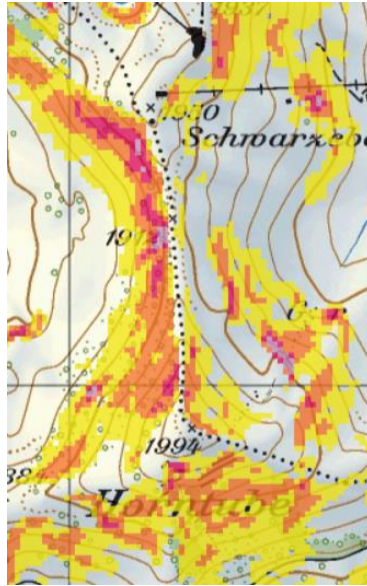
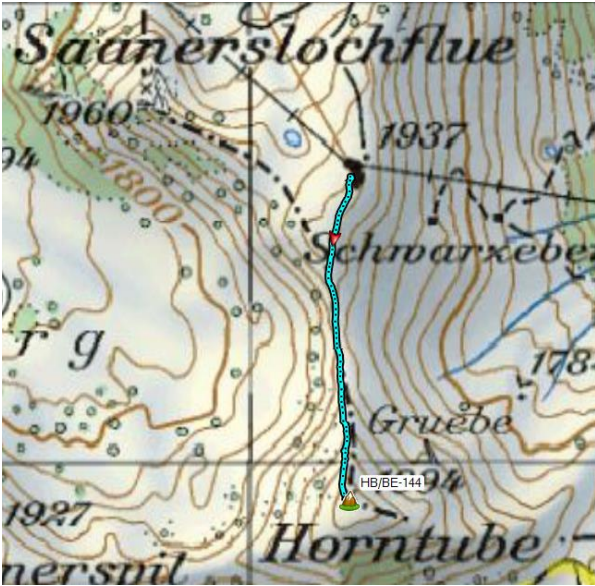
It's not marked on the maps at [map.wanderland.ch](http://map.wanderland.ch) as in operation, but there is a gondola lift running from Saanenmöser to Saanerslochgrat. Take it and save yourself lots of legwork. (See the cutout from the winter activities map for the Gstaad region at the end of this report.)

Further, the gondola station is where you get your first view of Horntube; the trail follows along to the left of the line of trees.



*View of Horntube from the gondola station.*

What should strike you is that the ascent is relatively steep. In fact, there are portions  $> 30$  degrees. Further, the ridge itself is quite narrow in many spots, just enough room for a footpath, and there are steep dropoffs on both sides.



On the left my GPS track for the hike up. On the right, the map.geo.admin.ch display of areas > 30 degrees (anything in color, with yellow being > 30 degrees and other colors even steeper areas).

Thus, attempt this *only* if conditions are excellent. If there is any chance you will not have good footing, such as due to new snow, drifting snow, or warm temperatures leading to slushy snow, I strongly urge you NOT to attempt this summit. Also be very cautious of snow cornices that might develop, and be sure to check the avalanche report at [www.slf.ch/lawinenbulletin/lawinengefahr/index\\_EN](http://www.slf.ch/lawinenbulletin/lawinengefahr/index_EN) -- and if the level is anything higher than "2", I would also stay away.



A closer look at the trail going up. From this it's hard to tell how really steep it is near the top.

If conditions are good, though, it's not much of an ascent. From the gondola station you drop down 34 meters, and then you must climb 82 meters to get to the summit itself.

The activation zone is relatively large and flat, but there are no good mast supports. The only structure is a metal snow fence, and when I tried to use that as a mast support, the large amount of metal made it impossible to get a good SWR on my EndFedz end-fed dipole. I wasn't sure what I would use for a mast support, but it turns out there was so much snow on the ground that my pole sunk in so deep it was self-supporting without the need for any guy lines (which I did not have with me).

Keeping in mind when the gondola stops running, I had a rather abbreviated activation on 7 MHz. The trip down went fast, but it was very, very tricky. Going up wasn't really too bad, but on the way down getting good footing in late-day soft snow was difficult. Fortunately, I made it down without any major incidents.



*This metal snow fence is the only support in the activation zone.*



Winter activity map for part of the Gstaad region. You park or get off the train at Saanenmöser and take the gondola up to Saanerslochgrat. From there, Horntube is not far away at all. (Note on the left Rinderberg, HB/BE-106; there is a gondola lift from Zweisimmen that takes you the whole way up. In fact, in the summer there is a nice hiking route from Rinderberg to Horntube for a double activation, but I wouldn't try it in winter!)