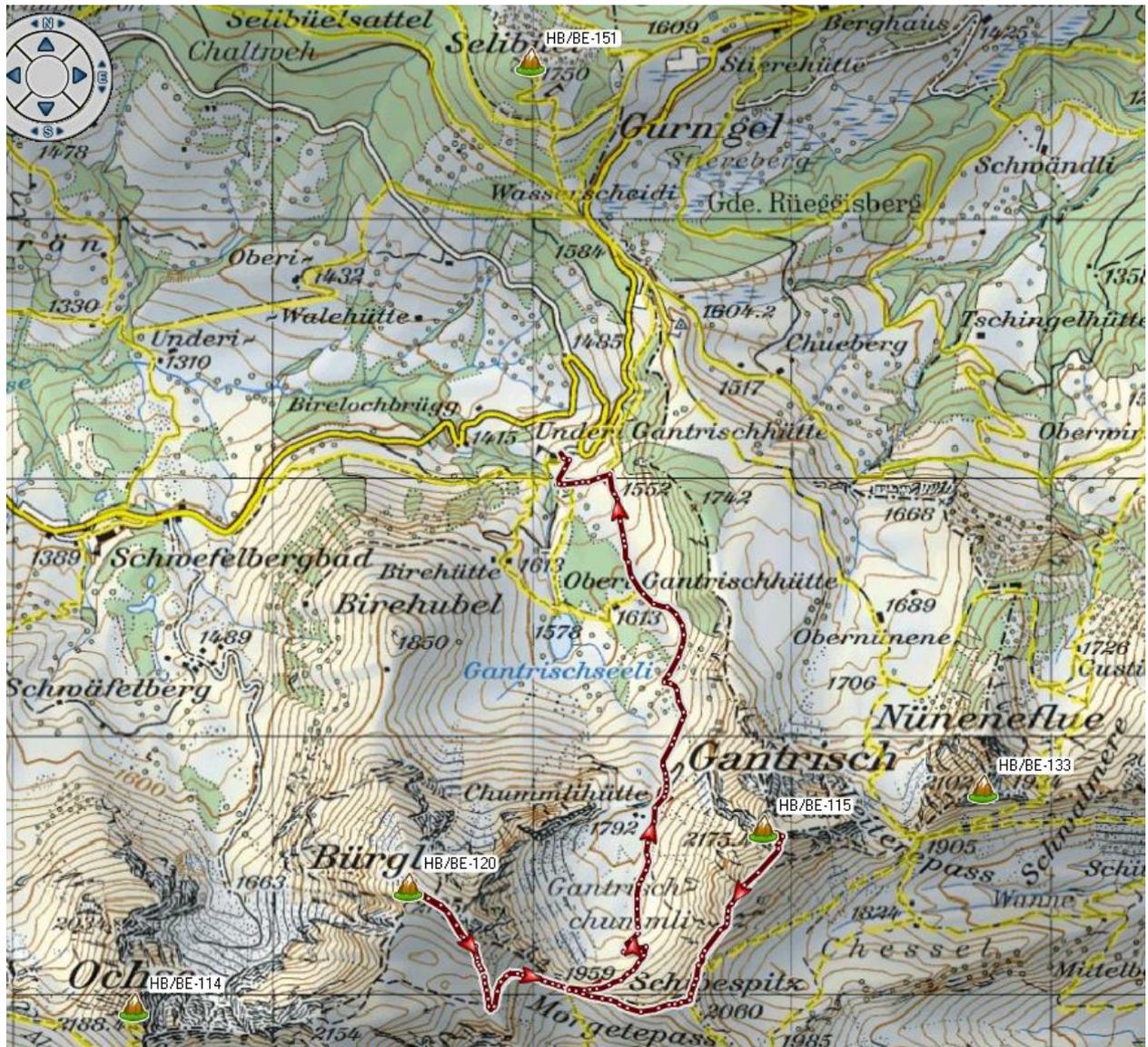


Gantrisch HB/BE-115 and Bürglen HB/BE-120

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Ever since I activated Selibuehl (BE-151) last winter and looked across the valley to Gantrisch, that summit has been high on my list. I finally go around to it, and it was well worth the effort. This area is quite picturesque and also very popular with hikers. I had beautiful sunny weather with a somewhat gusty wind.



Morgetepass is the fork between BE-120 and BE-115. On the top of this map is Seilibuehl (BE-151), which I did last winter and found to be a nice snowshoe hike.

I took the bus to Underi Gantrischhütte (where this is also some parking -- and there is also a very large parking lot at Stierehütte, close to Selibuehl). Note the bus connections are very limited, roughly three per day. I took the earliest bus up and left on the last bus down (at 16:22).

The first hour is the ascent to Morgetepass, and this basically follows a military road (you can see the gun emplacements built into the sides of Gantrisch). This road is flanked by steep slopes, which makes me believe it would be unsuitable in wintertime.



Seen from Underi Gantrischhütte, the day's goals: Bürgelen (HB/BE-120, far right) and Gantrisch (HB/BE-115, on the left). The military road to Morgetepass runs between them.

At this point, you turn west to go to Burglen or east to go to Gantrisch. I first did Bürgelen (HB/BE-120), and this is a T2 hike -- no exposed sections, not particularly dangerous or challenging from a technical point of view. It's just a matter of putting one foot ahead of the other up to the top. It took me 1 hour 42 minutes to cover the 653 meters of altitude from the bus stop at a leisurely pace. Note, on the summit there is no cross, no benches. A few meters below the summit there are some fence posts that could be used to support a mast. I, though, had my loop along and was glad, because this allowed me to set up in an area protected from a gusty wind and stay warm without putting on a jacket. Between the loop and poor conditions, I made only 13 QSOs on 40m, although I did manage to get into the UK.



A look down at the refreshment stand at Morgetepass on the way down from Bürgelen. Note the vehicle for transporting drinks up the military road.

Next it was back down the 200+ meters to Morgetepass. Interestingly, two entrepreneurial young ladies set up a refreshment stand selling beverages, cheese, etc. They had quite a lot of business, too!

I wasn't sure about how much time I would need (and had to keep the bus schedule in mind), so I didn't stop to give these ladies any business but instead proceeded right away to Gantrisch. Most of the hike (total ascent from the pass: 274 meters) is not particularly dangerous. However, before the final ascent there is a hiking sign where it says "Vorsicht" (careful) -- and if the Swiss put that sign up, they mean it. The last 50 vertical meters were very steep and very exposed. There was a wire rope in 3 sections, each about 15 meters long. Without this cable, I would not have attempted it. This is about as close you can get to rock climbing without doing actual rock climbing. (If you have visitors looking for some "adventure" or "excitement", this might be a good candidate.) Despite the wire cable sections, I saw dozens of people going up and down, so I figured it couldn't be too, too bad. But it did go to about the limits of my comfort zone.



The final ascent to the summit of Gantrisch is even steeper and trickier than it looks here. Without the wire cable to hang onto, it would be beyond my capabilities.

On the summit, again there are few aids for supporting an antenna mast, and again my loop came in handy. I made 12 QSOs on 40m and 7 QSOs on 30m, including my only S2S of the day.

I then headed down back down to my starting point. I left early so as not to miss the last bus. The timing was perfect -- just enough time for a relaxing beer before boarding the bus (bus to Thurnen, regional train to Bern, IR to Zurich, IR to Thalwil).