

## GR-101 Piz Beverin

By Paul HB9DST, July 17, 2015

*Summary: A famous summit, but one of the most difficult ones I've tackled thus far. However, it was accomplished with excellent company -- which was comforting when we ran into a thunderstorm while on the summit.*



*Here I am activating GR-102 Lüschergrat with Piz Beverin GR-101 dominant in the background. Who would have ever thought I would actually activate that peak?*

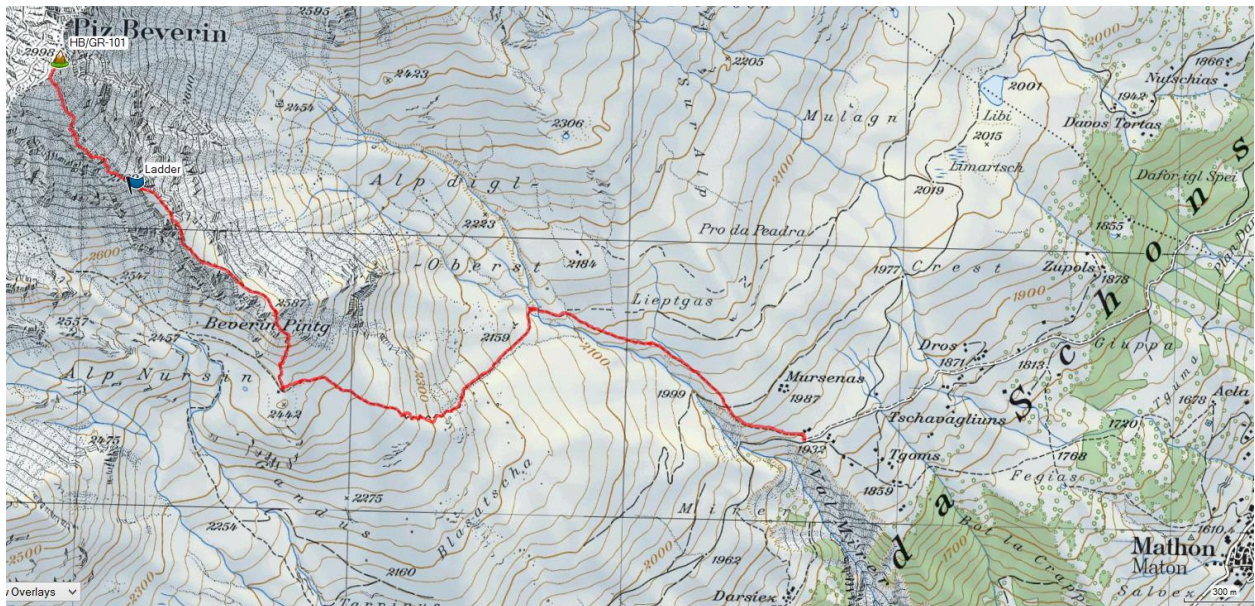
I've long admired Piz Beverin. When activating summits across the Glasspass valley your eyes are magnetically attracted to this impressive peak. One of my hiking books rates this as a T4 - T5, so I never expected to activate it. But I did!

The other day, Juerg HB9BIN were activating a different summit along with Hans HB9CKV. He's in his 70s and is still incredibly fit (puts me to shame) and grew up in this area so he knows all the summits really well. Some he's done as many as two dozen times in his lifetime. I mentioned Piz Beverin in passing, and he said it's absolutely no trouble and that even his partner did it and she had no major problems -- so I should also be able to do it. He also offered to join us as a "mountain guide".



*At the parking lot with our destination in the background. At this time of day it was sunny and quite hot. This would all change by afternoon...*

Vital statistics: the hike to the summit is 5.3 km, the ascent is 1087 meters, and the hike (with several extended breaks) took just a few minutes over 4 hours.



As for driving there, after taking a detour due to road construction, we finally did reach our targeted parking lot near Mursenas (follow the signs to Mathon and then continue up). Right there a friendly farmer puts drinks in some spring water and sells them to thirsty hikers -- and this day it was extremely hot.





*Sign on the left reads, "Have you already climbed the peak, or is that your goal? Thirsty? Look in the trough, there's beer, cola... The spring water is free. Take a seat on our bench, enjoy the view and THANK YOU! The Michael Family". On the right is the trough with the beverages and (not visible) a can into which you drop as much money as you feel is appropriate.*

The first section goes up at a moderate climb through some meadows. Near Point 2442 there is a spring with water, and then you turn north to start a steeper climb up to Beverin Pintg. In this stage there is a 50 vertical meter section that makes this hike a T4 in my mind (Juerg calls it a T3+), but any time I have to use my hands to climb a section and it has no rope support, that's a T4 for me. But to call this a T5 is going overboard. If you go slowly and take your time, it's not that bad (but don't do it alone).

Once you finish that climb, there is a moderate slope leading to one of the most famous points of this hike, one everyone mentions: the 8 meter ladder. On the way to the summit you climb down the ladder (sounds counter-intuitive, but it's true) and then there is the steep climb through loose rocks up to the final summit.



*The first section takes you up through some meadows.*



*The sign at Point 2442 pointing to the route with the ladder; the summit is also visible just to the right of the sign.*



*After climbing the T4 section following Point 2442, you have a gentle slope up leading to the ladder, which is located at the top of the green section. In the foreground our mountain guide Hans HB9CKV.*





*Hans descending the (in)famous 8 meter ladder after which he will make the final ascent to the summit.*



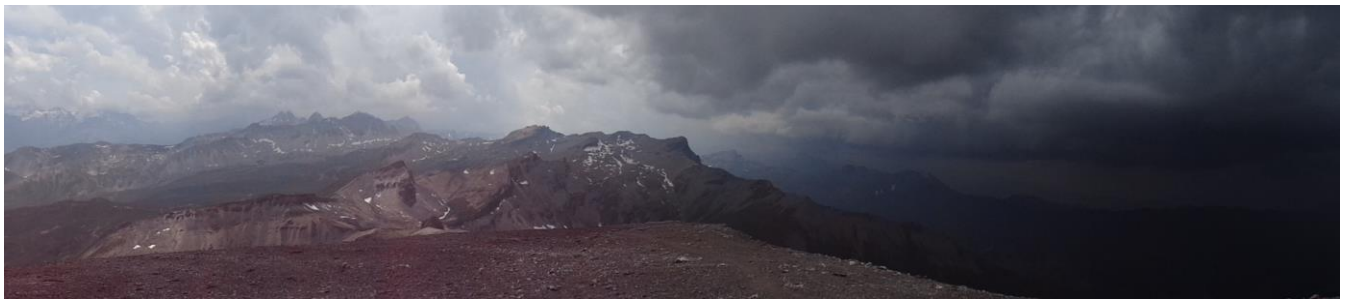
*The final ascent -- not technically difficult, no exposure to cliffsides, but tough on the feet.*

The activation area is quite large. There is one signpost with the directional signs for the hiking paths (Juerg attached his mast to it), and there is also a large cairn (pile of stones) to which I attached my mast.



*My mast lashed to the cairn at the summit. In the background you can see storm clouds starting to build.*

As I mentioned, it was a very hot day (we brought plenty of water) and the weather forecast talked about scattered thunderstorms. When we got to the summit -- and saw a number of other people on the trail up and down -- it was still sunny all around. But within half an hour it was very dark to the east. In fact, it seemed as if Piz Bevein was directly on the weather front: look to the west and it's sunny, look to the east and it's very, very dark. At first the wind was blowing the storm clouds away from us, but then the wind shifted and started blowing them towards us. We quickly broke down the stations and started down. I was particularly worried about the T4 section if the rocks were all wet and slippery, but we got through that section and about 15 minutes later the downpour started. And it was a downpour! We hiked down through this heavy rain for at least 1.5 hours, accompanied by plenty of thunder and lightning. I was getting quite nervous, but Hans HB9CKV, this very experienced hiker who has seen just about everything, kept me calm throughout the entire experience. When we got to the car, the rain had slowed down to a drizzle; when we got to Chur where I picked up my train, it was sunny again.



*A photo just before we left the summit. We were exactly on the weather front: turn to your left and it's sunny; turn to your right and there is thunder and lightning.*

In summary, this is one summit I never expected to activate. But it's not nearly as bad as the books describe it, especially in the company of our experienced guide.



*A final look at the summit from the parking lot as we left. This shot clearly shows the notch in the middle; this is where the ladder is located.*