

Gonzen (HB/SG-030) and Tschugga (HB/SG-048)

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Paul, HB9DST

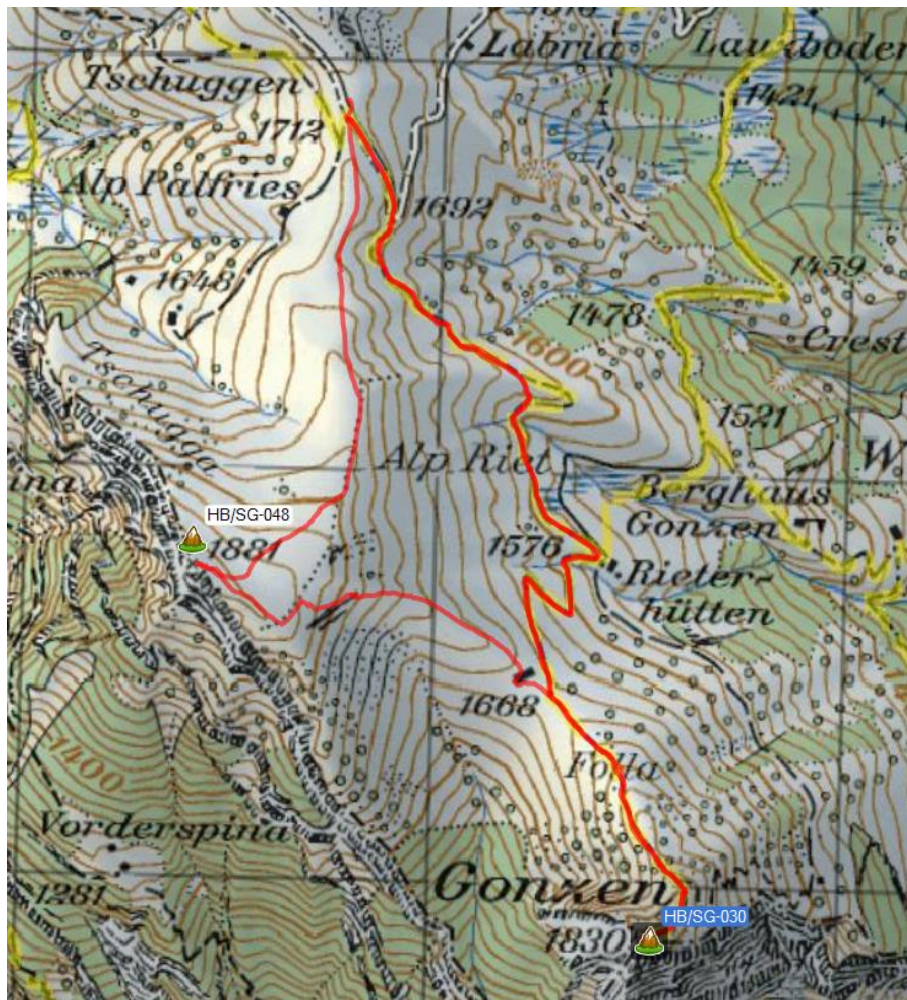
Summary: From the valley near Sargans, you see Gonzen as a vertical wall of stone and the summit looks impossible. From the rear side, however, it's not difficult at all to activate, and in fact a dual activation is not tough.



Gonzen and its vertical rock wall as seen from Sargans.

I've traveled through Sargans many times, and each time I looked up at Gonzen with its impressive wall of rock and thought, "that's one I'd really like to activate." I also know people who have done it, so it's not impossible. However, public transportation up to Gonzen is not very good and entails a long hike, so I was waiting for an opportunity to go with somebody who was driving. Peter HB9TVK was about to do his 100th activation and asked me and some others to join him, and we selected Gonzen as our destination. It turned out to be a large group with 5 hams helping Peter celebrate his 100th.

As noted, doing Gonzen by public transportation entails a long hike; from the highest bus stop it is another 513 vertical meters, 4.5 km and an estimated 1 hour 45 minute hike. By driving up, you can cut these amounts in half.



GPS track of our hike; we started out at and returned to Parking Area 8, which is at the top of this map.



Sign indicating P8 and need to purchase ticket at P1 or P9. View to Tschuggen (HB/SG-048) from P8; in the foreground is HB9TVK's new Tesla, one of the very first in Switzerland.

When you go by car, keep the following in mind: the road from Wartau to the Gonzen area has 9 different parking areas (P1 to P9). The use of any of these parking areas requires you to purchase a ticket. There are ticket machines (coins only) just at P1 (the lowest parking area) and at P9 (the highest parking area). So on your way up stop at P1 and get your ticket (CHF 10.00 for the entire day). The closest parking area to Gonzen is then P8; there is also a restaurant just down the road at P9 you can visit after the activation for a beer or bite to eat.



View of Gonzen (partially hidden in the clouds) from P8.

The hike from P8 to Gonzen is not difficult, I would rate it as T2. It goes for 2.8 km, the ascent is 254 meters, and it took us just over an hour. The views into the Rhine valley are spectacular because you are literally at the top of the vertical rock wall you see from the valley. There is a summit cross which could

be used for an antenna support, but this summit is a very popular hiking destination so there will likely be plenty of people around. However, the activation zone is relatively large, and there are shrubs and trees which you can use to support a mast or into which you can simply throw a wire antenna (which HB9TVK did).



Final approach to Gonzen; in the foreground, Clemens HB9EWO.



From the summit of Gonzen: view into the valley, and view over to the next summit, Tschugga, HB/SG-048.

From Gonzen you can look across and see that Tschugga (HB/SG-048) is not far away at all, and it is basically on the way back to P8. From the barn at the low point between them (Point 1668) it is a climb of 214 meters up relatively steep pasture land; it's not technically difficult, but take your time. Some members of our crew went to the restaurant at P9, while three of us continued up this summit. We

needed somewhat less than an hour to go down from Gonzen to the barn at Point 1668 and then up to the summit. The total distance from Point 1668 to Tschugga and then P8 is 2.6 km. There is no summit cross on Tschugga, but there are plenty of fence posts to which you can lash a mast, and the activation zone is relatively large so multiple stations could spread out there. From here you again get very nice views of the valley and also of Gonzen.



The barn at Point 1668 and the somewhat steep route behind the barn leading to Tschugga's summit.



Peter HB9TVK at the summit of HB/SG-048; in the background to the left is HB/SG-030.