Ashibetsu-dake 芦別岳 (1726m) is a serious alpine peak in the Yubari Range 夕張山地 near Furano City in central Hokkaido. It's a fine ski mountaineering objective, but it requires a good weather window to attempt. Hanmen-yama 半面山 (1377m) is a minor peak serving as an advanceguard of sorts - a necessary transit point for both this Winter Ridge route 冬尾根 and summer trail 夏道 on the way to the main prize. On stormy days, however, Hanmen-yama becomes a worthy objective in its own right, particularly via this winter ridge. There are a number of lappable slopes at the upper part of the route which hold snow well. If the weather is putting a damper on other larger objectives in the area, a walk up Hanmen-yama might be the antidote.





LOCATION

Hanmen-yama sits just east of the summit of Ashibetsu-dake in the middle of the Yubari Range near Furano City in central Hokkaido. This route up the "Winter Ridge" 冬尾根, as it's referred to some, starts at the entrance of the Karamatsu-rindo forestry road カラマツ 沢林道 next to the Furano Recycling Center, on the eastern side of the range.

GENERAL NOTES

Ashibetsu-dake is somewhat of a unicorn in the mountains around Furano City. The summit facilitates access to some committing and challenging terrain. It's a rare day, however, that the weather will allow a summit in deep winter. This winter ridge to the transit-peak that is Hanmen-yama, however, fills the gap when seeking a backcountry adventure when visibility or wind might preclude a summit attempt. In particular the slopes on the south side of the ridge, in the upper portion of the ridge, offer some great lappable terrain.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES

The timing above applies to a leisurely, simple up-and-back mission in very deep mid-winter powder snow. It doesn't take into account lapping terrain.

From the main road, skin about 800m west up the Karamatsu-rindo forestry road カラマ ツ沢林道. About 100m after the gate, at the hard left hairpin bend, continue westwards. You'll walk along a very gently rising clearing

where things finally open up considerably.

Keeping an eye on possible lappable zones on the climber's left (south) as you climb, continue along the ridge. You may need to cut steep kickturns out on the southern slopes at times to effectively gain altitude - the ridge can be narrow in places. The summit of Hanmenyama (1377m) comes all of a sudden. It's a featureless summit, with no clear high point. There's a summit sign, but you'll have to search for it.

From Hanmen-yama, make the call to either continue on to the Ashibetsu-dake summit or descend and make the most of the

in the plantation forest before gaining the ridge at around 460m. The ridge is compact and disturbingly bushy until around the 950m mark,



YUBARI RANGE

lappable terrain off the winter ridge towards Ichinosawa-gawa 一の沢川. The return to the trailhead is back along the ascent ridge.

TRANSPORT

By car: The trailhead is a 20 minute (14km) drive from central Furano City via National Highway 38. There is no dedicated parking at the trailhead. Skiers will typically park in a small cleared area at the very start of Karamatsu-rindo forestry road. There's room to park two cars at a pinch. This spot is in fact a place for snowplows to push snow when clearing roads after heavy snow. If parking after heavy snow and before plows have come through, be sensitive to snowplow access (avoid parking on the side of the road).

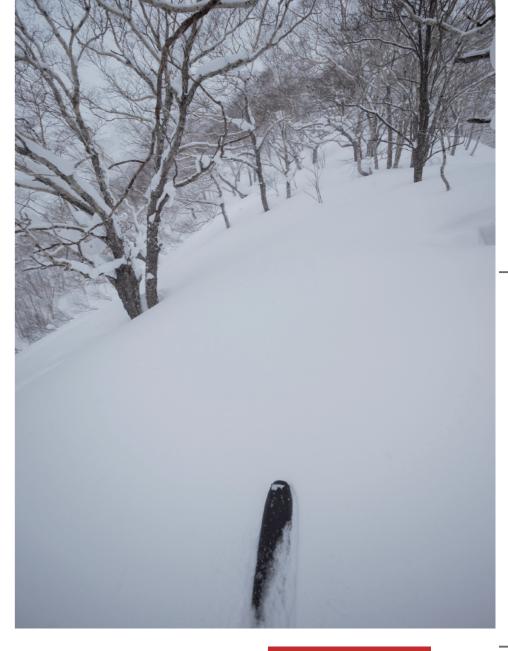
Public transport: The JR Yamabe Station 山部駅 is a 40 minute walk (3km) from the trailhead. Yamabe Station is a 14-minute train ride from Furano Station.

SAFETY NOTES

The slopes on the south side of the winter ridge all drop into a deep and narrow gully (the Ichino-sawa-gawa gully). This is a serious terrain trap where skiers would get buried very deep if caught in an avalanche. Ski with caution and be aware of what the snowpack is doing. If shooting for the Ashibetsu-dake summit, see the Ashiibetsu-dake Shindo route ski touring post on HokkaaidoWilds.org for safety notes.

ONSEN NEARBY

If there's just one thing that the immediate Furano area lacks, it's good natural onsen. Drive 40 minutes up to the Tokachi Onsen area, and you'll be in heaven - our pick is Hakuginso's massive outdoor onsen complex. But if you're headed back to Furano, try out the pokey but cute Hotel Naturwald Furano ホテ ルナトゥールヴァルト富良野 (600yen), right next to the Furano ski area.



Japanese Map Glossary

Romaji	Kanji	English
bunki cho dake/mine eki goya/koya hinangoya ike kawa/gawa kako ko/mizumi kyo numa onsen sawa taira/daira tani/dani taki toge yama/san/zan	分町岳。水難、水水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水、水	junction town peak station hut shelter pond river crater lake gorge pond hot spring stream plateau valley waterfall pass mountain

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

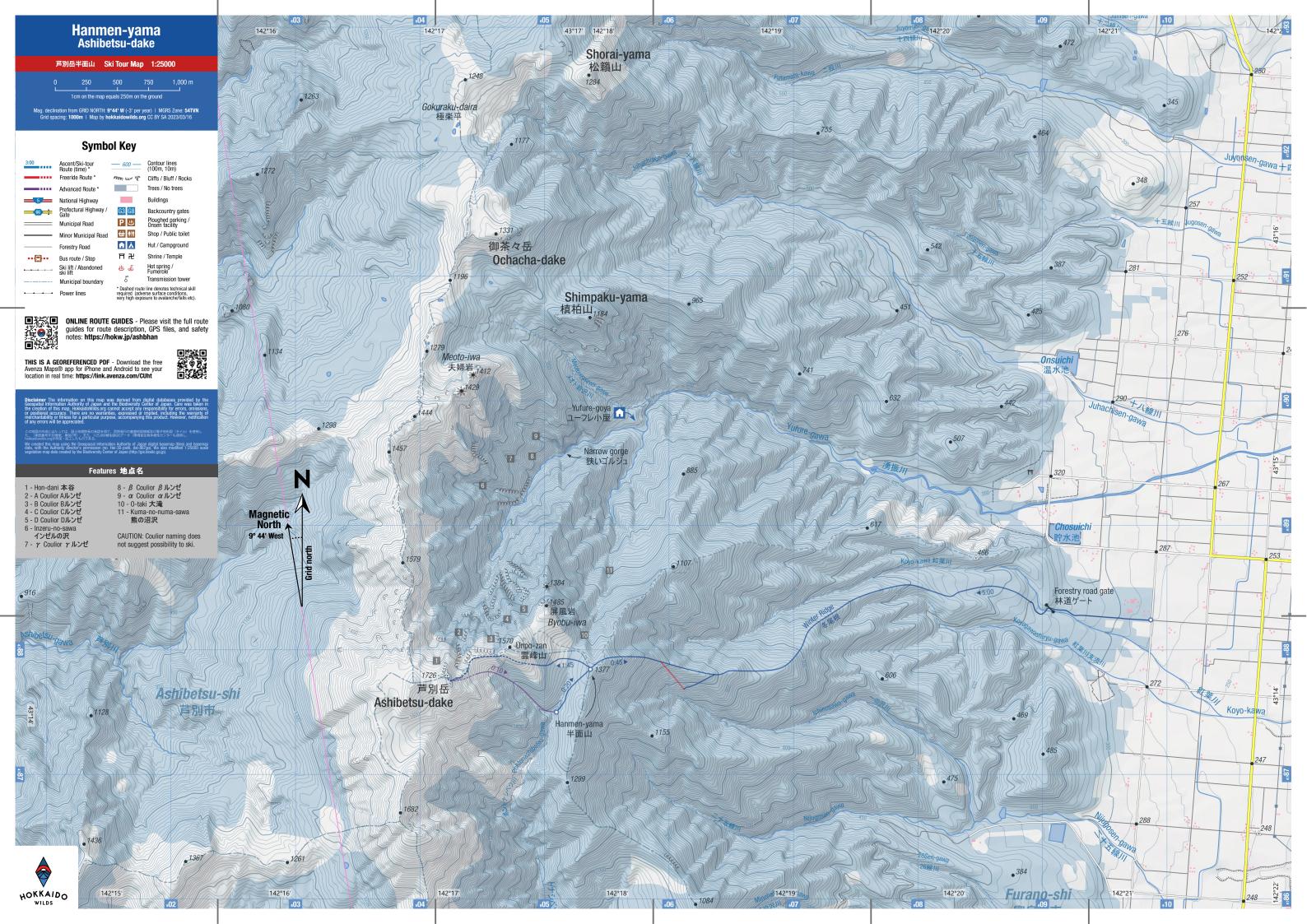
Please visit the full route guides for GPS



TEXT, PHOTOS, MAP I Rob Thomson

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PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1

Load your printer with A3 printer paper (297mm x 420mm). If you've only got Tabloid or Ledger size (279mm x 432 mm), just follow the instructions below. You'll achive an accurate scale, but the map will be clipped a little at the top and bottom.

STEP 2

Open the print window by clicking on File > Print (or hitting Ctrl + P on your keyboard).

STEP 3

Make sure "Actual Size" is selected.

STFP 4

For double-sided printing, select "Print on both sides of paper".

STFP 5

For best results, select the highest quality print option available on your printer (settings will vary).

STEP 6

You won't need this instructions page, so just select the pages that don't include this instruction sheet.

STEP 7

Click "Print".

PLEASE PRINT AT 'ACTUAL SIZE' (NO SCALING)

The 1:25,000 scale used in the map is accurate if the PDF is printed without scaling (i.e., ACTUAL SIZE). Follow the instructions on this page to ensure an accurate rendering of the scale.



ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

