

Trail Description
Wild West



Trail Name:	Wild West
Primary trail used:	West Ridge Trail
Distance:	15km
Trail type:	Out and back
Ascent/Descent:	981m (+) / 981m (-)
Grading:	BLACK
Start + Finish points:	Clock Tower, Mt Buller Village Square
Via trails:	Summit Nature Walk (north side), Mt Buller, West Ridge Trail
Highlight features:	Mind and lung blowing views, knife-edge ridge running, beautiful saddle pastures
Descriptor:	<p><i>This run is not for the faint-of-heart, nor someone with a fear of heights. This is for those wanting Adventure, capital A. From the Mt Buller Summit it's adrenaline all the way as you crack down the West Ridge with hairy drops either side, plenty of scrambling (and let's face it, some is purely un-runnable) before the second half delivers in spades with sweet singletrack downhill running. You can arrange for a pick-up at the bottom, but where's the fun in that? (NOTE: this run is not for beginners or those without some wilderness experience. Be prepared for rough weather at any stage and carry a topographical map to get your bearings via contour lines).</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Beginning at the Clock Tower in the Mt Buller Village Square, head west, uphill on Athletes Walk (the concrete walkway heading uphill from the Square). 2. The walkway joins with Summit Road. Continue on up until you reach the entrance to the Arlberg. To your right there is a singletrail leading towards a wooden arch. Running straight under and on, towards the Northside Discovery Centre you are now on the Summit Nature Walk. 3. As you reach the high side of the Northside Discovery Centre and a road crossing, keep running along the Summit Nature Walk, above Burnt Hut Reservoir and eventually to a small grove with a directional marker pointing out what's filling the impressive view. 4. The trail continues on, graded and good running underfoot, to the Summit Car Park where you then start the short, sharp climb to the summit of Mt Buller (reached at 2.5km). Take stock, look down: it's a big view and a big drop. And you're going to run it. 5. Follow the ridgeline straight down. The trail, starting to get rocky underneath, requires concentration, and occasionally is rather indistinct. Stay on the knife-edge as it drops – a quick scan of the rough landscape in front is usually enough to pick out the trail ahead. 6. At approx. 2.8km, start looking for the trail to drop slightly to your left. The natural inclination is to head to the right, where you will see a larger cairn in the distance. This is actually the beginning of the North Ridge. Instead you will find the trail veers off and down slightly left, dropping to the high side of a rockfall/scree field, demarked also by low shrubs. It's a steep scramble down, but after the scree, you will eventually pick up a much clearer trail that starts to rollercoaster along the humps of West Ridge. 7. At approx. 4km you will reach the top of one of the humps, greeting a 'West Ridge Walking Trail' sign along with magnificent vistas toward Mt Timbertop and down into the valley and Mansfield. Underfoot is a mix of scramble, rock hop and the short bursts of fun runnable but technical trail. 8. At 4.5km the terrain eases up, and in fact becomes super fun as it weaves through small high meadows dotted with stunning gums, with glimpses of views back towards the ridge you've just dropped off. From here the trail is easily discernable and runnable all the way to the turn-around trailhead, with a short section of foliage closing in for a stretch creating a tunnel of sorts. 9. Popping out onto a 4WD trail, you can meet your pick-up by turning left, uphill, to get to the access road (Doughty's Road). 10. But of course, you've decided to run back up. Simply retrace your route, noting that the lactic will be let loose on the legs: it's an approx. 700-metre vertical climb ahead in just 5km.
Rating /45 (technical)	42 / 45
Rating /10 (indicative)	9 / 10