

News in brief

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Bear in Graubünden

The summer headlines in all Swiss media: A brown bear entered the canton of Graubünden from the Italian Alps and made its way through the National Park, seemingly en route towards South Tyrol. During its four-week stay in Switzerland the brown bear killed a calf and at least two sheep. The last Swiss brown bear was killed in the lower Engadine in 1904.

Deiss conquers the peak

On 1 August 150 years ago, a team of climbers conquered the Dufour (VS), Switzerland's highest peak. To commemorate this pioneering achievement, Joseph Deiss and several teams



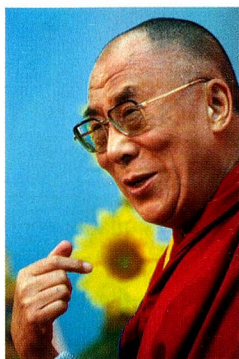
of mountaineers climbed the legendary summit: after a seven-hour ascent to 4634 meters above sea level, the 59-year-old Federal Councillor enjoyed a panoramic view of a Switzerland which he wants to be a forward-looking country. A fine metaphor for the challenges facing the Minister of the Economy, including negotiations on an important economic cooperation agreement with the United States.

Samuel Schmid booed on the Rütli

At his National Day speech on the Rütli, Federal Councillor Samuel Schmid was booed by



some 700 members of the radical right. But the Federal President was unfazed, staying as cool as cucumber and stressing the importance of the integration of foreigners and foreign cultures for our country's future.



Dalai Lama in Zurich

On the occasion of the 70th birthday of the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, the University of Zurich's Ethnographic Museum presented an exhibition on the history of the 14 Dalai Lamas (from the 14th century on). For eight days in early August the spiritual leader of Tibet held a daily four-hour audience with his followers in Zurich's Hallenstadion.

2005 armament programme

Samuel Schmid can relax. The 2005 armament programme, worth CHF 1.02 billion, looks set to be approved by the National Council in the autumn session of parliament. At any rate, the National Council's security policy commission has given the go-ahead for the arms purchases proposed by the Federal Council. The shopping list includes 20 light training and transport helicopters worth CHF 310 million.

Christoph Blocher at the Marché-Concours

Federal Councillor Blocher's appearance at the Equestrian Festival of Saignelégier (JU) was interrupted by some 300 demonstrators protesting against his presence and his asylum policy. A few days later the Jura government apologised to the Federal Council,

and shortly after this the Head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police – not without some pride – presented a first review of his asylum policy: within the space of one year, the number of new asylum seekers in Switzerland dropped by 42%, while numbers elsewhere in Europe declined by an average of 22%.

Roger Federer – record breaker

After becoming the first tennis player in history to win four grand slam finals, Roger Federer added another record to his belt when he became the only player to win the four Masters Series tournaments in the same year: Indian Wells, Key Biscayne, Hamburg and, most recently, Cincinnati, Ohio, where he won the 31st title of his career and the 9th this year. Former tennis ace Marc Rosset was dismissed under rather mysterious circumstances from his post as captain of the Swiss Davis Cup Team.

Switzerland under water

Rail routes down, mud avalanches, landslides, flooded cellars and ground floors, contaminated drinking water, dead telephone lines: bad weather at the end of August caused chaos in many regions throughout Switzerland. Rivers and lakes burst their banks, and around 1500 people had to be evacuated in central Switzerland. Parts of many cities were under water (Berne, Lucerne). The bad weather claimed five victims and caused more than a billion francs in damage to property.



Controversial tank sales

The Federal Council has provisionally stopped the sale of 180 M-113 tanks to Iraq. The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco) must first determine



whether the tanks are really intended for police, border security and material transport purposes – and not for military deployment.

Thun in the Champions League

After beating Swedish team Malmö 3:0, Thun qualified to compete against Europe's elite teams – while FC Basel was



denied the opportunity after their defeat by Werder Bremen. Grasshoppers of Zurich and FC Zurich qualified for the UEFA Cup.

Mummies in the basement

Two mummies were discovered in the basement of the Canton of Jura Archaeological Museum. Initially they were thought to

be Latin American in origin, but it now appears that they are African. The cantonal archaeologist of Basle is currently examining this potentially important find.