

Swiss Holiday Scene

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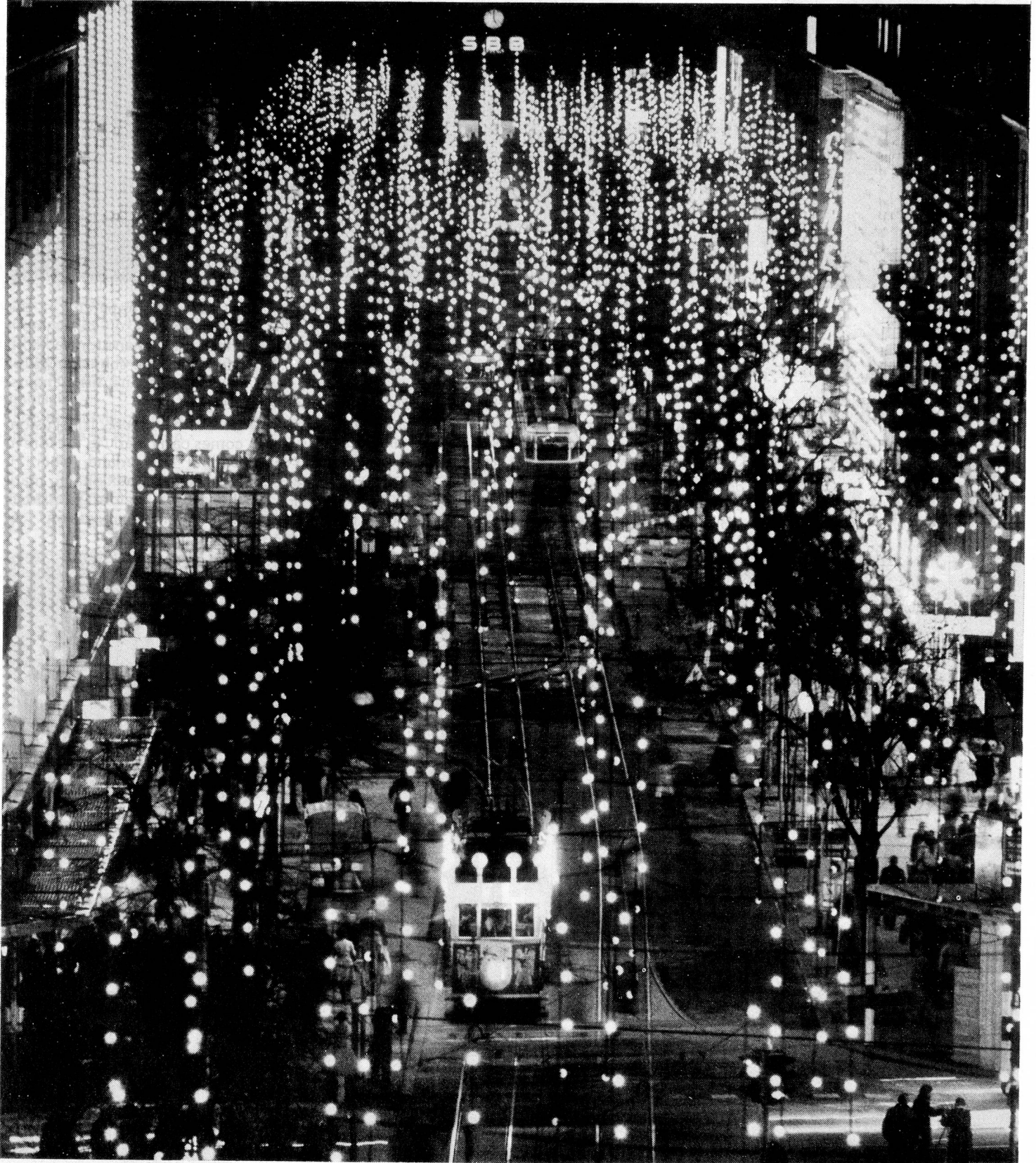
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Swiss Holiday Scene

Compiled by the Swiss National Tourist Office



A snowstorm of lights greet St. Nicholas when he rides his magic tram down Zurich's Bahnhofstrasse at Christmastime. More Swiss Christmas pictures overleaf.

Swiss Holiday Scene



THE BISHOP FROM ASIA MINOR

DECEMBER in Switzerland is the month of St. Nicholas. He makes his first appearance on December 6.

Sometimes he goes on his rounds dressed like a venerable bishop; at others he appears as a bogeyman to frighten the children and make them promise to be good.

The saintly figure goes back to the Bishop of Myra in Asia

Minor, who rapidly became popular and legendary throughout Europe for his miraculous deeds and acts of charity.

His role as the friend of children was especially welcome to the medieval church, since it pushed more and more into the background older pagan customs which were widespread at the beginning of December.

But the pre-Christian influen-

ces are still apparent in the noise, threats of punishment and in the demand for placatory gifts which are characteristic of St. Nicholas and his hangers-on.

The dual aspect of the custom comes particularly to the fore in Central Switzerland, where it has become traditional to mark the period before Christmas with big, noisy processions.



The Christmas Fairy offers "Willisauerringli"



Colourful dancers accompany St. Nicholas

Century of curling

IT is 100 years since curling was played at St Moritz for the first time. To mark the centenary grand celebrations will take place on the frozen lake of this famous resort between January 23 and 25.

One hundred curling teams will be in St. Moritz with a total of 400 players from 10 countries – including the Ivory Coast, Canada and Scotland – who will participate in a tournament on 50 curling rinks. Some 800 stones and 400 brooms will be required for the games.

As more than 140 teams have applied for enrolment in the tournament, an extra challenge is at present facing the organisers.

The event will be covered by both radio and television.

Slalom to success

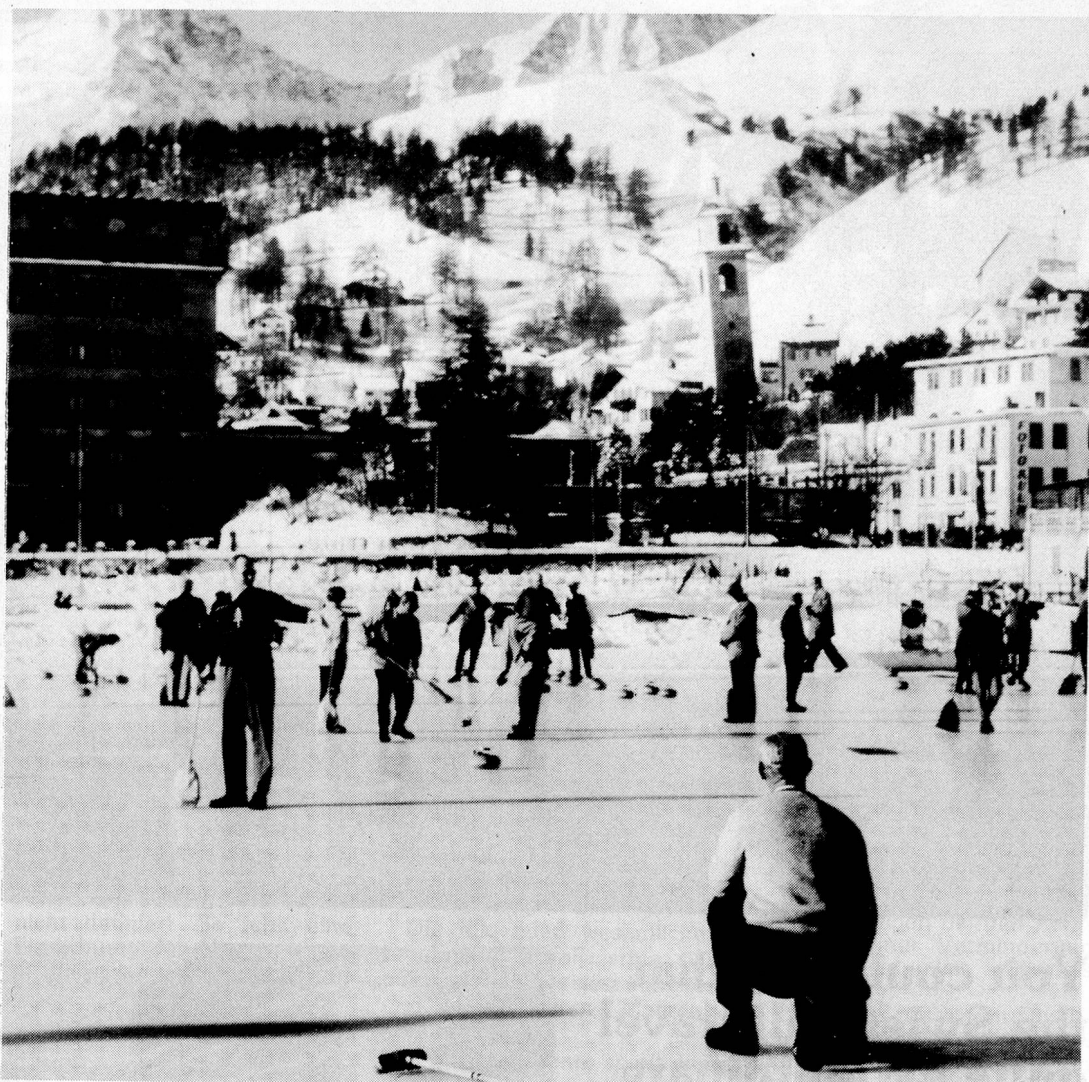
HIGHLIGHT of the Daily Mail International Ski Show, held at Earls Court, London, was a fun dual slalom relay race between teams from the House of Commons, House of Lords and the Swiss Parliament.

Despite the skills of Winston Churchill (MP for Stretford), John Hannam (Exeter), Roger Moate (Faversham) and Kenneth Carlisle (Lincoln), the Swiss politicians won both races, returning the fastest time of 20.62 seconds on the giant artificial ski slope measuring 51

metres long by 14 metres high.

The Swiss politicians were Dr Fred Rubi, Adolf Ogi (both representing the Canton of Berne), Manfred Aregger (Canton of Lucerne) and Christian Grobet (Canton of Geneva).

They flew to London at the invitation of the Swiss National Tourist Office, Swissair and the Daily Mail Ski Show. During their short stay they also visited the House of Lords.



Curling at St. Moritz



THE Swiss turned back the pages of history to the early days of winter sports as their contribution to this year's Daily Mail International Ski Show in London.

Swissair and the Swiss National Tourist Office recreated the traditional reception area of the "Hotel Schweizerhof", and the decor included replicas of winter sports equipment of long ago.

The all-knowing concierge of the hotel was ready with

advice and literature for visitors, together with advance information of new sports facilities planned for the 1980s.

In our picture the Schweizerhof's concierge – impersonated by the Swiss National Tourist Office's general manager in London, Mr Albert Kunz – offers a welcoming drink to Mrs Beverley Rees, wife of the managing editor of the Daily Mail, and the paper's editor, Mr David English.

Events of the month

Dec 4-7	Zürich	Züspa: 4th International collectors' fair
Dec 4-8	Lucerne	Tennis: Smash-Cup: international tennis tournament
Dec 7-20	Davos	Congress Centre: 29th and 30th courses on «Operative treatment of fractures and non-unions»
Dec 13/14	Davos	7th International cross-country skiing days
Dec 17-21	Geneva	Palais des expositions: automobile sport festival
Dec 18	Lenzerheide-Valbella	13th Lenzerheide-Valbella public night cross-country skiing event
Dec 21	Rapperswil	«Star singing», procession of animals and Nativity play
Dec 21	St. Moritz	Skiing world cup, men, downhill
Dec 26-31	Davos	Ice hockey: 54th Spengler Cup



You could say that the Swiss will travel quite extraordinary distances to sample some home cooking

SOME of the leaders of the tourist industry in the Lake of Geneva region, Fribourg and Neuchâtel wait above for breakfast to be served in a Manchester hotel.

And on the right is just a section of the breakfast buffet. The invitation, which went out to travel agents throughout the North of England, was to a "typical Swiss breakfast" – but such was the choice of goodies that it was more like a banquet.

The 19-strong delegation included directors of tourist offices, hoteliers and the executive secretary of the Association of Private Schools.

The following morning they gave a second gigantic breakfast at the Swiss Centre restaurants in Leicester Square for the benefit of southern travel agents.

