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NEW VIDEOS

Alpine Express. John Cocking.

PAL VHS & BETA. NTSC VHS

This video is produced in the form of three journeys starting from the village of Kandersteg. A very good potted history is given to each major town on the tours, along with a lot of background information on the railways themselves. A grand view of the "Nostalgic Orient Express" arriving in Switzerland, with an SNCF 141R in charge helps to set the holiday scene. The first tour is on the BLS to Spiez & Zweisimmen and then the MOB to Montreux via the "Super Panoramic Express", with views of both the "Super" and "Panoramic Expresses" as well as other stock that regularly work the line. Views from the front of the Super Panoramic (*How did they get the front seat?*) and many lineside and mountain shots give a very good view of the route. From Montreux the journey continues via the SBB to Brig, where the BLS provide the connection back to Kandersteg. The second journey is to the Jungfrauoch, showing very good shots of both old and new stock on the BOB, WAB and the JB. The views of both the scenery and the railways were excellent, but by necessity brief as there is much to cover in this area. The final journey is by the BLS to Brig and then on the famous FO "Glacier Express" to Andermatt. Background information and views of all the various stock, including the new observation coaches, operating this line is shown. From Andermatt the route is via Göschenen and the SBB Gotthard mainline to Luzern where a change is made to the metregauge Brünig line for the journey to Interlaken and back to Kandersteg. The sound in one or two sections tended to break up a little, but this very minor fault did not effect the overall enjoyment of the video. I have since learnt that a new sound system is being used for future videos which will overcome this problem. Most enjoyable.

The Rhätischebahn in Jubilee Year. John Cocking. PAL VHS & BETA. NTSC VHS

When I saw the title I expected to see a video on just the parades etc that have taken place on the RhB, but how wrong I was as here was an in depth view of the RhB during both the celebrations and going about its normal work. The opening part of the celebrations shows a most unusual view of an RhB Ge6/6^{II}, a DB "ICE" and an SBB "RABe" all running side by side into Chur. But the king of the show must surely be the 100 year old steam locomotive No.1 "Rhatia", shown working both the Chur to Arosa section - preceded by a man with a red flag - as well as the Davos line to Kublis where on one occasion it ran out of steam. For the fans of the "Krokodile" there is ample proof that some are still alive and well, as they work the many regional stopping trains. "Murphy's Law" came into force during the parade in June, it rained heavily, but the shots of the various older locomotives such as the Ge2/4 and Ge4/6 were captured nicely. The routes from Chur to Disentis and from Reichenau-Tamins to St Moritz are covered in as much depth as time allows, with many superb views of express and regional traffic (*modellers, note the many varied formations*) in the Vorderrheine valley and around the mountain section north of Preda.

The Bernina is portrayed with many views of both, the "Bernina Express" with its modern motive power, and of the older locomotives and Triebwagens. After scenes of street running towards Tirano, the video shows the FS station with a shot of the latest "Pendolino" train leaving for Milan. The whole show ends with views of the RhB Bernina display held at Poschiavo station. A really enjoyable video which I am sure will prove popular with fans of the RhB.

Lugano - Luzern. Thusis - St Moritz. Rincovision. Zürich. PAL VHS
Zermatt - Gornergrat. Wengen - Grindelwald.

These 4 videos are part of a series being produced to cover the railways of Switzerland. There is no script on any of the tapes, just the sounds of the locomotive except on the WAB tape which must have been filmed outside the Triebwagen as the only sound is the rack rail and cog. On the Gotthard tape a small map is superimposed very carefully to show where the scenery being viewed is located. This is the only tape that has large gaps in it, which is dictated by the fact that the entire journey is much longer than the tape. The Gotthard tape does not reveal the locomotive or train, but judging by the station clocks I think the train is the northbound "Carlo Magno" bound for Dortmund. The tape of the RhB has a rather unusual feature in that the approach to stations is viewed as the locomotive approaches, and then quickly cuts to the rear of the train showing the other side of the station which could be of assistance to modellers of this line. The journey via Kleine Scheidegg gave the impression that the camera was mounted on a wagon in front of the Triebwagen, one point I noticed was the absence of people, just one or two in an hour, which aroused my curiosity as to when it was filmed. With the sun behind the camera the Eiger and Jungfrau mountains were shown in all their glory. The tape of the journey from Zermatt to the summit at Gornergrat was taken with quite a considerable amount of snow still on the ground, which I think gave more atmosphere to this incredible line. The view of the Matterhorn mountain from the train was really impressive.

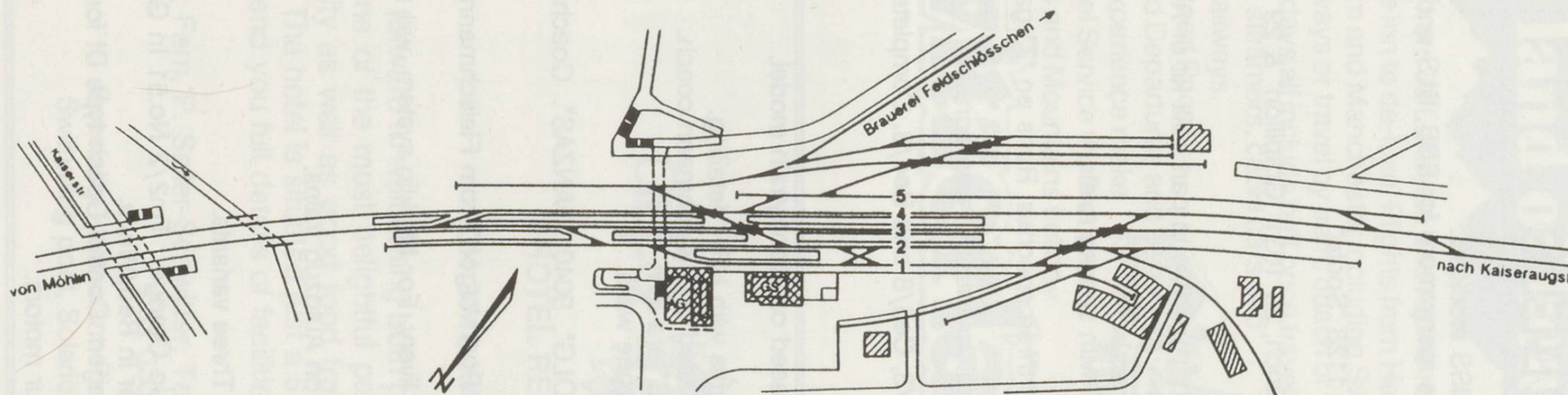
My overall impression of these videos was that they were very well done and were well worth the expense, I am not sure if the discount will apply to the four new tapes due later this year, but in any case I look forward to seeing the tapes of the Bernina line and the Appenzell route, the latter having been sadly neglected by cameramen in the past.

Fäszination Gotthardbahn. By RV TV Ltd.

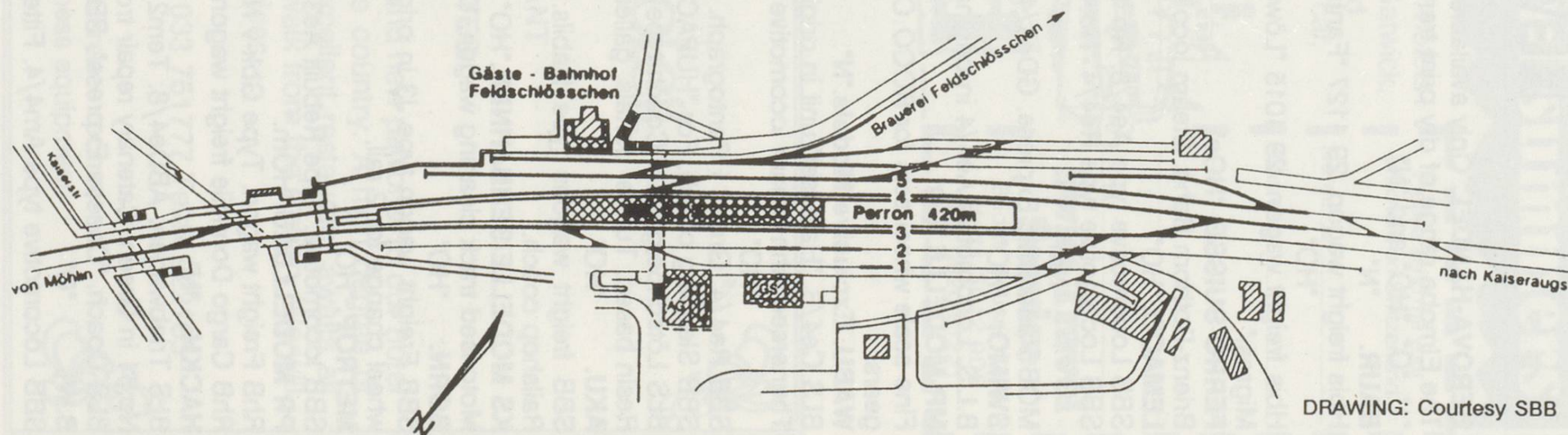
PAL VHS and BETA. NTSC VHS

When I saw the cover to the video with its German title I assumed that the coverage would be the old Gotthardbahn route from Luzern to Chiasso, but the cover photograph of the TEE "Gottardo" in the moonlight rather upset that train of thought. A potted history to the route is given at the start of the tape along with some drawings of the older crossing points. The start of the video journey is Basel, being the principal feed point for the route, the reason for this being explained in the script. The trackside shots along the route were very good indeed, but I could not understand why the camera cut away to the next shot, half way through a freight train, making it difficult for anybody studying train formations. As so many trains are shown maybe it should not be impossible to work out some of them. There is a very nice shot of a spritely Ae4/7 at speed, proving to the world that there is a lot of life left in the older locomotives. Brief excursions are made on some of the railways found alongside the route, such as the Arth Rigi, Furka Oberalp and Monte Generoso which may have been done to whet the appetite of the viewer who is left wanting to see more of these lines. Also included was a momentary visit to the SBB Main Workshops at Bellinzona, - a useful subject for a future video - with its rather unconventional looking battery powered Ta2/2 used for shunting within the workshops. This viewer got the impression that the journey from Bellinzona to Chiasso had to be covered quickly before the tape ran out, maybe caused by the dallying in the Locarno area looking at the semi naked ladies. Two debit points that I felt marred an otherwise excellent video, was the excessive use of the overlay maps which in the case of Arth-Goldau obscured the proper view of the important railway sheds, and the distorted soundtrack of the train taken from inside the carriage, albeit for a very short period. Those points apart the video is most enjoyable and a useful reference for students of the line.

RHEINFELDEN. SBB STATION. OLD LAYOUT



RHEINFELDEN. SBB & FELDSCHLÖSSEN BREWERY STATION. REBUILT LAYOUT.



DRAWING: Courtesy SBB