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NEW VIDEOS

Tirano to St. Moritz. Rincovision. Zürich.

PAL VHS.

Tape running time. 1 hr 54 minutes.

Journey time 2hrs 13 mins.

The area covered by this video is new territory to me, I have never travelled the line so was able to view it without preconceived ideas of what it should be like. The end result was that I watched a video that was not only excellent in photographic quality but left me with a feeling that here was a line that I must visit. The only sounds are those of the locomotive or to be more precise the Triebwagen and the track. The opening scene of a train on the famous Brusio spiral and the maps at the start to show exactly where the railway is was a good idea, as I assume that this video is not intended to just preach to the converted. The street running of the train at the start of the journey as it crossed into Switzerland and also in the towns at the southern end of the route was quite an eye-opener. Here is a major league railway operating quite long trains of two ABe4/4's and up to seven coaches behaving like a suburban tram system. I lost count of the number of places where it would be possible to film this line from the roadside. The scenery en route varied from urban scenes at the start to wide open valleys leading up to the summit of the line at Bernina Hospiz. The Swiss railways are renowned for their rapid starts from stations, but the exit from Pontresina would make a 'Concorde' captain envious. One major problem the video producer has is the concentration factor, for me I was enthralled for the whole tape, and felt that here was something that anybody studying, or just interested in this line, should have. Highly recommended.

Gossau to Wasserauen. Rincovision. Zürich.

PAL VHS.

Tape running time 52 minutes.

Journey time. 57 minutes.

In the North East of Switzerland, in the Appenzeller region, there is a metre-gauge railway called the Appenzellerbahn (of course!). The opening shot of the video shows an ABe4/4 pendelzug climbing the hill, and then cuts to the Swiss the area maps. All Rincovision videos now show the name of the station being passed on a small blue board at the bottom of the screen. A brief shot of the driver is shown, but apart from that the view is that seen out of the front window accompanied by the sounds of the track etc. This video, which almost runs to timetable, captures some of the atmosphere of the Appenzellerbahn, whose history can be traced back to the Schweizerische Lokalbahnen formed in 1875, shows that the A.B. is a very sprightly creature as it weaves its way along the valleys to Wasserauen. There are plenty of opportunities to view various types of stock, including some views of the stock of the standard-gauge Bodensee Toggenburg as the train passes the sheds at Herisau in which are stored the historic coaches of the BT and the ex VHB locomotives Be4/4's. It was very soon apparent from the video that here is a very modern railway system signalled throughout according to the S.B.B. Regulations of 82. It is obvious from the video that there are many places where lineside photography is possible with the minimum of effort. Although this video may not have the appeal of one about the S.B.B. or the Rh.B., I think it is worthy of a place in any collection based on its quality and content.

NEW VIDEOS.

Zweisimmen to Montreux. Rincovision, Zürich.

PAL VHS.

Tape running time 1hr 40 minutes.

Journey time. 1hr 47 minutes.

The tape opens with a view of the 14.20 ex Montreux, Panoramic Express in Gstaad, and then changes to the now familiar map of Switzerland and later to one of the route. As members will know the journey time to Montreux varies greatly, but I have based the time on the assumption that the train used is the 15.15 ex Zweisimmen. That assumption is working on the basis of stops made and the station clock at Montreux. This route is possibly as well known as the Glacier Express, and has proved to be very popular with the tourists evidence of which is the number of Panoramic Express services per day. From a railway enthusiasts point of view this video may be a little disappointing, due to the fact that the cameraman insists on filming a rather self-conscious driver instead of the route out of each of the stations. There may have been a perfectly valid reason for so doing, but for me it spoils a very good video. The rest of the journey is very good indeed, with many chances to see other rolling stock and stations on the route. Once again this railway is fully signalled to the latest standards. In almost every crossing point on the route was a train waiting for the Panoramic express to pass, showing the route is an important path from the South West to the Centre of the country. In spite of the minor point about the exits from stations, this video was most enjoyable and should prove most useful to modellers of the line.

Genève to Delémont. Rincovision, Zürich.

PAL VHS.

Tape running time. 1hr 50 minutes.

Journey time. 2hrs 4 minutes.

For anybody who thought that the S.B.B. trains travelled at a fairly sedately speed, this video is an eye-opener. For nearly two hours the viewer is treated to a really exhilarating journey along the shores of Lakes Genève, Neuchâtel and Biel. The opening scene is of an intercity express emerging from the cutting from Genève airport, followed by the map of Switzerland and the map of the route to be shown. The journey of IC623, Genève Airport to Biel, commences with a rapid departure from platform six of the main station out past the carriage sidings and on into the countryside beyond. In a very short time the train is travelling at speed along the lake-shore, making good use of the almost level track. Shortly after Gland the train passes an eight coach passenger train hauled by three Re4/4^{III}s, then races on to Morges. Here the sidings and some stock of the metre-gauge Bière-Morges-Apples railway are visible. At Denges-Echandens the train swings onto the 'Lausanne by-pass line' via what must be the Swiss railway equivalent of England's 'Spaghetti' junction, before joining the Lausanne to Vallorbe/Yverdon line via an equally complex flyover junction at Bussigny. The first stop is at Yverdon where the huge workshops of the S.B.B. can be seen, and then the train races on over the single line past Onnens, Concise to the twin tracks of Gorgier, all the time following the shore of Lake Neuchâtel, where a brief stop is made before rolling on to Biel laying 30kms further north. Just outside Biel the locomotive was subjected to an attack by 'Kamikaze' insects, but as soon as the train stopped in the station some slick camera work of the driver adjusting his 'Dienstfahrplan' hid from view somebody frantically cleaning the window. From Biel the train assumes the role of an ordinary express as far as Basel. From Lengnau the train is travelling on the single line belonging to the B.L.S, stopping only at Grenchen Nord before plunging into the long Grenchenburg tunnel, then on through Moutier to Delémont. As is the case with the other tapes, all station names are shown and the soundtrack is of the train itself. Verdict: Excellent.