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Re4/4 460.029 passing through Olten, June 1993

Photographing the first 460s

by Steve Horabin

Photographs by the author

It was during our visit to the SLM works on the SRS' 10th Anniversary Tour in July 1990 that I first saw a Re4/4 460 locomotive. With the locomotive in the early stages of construction, it was difficult to imagine what a splendid looking machine it would turn out to be.

Now in 1993 the first 460s are rolling off the production line and into service.

For my two week's holiday this year I stayed on the Vierwäldstattersee and one of my ambitions was to seek out and photograph the some examples of the class. My first sighting was on an early trip on the Gotthard near Wassen; as I was heading south a double headed freight passed by northbound.

I left my train at Bellinzona and returned immediately on a local service to Biasca, hoping to see a 460 in the sidings. Unfortunately I was out of luck, but whilst here I noticed a water column, a relic from the steam age.

Many local services on the Gotthard line are now replaced by buses, so I made my way

to the station forecourt for the bus to Faido. This was a most enthralling journey as the bus follows the old road which parallels the railway for most of the way. One is able to examine the line's magnificent construction and it is quite an experience to have a huge freight headed by two Re6/6 460s passing by.

From Faido I set out to walk up through the spirals to Rodi-Fiesso. The pathway is quite steep and fairly overgrown; with hindsight it would have been better walking down. There are several places where good views of the railway can be had and I was able to take my first photograph of a 460 hauling a northbound passenger service.

A few days later I happened to be in Olten observing the general scene when 460.029 approached from the Bern direction with a Basel-bound IC service. Three minutes later there was a three coach test train, topped and tailed by unidentified 460 locomotives on a test run.

I ventured on to Niederbipp where I was



Re4/4 460.024 at Niederbipp, June 1993

able to get my first shot of a stationary 460, 460.024 which seemed to be there for driver training. 460.024 was sighted more than any other of its class during my stay.

The next step was to get some haulage and, putting my faith in the *Modern Railways* article and list of 460 class hauled trains, I travelled to Thun from Luzern via Konofingen to meet up with Train IC819 Basel - Brig, which was hauled by 460.005. I got off at the next

stop, Spiez, it is impossible in so short a journey to give an assessment of its performance. It certainly was an attractive sight heading a rake of SBB, DB and BLS coaches.

Perhaps by the time this is published we may have an update on those locomotives in operation so far.

The locomotives seen during the period 26 June to 10 July 1993 were 460.005/008/015/024-025/029/032-033/036/039/045.

Re4/4 460.005 at Spiez, June 1993

