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Summer Observations

by Stephen J. Barnes

Class 460

I observed these operating in multiple on freight over the Gotthard, normally on container, swap-body and Interfrigo type traffic. Typical combinations are 460 048 + 460 034 (6/8/93) and 460 052 + 460 020 (12/8/93).

Class 450 and Zürcher S-Bahn

As mentioned previously DPZ stock has taken over route S12 from Re 4/4^{II} + EW I formations. The next route to be converted will be the S9, although I saw no evidence of this by mid-August. An interesting point is the stabling of RBe4/4 pendelzug sets for S9 at Arth Goldau over the weekend. At least three or four 6-car sets can be seen.

Class 540 RBe4/4 (ex 14XX)

540 008/036/042/062 were all observed in service during August, all with new doors. EW I/II stock with rebuilt doors is now used in service around Lausanne and on the Winterthur - Stein am Rhein service.

PTT

The new Ee3/3 No.14 is now in service.

Pendelzug services in the Luzern area

Luzern - Zug (via Rotkreuz) mainly Re4/4's + Ls

Luzern - Göschenen/Airolo mainly RBe4/4 + EW I/II in NPZ livery (see June *Swiss Express*)

Luzern - Olten and Luzern - Bern RBD4/4 Kolibri 4-car sets.

The Aarau - Zofingen (via Suhr) and Aarau - Wettingen (Table 645) services are operated by Olten-based 2-car NPZ units, ie, with no intermediate trailers.

Shunter location

The following shunters were to be seen this summer at the quoted sites:

Luzern based shunters

Arth Goldau	16403/16410
Ebikon	16320 (see also <i>Notepad</i>)
Luzern	18821-23/16407/16411
Rothenburg	16405
Rotkeruz	1614
Wolhausen	16406

Olten based shunters

Aarau	18432
Solothurn	16402
Wohlen	16394
Zofingen	16399

Other shunters

Altdorf	Tm 235 001-5
Birrfeld (nr.Brugg)	Em 831 000-5
Erstfeld	Tm 235 008-9
Suhr	Em 831 001-2
Zürich	Tm 235 005-6

A Courteous Gesture

Track maintenance was carried out on the line between Meggen and Küssnacht-am-Rigi in August. The line is closed at night from 24:00 - 05:00. This is not unusual in itself, but what is of interest is that every house adjacent to the line received a notice through the door, giving advanced warning of the work, dates, times, and reasons and apologising in advance for the inconvenience and disturbance. It was very noisy!

Regional services

Further swingeing cuts to Regional services were due for Autumn and the 1994 timetable changes. Much debate was evident in the Swiss regional press. The "private" companies were often arguing that the hourly *Taktfahrplan* is too expensive and cannot be maintained.

The SBB thought appears to be a minimum service of 2-hourly intervals, if a service is to be retained at all on loss making routes.

From October the St.Maurice - St.Gingolph service was due to be converted to bus operation. I travelled on this route in August and found that the irregular service and awkward connections made travel arrangements difficult. Furthermore the connection with boats at St.Gingolph were only possible by sprinting down the hill! It appears that the SBB is applying BR 1960s style tactics.

At present many lines suffering from reduced services or withdrawal of local services (eg Laufen - Delémont are retaining freight traffic. But how long will this be for? *Cargo Domizil* is already being rationalised; when the accountants look at costs, in BR Sector style, I can

see complete line closures being widespread.

However, at least the replacement bus service is at regular intervals and integrated with rail.

Points on modelling

The Zürich S-Bahn DPZ models produced by Andreas Hui Modelbahn, Ardez were a limited run which sold out very quickly. A second series will be produced in Autumn 1994 - I wrote to him for details.

A comment on prices - unfortunately the regular advertisers in *Swiss Express* do not always offer competitive prices. It is often cheaper in Switzerland, with one or two items of ROCO stock, noticeably so. Beware!

Editor's Jottings

For the Swiss, 1993 has been an *annus horribilis*, a year to endure and then forget. First there was the fire that destroyed the centuries old Kappelbrücke at Luzern, now there are the disastrous floods that have devastated Brig. I hesitated to comment, thinking that disasters so often come in threes, only to realise that the cuts in Regionals train services should qualify for that description, since the Kappelbrücke will be rebuilt, Brig will be cleared of mud and debris and the damage repaired, but as those of us who lived through the Beeching disaster will know, the ruthless hacking of essential train services and the virtual abandonment of the Taktfarplan will almost certainly destroy a valuable asset.

We are indebted to two members for first-hand accounts of the devastation around Brig. It is very encouraging to know that we can rely on this help, without this feedback *Swiss Express* would not be anywhere near as topical and informative. We are now getting an encouraging number of letters for publication, what is more members are sending them in earlier, usually within a week of receiving the previous issue. This is an enormous help since not only can I type them out well in advance, but I have a better idea how much space I will need to reserve for what your Committee considers to be a very important part of *Swiss Express*.

Swiss station Buffets are featuring large in member's letters. However, I have yet to discover a really poor one, whether my object was a mid-day snack or a full evening meal. The only snag is that sometimes the facilities are fairly basic, which is acceptable if you're only staving off pangs of hunger around noon, but quite different when you're rounding off the day with a good meal. In my experience the buffets at any interchange point can be relied upon to provide decent fare at a reasonable price in the middle of the day. The only disappointment I've had was at Les Avants, where we were met by the sign *Ferme Dimanche* one Sunday. The only other obvious place was not serving snacks, so Doris and I followed a couple of locals past a *Restaurant* fingerpost to find a small, very French style estaminet where we got a truly magnificent open sandwich for, as I recall, SFr.5. Others in the party went hungry until we reached Bulle about two hours later, where some excellent ham rolls were available at the kiosk. This year we returned to Bulle to find the kiosk replaced by a modern buffet where once more we enjoyed a magnificent open ham sandwich. Does anyone know a bad station buffet in Switzerland?

The Model Railway Club has a fair number of SRS members among the regular attendance at Keen House, in fact at one time we could hold an informal Committee meeting with a full quorum at a moment's notice. On the "Continental" track night in September all HO stock seen running was of Swiss prototypes, the centre mixed gauge track being completely taken over by metre gauge, predominately RhB, but with coaches from the FO, BVZ and SBB for good measure. In case you're wondering why, in view of this, there isn't more modelling material in the magazine, two of the SRS/MRC members do provide material for *Swiss Express* and a third proof-reads the magazine. John Jesson has promised some more modelling features, he only has to find time between his other club and society duties.

This issue concludes the third volume of *Swiss Express* and is also the fifteenth issue I have edited. I was rather surprised to realise just how long I've been doing it, time does fly when you're having fun.