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News from the Bernese Oberland

by J.B.McCann

Bernese Oberland Bahn (BOB)

After a complete closure of the BOB from 11-16 November 1991, with bus replacement, the realigned kilometer of line south of Wilderswil was commissioned, with the permitted speed raised to 65 km/h.

Consultation with the Landesbuch and negotiations on the necessary land acquisition are now in hand to enable further straightening and doubling of the line south of the realigned stretch to Zwillütschinen to take place. Currently the Wilderswil-Zwillütschinen section is the bottleneck, especially if any late running occurs.

At Interlaken Ost the new diagonal subway is now in use and ramps are being constructed down to the original subway, which will mean that passengers should at last be able to use luggage trolleys when changing trains, particularly to and from the BOB.

A recast of the BOB timetable took place this summer, with northbound trains normally combining through the day at Zwillütschinen and arriving at Ost at xx:27 and departing again at xx:32.

Last winter, increased traffic has meant that instead of a single motor car covering evening workings to Lauterbrunnen, a mini-Pendelzug was used with an ABeh4/4" and a BDt, generally No.401. In the years since their delivery in early 1987, the three BDt s, (401-3) have found little use in the winter, since their luggage capacity

would appear to be inadequate. Two of the older looking vans D 552-3 have been in daily service as part of made up coach sets. The eight bogie passenger luggage vans, Nos.521-3 and 531-5 have a complicated history all of their own, their bogies all coming from withdrawn Brünig stock.

Schynige Platte Bahn (SPB)

The bodies of six of the oldest coaches, B2/4/11/13/14 have been scrapped and their underframes and bogies have been fitted with new aluminium bodies by Rameseler and Jenzer, very much in tradition style, closed and with a door to each compartment. They are painted in standard SPB red and cream livery, lettered in full SCHYNYGE PLATTE BAHN and numbered B 41-46. This order, and the complete rebodging of B4 No.24 last year, are welcome signs of capital expenditure on this delightful line.

Wengernalp Bahn (WAB)

The Wengernalp Bahn celebrates its Centenary on 20 June 1993. Amongst proposals being investigated are the possible use on the WAB of the SPB steam loco H 5 of 1894. It is understood that the use of Brienz Rothorn Bahn No.5, (which was the original WAB No.1) has been turned down because of the cost of changing the rack wheels from the Abt to the Riggensbach system and back again.

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