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Agfa

Re4/4 460 in advertising livery

by Alan Pike

During IMREX last Easter, Cyril Freezer passed to me an invitation from Agfa-Gevaert to attend a naming ceremony of a class 460 at Bern on 4 May 1994, since I would be in Switzerland at the time, attending the *Eisenbahn Amateur* conference. The invitation asked us to board the train at Gleis 1, Bern Hauptbahnhof at 13:44. Having lunched in a too leisurely fashion with our Swiss member, George Hoekstra of *LOKI* magazine, we only just made the deadline.

Precisely on time, the train consisting of three Panorama coaches, two saloons based on MkIVs and four other saloons (probably including standard Mk 1s 50 85 89-33 500 and 51 85 89-30 501) set off southward for an undisclosed destination. Soon after passing Bern Bümplitz Nord the train eased into the industrial sidings and stopped opposite the Co-op loading bank which had been turned into an extempore dais for the 350 or so guests on the train.

Swiss Express Vol.4/3 September 1994

Re 460.015 *Dübendorf II* near Bern Bümplitz Nord, 4 May 1994. Photo Alan Pike

Everyone had been provided with two cassettes of the new Agfa 400 ISO print film, which was also being launched. The boxes were specially printed with a representation of the locomotive we were soon to see, together with the date 4/5/94. Clearly these were collectors items, for those in the party who had unwisely not pocketed them before leaving the train, found on their return that they had been collected. This was not the case with mine, as I had already loaded one film in my camera, the day was dull, wet and cold but, as the accompanying illustrations show, the new film was well able to cope with the poor lighting conditions.

While we awaited the star of the show, we were entertained by the antics of a comic *Zugsführer*. Suddenly, on the main line, 460.015 raced past, light engine, then reversed slowly almost to buffer up to the rear of the train. Those of you who take *Eisenbahn Amateur* will have seen the colour picture on



Herr Oggi naming *Dübendorf II*, 4 May 1994. George Hoekstra is on the embankment at the back wielding his camera. Photo Alan Pike

the June cover, but for those who have not, the colours usually to be found on Agfa film packs make a most effective and striking colour scheme, with a dark grey roof, white upper body, bright red lower body and striped white and near black "underframe".

Speeches were made by dignitaries of the Swiss Federation, Agfa and the SBB. The Swiss Headquarters of Agfa is in Dübendorf, the district in which the ceremony took place and the area is represented by Herr Oggi, lately Swiss President and Transport Minister. While the speeches were taking place, a bottle of Moët et Chandon was placed on the headstock for the baptism. It was interesting to note the footstep which folds down from the headstock.

The ceremony was completed by the successful shattering of the bottle at the first attempt and the locomotive, bearing under the cab window the name *Dübendorf II* coupled onto the train (Re6/6 11618 is already named *Dübendorf*). We then set out on a non-stop journey through Bern Hauptbahnhof, Zollikofen, Biel, Neuchâtel, Yverdon and Payerne to the ancient walled town of Murten, site of a famous battle in Swiss history.

During the journey, white wine flowed freely, to be followed by tasty snacks. A competition was held, the winner of which got a cab ride from Murten to near Bern. Not being successful in the draw, I had to content myself with more wine (which was fortunately followed by coffee), as we made our way back through Kerzers and Lyss to Bern where we arrived about 18:25. What a hard life it is for *Swiss Express* reporters!

It is believed that this is the first locomotive to run in regular service in Europe in an advertising livery. Of course many EMUs carry extensive advertising and a number of trams run in overall advertising liveries. It must surely be cost effective and I wonder how soon it will be before the idea catches on in other countries.

For the locomotive to run in this livery for three years is costing Agfa Sfr.540,000. In addition, Agfa is to pay further charges to ensure wider exposure, in return the SBB will guarantee to run the locomotive a specified number of kilometres.

Our thanks go to Agfa-Gevaert and the SBB for the opportunity to be present at this historic occasion.

Editorial Note.

460.015 *Dübendorf II*, shedded at Lausanne, was in regular service between Genève and Brig during June, your Editor not only saw it on several occasions but twice rode behind it into the bargain. As Alan says, the livery is most striking. Equally interesting, in several photographic shops one could see the HO gauge Märklin model hauling three container flats, each loaded with two Agfa 400 boxes. Alas, these were *not* the special boxes to which Alan refers.