

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 4 (1994-1996)
Heft: 7

Artikel: Luzern-Stans-Engelberg - update
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-855056>

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Luzern-Stans-Engelberg - Update

by Nick Freezer

Above: Ex-Brünig D-series now
LSE 065-5 at Stans JUne 1995
Photo: Les Heath

The latest service includes revolutionary (for the line) changes to operation. At least two strengthening sets of coaches, formed ABt/B/B have been formed with the ABt facing north. (The standard 'Engelberg' sets are formed BDeh4/4/A/ABt with the driving trailer facing south, to be propelled up the rack). These work between Luzern and Wolfenschiessen only, carrying destination plates for 'Wagengruppe 131/132'. The driving trailer allows the set to be propelled from Wolfenschiessen, replacing the former messy manoeuvre of backing onto coaches in a siding, which then had to be shunted at Luzern to allow the train to depart. In early July, Group 131 comprised ABt 131-9 (ex RBS 201) and two LSE B's; Group 132 used 'turned' LSE ABt 23 and two SBB B's converted for Pendelzug work. A north-facing set was observed at Stansstad on July 4th attached to ex-SBB De4/4 121, presumably for Stans - Luzern short workings.

At the other end of the line, the elimination of the rack section above Obermatt is getting closer. The Federal credit for the realignment is already in place and Cantons Nidwalden and Obwalden should have released the remaining

money by the end of July. Party traffic to Engelberg is conveyed in a strengthening set, which is detached at Obermatt to climb the rack to Engelberg ahead of the service train. In the return direction, groups are conveyed on an extra train which departs Engelberg 10 minutes ahead of the service train, being reunited at Obermatt. Tail traffic on this section is confined to a single van.

Unexpectedly, the LSE have started to apply UIC numbering to their passenger-rated stock, presumably due to the use of SBB stock on the line. As on the Brünig line, the giveaway is a three digit running number followed by a check digit, with the full number carried on an internal plate. The UIC line number is '39' with the full number for ABt 131 being "50 39 - 37 05 131-9"

Stock seems to be renumbered on overhaul or acquisition, as is the case with a secondhand Brünig D from the 1950 (601-608) series, now LSE 065-5. Freight stock, again in common with the Brünig line, has not been renumbered. This includes two closed Gb-v vans recently purchased from the SBB for bicycle transport to Engelberg, now numbered LSE Hb-v 261/262.