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General

On 3rd March Swiss Radio International reported that the House of Representatives had rejected a proposal put forward by the Senate to pay for the building the Gotthard and Lötschberg base tunnels by increasing the price of petrol by 5 centimes per litre. They did, however, vote to build the two tunnels simultaneously. Later in the year a decision will be made whether the tunnels will be mainly financed by a levy on heavy goods vehicles.

SBB

The introduction of the new timetable on 24th May saw the replacement by buses for a three year trial period of the stopping trains between Burgdorf and Langenthal, although express trains will call at Wynental hourly. The buses, operated by Oberaargauischen Automobilkurse (OAK) and carrying an SBB logo provide a connecting service to Riedtwil, Seeberg and Herzogenbuchsee.

A new classification code has appeared. Re4/4^{II} 11167 and Re 460 051 have been observed as carrying the classification Re4/4^{II} f and Ref respectively. The 'f' indicates that they are fitted with an American radio control system, LOCONTROL, which it is hoped will be particularly useful on freight trains over the Gotthard route where multiple locomotive operation is necessary. Initially 8 locomotives (4 Re 460, 2 Re4/4^{II} and 2 Re6/6) have been fitted with this equipment for a trial period. If successful it will be adopted and fitted to about 80 locomotives by the end of 1999.

The double deck IC 2000 coach used as an information coach during last year's celebrations has been fitted out as a Bistro coach on the lower deck and renumbered 50-85 26-94 010. Service trials were scheduled from the end of March.

It is reported that lines where the express interval has been reduced to half hourly have seen an increase of passengers of between 5 and 15%; this is however outstripped by the 66% passenger increase recorded on the Genève - La Plaine section since the reequipment of 1995!

The new Bern S Bahn network commenced operation on 24 May 1998. It encompasses 138 stations on the SBB, BLS, RBS, RM and STB

networks. Services are provided in Cantons; Bern Fribourg, Solothurn, Waadt and Neuenberg.

PRIVATE RAILWAYS

Standard Gauge

BLS Lötschbergbahn AG

Following the note in the March issue, the problems regarding the reorganisation have been resolved, and BLS Lötschbergbahn AG formally came into being on 15th December 1997. The exchange of old for new shares took place from 12th January to 12th February 1998.

The metal numbers and BN, GBS or SEZ letters carried on certain of the Re4/4 locomotives are being removed and replaced with less attractive silver transfers. The locomotives involved are 177 (ex SEZ), 178 (ex GBS) and 179 & 180 (ex BN). It is believed that other locomotives have lost their metal numbers and letters. Reports please.

The following locomotives have been named:

465.014 Spalenberg
465.015 La Vue des Alpes
465.016 Centovalli

The correct name for 465.004 is *Saas Fee/Metro Alpin/Mittelallalin*.

BLS Autoverlad Lötschberg shuttle

On Saturday 28 february 1998 a new record number of 13,729 vehicles were carried by the Autoverlad service.

Kriens-Luzern-Bahn (KLB)

The Bundesrat has released the City of Luzern from the concession for operating the KLB, but only for the 1.2km section from Kupferhammer to Kriens. This section, which has only been carrying an annual traffic of 80 wagon loads will be officially closed from 24th May. The remaining section from Kupferhammer to Rösslimatt has been sold to a private concern. The Em4/4 diesel, No. 35, which has suffered mechanical problems has been replaced, somewhat unsuccessfully, by a road/rail Belloli vehicle which carries the numbering Tm 14.240 KLB 36.

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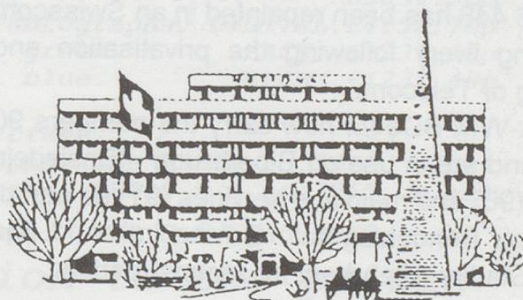
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Mittel Thurgau Bahn (MThB)

A much improved service on the Schaffhausen - Rorschach Seelinie will be introduced from the May 24 timetable change, with a half - hour pattern being introduced for most of the day on the Schaffhausen - Stein am Rhein and Kreuzlingen - Romanshorn sections. The loop on at Altnau between Kreuzlingen and Romanshorn, removed by the SBB in 1993, is being reinstated for the autumn timetable. 7

Sensetalbahn (STB)

BDe 578.102 was withdrawn in December 1997. To cover for this loss, Sihltal-Zürich-Uetliberg Bahn (SZU) BDe 576.595 and driving trailer Bt 998 have been on hire since mid December 1997.

Rorschach Heiden Bahn (RHB)

Trial running of the newly acquired rack engine HG2/2 3 Rosa started on 30 January. The first public working of this engine is scheduled for 3 May for Eurovapor.

Sensetalbahn (STB)

Both the BDe2/6 which came from the BLS are now out of service. 578 102, withdrawn in September, has gone to Spiez works for component recovery and 578 103, the last surviving pre-war BLS 'Blau Pfiel', is the subject of a preservation bid by the Tramverein Bern group.

Sihltal-Zürich-Uetliberg Bahn (SZU)

Whilst Em 836.506 is undergoing overhaul its duties at Zürich Geissshübel have been covered by the hire since mid January of Südostbahn Tm 236.433.

Südostbahn (SOB)

Re 446.448 has been repainted in an Swisscom advertising livery following the privatisation and renaming of Telecom.

The ex-WM BDe4/4 now carry the numbers 90 and 91 and are in use on Biberbrugg - Einsiedeln shuttles (90) and main line services (91) as part of a three car Pendelzug set. Driving trailer 11 has gone to Stadler Altenrhein for reconstruction.

Metre Gauge

Berner Oberland Bahnen (BOB)

SBB-Brünig AB 474 has been acquired and is

numbered AB 221. The vehicle has undergone overhaul at the LSE works at Stanstaad and is now in the new style BOB livery as carried on the ABDeh4/4¹ railcars 311 - 313. BDeh4/4 303 is stored at Grindelwald

Biel-Täuffelen-Ins (BTI)

Plans are in hand for Be4/4 523 (ex 503) and 524 (ex 504) to be coupled to each end of a rake of stone tippler wagons, Nos. Fa 571 - 574, to form a pendelzug type stone train. Xe4/4 521 (ex RVO Be4/4 109) is to be used for freight haulage. Passenger traffic on the line will be in the hands of Be2/6 501 - 506, with Be2/6 507 in reserve as well as the spare power unit 5080 and Be4/4 525 (ex 505) with driving trailer Bt 552.

Brig-Visp-Zermatt Bahn (BVZ)

A report has been received that HGe4/4¹ 14 has been withdrawn and cut up. Any additional information on this significant news would be appreciated.

Furka-Oberalp Bahn (FO)

The new works and depot at Glisergrund is nearing completion and are expected to be opened this autumn. Work started on boring the new Disentis Tunnel on 8th April 1998.

Luzern - Stans - Engelberg (LSE)

Seven Brünig centre entrance coaches (6B, 1 AB) were purchased at the end of 1997. Renumbered 61 - 66 and 71, they will be used on strengthening services on the valley section below Wolfenschiessen.

Montreux-Oberland Bernois (MOB)

The new Be2/6 railcars, 7001-4, are not, as expected working through services between Vevey and Montreux. Since February two have been rostered on the CEV and work Mondays to Fridays from Vevey to Chamby, one works the MOB from Montreux to Les Avants, whilst a fourth is in reserve. It is not known at the time of going to press what the situation will be when the new timetable comes into force.

The rack - fitted units 71 - 75 will be restricted to Les Pleiades services. Of these, fire-damaged BDeh4/4 71 and Bt 223 are to be rebuilt as a permanently coupled set, and Bt 224 is to be rebuilt with a low - floor centre entrance.

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HO.

SBB Eb 3/5 no.5819, black.	£745.00p
MThB Eb 3/5 no.5810, black.	£691.90p
BLS Ae 4/4 no.251, brown, 2 pantographs.	£753.50p
BLS Ae 4/4 no.253, green, 2 pantographs.	£753.50p
BLS Ae 4/4 no.257, brown, 1 pantograph.	BLS Ae 5/7 no.171, green
BLS Ae 4/4 no.258, brown, 1 pantograph.	BLS Be 5/7 no.151, brown
BLS Be 5/7 no.163, brown, chrome lettering.	
SBB RABFe 8/12 no 1041, red, 3 car set.	£1479.30p
SBB C 4/5 no. 2601, black.	£838.20p
SBB Bm 6/6 no.18509, brown.	
SBB B 3/4 no. 1367, black.	SBB Bm 6/6 no.18507, red.
SBB Am 4/6 no.1101, green.	SBB B 3/4 no.1369, black.
NOB A2T nos.101-125, black.	SBB Ae 4/6 ³ no.10851, green
SBB Ae 4/7 no.11017, green.	SBB A 2/4 nos.191-200, black
SBB C 5/6 no.2965, black.	SBB C 5/6 no.2978, black.
SBB Ae 3/6 ² no.10439, brown.	SBB C 5/6 no.2958, grey.
	SBB Ae 3/6 ² , green.

'O'.

BLS Ae 4/4 no.251, brown. 2 Pantographs	
BLS Ae 4/4 no.252, brown. 2 Pantographs.	
BLS Ae 4/4 no.253, green, 2 Pantographs.	
BLS Ae 4/4 no.257, brown, 1 Pantograph.	
SBB RAm TEE 1 501-502 4 car set, red/creme	£5954.50p
SBB Bm 6/6 no.18509, brown.	SBB Bm 6/6 no.18507, red.
SBB C 5/6 no.2978, black.	SBB C 5/6 no.2965, black.
SBB C 5/6 no.2958, grey.	

'1'.

SBB Re 4/4 ² no.11164, green, DIGITAL.	£3654.80p
SBB Re 4/4 ² no.11161, TEE, DIGITAL.	£3654.80p
SBB Re 4/4 ² no.11179, red, DIGITAL.	£3654.80p
SBB Re 4/4 ² no.11181, 'Bourret', 2 Pantographs, DIGITAL.	£4152.70p
SBB EW 1V Personenwagen 1st and 2nd, green.	EACH £1231.40p
BLS EW 1V Personenwagen 1st and 2nd, blue.	EACH £1231.40p
SBB Ae 4/7 no.10955, green.	
SBB RAm TEE 501-502, 4 car set, red/creme.	
BLS Ae 4/4 no.252, brown, 2 Pantographs.	SBB C 5/6 no.2978, black
BLS Ae 4/4 no.253, green, 2 Pantographs.	SBB C 5/6 no.2965, black
BLS Ae 4/4 no.257, brown, 1 Pantograph.	SBB C 5/6 no.2958, grey

**There is a qualification to the prices
quoted.**

Please ask for further information.

Oberaargau Solothurn Seeland Transport (OSST Group)

A major reorganisation of rolling stock is taking place within the group as part of the OSST 2000 scheme, with a number of transfers between the constituent companies, BTI, SNB and RVO. It is hoped that this Group will feature in the Private Railways articles in the next Swiss Express.

Regionalverkehr Oberaargau (RVO)

Be4/4 103 (ex BTI 502) has been acquired and will be used together with Bt 153 (ex BTI 553) on the Langenthal - Niederbipp services. Be4/4 104 (ex BTI 501) and Bt 154 (ex BTI 554) will be in reserve. Be4/4 107 (ex 103) is used for works services..

Rhätische Bahn (RhB)

The Chur - Arosa line started full operation with alternating current on 29th November 1997. On a visit on 13th April Ge4/4^{II} 611, 613, 620, 625 & 628 were seen in service on the line.

On 29th to 31st December 1997 and Tuesdays and Thursdays 20th January to 12th March 1998 the RhB operated an additional train, available to second class passengers, between Davos and St. Moritz using panoramic coaches on loan from the Furka-Oberalp-Bahn (FO). The coaches, designated as being through to St.Moritz, were attached to train 25 (0845 Landquart to Davos Platz) and then separately operated forward to St.Moritz as train 100, the "Winter-Panorama-Express", via Filisur and the Albula line. The return journey was by the same route, operating as train 101 to Davos Platz before being attached to train 70 (1702 Davos Platz to Landquart). A photograph in Schweizer Eisenbahn-Revue issue 1-2/1998 p7 shows train 101 at Celerina on 30th December 1997 with Ge4/4^{II} 618 hauling just two FO panoramic coaches from the AS 4011-4014 batch.

Rheineck-Walzenhausen Bahn (RhW)

Despite the return of BDeh1/2 1 after repair following its collision with a road vehicle, the line remained closed until the beginning of April for infrastructure work.

Solothurn-Niederbipp-Bahn (SNB)

Be4/4 108 (ex RVO) has been acquired and

reclassified Xe4/4 for use on works services.

Other Gauges

Brienzen-Rothorn-Bahn (BRB)

H11/3 No.5, the former WAB No.1, has been out of service since 1996. With engineering assistance from the BLS works at Spiez, it has been completely stripped down and repairs or re-manufacture carried out as necessary. The locomotive is now being re-assembled at Brienzen and it is hoped to have the work completed in time for operation this summer.

PRESERVATION

Blonay-Chamby (BC)

Although the CEV is now running through services from Vevey to Chamby, these only operate Mondays to Fridays. The Blonay-Chamby section continues to be used by the BC at weekends.

International

Cisalpino service on the Zürich - Stuttgart route started on 1st March, with a return working on trains 486 / 489.

Cisalpino Venice services from 27.9.98.

North - South

	CIS 41	CIS 35	CIS 39
Geneve		09.05	19.33
Basel	06.17		
Bern	07.34		
Thun	07.54		
Brig	08.58	10.58	21.23
Milano	10.45	12.45	23.10
Venice		15.55	

South - North

	CIS 36	CIS 46	CIS 38
Venice	11.58		
Milano	15.15	17.15	18.15
Brig	17.03	19.02	20.03
Thun		20.06	
Bern		20.32	
Basel		21.41	
Geneve	18.55		21.55

**Please submit articles for the
September "Swiss Express"
by the 20th JULY.**

THANK YOU