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Schweizerische Bundesbahnen (SBB)

At approximately 0500 on 29th October 1997 six wagons of a twenty four wagon goods train were derailed while passing through Rickenbach-Attikon ZH at 80 km/h. Damage, estimated at over 100,000 Fr., included 150m of track, two points, insulation materials and cable and the glass front of the station signal cabin. Two local trains were replaced by buses whilst the Islikon-Oberwinterthur line was single line operated until 1st November.

The reconstruction work at Morges station was completed over the weekend of 7-9 November 1997. Of note is the replacement of the classic buffet by a McDonalds.

With effect from 1st January 1998, the axle weight limit on the lines Auvèrner - Les Verrières, Reuchenette - Tavannes and Ebikon - Gütsch has been reclassified to Class D (22.5 tonnes).

Commemorative namings:

Re 460 085 was named Verkehrshaus in the presence of the replica Rocket on 16th September at the Verkehrshaus,

Re 460 081 was named Pfander on 13th September at the Bregenz (Austria) open day.

Impressive autumn statistics:

On 4th December a new daily record of 147608 gross tonnes of freight was worked over the Gotthard in 87 southbound and 68 northbound.

Over 1 million tonnes of sugar beet were conveyed by rail to the Aarberg and Frauenfeld sugar factories during the 1997 season.

PRIVATE RAILWAYS

STANDARD GAUGE

BLS Lötschbergbahn AG

The amalgamation of the BN, GBS and SEZ into the new BLS Lötschbergbahn AG, which had been agreed by general meetings in the middle of June 1997, did not take place due to objections raised by private shareholders regarding the valuation of stocks. Further discussions have taken place and it is hoped that agreement to revised valuations and the necessary change of the statute will be approved at a general meeting in 1998.

Further to the note in the December issue, additional names of railcars are:

565.733 BOLTIGEN
565.735 BERP
565.736 TOFFEN
565.737 FERENBALM - MÜHLEBERG
565.738 KERZERS - RIED
565.739 WIMMIS
565.740 UETENDORF
565.741 MARIN - EPAGNIER
565.742 ST. BLAISE

All except one (734) of the second series RBD 565 units now carries names and crests.

Bridge testing on the Grenchen Nord line in October was carried out by the SBB's 'museum' Ae4/7 10976; the type was chosen for its concentrated weight per meter.

Mittel Thurgau Bahn (MThB)

The latest 'Domino C' signalling equipment from Siemens is scheduled for installation on the newly acquired 'Seelinie' between Schaffhausen and Rorschach..

Sensetalbahn (STB)

With home-owned BDe 578 102 out of service from September, Be4/4 761 and an unrecorded BDt was hired from the BLS as a substitute. This was replaced by SZU BDe4/4 595 in mid-December.

Südostbahn (SOB)

The former Wohlen-Meisterschwanden-Bahn railcars BDe4/4 1 and BDe4/4 2 are numbered BDe 576.590 and BDe 576.591 respectively.

METRE GAUGE

Appenzeller Bahn (AB)

BDeh4/4 15 now carries overall advertising livery for "Radio Actuell" as well as the Kantonalbank.

With the refurbishment of BDe4/4 46 + ABt 146 (ex 61), all scheduled services on the Gosau - Wasserauen section use the +GF+ coupler in place of the conventional centre buffer. 'Heritage' stock A 1, Br 10 and B 11, and Te2/2 49, have been equipped with adaptor couplings.

Berner Oberland Bahn (BOB)

The new 3km of double track between

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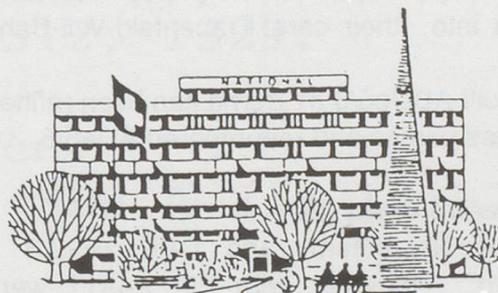
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Zweilütschinen and Wilderswil will be ready for service in the Autumn of 1998. It has been designed for a maximum speed of 70 km/h.

ABeh4/4 306 has been completely rebuilt with new electronic control equipment which will enable it to be remotely driven from a driving trailer. It now carries an emblem and the name *Lütschen-tal*. ABeh4/4 305 is being similarly rebuilt.

Biel-Tauffelen-Ins Bahn (BTI)

The new Be2/6 sets (motor units 5011 to 5071) are being renumbered 501 to 507 respectively. Be4/4 501 to 505 will be renumbered Be4/4 521-525.

Bière-Apples-Morges (BAM)

An accident occurred at Bussy-Chardonney on 27th October 1997 when a train, comprising Be4/4 12 and a driving trailer, travelling in the direction of Bière collided on an unguarded level crossing with a tractor hauling two trailers loaded with sugar beet. The driving trailer of the BAM train was derailed and struck a catenary mast fatally injuring the driver. Four of the passengers were injured, but the tractor driver was unhurt.

Dampfbahn Furka Burgstrecke (DFB)

HG2/3 6 "Weisshorn" (Ex BVZ HG2/3 6) has gone to Chur for overhaul during the winter. See also notes under Furka-Oberalp-Bahn

Ferrovie Autolinee Regionali Ticinesi (FART)

ABDe4/4 1, which for some years has been lying unused at Domodossola-Vigezzina. The car is the only survivor of the former Valle Maggia line stock and was built in 1907. It was moved by road in late October 1997 to Schwarzenbach ZH where it was placed on a rollschemel for carriage to Uster ZH. It will be restored by the Freunde Schweizer Schmalspurbahnen (FSS) who have also taken into their care Frauenfeld-Wil-Bahn Be4/4 1.

1963 - built ABDe6/6 31 Berna has been refitted for first class parties and renumbered ADe6/6 31.

Furka-Oberalp Bahn (FO)

HG3/4 4 (in steam) and DFB HG2/3 6 "Weisshorn", together with FO X4911 were hauled by FO HGe4/4 II 103 to Disentis/Muster on 28th October 1997. From there the FO steam locomotive hauled "Weisshorn" and the van to

Chur where an empty workshop has been taken to overhaul both steam locomotives during the winter. They will return to the Dampfbahn Furka Burgstrecke in the summer of 1998, where FO 4 will be on loan having had its rack equipment restored to working order.

A 370m long loop has been installed at Bitsch halt between Morel and Naters.

Frauenfeld-Wil-Bahn (FW)

Be4/4 1 (ex 201), K 25 and L 26 which were last reported at La Chaux de Fonds have been taken into the care of the Freunde Schweizer Schmalspurbahnen (FSS)

Lausanne-Echallens-Bercher (LEB)

Work started in September 1997 on the 445 metre tunnel from the present terminus to Lausanne Flon. Completion is expected in the year 2000.

Luzern-Stans-Engelberg Bahn (LSE)

Push-pull trains on this line powered by the former Brünig line locomotives (Deh4/4 121 & 122) are pushed from Luzern; the driving trailer being at the Engelberg end of the train. To provide extra capacity at certain times driving trailer ABt 23 has been turned so that it and additional coaches can be attached to the Luzern end of locomotive operated trains. As the LSE did not have a sufficiently long turntable, ABt 23 was loaded onto a standard gauge transporter wagon at Luzern and taken to the SBB depot to be turned. To provide extra seating capacity on the line the short second class coach, B 42 has been sent to Stadler, Altenrhein for lengthening.

Martigny-Châtelard (MC)

Te2/2 92 is stored out of use at Martigny.

Meiringen-Innertkirchen-Bahn (MIB)

RBS Be4/4 74 (in blue and white livery) was received in October 1997 as a spare vehicle. It has replaced BOB Be4/4 301 which is now withdrawn.

Regionalverkehr Bern-Solothurn (RBS)

Be4/8 55 now carries overall blue and white advertising livery for "Swisscom".

The blue and white liveried Be4/4 74 (lately allocated to Worb depot) has gone to the MIB as a

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SBB RBe 4/4 -1461, green. 1407 Seetal.

SBB RBe 4/4 -540 055-1 NPZ.

SBB Ae 4/7 - 10955 or 10998. green.

SBB Eb 3/5 5819. black.

MThB Eb 3/5 5810. black.

EBT Be 4/4 101-108. green.

SMB Be 4/4 171-172. green.

BLS Ae 4/4, 1 panto, brown, 257 or 258.

BLS Ae 4/4, 2 pantos, brown 251.

green 253.

SBB RABFe 8/12 1041, 3 unit set.

SBB C 4/5 2601. black.

BLS Be 5/7 151. brown. or 163 brown.

BLS Ae 5/7 171. green.

SBB Bm 6/6 18501-18514. brown or red.

SBB B 3/4 No. 1367, 1312, 1329.

SBB Am 4/6 1101. green.

SBB Am 4/6³ 10851. green.

NOB A2T 101-125.

SBB A 2/4 191-200

11m (LGB) Gauge -

MOB FZe 6/6.

MOB DZe 6/6.

spare vehicle. It left the RBS on a low loader on 9th October 1997; its final day in service being on 30th May 1997. The blue and white coaches (BD 243, Bdt 244 & 245) to which it was normally attached in service will probably go to Stern & Hafferl in Austria if current negotiations on their sale are successfully concluded.

Rhätische Bahn (RhB)

On 25th and 26th October 1997 the RhB ran two farewell excursions with the four former MOB-Salonwagen. A drawing-room car was attached. The trains were hauled by G4/5 107 and 108 and covered the route: Landquart - Klosters - Davos - Filisur - Chur - Landquart. The four Salonwagen will now be fully renovated. Two will receive additional electrical equipment to make them Bernina line compatible, whilst the other two will be fitted with rack braking. The livery will change from red and cream to blue.

Ge 4/4^{III} 648 has been given a blue based special livery relating to the Vereina tunnel which will be carried least up to the opening of the tunnel in approximately the autumn of 1999. Three additional Ge 4/4^{III} and 8 Bdt driving trailers with low floors and centre entrances have been ordered for use on the Vereina tunnel car trains.

During October and November nine special trains, sponsored by Kanton Graubünden, were run for the entire RhB staff to the south portal of the Vereina tunnel at Saglians. On each occasion the special train ran Landquart - Chur - St. Moritz - Saglians (-Scuol) and back, in the formation A, D (photo studio), two A, WR 3821 (Stiva Retica), three A. Each was hauled by the special Vereina liveried Ge 4/4^{III} 648. The Ge 4/4^{III} class, which is normally barred between Bever and Scuol because of high axle weight, was on these occasions granted special permission.

An order has been placed with Stadler, Altenrhein for 10 Panoramic coaches (3 A and 7B) for use on the Bernina line. They will be of similar construction to those on the SBB Brünig line.

Buyers are still being sought for the surplus Arosa line ABDe4/4 DC railcars 481-486. As part of the Chur - Arosa overhaul, the loop at St Peter-Molinis has been extended to 190m, with the dedicated goods track taken out.

As indicated in the Kursbuch, RhB trains 100 /

101 'Winter Panoramic Express', 09.55 Davos Platz - St. Moritz and 15.18 return, are made up of FO / BVZ panorama coaches from the Glacier Express pool based at Landquart.

To accommodate Gotthard Base Tunnel construction traffic, it will be necessary to overhaul the electrical supply system on the Reichenau - Disentis section, with the construction of a new substation at Tavanasa.

Trogenerbahn (TB)

The old station at Speicher was demolished in September. The signalling at the station has been replaced by the new 'Domino C' equipment from Siemens.

Trams

Verkehrsbetriebe der Stadt Zürich (VBZ)

Swiss Standard bogie pair Ce4/4 1392 + C 732 has been restored as a historical formation in original livery.

Industrial

The AEG-built '12X' development locomotive, still carrying its DB number 128 001, is undergoing trials on the BLS from Adranz at Oerlikon after re-equipment with IGBT transistor equipment. It can now work under 15kV and 25 kV catenary.

International

The new Italian E412 dual voltage locomotives (3000v DC / 15kV AC) has been on trials between Winterthur and Romanshorn and over the Gotthard Line.

The SBB has developed Gotthard line operations to such a level that the FS are finding it difficult to accept the traffic on offer at Chiasso.

**Please submit articles for the
June "Swiss Express"
by the 20th APRIL.**

THANK YOU