

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 6 (2000-2002)
Heft: 12

Rubrik: The editor has his say!

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From: Chris Harnett, MITV - The New Glacier Express

Production by MITV. 2002. English/French/German/Italian/Japanese narration. DVD 2 disk set together with a route map. Digital Dolby Stereo. NTSC & PAL.

Comments from the review of the Glacier Express DVD - SE September 2002

Note from Editor - I asked Sue and Chris at an exhibition about a comment made in a review of the above and they promised a technical explanation as to why the DVD was not seamless.

Both Sue and I would have liked to have made the DVD of Glacier Express into one seamless programme, however this was not possible to do as the DVD has been made in 5 languages. Only one set of pictures is laid onto the disc, so each language must be laid separately and synchronised by time-code with the picture. This is true from end to end of the programme. However, each of the five languages are very different and the length of each sentence can vary by several seconds. Nor do the different voice-over artists necessarily start in exactly the same place or finish together. The result means that while the tracks are fine for each of the programmes separately, if we had to cut out the end of one programme and the start of the next programme it would have meant a very long and costly editing and authoring job to line up the various languages after the join of the two programmes. The result would have been a vastly increased cost which we would have had to pass on to our customers. As it is we are able to offer these two programmes at a most attractive price equivalent to the original video price for only one of the tapes.

A little technical explanation as to why we made the DVD on two discs, one PAL and one NTSC. Those of a technical disposition can try this at home! The NTSC disc will play on a UK DVD player, as our DVD has no region coding, however if the DVD player is connected to the ordinary PAL composite output of the television set the NTSC pictures will judder when the train is moving, this is called "motion artefacts". If the DVD player is connected to the television set via the RGB input however the TV will work at the USA frame rate of 60hz, which is slightly different from the UK and the picture will be perfect. The PAL disc will work fine on a UK player with PAL composite output of the TV, but would not play properly on the USA or Japanese home set-up. If possible in the UK it is still best to use the RGB or component input of your television for DVD as this gives a much better result than the single PAL composite feed whether it is via a yellow phono socket or the "scart" input (although please note that not all scart inputs are RGB capable).

To sum up, the DVD is in this 2-disk form to give the highest quality at a sensible price, something both Sue and I have always strived for. Maybe in the future costs will come down drastically and computers improve to the extent that future projects can be altered. Just as a note on other DVDs, many discs are NTSC mastered and will judder on a UK set up unless the DVD and TV are RGB connected, a real problem with moving footage such as is found on all railway programmes.

THE EDITOR HAS HIS SAY!

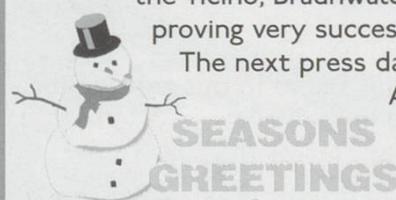


No room at the Inn again, now where have I heard that before?

Many thanks to the many members who submitted articles and photographs. The response was splendid. I have had to leave loads of good things out so there is much to look forward to in forthcoming editions. This will include full details of the RhB's Albula celebrations, a new route to Switzerland via Friedrichshafen and the Bodensee, more on the Sursee-Triengen, more on the Ticino, Braunwald and loads of great photographs. The use of digital images, by the way, is proving very successful indeed. It also saves money at the pre-press stage.

The next press date is the 20th December so get cracking. PLEASE NOTE THE NEW EMAIL ADDRESS FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS which is:

Contributions@SwissRailSoc.org



Finally the Swiss Express team wish you all the compliments of the season and a very happy and prosperous New Year.