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THE MODELLING SECTION

John Atkinson

ROCO 44892: SBB Bt STEUERWAGEN IN EWIV LIVERY



Having noticed and examined the ingenious axle switch as I placed the model on the track, I found that the lights on my one worked the wrong way round. That is, all three lights came on when the coach was pulled and the tail light alone worked when it was pushed. (The first thing I did was turn the coach round to see if the same thing happened!) Easy, I thought, a couple of wires need reversing and resoldering. In the meantime I continued playing with it in my Pendelzug and noticed that the axle switch was not reliable in practice. It tended to move along the axle and made imperfect contact making the light(s) flicker. (I sometimes switch in a constant-lighting unit using high-frequency a.c. so this was particularly noticeable when the coach was stationary but I believe the same thing could happen with digital operation.) The coach was dismantled to find out how it all worked and to see what I could do about it.

Having studied the wiring and how current was carried to the two bulbs, I thought I could improve things generally while making the lights work the right way round. The Steuerabteil bogie was removed together with the wire from the axle-switch contact. I avoid using a soldering iron near plastic as much as possible so I simply cut off the wire at each end with pedicure scissors.

On one side of the coach the contact strip for an interior lighting unit is electrically continuous but on the other side the two bogie contacts are separate. These I linked with insulated wire. The ballast weight needs to be relocated properly when the coach is reassembled and cannot simply sit on top of the wire. I first thought of filing nicks or depressions in the two cross-members below the weight to

accommodate the wire but, knowing my luck, decided to drill through them and thread the wire through.

I then unclipped and removed the metal axle-bearing strip that is electrically isolated from the Steuerabteil bogie and soldered a wire from it (making sure to avoid the areas where the two clips locate) to the appropriate point on the pcb where the bulbs are mounted, having first identified which bulb should always be on and which needs to be switched. A diode was then soldered in circuit with the latter. (I do not know much about electronics and cannot give the value of the diode. Many years ago I had to replace one in a loco and, having consulted Kent Panel Controls, bought a dozen. They are (were) very cheap.)

The diode was not mounted conveniently or neatly near the pcb because I thought it might obstruct something when the coach was reassembled, so a couple of holes were drilled through the bulkhead next to the pcb and the diode now hangs on the other side of this with its wires threaded through to the pcb. Finally, the wheels on this bogie were exchanged for split-axle wheelsets (as used on the other bogie) and the coach reassembled.

For two bits of wire, a diode and a wheel change, the lights now not only work correctly but also more reliably as current is taken from all eight wheels. I believe it could be possible, unless not for the first time I have missed something blindingly obvious, that my arrangement would have been cheaper to produce in the first place. All you have to do is get the diode round the right way!