

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 6 (2000-2002)
Heft: 2

Artikel: Stock developments on via Mala
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-854859>

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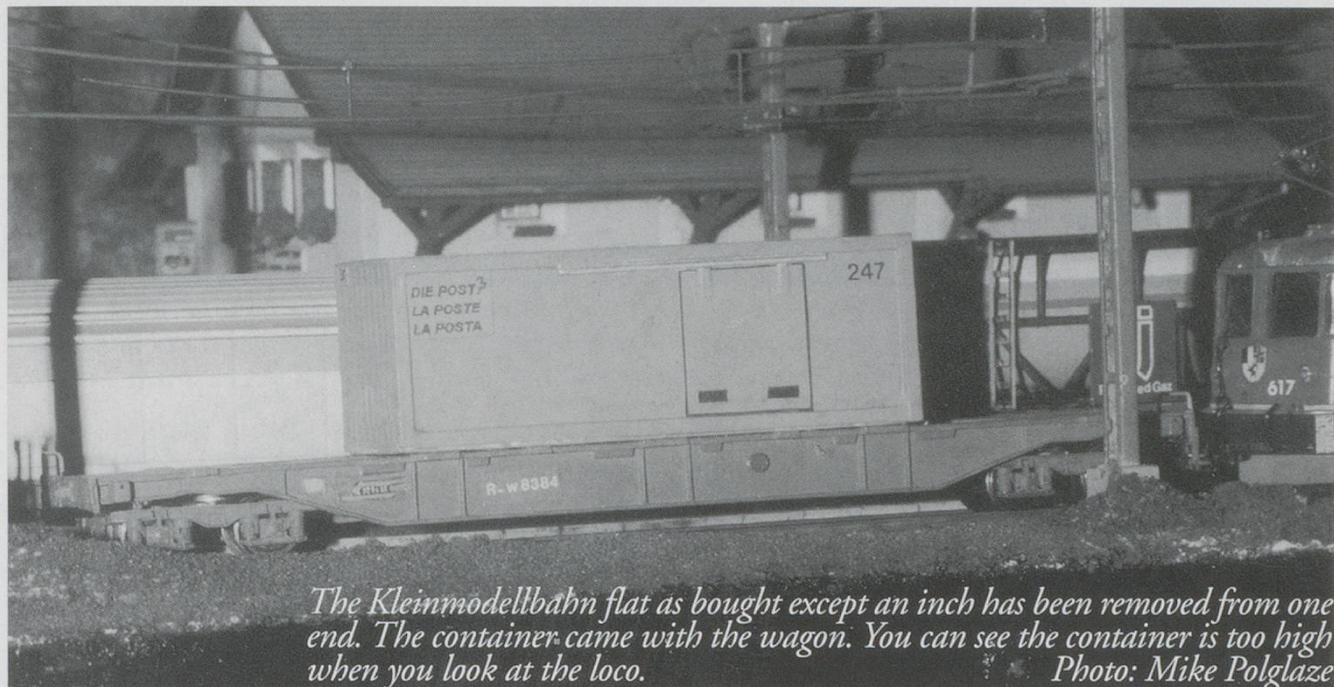
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Perhaps I should explain for members who may not know the background and reasons for building Via Mala is that it is based on a line from Thusis to Bellinzona that was planned in the early part of the 20th century but never built, although plans were published in about

3908 to Bellinzona. This conveys two mail vans (Z) and two PTT containers. Unlike 4505 it does not convey passenger stock. On leaving Thusis it heads up through the Via Mala and reaches Bellinzona about mid morning. It then returns to Landquart during the late afternoon.

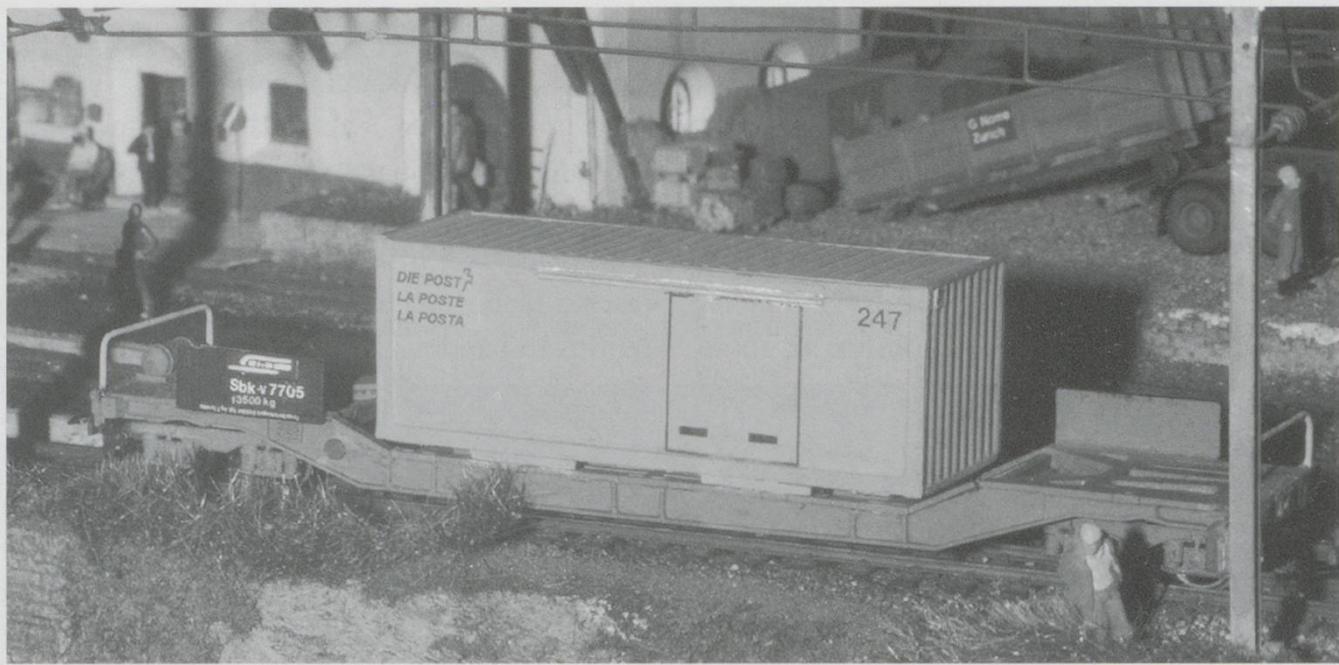


1927. At about the same time a line was also being planned to run from Landeck, in Austria to Mals in what is now South Tirol, this line was never built, as WW1 put an end to it when South Tirol became a part of Italy. This would have been the Vintsgaubahn (VSB). It was planned to be standard gauge but "modellers license" converted it to metre gauge! As neither line was ever built I wondered what traffic might have developed had they been, hence the presence of Austrian trains and stock running over the RhB. Now with the Vereina tunnel open who knows what might develop. Will the prototype follow the model?

In the September 99 issue of "Swiss Express", Nick Freezer refers in his "Notepad" to the new movement of PTT traffic by containers. He referred, in the RhB notes, to train 4505 from Landquart to St Moritz. What he didn't mention is the fact that half an hour after 4505 leaves it is followed out of Landquart by

Now to the truth. I read about the introduction of the PTT containers in the June or July "Loki" which carried an article and some quite good photographs of the containers, albeit on the SBB. It so happened that I had some containers in the "scrapbox" and these were recovered and painted yellow. Letraset and the computer produced the required lettering and a Rotring drawing pen the side access doors. Originally there were three containers, two of them mounted on a pair of Kk-v flat wagons whilst the third was on a shortened and height reduced Kleinmodellbahn HO container wagon.

The container on the Kleinmodellbahn wagon was too high, almost out of gauge, and needed to be lowered somewhat. Then in a recent copy of "Today's Railways" was a photograph of a pair of well type wagons carrying PTT containers on a train leaving St Moritz. A second Kleinmodellbahn wagon was obtained



The same wagon converted into a well. The container was removed during the rebuild. (If you look carefully at the lorry dropping the container in the background there is a lady under it about to commit suicide. I didn't see her until the photo was developed!).

Photo: Mike Polglaze

and stripped down to component parts. The two side frames were clamped together and the upper middle part removed, carefully, leaving a well wagon frame. The floors of these models are metal and this was cut to the required lengths and the wagon reassembled. An inch was removed from each end to

shorten it. A pair of Bemo freight bogies replaced the standard gauge ones. The whole thing was then painted using Humbrol 27 grey. The original wagon received the same treatment and these two now work the "Postie". The two containers on the Kk-v's will eventually revert to commercial traffic, maybe.

MORE FROM VIA MALA IN THE NEXT SWISS EXPRESS

John Jesson

Every year, after writing the Toy Fair report, I await the reports by the professional magazines. Usually, I find that there are very few differences between their reports and mine but, this year, the differences are rather more in number.

AKU and BORN, although not having their own stand, were represented by a showcase on another stand. AKU were showing the overhead line maintenance wagon and the open wagon for transport of oil contaminated scrap which were announced last year, but announced nothing new. BORN displayed two new 2-axle luggage vans, a SBB 2-axle luggage/post, type FZ2, series 19109-19113, and a SCB luggage van F2, series 632-647. ARNOLD are producing their RBe 4/4 in both gold and silver, as part of the companies 40 year anniversary. The Czech company ETS produces tinplate models in gauge O. Although there are one or two models of Swiss appearance in their range, this year

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they are making an unmistakably Swiss loco, the Seetalbahn Crocodile, Ce 6/6 15301. GABOR are adding two RhB buildings to their range of Nm models, a small station building and a storage hut, both of wooden construction. At the other end of the scales, HMB has announced the Hotel Edelweiss in IIIm scale. This is a very modestly-sized hotel, of rendered/timber construction. LGB are producing a 3-axle coach for use with the Brünig rack tank loco. There are several models from MAERKLIN that do not appear in the new items brochure that I have. The Re 4/4^{II} 11276 comes in the SBB-Cargo livery, and there are to be four wagon sets. A pair of wine wagons for Era II, one with 2 wooden barrels and a brake cabin, the other a K3 van with opening doors and barrels inside. For Era V is a pair of Hbbillns vans with Flumroc and Volg names, a KombiRail set for Migros-Danzas, and a pair of bogie tank wagons for Wascosa and AVIA. The set of old- (Cont. page 20)