

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 6 (2000-2002)
Heft: 3

Rubrik: Notepad

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Lokoop's 486 653-9 parked at Kreuzlingen. 1/7/2000. See MthB below.

Photo: John Atkinson



SBB CFF FFS

The former Macdonalds restaurant cars have re-entered service as Coop Railshop cars, employed as miniature supermarkets on Bern - Zürich Hbf semi fast services. (see article by George Hoekstra)

Dinosaur themed family carriages are being introduced, initially on the Bern - Chur IR services.

Initial overnight testing of the signalling equipment, for the pilot ETCS (European Train Control System) in-cab signalling system on the Olten - Luzern line started on May 17th, due for completion by the end of November. Re4/4II 11279 is the test locomotive. Full-scale daytime trials are scheduled to start in December.

In the first four months of 2000, the SBB conveyed over 8000 wagon loads of timber brought down by the Lothar storm of 26th December, mostly to Austria and Italy. Traffic has been restricted by lack of suitable wagons as well as paths for the extra trains over the Arlberg route.

The ICN RABDe500 tilting trains entered scheduled service from May 2000, making two return trips a day on the Lausanne - Neuchâtel - Zürich - St Gallen service running in pairs. Between 1st and 5th May, a pair of ICN working a Brugg - Basel Bhf relief, returning to Zürich Hbf, provided the first public services for the class. ICN sets will be named after famous Swiss citizens (see George Hoekstra's note in this edition)

The proposal to extend the Geneva - La Plaine service to Bellegarde has received local approval, but requires approval from the French Transport Ministry for the operation of the lightweight Bem550 units over SNCF tracks.

BLS Lötschbergbahn (BLS)

The BLS now operates a weekly freight service between Basel and Chiasso via the Gotthard line. Approval has been given for a second batch of six RABe 525 NINA units.

From May, a BistroBar is running on the BLS portion of the Golden Pass Express between Zweisimmen and Interlaken. Catering is provided by Mitropa.

Other Standard Gauge

Regionalverkehr Mittelland (RM)

In Hüswil (LZ) on 6th June a passenger train with ABt 962 leading ran into a goods train due to an incorrectly set point. Sadly a railway worker died whilst the driver of the passenger train and three persons were hurt.

Mittel Thurgau Bahn (MThB)

The contract postal services from Frauenfeld to Chur were being worked by Lokoop Ae477s and MThB Re4/4 21 in late June. The MThB Re4/4I were only seen at St Gallen.

Voralpen Express (VAE)

The Voralpen Express sets are very much in a state of

transition this summer. While all the bistro and first class coaches are in use, not all the Revivo Bs are available for service. While two rakes are complete, the shortfall has been made up with BT EMU style trailers or plug-door EW I, or SOB loco-hauled vehicles as required. Conventional SOB and BT driving trailers are being used. In the Bistro cars, the seating bays are provided with tables but do not line up with the windows!

Two of the SOB EW IV Bs previously used on the Voralpen Express service are working in a Rheintal Express rake between St Gallen and Chur, easily recognisable as they still carry their SOB branding and numbering.

Metre gauge

Appenzeller Bahnen (AB)

ABe4/4 43 has been restored to its 1933 condition as BCe4/4 30, in connection with the celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Herisau - Urnäsch line on 21st September. A festival is planned for 1st to 3rd September, with a special timetable operating on the (former SGA!) line between Teufen and Appenzell.

Xeh4/4 91 (originally SGA ABDeh4/4 1) was sold in June for preservation to La Traction, Pré-Petjean. The company has been distributing morning newspapers to first class passengers.

At the end of May, ABt 133 was severely damaged in an accident at Sulzbach, between Appenzell and Gonten, when the train collided with a lorry which crossed its path on an unguarded level crossing.

In June 2000, Radio Appenzell BDeh4/4 15 was observed running with ABt 113. Its traditional ABt 115 was being used as the driving trailer in the three coach Pendelzug set used with Ge4/4 1.

Berner Oberland Bahnen (BOB)

On the night of 28th/ 29th May a 40 year old centre entrance coach, which was stored in Grindelwald station rolled down the 7.5% incline at the station exit and derailed after travelling for 750 metres. As well as damage to a catenary mast the coach suffered total loss. Damage to property was put at 150,000 Francs. The cause, which then was unknown, is being investigated by the cantonal police.

In early June ABeh4/4 309, reported in the last issue as being sold to Germany, suffered a head on collision at the entrance to a single track tunnel after only two months in service with the Bayerische

Zugspitzbahn (BZB). Ironically it collided with another Swiss built unit Beh4/8 10 (SLM 5316 of 1987). It has been reported that the BZB was hoping to purchase ABeh4/4 310 which may now occur sooner than anticipated due to stock shortages as a result of the accident.

Bremgarten Dietikon Bahn (BD)

The formal amalgamation of the BD with the Wohlen-Meisterschwanden Bahn (WM), its long-standing sister company, has been approved after 80 years!



Chemins de Fer du Jura (CJ)

The newly acquired Chur - Arosa 487 and 488 have entered service as ABe4/4 641 and 642. Dm4/4 508 is numbered T 66 with the Chemins de fer Provence, France.

Ferrovia Lugano - Ponte Tresa (FLP)

Five low-floor central sections have been ordered for strengthening Be4/8 21 - 25. These will be built as part of the RBS Mandarinli strengthening order. Proposals have been tabled for the extension of the line to Luino in Italy.

Furka-Oberalp Bahn (FO)

One of the centre entrance coaches acquired from the Brünig line, B 4241, has been turned out as a Sport Wagen in plain red livery and is in use on Glacier Express workings. Roller blading and golf is depicted on the south side.

CF Gruyère - Fribourg - Morat (GFM)

Be4/4 116 has emerged from Bulle works fitted with a new, metal, body in the style of the old wooden body which was scrapped in 1998. The rebuilt automotrice carries its original initials CEG (CF électricques de la Gruyère).

Montreux-Oberland-Bernois (MOB) / group

The reformed Golden Pass Panoramic sets are formed with first class driving and downgraded second class intermediate coaches.

Regionalverkehr Bern-Solothurn (RBS)

After the strengthened Mandarinli units are brought into use in Summer 2001, the remaining traditional stock on the Solothurn line will become redundant and is expected to be offered for sale. This list currently comprises Be4/4 3, BDre4/4 4, 21, 22, 23, Bt 212, 216, 221, 222 and B 315, 316.

Below left: New RhB panoramic coach with "Bernina Express" branding. Chur, 26/6/00. *Below right:* Non branded livery version in same train.
Photos: Nick Freezer



The main Bernina Express is now completely formed from the new Panoramic stock. The low season service uses only six of the ten coaches ordered (one A and five B, including service car B2501). In high season, two strengthening vehicles are added, one A and one B. One A was observed entering Landquart works on June 21st. The EW IV set now works the Landquart - Tirano Heidi Express.

The summer-only Engadin Star service (09.45 Landquart - St. Moritz, 15.55 St. Moritz - Landquart), worked by a Ge4/4ⁱ locomotive, uses three Bernina EWIV coaches (1 A, 2 B). The morning Engadin Star working is attached to the 09 25 Chur - Davos Platz service at Chur, (but only advertised from Landquart!) and detached at Klosters for the run through the Vereina tunnel.

For the 2000 - 2001 timetable, the last service to St Moritz (arrive 23.40) runs from Klosters via the west side of the Sagliains triangle, returning as the first train of the day at 04.58!

The revamped Engadin services requires seven Pendelzug sets in service, strengthened as necessary. This especially applies on the Aqualino service, timed for tourist traffic to and from the lower Engadin. The eighth BDt is, where available, used on the Chur - Arosa line.

The RhB has also participated in the windfall traffic after the Lothar storm, mainly over the Bernina Pass to the Veltlin. Some traffic has originated on the SBB and has to be transshipped at Landquart, using two metre gauge wagons for one standard gauge load. The surviving ABe4/4 railcar/driving trailer set, 501 & 1722, retain one regular working, the single



surviving Samedan - Pontresina shuttle, trains 781 / 794 (21.48 out, 22.04 back).

Following the opening of the new Disentis tunnel in November 1999, Disentis station was closed between 25th April and 12th May to allow the station track work to be rearranged. This was followed by the construction of an island platform and canopy, completely altering the appearance of the station. The canopy was in place by the end of June.

General

The boards of the Chemins de fer Martigny-Orsières (MO) and Martigny-Châtelard (MC) have decided to accept a merger, forming "Transports de Martigny et région" (TMR).

Trams

Transport publics de la région Lausannoise (TL)

From 28th May, the Flon - Renens TSOL service is now Metro Line 1. The Flon - Ouchy (LO) and Flon - Gare (LG) services are both now known as Metro Line 2.

Städtische Verkehrsbetriebe Bern (SVB)

From 1st January 2001, it is intended to rebrand the city's transport system as Bern Mobil, changing to a red livery. The company will retain its present SVB title.

Verkehrsbetriebe de Stadt Zürich (VBZ)

In order to increase capacity plans are being studied to insert a low floor centre car in the Be4/6 trams which would then become Be4/8.

Industry

It was announced on 4th August that DAIMLER-

