

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: - (2003)
Heft: [2]

Artikel: A Martigny cocktail [continued]
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-855136>

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In September 2002 David Edwards visited Switzerland, staying in Martigny and exploring some of the less well-known railways in the area. Continuing on from Martigny, David describes his trip in words and with a series of digital photographs around Aigle and Bex.



Thursday morning bright and early it's down to the station again, this time on the main line to Bex for the BVB's 09:23 to Villars-sur-Ollon and on to Col de Bretaye. Another sparkling new unit was waiting for us, this time in the station forecourt without a soul in sight. A few minutes before departure time a few passengers arrived along with the driver who had been drinking his

ALL PICTURES BY THE AUTHOR

ABOVE:

BVB No 93 at Bex, 5/9/2002.

RIGHT:

BVB Bdeh 4/4 at Villars, 5/9/2002.

BELOW:

BVB driving trailer at Bretaye, 5/9/2002.

OPPOSITE PAGE:

TOP:

AOMC No 531 at Aigle, 5/9/2002.

CENTRE:

AOMC No 501 at Champéry, 5/9/2002.

BOTTOM:

AOMC No 501 at Aigle, 5/9/2002.



morning coffee in the nearby café. For the first part of the journey the track runs alongside the road before turning right into the town. Here the streets are very narrow with only enough room for either a train or a car, but not both. After passing through the town the line again runs alongside the road, climbing steadily past the depot and through various settlements, before arriving at



climbing to the village of Ollon. From here the line was quite flat and boring until we arrived in Monthey where we passed the old depot before running into the modern terminus. The train then reversed back into the town, crossing the main road before engaging the rack for a very steep climb out of the town and along the valley towards Champéry. The scenery changed completely and we were treated to wonderful views as we zigzagged our way to the terminus

Villars where we changed trains for the steep climb up to Col de Bretaye. The views from the line are magnificent and at the summit there are numerous walks around the mountain lakes. We spent about an hour here before returning to Bex for the main line train to Aigle, the terminus station of the metre gauge line of the AOMC to Champéry.

The line leaves the station and runs along the roadside to the outskirts of the town where we passed the new depot before



station just beyond the village, at the cable car station to Planachaux. Soon it was time to return to Aigle for afternoon refreshments at the little café on the narrow gauge platform. The seating of the café has been designed to represent the compartment of a metre gauge coach and there is a G scale locomotive and coaches running along the wall above the window. After being suitably refreshed it was time for our next journey, this

time on the ASD line to Les Diablerets.

As our train was in the station we got on board and settled ourselves in for the journey. Just before we were due to leave a motor coach arrived and disgorged all its occupants into our coach. This procedure taking quite a while resulted in a late departure, which didn't matter to us as we had plenty of time to spare. Leaving the station our route crossed the Champéry line at right angles and continued this time in the middle of the road as far as the depot. Just after this we passed a large castle where the line climbed sharply on a very tight horseshoe curve into a tunnel and on up the wooded valley. Eventually we arrived at Les Planches where our train turned off for the small village of Le Sépey where we reversed to return to Le Sépey and on to Les Diablerets. All our fellow passengers disembarked to get back on their bus, which had travelled up the valley, followed by Roy and myself quite forgetting the late departure of our train from Aigle. We



ABOVE:

ASD driving trailer at Aigle, 5/9/2002. Photo: David Edwards

BELOW:

An ASD Train in the valley.

Photo© STS

had just started to take a photograph when I noticed our train starting to move off. Fortunately I managed to catch the attention of the driver who kept the doors open allowing us to jump back on while the train was on the move. Now we know how they keep the trains on time.

