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TRACKING DOWN TRAIN S19074

(OR ICH BIN AUCH EIN Re4/4")



Zürich Tiefenbrunnen.
29/05/02. Re4/4GG,
11229 arrives with the
empty coaches to form
Train S19074 to Arth-
Goldau on the day of
my journey.

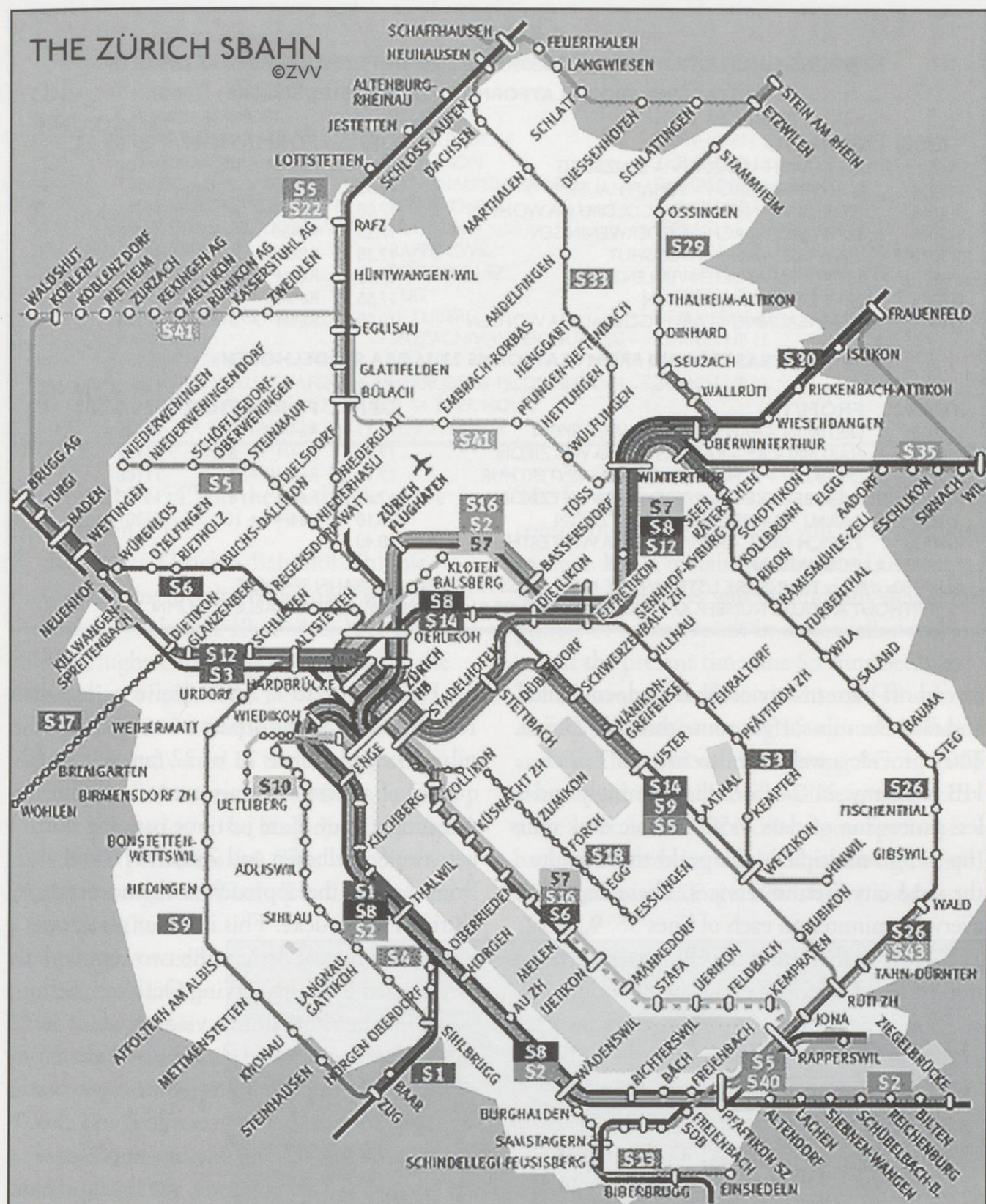
can be found in the Zürich area during Monday-Friday peak hours. Due to the variety of destinations served and the diversity of routes taken, tracking down these trains in the timetable is certainly a challenge.

Train S19074 is

“What on earth is train S19074?” is the question that will no doubt spring to the minds of many, though there is a hint in the sub-title. (See also Nick Freezer’s “Notepad”, SE 6/8 pages 58/9). How frustrating those captions are in some publications that only give a meaningless (to the masses) train number, especially if the subject is freight. Of course never in “Swiss Express” I hasten to add. So fear not, all will be revealed shortly. I did, however, have to forsake the plethora of more sensational Swiss rail attractions on offer in order to experience this less spectacular, but nevertheless interesting, side of SBB operations which receives very little, if any, attention.

The advent of the “Bahn 2000” clock face interval timetable and the subsequent increase in service frequency on many lines has revolutionised Swiss rail travel opportunities though this rigid regularity has made the passing scene somewhat predictable to the casual observer. However, some off-pattern services still survive and by far the biggest concentration of these

the 18.00 (a similar service, S19066, operates at 17.00) from Zürich Tiefenbrunnen, on the east shore of Zürichsee, to Arth-Goldau, which takes the circuitous route via Dietikon, the Heitersberg tunnel, Wohlen & Rotkreuz, a distance of 52.5 miles. In contrast the direct route from Zürich HB to Arth-Goldau via Zug is a mere 27.5 miles. It takes 94 minutes to complete the overall journey including 19 intermediate stops. To establish all the calling points and timings of this service over its entire length requires some timetable detective work as it is necessary to refer to no less than five tables (801, 710, 650.1, 653 & 600). No doubt these off-pattern trains are seldom used by tourists but having become aware of their existence I promised to satisfy my curiosity by joining homeward bound Zürich commuters one evening on my 2002 visit, so sorry to any regulars if I sat in their usual place. As the only through off-pattern services in the opposite direction on this route are the 05.46 from Rotkreuz to Oberwinterthur and the 06.29



from Arth-Goldau to Zürich Tiefenbrunnen commuters' usual morning seats are guaranteed free from a similar foreign invasion as far as I am concerned!

Before describing the journey on train S19074 I will briefly explain how these afternoon peak hour trains fit into the general pattern of Zürich S-Bahn services. Indeed such

is the intensity of S-Bahn services throughout the day that one may wonder where the spare capacity lies to enable these trains to operate. I will also outline in a little more detail both recent developments and those planned over the next decade, some of which were reported in Nick Freezer's "Notepad" SE 6/9.

Trains S19066 & S19074 are among

TABLE I
ZÜRICH HB LOW LEVEL - SBB OFF-PATTERN PM PEAK DEPARTURES
WESTBOUND FROM PLATFORMS 21-22 (VIA HARDBRÜCKE)

TRAIN	FROM/TO	ZHB DEP	FORMATION	LOCO/UNIT 29.05.02
2882	STETTBACH – AARAU VIA LENZBURG	16.53	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 10*	11201
S18064	SCHWERZENBACH – SCHAFFHAUSEN	16.55	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 10	11211
S19066	TIEFENBRUNNEN – ARTH-GOLDAU VIA WOHLN	17.08	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 8	11147
S18068	SCHWERZENBACH – NIEDERWENINGEN	17.25	Re450 x 1	450003
S19070	TIEFENBRUNNEN – WALDSHUT	17.38	RBe540 x 2	540006/63
2888	STETTBACH – OLTEN VIA LENZBURG	17.53	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 11	11xxx
S18076	RÜTI ZH – SCHAFFHAUSEN	17.55	Re4/4 ¹¹ + ?	11xxx
S19074	TIEFENBRUNNEN – ARTH-GOLDAU VIA WOHLN	18.08	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 8	11229

EASTBOUND FROM PLATFORMS 23-24 (VIA STADELHOFEN)

TRAIN	FROM/TO	ZHB DEP	FORMATION	LOCO/UNIT 29.05.02
S18065	DIETIKON – RAPPERSWIL VIA WETZIKON	16.37	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 8	11125
S18067	HARDBRÜCKE – RAPPERSWIL VIA WETZIKON	17.07	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 8	11112
S19067	DIETIKON – SCHAFFHAUSEN VIA WINTERTHUR	17.10	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 8	11108
S18071	HARDBRÜCKE – RAPPERSWIL VIA WETZIKON	17.37	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 8	11158
2883	AARAU – RAPPERSWIL VIA WETZIKON	18.10	Re4/4 ¹¹ + 10*	11201
RX1633	ZÜRICH HB LL – KONSTANZ VIA WINTERTHUR	18.40		

* PUSH PULL FORMATION

ALL S180xx/190xx TRAINS ARE LISTED IN THE MAIN SWISS TIMETABLE AS S-BAHN SERVICES.

"S" WITHOUT A ROUTE NUMBER APPEARS AT THE TOP OF EACH APPROPRIATE TIMETABLE COLUMN.

several off-pattern services that are loco hauled and take the sub-surface route through Zürich. They provide a welcome diversion at Zürich HB platforms 21-24 from the seemingly endless procession of class "450" double deck units (up to 3 in multiple in the peak) that operate the cross-city S-Bahn services. These depart every 30 minutes on each of lines S6, 9, 5, 12, 16, 7 & 3 in that order travelling west, giving a minimum of 14 trains each way per hour.

Headways of 2 and 4 minutes are the norm but every 15 minutes, after the xx.06, xx.21, xx.36 & xx.51 departures, there is a 7-minute headway. It is these 7 minute gaps that are utilised by a variety of off-pattern Monday – Friday (Public Holidays excepted) peak hour trains, details of the afternoon trains being shown in table 1 together with the five eastbound trains of a similar nature. Although not strictly in this category, another loco hauled service to use the sub-surface platforms is train RX2736 which arrives via Hardbrücke from Konstanz at 18.21 and after a 19 minute stand departs as train RX1633 to Konstanz via Stadelhofen.

From 17.02 to 17.58 inclusive no less than 18 westbound trains depart from Zürich HB sub-surface platforms 21 or 22 (an average frequency of almost one train every 3 minutes). Amazingly, they share just one running line between Stadelhofen and Zürich HB and also from there to the approach to the next station, Zürich Hardbrücke. This is a four platform station of unusual design, the two centre platforms, used by trains serving Oerlikon, being on an incline rising onto a viaduct which leads to the Käferberg tunnel. In view of the intensity of the service in peak hours a Swiss style precision operation is therefore essential and close cooperation between all relevant operational staff is paramount. However, the ingenuity and expertise of the timetable planners in devising such a plan in the first instance should not be overlooked.

Other S-Bahn services on lines S1, S2, S8 & S14 were still accommodated at Zürich HB main line platforms 3-18 during my May 2002 visit but changes have already taken place. S1, S8 & S14 line trains are currently (2004) using the newly built surface level platforms

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF REGULAR S-BAHN TRAINS SERVING ZÜRICH HB/SIHLPOST

LINE	FROM	TO	VIA
S1	ZÜRICH SIHLPOST	ZUG	ENGE & THALWIL
S2	EFFRETIKON	ZIEGELBRÜCKE	FLUGHAFEN, ZÜRICH HB & THALWIL
S3	DIETIKON	WETZIKON	ZÜRICH HB LL
S4	ZÜRICH HB LL (1/2)	LANGNAU/SIHLBRUGG	SIHLTALBAHN (SZU AC)
S5	RAFZ/NIEDERWENINGEN	PFÄFFIKON SZ	ZÜRICH HB LL & USTER
S6	BADEN/REGENSDORF-WATT	UETIKON	SEEBACH & ZÜRICH HB LL
S7	WINTERTHUR	RAPPERSWIL	KLOTEN, ZÜRICH HB LL & MEILEN
S8	WINTERTHUR	PFÄFFIKON SZ	WALLISELLEN, SIHLPOST & THALWIL
S9	USTER	ZUG	ZÜRICH HB LL & AFFOLTERN AM ABLIS
S10	ZÜRICH HB LL (1/2)	UETLIBERG	UETLIBERGBAHN (SZU DC)
S12	BRUGG AG	SEUZACH/WINTERTHUR SEEN	ZÜRICH HB LL
S14	ZÜRICH SIHLPOST	HINWIL	OERLIKON & USTER
S16	EFFRETIKON/FLUGHAFEN	HERRLIBERG-FELDMEILEN	ZÜRICH HB LL

OFF PEAK M-F FREQUENCY – S1 & S2 HOURLY: S4 3 PER HOUR:
OTHERS 2 PER HOUR OVER ALL OR PART OF EACH ROUTE

(numbered 51-54!) on the south side of the main station.

Known as Zürich S-Bahnhof Sihlpost, these platforms are also being used to accommodate the main line IR services between Zürich Flughafen/HB and Luzern while the lengthening of platforms 3-9 takes place during 2002-2004. Some of these trains may eventually be diverted to the recently approved Zürich Löwenstrasse, a four platform sub-surface station to be built directly under Zürich HB platforms 4-9. This will allow direct running from Thalwil to Oerlikon via a new tunnel and eliminate the need for trains on lines S2 & S8 to reverse at Zürich. Trains from the Altstetten direction will also be able to access Oerlikon via Löwenstrasse by using the same tunnel.

The Löwenstrasse project was scheduled for completion in 2012, which will allow Sihlpost to close, but it remains to be seen if current funding difficulties will significantly delay this project or indeed result in its cancellation.

At the present time line S3 runs between Wetzikon and Dietikon via Zürich HB sub-surface platforms running 15 minutes before and after line S12 trains to Brugg AG. In 2005 alternate trains on line S3 will be extended to serve stations between Killwangen-Spreitenbach and Lenzburg via the Heitersberg tunnel then Aarau including a new station at Mel-

Dietikon 05.06.03.
Re4/4^{II} 11219 awaits
departure with Train
S18065, the 1620
Dietikon-Rapperswil
via Zürich HBLL and
Wietikon.



lingen-Heitersberg. The existing station at Mellingen, situated on the branch to Wettingen, will then close and the line between those latter points will become freight only. This will bring about alterations to many of these peak hour services and the draft 2005 timetable shows trains at 17.38 & 18.38 (S19070 & S19072) from Zurich HB to Rotkreuz via Wohlen which do not stop between Dietikon and Othmarsingen.

As a result of the extension to line S3 new EMU's are on order to supplement the S-Bahn fleet of 115 class 450 double deck sets and 17 of the original 18 RABDe 12/12 EMU's, now known as class 510s. The latter date back to 1965 and were refurbished in the middle/late 90's. Class 540 & 560 EMU's also work some S-Bahn services but normally only on the lines on the perimeter of the Zürich S-Bahn system which do not actually serve Zürich city centre, S41 Winterthur – Waldshut via Bülach (class 540) and S26 Winterthur – Rapperswil via Bauma (class 560) being two examples.

Class 510 EMU's normally dominate line



Zürich HB, 28.07.98. 450008 working an S14 service to Hinwil

S1 to Zug via Thalwil. Both lines S1 & S2 only run hourly. Lines S4 (every 20 minutes, Re 456 push & pull double deck stock) & S10 are operated by SZU and use sub-surface platforms 1 & 2. Lines S1, S4, S10 & S14 are the only S-Bahn lines that start and terminate at Zürich HB/Sihlpost.

The SRS website link:

<www.swissrailsoc.org.uk>

(thenclick on webcams at Zürich)

has given internet users the novel opportunity of being able to follow the Sihlpost project taking shape, an initiative typical of Swiss attention to detail. Webcam 3, the default, is situ-

TABLE 3
OFF-PATTERN PM PEAK SERVICES VIA THE ALTSTETTEN - WIEDIKON CHORD
WEST TO SOUTH

TRAIN FROM/TO			ALTSTETTEN DEP
S18035	DIETIKON – ZIEGELBRÜCKE	SBB	16.53
S18061	SCHLIEREN – EINSIEDELN	SOB	17.18
S18055	DIETIKON – ZIEGELBRÜCKE	SBB	17.53
S18059	ALTSTETTEN – ZUG VIA THALWIL	SBB	18.23

SOUTH TO WEST

			ALTSTETTEN ARR
S18060	EINSIEDELN – SCHLIEREN	SOB	16.41
S18050	WOLLISHOFEN – ZUG VIA AFFOLTERN AM ABLIS	SBB	17.33
S18052	WOLLISHOFEN - ALTSTETTEN	SBB	18.07

ated on the main signalling centre building overlooking S-Bahnhof Sihlpost and Zürich HB and currently shows the platform extension works at HB. Webcams 1 & 2 are situated on an office block facing the south side of Zürich loco depot.

No.1 now shows the new viaduct leading to Oerlikon via Wipkingen while No.2 shows the new Thalwil line dive-unders. The webcams take pictures at roughly 3-minute intervals but they do have a mind of their own on occasions. Several excellent aerial photographs and diagrams of Zürich (including the planned Löwenstrasse) and the surrounding area can be accessed via the menu to the left of the webcam picture.

There are also a few peak hour off pattern services that bypass Zürich HB running directly between Zürich Altstetten and Zürich Wiedikon, a short ride which passes Zürich workshops yard where one of those elusive tiny yellow works Ta tractors may be seen if you are lucky. These trains are shown in table 3, the most noteworthy being the 17.11 from Schlieren to Einsiedeln (tables 710, (801), 720 & 672 and briefly mentioned in SE 6/9 page 13) which conveys a minibar/railbar for all but five weeks of the year and is now normally headed by an SOB class 446. A connection to Arth-Goldau (arr.18.47) and Luzern (arr.19.13) is available at Biberbrugg. On the 29th May 2002 the Lokoop 477/9 advertising "Classic Rail" in a light brown livery was in charge but of course all these locos have now returned to their German homeland. Surprisingly (or on reflection unsurprisingly as the SBB is involved!) the excellent SBB



Zürich Altstetten, 05.06.03. SOB Re 446446 arrives at 1641, just as the sun disappeared for a minute, with S18060, the 1543 from Einsiedeln. It had taken the direct chord from Wiedikon to avoid ZürichHB and is about to go on to Schlieren, run round and form the 1711 return train, S18061. The catering car can be seen in the centre of the train. Note also the siding which runs the whole length of the platform.

on-line timetable gives no less than 26 options for travelling from Wiedikon to Altstetten between 16.00 & 18.00 involving Trams, Trolleybuses, S-Bahn trains and "D" Regional trains, as well as the walking time between different transport modes.

Prior to heading off to join the 18.00 from Zürich Tiefenbrunnen on 29th May 2002 I spent some time on the road bridge that spans the railway complex adjacent to Zürich Hardbrücke station, 2 minutes running time from Zürich HB, in order to verify some of my earlier research on these services. My son was of great assistance following a different itinerary; this took him from Dietikon to Altstetten to Wiedikon to Zürich HB before joining me at Hardbrücke at 17.27 having arrived on train S18068. This was the only off pattern service to be formed by a class 450 double deck set. It had worked empty from the nearby sidings to Schwerzenbach some 30 minutes earlier. Between us we managed to sample, albeit some very briefly, eight off-pattern services, seven of which appear in table 1 together with



Dietikon 05.06.03.
Re4/4^{II} 11219 awaits
departure with Train
S18065, the I620
Dietikon-Rapperswil
via Zürich HBLL and
Wietikon.

rear coach and although the centre of the train was well patronized there was a maximum of 8 passengers in our coach at any one time during the journey. Many

one service via the west-south curve, as well as seeing all but one of the remainder. Ten of the twelve commuter services shown in table 1 were hauled by Re4/4^{II}s the exceptions being the above class 450 and a pair of class 540 EMU's which could well have been one of the stand-by sets that are used occasionally to cover for loco/unit shortages/failures.

We took a line S16 service (450006) to Tiefenbrunnen arriving at 17.50 feeling quite confident in allowing only 10 minutes here. Of course a much bigger margin would have been considered necessary on home soil! On arrival we crossed to the opposite platform and Re4/4^{II} 11229 duly arrived with the eight coach empty train from the Rapperswil direction at 17.57. Only a handful of passengers joined and departure was to time. We travelled in the

passengers joined at Stadelhofen and Zurich HB and a considerable number alighted at Dietikon. Relatively small numbers alighted at the many station stops after Killwangen-Spreitenbach. On arrival at Arth-Goldau just three passengers, including ourselves, alighted, probably three more than usual!

Shortly after leaving Tiefenbrunnen the line enters the sub-surface section through Zürich and we suffered a short signal stop before Stadelhofen. Departure from Zürich HB was only 1 minute in arrears at 18.09. We emerged from the sub-surface tunnel running parallel to the rear of an ICN unit working the 18.07 departure to Geneva via Biel, a scene I

Dietikon 05.06.03.
Re4/4^{II} 11219 awaits
departure with Train
S18065, the I620
Dietikon-Rapperswil
via Zürich HBLL and
Wietikon.



Zürich Stadelhofen, 05.07.00. 450031 is seen heading into the tunnel towards Zürich HBLL with an S7 train from Rapperswil via Meilen to Winterthur via Hardbrücke and Kloten.



had seen enacted an hour earlier with train S19066 and the 17.07 ICN.

After passing the extensive carriage sidings either side of Hardbrücke

which, among many other items, held the Spanish Talgo stock for the overnight service to Barcelona, we were back on time by Altstetten. The yard serving the postal depot at Mülligen held two Ee6/6s as usual and after Dietikon several Ae6/6s were on view in Limmattal Yard together with one of the unglaumorous Am6/6 diesel shunters, 18521, that work solely in this yard, which was visible at the west end.

The running between stops was brisk from Altstetten onwards; speed exceeding 70 mph at some points. On leaving Killwangen-Spreitenbach we had an uncharacteristic lively ride over the points at the west end of the station to cross from slow to fast line before accelerating through the Heitersberg tunnel. It was possible to see out of the window in the gangway door at the rear of the train and this gave a drivers eye view in reverse for some of the journey. At Othmarsingen we were delayed for 3 minutes and had to endure the continuous drone of the traffic on the adjacent autobahn while waiting for train IC 835 (the 16.00 Brig – Romanshorn with 460110 in charge) to pass before we could cross to the tracks on the right used by Basel – Gotthard line freight. Understandably, because of the intrusive noise from the autobahn, Othmarsingen is not recommended as a place to linger for the purpose of watching trains, despite its attractive geographical

position on the rail network. As we descended under the Lenzburg main line, on the east to south curve that forms part of a triangle with Hendschiken at its southern apex, Re6/6 11679 passed by on a Basel bound freight.

The station stops thereafter are frequent and the landscape becomes rather uninspiring and very un-Swiss in character, the line now on a broad flat plain through which the River Reuss flows unseen some distance to the east of the railway. Factory units are prevalent between areas of cultivated land and there are no rolling hills or mountains to admire here. The line certainly does not offer the same aesthetic delights as the Seetalbahn, which runs parallel just a few miles to the west.

Em2/2, 103, of the BD was stabled at Wohlen as well as Ee3/3 16399 and one of the new Tm tractors, 234081. Re6/6 11628 added to the scene, passing through on a northbound freight. Not until after Müri AG, where we passed RBe 540011 working the 19.03 stopping service to Lenzburg, does the vista improve. The line now starts to rise slightly giving pleasant panoramic views on the left in the direction of the hills behind Arth-Goldau through which the SOB climbs to Sattel-Aegeri. The Rigi is also sometimes in view. At many points along this line the ubiquitous buzzards were seen gliding majesti-

cally over the fields and they appear to be as common in Switzerland as the magpie is in the U.K. The line eventually crosses the Reuss just before Rotkreuz where we arrived on time despite being 5 minutes late at that charmingly named station, Dottikon-Dintikon. There is a 13-minute connection at Rotkreuz off train S19066 for anyone wishing to travel to Luzern (arr. 18.41).

The last leg from Immensee alongside Zugersee under the foot of the Rigi massif finally brings one back to the dramatic Alpine scenery that most of us crave. We were routed into platform 6 at Arth-Goldau where arrival was exactly to time. The train drew forward before reversing into a siding on the south side of the station alongside Re4/4II 11147 and stock off train S19066. Both trains remain overnight to form the next day's early morning services.

In June 2003 we travelled on train S19067 from Dietikon to Schaffhausen with Re4/4II 11130 providing the power. This train is also routed via the sub-surface lines at Zürich HB and then via Stadelhofen & Winterthur, another non-standard route but only a minor detour in comparison to the

above services to Arth-Goldau. Again the train was well patronized but with plenty of room in the rear coach and we ran 2 minutes late throughout. Although this journey was also devoid of true Alpine scenery at least there were glimpses of that marvellous spectacle, the Rhine Falls, to look forward to shortly before arrival at Schaffhausen.

Well those were some "different" SBB operational experiences that perhaps some will consider as an alternative excursion when the weather is not up to "MITV" standards. The Zürich S-Bahn network offers a wide range of vistas on its many varied routes and is certainly worth exploring. It is not all suburbs and factory units as a trip on line S7 to Rapperswil via Meilen or S2/S8 to Pfäffikon SZ via Wädenswil will reveal, these two routes following the east and west shores of Zürichsee respectively,

though the latter route is no doubt familiar to many who know it as the Zürich – Chur main line. Line S9 to Zug via Affoltern am Ablis also has some very pleasant rural aspects once the Zürich conurbation is left behind. Line S10 to Uetliberg uses DC overhead power and is usu-



Zürich HB, 10.07.00. 450 class pioneer, 450000 stands ready to work an S14 service to Hinwil.



Another view of the old and modern mix at Zürich Stadelhofen. © STS

ally operated by pairs of SZU Be4/4's every 30 minutes from platform 2. There are views over Zürich, Zürichsee and the surrounding district from above the summit station to which the line climbs almost continuously from the inner suburbs gaining over 400m in height on the 21 minute journey (the journey down takes a minute longer!). There are also hiking paths along the ridge from the summit for those wanting to explore further.

At first sight the Zürich S-Bahn appears as a complex network of lines and services. However, by exploring the area line by line the picture eventually becomes much clearer. The considerable amount of research I undertook in order to compile this article has certainly helped me to gain a much better understanding of S-Bahn operations in Zürich and the surrounding area.

Just a word of warning regarding the times and frequencies shown above. The 2005 Swiss timetable (commences 12.12.2004) will bring about significant changes to the pattern and frequency of services on many SBB routes following the opening of the new high speed

direct line between Olten and Bern. The stopping patterns, times and speed of journey of all IC/IR/ICN/EC/ICE/TGV trains on the Bern/Biel – Zürich/Basel via Olten routes will see wholesale changes. This will have an effect on many other services and even where timings remain similar on some routes there are some instances of an increase in frequency. Even the Brünig line will benefit with the standard hourly service making much better connections with the Gotthard line at Luzern in both directions. More S-Bahn services will be introduced including the Luzern/Zug area and Biasca – Chiasso. So, if like me, anyone has built up a memory store of the basic Swiss train times and service patterns over the last few years they will have to start all over again. However, despite having to negotiate a steep learning curve, these changes will generally be welcomed as they will create far more journey opportunities, making for easier travel around the system.