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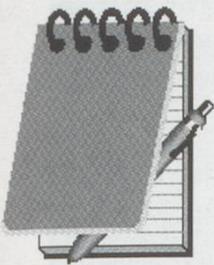
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23rd October 2004 - Olten 520-016-7 on special service to Olten Depot as part of the celebrations surrounding the opening of the NBS mentioned below. There are more pictures of this event elsewhere in SE

Photo: Duncan McKay



## INTERNATIONAL

SNCF class BB 37000 took over operation of freight trains between Mulhouse and Basel RB from class BB 20200.

### ↔ SBB CFF FFS

With three Bt coaches damaged in the side-on collision at Oberwinterthur on 10<sup>th</sup> June, a 'long' DPZ set, with a formation of Re450 / B / AB / B / AB / B / Re450, entered service in August on Route S8 (Pfäffikon – Thalwil – Zürich – Winterthur)

The first public services over the Mattstetten – Rothrist NBS section operated on 23<sup>rd</sup> October in conjunction with a Rail Fest at Olten. An hourly service was provided between Bern and Olten, also between Solothurn and Olten over the spur from the NBS at Inkwil.

To accommodate traffic for the Payerne air show on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September, and which was heavily promoted on the SBB website, all services serving the Fribourg town were heavily strengthened. In morning and afternoon, an hourly express service was operated between Yverdon and Fribourg calling at Payerne only, two extra trains ran from Lausanne and all local services were strengthened

TA Kirow rail crane fell over during track maintenance outside Aarau during the night of 26<sup>th</sup> / 27<sup>th</sup> June, blocking two of the four tracks completely and damaging cables in the area. All services through Aarau were suspended from start of traffic on Sunday morning, with Bern - Romanshorn services being diverted via the Aarberg

## NEW TECHNOLOGY TICKETING

SBB has announced plans to sell tickets over the mobile phone network next year. Its President, Benedikt Weibel, told the media that the system could allow for the introduction of differentiated pricing. According to Weibel, travellers will be able to buy their tickets by sending an SMS - indicating their departure station and destination - to a special number. They will then receive a message that can be used as a ticket. Weibel said that using mobile phone technology for ticket sales would offer new opportunities. But he also suggested that prices might vary in the future according to the time of day and when the sale was made and added that the railways price structure could, in future, be modelled along the lines used by low-cost airlines and telephone companies. He did say that, for the time being, the current pricing system, which guarantees access to all trains, would remain in place.

## INTERNET

SBB has also introduced full-blown sales via the Internet enabling customers to print their own tickets at home. Previously, travellers could only order their tickets on the web, which were then delivered by mail up to three days later. Under the new system, customers must pay using a credit card before the ticket data is sent to them. They can then print out the ticket on a standard sheet of paper. To travel with the ticket, they must show conductors an identification card, since Internet passes are attributed to one person. Other improvements are on the cards for travellers. Connections will be announced on board the Federal Railways' newest trains. Weibel could not say whether all the rolling stock would be upgraded, but he did promise that advertising would not be broadcast on trains.

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loop, Zofingen and Suhr with non-stop Bern - Zürich services routed via Pratteln and the Botzberg line. Signalling was restored at 0900 and main line services resumed on two tracks; some local services resumed after the third line reopened at 1600 but the fourth track was not reopened until 0820 on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

MThB Re4/4 21, for the past two years officially SBB Re4/4<sup>II</sup> 11272 but which retained its old livery and identity, was transferred to Bellinzona Works on 9<sup>th</sup> September for overhaul and repainting into standard SBB Passenger livery.

### **SBB Brünig**

A temporary platform at Kriens Mattenhof, which will become part of the Luzern S-Bahn network from December 12<sup>th</sup>, was specially opened on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> August to help serve the Wrestling and Alpine festival at Luzern Allmend. Trains only served the halt from the Hergiswil direction in the morning and towards Hergiswil in the afternoon.

Brienz station has acquired (outside) platforms and been reduced to two through tracks. As opened, access to the lakeside platform is only available from the level crossing, which still provides the access to the steamer pier.

Zentralbahn trains will apparently be branded "Luzern Engelberg Interlaken"; the original proposal to use "Luzern Engelberg Brünig" having apparently fallen foul of the sensibilities of the Berner Oberland

## **bls**

To allow driving trailers Bt 950 - 953 from the Bern - Neuchâtel - La Chaux-de-Fonds RX services to be refurbished, the BDt from the Simmental RX set was transferred to Neuchâtel for the period mid July to the end of August. The Simmental diagram was operated with the Ae4/4 running round at both Spiez and Zweisimmen, except for trains 2380 and 2383, which were worked top and tailed by two engines (the trailing engine being dead) to accommodate the four minute layover at Spiez between trains 2383 (arrive 1758) and 2386 (depart 1802). Work was shared between Ae4/4's 257 and newly reinstated 258.

The Golden Pass Pendelzug set has been diagrammed for Ae4/4 251, which carries a HAG sponsored commemoration of its 60 years of service. The set changes to Re4/4 haulage at weekends; on Sunday evenings the set has been used as a relief IC service from Interlaken Ost to Bern for train 1937, the (notoriously heavily loaded) 1739 departure from Interlaken Ost.

Due to the potential collapse of a (two years old!) tunnel on the Kandersteg road at Mitholz, Lötschberg road traffic had to be routed over the unmade service road for the NEAT construction site from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> July until a diversion could be built. The BLS responded by extending northbound car shuttles between 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July to a temporary terminal on track 1 at Frutigen; due to the lack of a reception area there, the shuttles returned empty to Kandersteg to pick up cars there.

The first production 'Jumbo' articulated twin set entered service in July. Unlike the prototype, the production series only use one EW I coach; a new low floor middle section containing the plug doors and the articulation has been used to 'stretch' the donor coach. The coaches will be used to replace the intermediate coach in the Bern S-Bahn NPZ fleet.

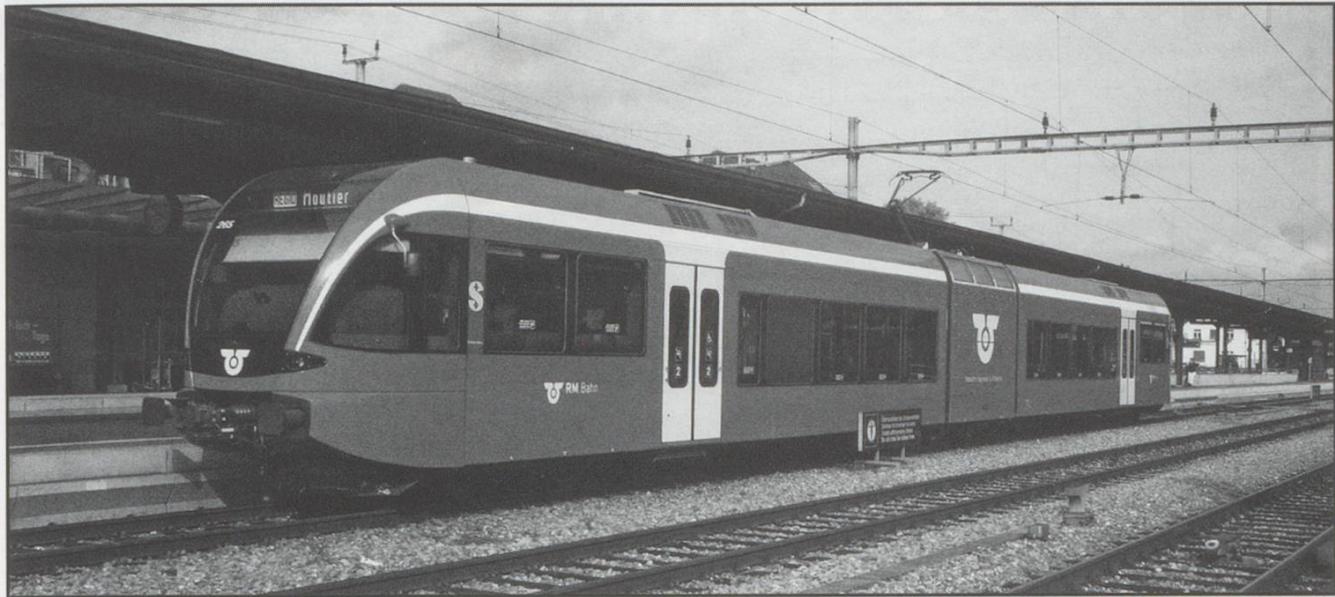
Between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> July, electrical interference tests were carried out in the Wimmis area of the Simmental line. Overnight, the line was single end fed from Zweisimmen and tests carried out to check interference levels on modern rolling stock as part of the Lötschberg Base Tunnel assurance program. Included in the tests were SBB Re450, 460 and ICN (RABDe500) vehicles, BLS classes Re465, Re485, RABe525, also a RM GTW unit and an ÖBB 'Taurus' loco of Class 1116.

Spiez - Interlaken locals are now normally worked by NINA units; the Goppenstein - Brig local service is in the hands of a two-car (RBDe + Bt) NPZ unit.

## **BOB**

ABe4/4 305, damaged in the Gsteigwiler accident, re-entered service on 28<sup>th</sup> June in the new blue and yellow livery.

The first of five three-section low floor trailer sets, ABt 421, was delivered from Stadler Altenrhein to Interlaken on 13<sup>th</sup> August.



RM GTW 2/6 526 265 at Solothurn. 07/10/04.  
Photo: Mark Barber



A quantity of the now spare 1960's fleet is to go to Madagascar, where the motor coaches will be converted to DEMUs for use on suburban services around the capital. Be4/4 15 and 16, together with Bt 101 / 103, are the first of the series to be transferred.



A near miss was reported on the afternoon of 23<sup>rd</sup> August, with both train 907, 1002 St Moritz – Zermatt and train 112, 1710 Zermatt – Brig, in the Randa – Herbiggen section at the same time. Fortunately, speeds over rack sections are slow and a collision was avoided. On schedule, the two trains should have passed at Herbiggen.



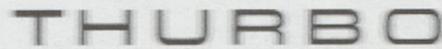
The service suspension between Nyon CFF and Les Plantaz ended on 4<sup>th</sup> July with the opening of the new underground station at Nyon. (Photographs of the new station are overleaf)



The Wrestling and Alpine festival at Rigi Staffel on 18<sup>th</sup> July saw practically the entire fleet in service. Loco He 18 was given the most critical diagram, taking the beer up from Vitznau to Staffel in the morning! 18 then ran light to Arth-Goldau to collect B2 7 and 14 for return traffic in the afternoon.



The last GTW unit was delivered on 13<sup>th</sup> August.



Repairs to the Emmersberg tunnel between Schaffhausen and Feuerthalen overran dramatically due to unforeseen geological complications. Instead of the line reopening on 7<sup>th</sup> August, the closure actually extended from 12<sup>th</sup> June until 29<sup>th</sup> October.

Ex-MThB ABDe4/4 16 + Bt 204 has been sold to TRAVYS for use on their Vallorbe – Le Brassus services. This set is third hand, having run as GFM ABDe4/4 171 + Bt 371 from 1966 to 1983.



**TROGENERBAHN** The first of the pair of Stadler built articulated units has been delivered, due to enter service during November. Track spacing in St Gallen has had to be widened to accommodate the new units.

The line's three trailer coaches B 11 – 13, originally built for the Lausanne – Moudon line of the Tramways Lausannois, have been sold to the IRR Museum Rheinschauen at Lustenau in Austria, where they will be run on 760cm gauge bogies.



The second track between Rohr and Brandegg on the Grindelwald section was brought into use in July.

The two Panoramic sets 141 and 142 have been delivered.



**TOP:**  
NStCM Bt 305 & Be4/4 302. New Nyon underground station. 2000hrs 01.10.04

**LOWER.**  
NStCM Be4/4 204. A/A. Station still not quite finished, no seats etc. The connection to the SBB station is a bit primitive and you need all of the four minutes to get up, out and go across to get the Geneva connection!

**RON SMITH SENT THESE PICTURES IN RECENTLY.  
SEE NOTEPAD FOR FURTHER DETAILS.**



## TRAMS



**Transports publics genevois** The first of the 21 six section Bombardier – built trams was delivered to Geneva on 27<sup>th</sup> August, and was scheduled to enter service in October. The 51m long vehicles were built by the Villeneuve and Wein works.



From early August 15 Combino trams (out of 28) were scheduled for service.

Around 17.30 on August 18<sup>th</sup>, a fire broke out in Wiesenplatz depot, badly damaging the storage hall, fortunately without any injuries. Written off were bar car Be4/6 602, 'Edelweiss' trailer B3 702, the 'Badwännli' open trailer B2 1046 and Bern tram Be8/8 711, together with a track machine. Services to Kleinhüningen were suspended for the

rest of the day. Fortunately, most of the historic fleet was out on city tours or stabled in the main running shed, from which all the trams, including stored Combino, were evacuated and sent to Allschwilerstrasse and Eglisee Depots overnight.

The five trams leased from Bern have been fitted with standard trailer couplings and put into service with BVB B4 trailers on Line 1/14. The sets have been allocated numbers 351 to 357, subtracting 360 from the Bern running number; however 351 / 711 was written off in the fire at Wiesenplatz depot on August 18th.

## HISTORIC SEFT

Public service on the Misox line restarted on 18<sup>th</sup> July. Three return trips between Castione and Cama were scheduled to operate on selected Sundays up to 10<sup>th</sup> October.