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THE PROPOSED SWISS TIMETABLE 2009

David Adams



PHOTO: David Adams

SBB has published some detail of their 2009 services in a draft timetable which can be accessed on www.fahrplanentwurf.ch. An increase in service frequency is a feature on several routes but the current service patterns are maintained in general on most. The Gotthard line probably sees the most changes and the basic alterations are described in the following overview. Tables have not been posted on the above website where services remain very similar to the current timetable.

CIS/EC/IC services will cease to feature locomotive haulage and will be formed of tilting EMUs from classes ETR470, ETR610 & ICN. There are 9 CIS services each way, 3 of which will be formed by the new ETR610 units. As others come on stream at the rate of two per month during 2009 they will gradually replace the remaining ETR470s. Seven of these services run to-and-from Zürich and two to-and-from Basel via Luzern. There will be 8 ICN services, six between Basel and Lugano/Chiasso via Luzern and two between Zürich and Lugano/Chiasso. Only early northbound and late southbound trains will serve Chiasso, where four ICN sets stable overnight.

The time-honoured connection with IR trains at Arth Goldau is maintained as at present and these will continue to alternate between Basel and Zürich to Locarno. No CIS trains will serve Chiasso and a 4 minute change at Bellinzona (or alternatively a longer change time at Lugano) into a Tilo class 524 dual voltage Flirt unit is necessary to reach Chiasso - these trains

continuing into Italy to Albate-Camerlata, the stop south of Como.

Intermediate timings of the Gotthard IR services have altered by a few minutes here and there but the major change is the 4 minute later arrival at Luzern where all northbound Gotthard line trains stand for 14 minutes before continuing to Basel at xx.55. Stops at Sursee and Zofingen have been omitted giving a faster journey time between Luzern and Basel. However, the time saved here is negated by the station dwell times for passengers travelling from points south of Luzern. Southbound the dwell time at Luzern is 13 minutes. Erstfeld will enjoy hourly IR northbound departures from 07.33 to 22.33 inclusive, giving two additional late services.

The S2 services from Erstfeld to Zug leave 2 minutes later than at present at xx.03 and the current annoying gap at 08.01 is filled, giving an hourly service from 06.03 to 20.03 inclusive. Consequently the current 07.50 S3 service to Luzern no longer operates south of Brunnen.

The sight of a tilting EMU each way every hour is unlikely to be welcomed by many, especially Gotthard line photographers. The class 460s they replace will no doubt find employment on the IR services and inevitably there will be a significant decline in passenger sector Re4/4 locos on the Gotthard line. That unfortunately is the price of modernisation and progress. I do stress that the above information is currently only provisional and that times must be checked before travelling. The new timetable comes into operation on 14th December 2008.