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INTERNATIONAL

CIS

Prototype ETR 610 001 was tested on the curvaceous Oberwinterthur – Etzwilen line in the last week in March, before transferring to Biasca on 29th March. Overhead line capacity trials between Grenchen Süd and Solothurn took place on 29th and 30th April using ETR 610 001 and 610 004.

Eurotunnel

The five MaK DE 1004 locomotives (0001 – 0005) have gone through Biel Works for attention to the CAT filters.

SWITZERLAND

SBB

A round trip on the Zürich S12 Seuzach – Brugg service on 12th April was unusually formed of two RABe 514 units sandwiching a DPZ set with Re450 108.

The first Kolibris are being refurbished at Olten Works. The operational modification is that first class accommodation will be moved to the driving trailer, which will have three different configurations. 13 units will have a 12 seat first class section for use on Region Alps services (Rhône valley and Martigny – Orsières), two units with a 56 seat At for the 'Glarner Sprinter' (Zürich – Schwanden) service, while the remaining 105 units will have a 24 seat first class section. This refurbishment includes the two Vallee de Joux units but not the six RBD562 units which work to Mulhouse.

The two prototype refurbished DPZ units (Re450 030 / 112) were trialled on the S14 Zürich – Hinwil service between 13th and 16th May.

Withdrawn Swiss Express liveried Re4/4II 11141 is in use as a transformer locomotive outside the new loco shed at Biel/Bienne.

Euro2008

The SBB's expectations for the Euro2008 period were that around 2500 extra trains would be required; however, around 3800 paths had to be found in advance to manage the options in the knock out stages. Around 400 conflicts with freight train paths were identified; of these it was necessary to reroute 40 trains completely. On top of these workings, the Greenfield Festival at Interlaken (13th – 15th June) and the Jodlerfest at Luzern (26th – 29th June) would require extra trains as well.

Spectators using public transport were expected to make their way to the central stations by either scheduled or extra trains, then use shuttle services to the stadia.

Basel: SBB Shuttle Basel SBB – Basel St Jakob

Bern: SBB Shuttle Bern Hbf – Bern Wankdorf

Genève: CFF Shuttle Genève Cornavin –

Lancy-Pont-Rouge (Genève Stade not used on safety grounds)

Zürich: VBZ shuttle Hauptbahnhof – Letzigrund

or VBZ Route 3 Bahnhofplatz – Albisriederplatz. Park & Ride facilities available from Dübendorf, with S5 and S15 services additionally stopping there.

Return services would run for two hours after the end of the match; all-night services were operated as well where not provided already.

The Switzerland – Austria EC service was augmented for the duration of Euro2008, with EC 165 / 166 Kaiserin Elizabeth extended from Salzburg to Wien, a relief service to the night trains EC 466 / 467 and an extra day train Europameister 06.50 Zürich – 17.00 Wien / 07.08 Wien – 16.53 Zürich.

SBB/SNCF

Work to modernise signalling and traction supplies in the Genève area has been approved. The line from Genève to Bellegarde is to be converted from 1500V DC to 25kV AC with signalling as far as La Praille modified to Swiss standards. One of the tracks between Genève and Châtelaine will be set up for either 25kV 50Hz or 15kV 16 2/3 Hz, restoring double track working to SNCF trains over that section. The link from St Jean to La Praille yard will also be made convertible 25kV / 15kV, while the Eaux Vives – Annemasse section will be converted from 25kV to 15kV to allow Swiss trains to provide the through service from Cornavin to Annemasse.

BLS

On peak winter weekends, seven or eight base tunnel services in each direction required relief trains on Saturdays, with four on Sundays, with on average 25 extra trains running each weekend. The reliefs for CIS 43 and 44 were run through to Basel.

From 29th March, weekend relief services were provided for CIS 41 (Bern – Domodossola), 43 (Bern – Brig), 44 and 48 (Brig – Bern).

A shunting accident at Bern on 13th May took a BLS NPZ unit out of service; the lack of spare capacity in the BLS fleet meant that from 19th June a five coach Kolibri set (560 106) was hired in from SBB for use on the S3 Gurbetal (Bern – Belp – Thun) services.

SBB / BLS

A cable fire on the evening of 29th March put the interlocking at Gümligen out of action for the whole of 30th March. During that day, CIS services between Basel and Milano were diverted via Chexbres; delays were even more than normal due to ongoing single line working on the Bern – Fribourg section between Wünnewil and Flamatt. The IC 8xx Romanshorn – Brig service was diverted via Belp, crossing the reverse working at Fischermätteli and overtaking the S3 service at Belp: journey times were extended by around 20 minutes. The S1 and S2 services were repalced by buses between Ostermundigen and Münsigen (S1) / Worb (S2); the Bern – Luzern RE service was substituted between Bern and Konolfingen.

TRAVYS

The Vallee de Joux line is being extensively rebuilt, with a new terminus being commissioned at Le Brassus. While work was also being carried out on the CFF section between Le Day and Le Pont between 9th June and 25th July, a limited diesel shuttle service was provided between Le Pont and Sentier-Orient, using SNCF X2800 DMU's X 2866 and X 2895. The two Kolibri units (RBDe 566 384 / 385) were hired to CFF to augment their fleet during Euro2008; in their absence, school trains were covered by an ex-MThB Pendelzug set hired from TRN working between Le Pont and Chex-le-Maitre Ecole. Exceptionally, the 'Slow Up Vallee de Joux' day on 6th July was marked by running a through service between Vallorbe and Sentier-Orient. The new station at Le Brassus was due to open on 25th August.

OeBB

The prototype NPZ unit acquired from SBB has been renumbered RBDe4/4 207, AB 507 and Bt 907. The unit was named Balsthal on 28th April and entered passenger service the following day.

SOB

ABe4/4 14 and four coaches were sent to Kaiseraugst for scrap on 14th March.

A three coach Pendelzug set (BDe 576 049, built as SOB ABDe4/4 71 Einsiedeln in 1959, B 347 (1964) and ABt 149 (1972) has been sold to the Verein Histrosiche MThB group.

Treibwagen 576 055-057 have been sold to the MAKIES group for use on gravel trains based on Gettnau in the Emmental.

SZU

The DPZ sets purchased from SBB are being renumbered B 231/2, 241/2 (downgraded AB) and Bt 951/2.

The 59x series motorcoaches are reaching the end of their life. Single-cab 576 595 / 596 are due for withdrawal after the Euro2008 tournament finishes in July.

AB

The first of the second batch of articulated units for the Trogenerbahn was delivered on May 14th.

CJ

On the night of 14th March, a landslide blocked the line near Roche Tunnel at Km 19 east of Bollement. The normal bus replacement route was not available, as the landslide had also blocked the valley road. The line remained closed until 10th May while the ground was stabilised.

Standard gauge Bt 921 (ex SZU) was taken to Tramelan for overhaul in April, being towed to Tavannes by Be 576 112 and then transferred to Tramelan on Rollschimmel.

MGB

The third four car KOMET unit is now in service. The first three car ABe4/8 unit was tested on the Schöllenenbahn section from 1st April.

The Winter 2008 Saturday ski extras between Brig and Betten were made up of an ex-BVZ ABDe8/8 unit with an ex-Zermatt luggage driving trailer.

RBS

Stadler has received a contract to insert a low floor section into the 'Blues Line' units 81-89, which work between Zytglogge and Worb via Gümligen.

TRN

NINA unit 527 322 has been sold to BLS (having been previously hired from March) and was put into service retaining TRN livery but carrying the number 525 037. A further two FLIRT units have been ordered from Stadler for delivery in 2009, allowing the last NINA unit to be sold on to BLS; at present TRN has no reserve stock at peak periods, with four passenger sets for four duties and has to hire cover from SBB or BLS.

ZB

The remaining serviceable tractors, TeIII 201 / 3 and Tm 981 - 3, have been given their computer numbers Te 171 201 / 3 and Tm 172 981-3.

asm

Work has started on restoring the link between Niederbipp and Oensingen, originally closed on May 9th 1943, planned for opening in 2010 or 2011. An advance bus service started on 28th April, running at half hourly intervals on Monday to Friday peak periods and midday.

The first of three low floor Be4/8 for the Solothurn lines was rolled out by Stadler's Bussnang works on 25th April. Branded STAR (Schmalspur Treibzug für Attraktiven Regionalverkehr). It is a narrow gauge version of the FLIRT design.

RhB

Ge4/4II 632 Zizers re-entered service on 19th May, with a new body built at Landquart after the damage sustained in the collapse of the avalanche shelter at Valendas after the engine struck a rock fall on 16th January 2007. The cost of SwF 3m was under half the cost of a new loco; the money thereby saved has gone on reconstructing and extending the avalanche shelter.

The Albula and Bernina lines were granted World Heritage Site status on July 7th.

TRAMS

BVB / SVB Bern Mobil

A sixth section is to be inserted into eight of the 15 Combinos, making the trams 41m long with a classification of Be6/8.

VBZ

Dot matrix indicators are being added at 57 stops on the system, indicating the next vehicle on each line serving the stop.

FUNICULARS

Two funiculars have permanently closed during Spring 2008, the Engelberg Hotel Terrasse funicular closing on 6th April and the Luzern - Gütsch funicular closing on 21st April.

HISTORIC

BC

MOB DZe6/6 2002, out of service since 1996 with axle problems, has been transferred to a group based on the BC. The 1932 built unit has been stored in the open since the shed at Gstaad was demolished at the end of 2007. See the article on pages 35 and 36.

LA TRACTION

Although the group had to cancel their Mother's Day specials for May 11th due to the closure of the Saignelegier – Glovelier section, their ex-SZB Gem4/4 122 was hired by CJ for use on works trains on the closed line.

DBB

The DBB (ex EBT) depot at Burgdorf will be demolished as part of the station improvements there; their workshop will move to the former EBT wagon repair shop at Konolfingen in 2009.

This group is planning to move its steam operations away from the Sensetal to the de-electrified Solothurn – Büren an der Aare line. For the rest of this year, they are advertised to work steam shuttles between Ramsey and Huttwil on 14th September for the Slow Up Emmental weekend and for the SMB Centenary on 5th October.

DFB

HG2/3 6 Weisshorn has reentered service after overhaul, painted in the traditional Swiss dark green livery.

BLS

A cavalcade was staged on 1st June at Dürrenroth between Sumiswald and Huttwil to celebrate the centenary of the Ramsey – Huttwil line. Most of the EBT and BLS historic fleet was present: electrics comprised BLS group Ae8/8 273, Ae4/4 251, Ae6/8 205, Ce4/6 307, EBT group De4/4 259, BDe2/4 240, Be4/4 102, plus Re465 017 and 425 191 from the operational fleet; steam featured GTB Ed3/3 3, SMB Ec4/5 11, LHB Ed3/4 11, EBT Ed4/5 8 (all on passenger sets), SMB Ed3/4 2 on mixed, plus ex-DB 64 518 on goods and SBB Historic's CZm1/2 321. Another centenary celebration is planned for the SMB on 5th October

● WHOOPS!

In the June edition of *Swiss Express* we managed to mis-spell the names of two of our contributors. They were Jason Sargerson (not Sargeson) and Bill Weber (not Webber). Also the picture on P 49 of the magazine should have been credited to Armin Schmutz not the SBB. Sorry everyone.

● DIFFERENT BUS.

One of our alert members, David Williams, has pointed-out that the articulated vehicle that was used in the emergency services exercise in Luzern that we reported upon in the June *Swiss Express* was actually a trolleybus. We should have spotted the electrical gear on the roof together with the mounting points for the trolley poles.

Thanks, David.

● LAUSANNE m2 PROJECT.

Following the article on this project in the June *Swiss Express* Marc Badoux the Director of the project has kindly written to us to note that the inauguration festivities for the m2 are planned for the 18th – 21st September. Your magazine circulates at the highest levels!

Editors Note: If any member is in Lausanne on the dates in question we would be pleased to receive an article, or just some photographs, recording the events.

● ACCIDENT CLOSES LINE.

On the 23rd May the main SBB/CFF line between Geneva and Lausanne was brought to a standstill at 08.20 when an Re4/4 on a local train managed to entangle its pantograph in the overhead wires near Morges. It was two hours before the line was reopened. Thirty trains were cancelled. Buses were run between Allaman and Lausanne. Around 10,000 commuters were affected. Some Lausanne inhabitants took taxis to make sure that they would catch their flights from Geneva airport – at SFr250! Fifteen people are reported to have missed their flights. It is the 5th time this year that this stretch of line has been closed, twice because of suicides. The Swiss press say that the line is saturated, with no alternative route in case of difficulties, and demand the continuation of the third track that was opened in 2004 between Geneva and Coppet. The line sees more than 238