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*Tausende Züge fahren.
Holen den Tag, die Nacht.
Haben wie Schwalben den Frühling
und wie Wölfe den Frost gebracht.
Sausen nach Süden, nach Norden.
Preschen durch Regen, durch Schnee.
Die Schwellen rostsätzlich geworden,
von der Sonne durchglüht das Coupé.
Züge sind Brüder und Schwestern,
die Väter, vom Rauche schier blind,
Abende liebten sie gestern,
Frühe die Jungen, den Wind.*

*Keiner ist anders als alle.
Einer allein, der mich trug,
glitt wie auf Messers Schneide:
des Jahres letzter Zug.
Wende von Norden nach Süden.
Schnee hing ein Netz in die Luft.
Fing in dem Netz vor den müden
Augen die Trauer, den Duft...
Duft und Verbängnis des Jahres.
Abschied und Wiederkehr.
Zärtliches Licht dunklen Haares.
Wärme... Zubause... Das Meer...*

*Schlafen die Dörfer in Frieden?
Bald hüllt der Tunnel uns ein.
Sind wir vom Glanz hier gemieden –
werden dort Sterne sein?
Hinter der Nacht wacht der Morgen.
Drüben – ist Heimkehr? Beginn?
Den Himmel kann keiner sich borgen,
die Erde gäbe er hin.
Nässe, Kälte und Schwärze.
Vorbei eine Glocke, die schlug.
Im Flaschenbals flackert die Kerze.
Des Jahres letzter Zug.*

ALBERT EHRISMANN

In this 1963–64 season the attention of all Switzerland's winter sports people is riveted to the Winter Olympics being held in nearby Tyrol. Because of this geographic proximity, the Olympics are exerting an influence on Switzerland's own winter sports programme. Although for this reason the Swiss are not organizing any international championships this winter, there will be good opportunities to see top flight sports events. The great alpine ski-racing season will open as usual in the first weeks of January with additional races in the Bernese Oberland. In the two giant slaloms at Adelboden, the Grindelwald women's race and Wengen's international Lauberhorn race, top performers in alpine skiing events will be showing what they can do for the first time this season. These contests are important not only for final selections for Switzerland's national team, but also for the highly coveted FIS points which are significant for the assignment of starting numbers in Innsbruck. Some of the best specialists in cross country, ski-jumping and the northern combination will be meeting in Le Brassus as a preliminary looking toward Innsbruck. During the course of the season there will be a number of other annual international skiing events. And with a few exceptions Swiss championship titles will be awarded during championship week in St. Moritz in March.

Thanks to Switzerland's ample supply of artificial ice-rinks, activity in this field began quite early this season. Ice hockey teams were already chasing points in November in order to be able to interrupt their activities during the Olympics. In the last few days of the old year Davos' rink (which also can produce artificial ice) will be the scene of the international Spengler Cup Tournament in which some of the best European Club teams will participate. Shortly after there will be an ice hockey tournament in Villars which has become a new centre of ice sports. The extensive ice-hockey programme also includes international matches and friendship meets.

The figure skaters will meet quite early, on the first weekend in January in Winterthur, to select their champions. In all probability one or more figure skating exhibitions will be arranged with the participation of outstanding skaters from abroad, either before or after the Olympics. Speed skaters will be meeting primarily in Davos, although some contests are to be held in other cities too. Curling is gaining rapidly in popularity, and there will be thousands of enthusiastic curlers of all ages on the ice this season. Among Switzerland's bobsleigh specialists, things may be a bit quieter. Because of the Olympics in nearby Innsbruck, St. Moritz will not open its Bobsleigh track, but merely maintain the Cresta Run, which of course is an attraction in its own right. As usual Grindelwald will be organizing its annual Swiss Polyathlon championships. Another sport which is steadily gaining in popularity is horse-racing and horsemanship contests on snow tracks. Arosa, Davos, St. Moritz and Gstaad will all be organizing their annual international events in this field.

In addition to the above major events on Switzerland's 1963–64 calendar, there will be an abundance of medium and smaller winter sports contests. And since most, if not all of the real benefit of winter holidays comes from taking the "do it yourself" approach to winter sports, it is certainly worth mentioning in passing that Switzerland, as the classic land of winter sports, offers everyone unlimited opportunities for healthy exercise and rejuvenating rest in crisp, clear mountain air and sunshine. Whether you ski or skate for speed, or whether you prefer leisurely hikes and gentle sleigh rides—whatever you seek in health-giving wintertime activity—you will find it in Switzerland.

KARL ERB