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Mailbag

Ready To Run

I do sympathise with David Arthur on obtaining RTR stock for a specific area, however at the same time agree with your comments that a manufacturer who produces a vehicle has to maximise his market, and therefore Bemo (and others) are unlikely to produce a model with limited sales. The alternative is, as you suggest, to adapt a current kit or scratch-build.

Currently, I am unemployed, so purchasing any RTR is out of the question. I am scratch-building the trailer and railcar (BDe4/4) of the ASD (before it disappears?), and am about three quarters of the way to completion, having obtained plans (1:50 scale) from TPC in Aigle, and working from my own photographs.

One section of the current *Swiss Express* I do applaud is the plans page. May we have more plans? (subject to copyright and availability to produce them in 1:87 scale).

David Keeble
Bromley

Observations

So far this year I have had a holiday near Montreux in late April and another in Davos in early June; this letter is provoked by several comments in *Swiss Express*.

Towards the end of the second holiday I visited Bergün station and there purchased for SFr.3 a 14 page document advertised as *Aktueller Locoturnus RhB*. This proved to be the motive power diagrams (excluding tractors and pw stock) for the period 23.5.93 to 24.10.93; although the diagrams are numbered there is no statement of the locomotive number for each diagram, or even the type of motive power intended to work each diagram. However, from information in the document and knowledge of RhB motive power, it is possible to deduce the type of motive power intended to work each diagram.

During my visit I saw no evidence of delivery of any Ge4/4^{III} locomotives. The diagrams show that motive power is very intensively used on the AC lines and maintenance must be done at night or at week ends; the evidence suggests that the AC lines are short

of motive power and I suspect the management will be more happy when the Ge4/4^{III}s are delivered and working reliably. I saw no double heading on the AC lines, and the locomotive diagram showed very little, usually early in the morning or late at night.

Locomotive diagrams 35 to 38 appear to be for the *Krokodil* with no scheduled work on Saturdays and Sundays; for locomotives of that age 4 out of 5 in service 5 days a week is very good. The *Krokodils* I saw in service were working these diagrams. One cannot claim that even these four diagrams are allocated to individual locomotives, as Diagram 37 starts at Landquart and finishes at Samedan, whereas Diagram 38 starts at Samedan and finishes at Landquart.

On Saturday 5 June 1993 there was a celebration, open day, exhibition of motive power, rolling stock and permanent way equipment and special trains; all presumably to celebrate the completion of the new station at Thusis, which was certainly not complete earlier in the week. Much new work is being done elsewhere on the system; items I so not recall in *Swiss Express* include improvements to the Landquart - Klosters section, presumably to improve the route for the opening of the new tunnel. I saw 5-head signals installed, but not yet in service, on new works at more than one part of the system.

I was very impressed by the operation and scenery of the RhB. As an example of the quality it can achieve, on one train from St.Moritz the conductor was making announcements in five languages; I cannot reliably recognise all but I thought that his order was German, Romansch, French, Italian and English; however most conductors were content with two, but how often does one hear any BR staff who can do even that?

I returned to Zürich Flughafen via Landquart and then, using the route via St.Gallen I got off at Wil, hoping to do a fair amount of photography at the standard gauge station. That was made almost impossible by the reconstruction work in progress.

So to my earlier visit to the Montreux area.

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ASD was closed and a substitute bus service was operating; on enquiry at the TPC office in Aigle, I was told that the rail service would resume in about three weeks. Part of the AOMC was also closed, with a substitute bus service for the section Monthey - Champéry; that closure seems to have been planned as there was a proper timetable and statement of when rail service would resume.

On the Sunday I went up to Rochers de Naye pushed by the steam locomotive from Caux, but returned by modern electric traction. I have never before been propelled by a steam rack locomotive and found it one of the most uncomfortable journeys I can remember. The problem was severe surging, similar to that produced by some GWR and BR steam locomotive designs at low speed. However the rack locomotive never got going fast enough to eliminate the problem. The locomotive had a noticeable beat and sounded like a conventional steam locomotive; however it nearly stalled on some of the more severe sections of track.

The empty steam train followed the electric down from Caux to Glion and I suspect that it was intended to put the steam train into the depot at Glion, but I did not wait long enough to confirm that. The Shed at Caux is too short for the steam locomotive and two carriages, in my opinion. There were very few passengers on the steam train on which I travelled (although the electric services were well patronised) and the steam operation could not be economic for that amount of traffic.

On the SBB the 460 series BoBo locomotives were often seen and were a welcome increase in variety. On 30 April at Brig at 11:29 Be4/6 No.1607 arrived from the west hauling a coach of similar design which could have been a driving trailer. That was my most unusual sighting on the SBB and I assume it was a special.

By background I am a professional engineer, which is probably why I read some items in *Swiss Express* with suspicion. However I enjoy the vast majority of the magazine, and do not mind much material about the RhB so long as it does not do a long term takeover.

Dr.David Pearson
Aberdeen

We did report that the RhB was to undertake a large number of track improvements to increase the operating capacity of the line, for details of what work is being done where we rely on reports in other journals and the observations of members.

I am surprised that a chartered engineer should regard the fact that maintenance is mainly done at nights and week-ends worthy of comment, when was it ever otherwise on a well organised and economically run railway? The Ge4/4^ls are not being built to let older locomotives sit idly in Landquart sheds, their main purpose is to provide greater power to operate the more heavily loaded trains, to enable the last of the 70 year old Baby Kroks to be honourably retired from revenue service and to allow some of the Ge4/4^s to be transferred to the Arosa line if and when the proposed tunnel section allows this to be converted to AC. There will also be additional requirement for motive power when the Vereina tunnel is completed. The RhB is unlikely to move away from its long established policy of making intensive use of all available motive power.

CJF

Transfers - an appeal

I spent the last week of June in the Interlaken area. like G.W.Fitzpatrick I also travelled on a *Regionalzug* heading south. In my case it was to Reichenbach, where the train terminated. BLS buses were providing the connections to Wengi, Frutigen Kandergrund etc. This is shown on table 301 of the Kursbuch (the 1992/3 one anyway!). I hope this information helps.

Maybe someone can help me. I have just purchased, at great expense (£5!) a slightly battered Kleinbahn ABFe4/8 twin-car EMU. This appears to be identical, or at least very similar to the BLS group ABDe4/8 sets Nos.743-745, so I intend a repaint in blue/cream as BN No.743, of which I have some good photographs taken at Kandersteg in 1992. Being new to Swiss outline modelling, I have no idea where one can get the right transfers. Can someone tell me.

Martin Axford

Wootton Bassett

Transfers are a bit of a problem; some members purchase their supplies in Switzer-

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land. If any member has found a reliable method of obtaining them from the UK, could he please let everyone know.

Kursbuch supplements

A few observations following a recent trip to Switzerland and some comments on the September issue of *Swiss Express*.

I bought a copy of the Kursbuch in Brig and, as you predicted, the typographical errors in Table 470 had been corrected. However I was given reduced size stick-in amendments for Table 610 (Winter) - two sets to be precise. On comparison with my edition I cannot see any difference so presumably this means there was something wrong with the early editions. This raises the possibility that where errors are found the amendments are only being issues within the locality of the routes involved - somewhat inconvenient if you travel extensively.

As for the Postbus supplements, although I agree it is not unreasonable to charge a little extra on these tourist routes I think the publicity could have been better. Although mentioned in the Kursbuch it seems to have been forgotten about in the advertising for some of the holiday passes - any family intending to stay in Andermatt and do all the routes in the area would get quite a hefty bill. I witnessed a Swiss family get clobbered for the best part of £20 on a single trip over the Nüfenen.

My recommended station restaurant for some years now has been at Samedan. this wonderful establishment seems to be a favourite with the RhB staff, no doubt due to the hefty 2-course menus at SFr.12 and SFr.16.50, which change daily, including Sunday. Last year I also enjoyed a similar meal at Romanshorn (only during recognised meal times), whilst watching the organised chaos of through trains squeezing between the crowds for the Bodensee ferries.

Steve Bratt
Crewe

The mystery deepens, the amended table 610 is identical to the one in our earlier copies of the Kursbuch. These were purchased at Zürich Flughafen, which disposes of Steve Bratt's theory that the amendments might be issued on a localised basis. Zürich is not exactly close to the Brünig.

Signals and Glossary

Regarding John Jesson's observations on Swiss Signals in *Swiss Express*, June 1993 pp 14 & 47, it occurs to me that this application is somewhat like the exit signals at the start of automatic block sections. See Diagram (Anlage) 4 at the back of *Signalbuch der Schweizerischen Bundesbahn* dating from 1981-2. Perhaps John may care to comment.

I was pleased to see the President's *Glossary of Technical Terms* in *Swiss Express*, June 1993. Over the years I have prepared my own list which covers not only technical terms, but unfamiliar words I have come across in the many Swiss books I have. This list runs to 29 typewritten A4 pages. Do you think any members would be interested in this?

Finally, I also note in the June issue that the tendency for modellers to give macabre or offbeat titles to their layouts is alive and well. Hence, presumably, the name of Mr. Edward's layout - *Friedhof* means cemetery or graveyard.

J.E.Daboo
East Grinstead

As 29 A4 pages would amount to at least two complete issues of Swiss Express I would appreciate member's reaction to Mr.Daboo's offer.

Offbeat layout names can backfire. John Allen's Gorre and Daphetied was an excellent case, the problem was getting people to realise the second name was pronounced "defeated" and not "daffytied" or "dap-heated". On a slightly different theme, has anyone named their layout Kleine Friedegg? You know, the small mountain opposite the Grosse Friedegg, which is alongside the Schinken Platte.

CJF

SBB Stock News

New locomotives up to the end of July 1993:

Re4/4 450	450.061-065
Re4/4 460	460.002/014-017/019/020/035-044/046/ 048-052/054-055/060

Withdrawn:

Ae3/6 ^l	10641/10650/10653/10679/10684/ 10699/10702/10711/10712
Ae4/7	10921/10995
Te ^l	34/46/50
Tm ^{ll}	735
Be4/6	1608