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INTERNATIONAL

RABe 524 001, the first FLIRT unit equipped for 3000V DC working for the TILO services, was tested under 3000V DC on the FNM line near Malpensa (Italy) and under 1500V DC on the Geneva – La Plaine section from 31st July.

Prototype TGV Est unit 4401 was tested in Switzerland in the last two weeks of August, including the Gotthard Line, Bern – Geneva, and night time tests over the Rothrist – Bern NBS at speeds of up to 220 kph under ETCS signalling.

SWITZERLAND

SBB

ETCS night time operation on the Mattstetten – Rothrist NBS started on 2nd July. Presently in use on services after 21.30, full operation will commence in December 2006. In the first three weeks, signalling difficulties only caused 11 out of 196 scheduled trains to be diverted over the old line through Burgdorf.

The line between Eclubens-Rue and Moudon through the Broye Gorge, damaged in the April floods, is continuing to prove troublesome. The line was blocked for six hours on 19th July, followed on the evening of 27th July by the derailment of four wagons of a Payerne – Lausanne Triage goods train, closing the line until midday on 29th July.

Zurzach station has been provisionally renamed 'Bad Zurzach' to match the (as yet unconfirmed by the Federal Government) change in name of the town.

On 10th December, new stations will open at Meggen Zentrum (around 1 km west of Meggen) and at Hochdorf Schönaue (between Ballwil and Hochdorf). Platforms are also being built at Wurzenbach loop to serve the Verkehrshaus, however, this station will not open until 9th December 2007.

SBB have decided to build three control centres for the national network, located at Lausanne, Olten and Zürich, effectively covering the old Kreis I, II and III lines respectively. This replaces plans to build a single centre at Olten to cover the entire network. The Lausanne centre is already under construction and will

open from 2007. Olten will take over the existing control centres at Bellinzona and Spiez, thereby controlling both Gotthard and Lötschberg transit routes. Project completion is planned for 2015.

Ae6/6 11492 has been repainted into Cargo livery, renumbered Ae 610 492 and had the name 'Erstfeld' (previously allocated to 11464) applied under the cab windows. Together with two SBB restaurant cars, it now forms an exhibition commemorating 125 years of the Gotthard Railway at the Erstfeld services on the A2 motorway. (Details can be found on the SBB website under <http://mct.sbb.ch/mct/en/reisen-gottardo>)

All SBB Infrastructure diesel vehicles are to be fitted with particulate filters by the end of 2008; it is expected that around 200 units that cannot be modified will be withdrawn and replaced where necessary.

Summer period IC 10790, 18.37 Chur – Zürich Hbf, normally formed EWIV A, EWIV B and Bpm, has been worked on occasions this year by a RBe540 treibwagen rather than the booked Re/44II.

IR 469, 22 43 Paris Est – Chur, headed by Re460 107, collided with a road-rail track machine outside Rheinfelden on the morning of 16th August. As the train was slowing for the scheduled stop at Rheinfelden, damage was minor. The line reopened after four hours and the stock sent forward to Chur for the return train that evening.

A goods train derailed at Mühlehorn on the morning of 17th August, blocking the Ziegelbrücke – Sargans line until 2200 that evening. Services were either diverted via Wallisellen, Weinfelden and Romanshorn avoiding line (IC / EC services) or replaced by buses between Ziegelbrücke and Samedan. Chur – Ziegelbrücke local services terminated at Unterterzen for the duration of the blockage, and, due to track damage, were unable to call at Mühlehorn until 24th August.

SBB have retained the contract to operate Zürich S-Bahn services on behalf of ZVV until 2014. A new performance regime forms part of the contract.

Track repairs between St Imier and La-Chaux-de-Fonds on 2nd September saw the diversion of the morning Cargo Express train from Biel to La-Chaux-de-Fonds via Neuchâtel, bringing the unusual sight of a loco-hauled train running round at the reversing station at Chambrelieu.

An air show at Lodrino on 2nd and 3rd September brought trains back to the station at Osogno-Cresciano, closed to normal passenger services since 1993.

ZB

ABe 130 010 was named 'Brienzer Rothorn' at Brienz on 29th July.

TmIII 599 has been overhauled, fitted with a new diesel engine and renumbered Tm 172 599.

The first three unit low floor driving trailer formation, ABt8 941 arrived at Interlaken from Stadler Altenrhein on 14th July. Pending the opening of the Engelberg tunnel (now delayed by another two years) they will be deployed on the Meiringen – Interlaken section. The sets are similar to the BOB sets, but with a SPATZ style cab.

BLS

Ex-MThB Bt 201 and 202 have been acquired from THURBO, and are being overhauled at Oberburg to replace EWII Dt leased from SBB in the Re420.5 pendelzug sets.

Further Re/44ⁱⁱ have been hired from SBB to cover for collision-damaged Re 465 014 and 017. In September, 11247, 11258 & 11259 were on hire. BLS plan to buy two more Re4/4ⁱⁱ for Pendelzug work, these are expected to be from the remaining 'Swiss Express' batch 1110, 11109 and 11141.

The Re425 fleet has been formally sectorised. 170 to 189 are the BLS Cargo fleet, to be fitted with ETCS for the Lötschberg base tunnel; 161-9 and 190 are allocated to Kandersteg car shuttle and Golden Panoramic duties, while PA equipped 191-195 are formally dedicated to Pendelzug duties.

13 four-car EMUs have been ordered for service from Spring 2008. Derived from the NINA design, they are primarily intended for RE services between Spiez and Brig over the Lötschberg line, which will be introduced in

December 2007 when IR services are diverted through the Base tunnel.

SOB

On 13th July, Ae6/6 11506 piloted train engine Re446 016 on the afternoon 'Gipfeli Express', 15 51 Einsiedeln – Zürich Altstetten.

TMR - MO

Heavy rain on the evening of 25th July caused the Drance River to flood, washing away 450m of track near Bovernier and the river bridge. NINA unit 527 511, working the last train from Martigny to Orsières, was derailed. The whole of the MO section was closed until October; leaving unit 512 trapped at Le Châble; unit 527 513 was put into service on Region Alps services between St Gingolph and Sion. The derailed unit was recovered by the SBB Brig rescue train, powered by Bm6/6 18505, and was sent to Bombardier Villeneuve for overhaul.

From 2008, it is expected that the three TMR NINA units will be sold to BLS and replaced by refurbished SBB Kolibri units.

OeBB

ABDe4/8 244 (ex BLS) has been taken out of service; if a preservation group cannot take over the unit by the end of the year it will be broken up.

THURBO

Correction to the last notepad: The unit in store at Rorschach on 5th July was Bm596 673 and not Te 3 as published. (Compiler's apologies!). It is anticipated that the Diesel GTW 2/6 units will be withdrawn from the Radolfzell – Stockach service in December.

THURBO RABe 526.7 units have taken over the S29 (Winterthur – Stein am Rhein) Monday to Friday service from mid-July, replacing RBe540 pendelzug sets.

BOB

All the ex-Brünig centre entrance stock has been withdrawn and sent for scrap. B505 and B 506 have been acquired from ZB

RBS

A turning circle has been constructed at Worb Dorf for Line G trams to Bern Zytglogge; this will facilitate the integration of the line with the Bernmobil tram network.

RhB

Berninabahn Ge2/2 161 has been overhauled and fitted with air brakes to shunt Bernina Express panoramic coaches at Tirano during their layover.

The pre-1950 centre entrance lightweight stock has been deemed time-expired and will be withdrawn as vehicles become due for overhaul. A1221 (1949) and A1252 (1940) were broken up on 4th July. However, it is expected that A1251 and one of the B2301-2306 series will be transferred to the Historic fleet to form a 'Fliegende Rätier' set with ABe4/4 501.

The new Saas tunnel was opened on 5th September.

Tirano station is to be rebuilt over the winter, which should simplify the operation of the station when four trains (three Bernina Expresses and one conventional train) are present at the same time!

Problems continue to occur with the new Panoramic coaches, with defects in PA systems, braking and suspension occurring.

VBZ

The first 3km section of the Glattalbahn from Oerlikon Messe to Auzelg is scheduled to open

on 10th December. This will be worked as an extension of VBZ Route 11. Work on the second stage, to Zürich Flughafen and Kloten, started in the autumn.

HISTORIC

SBB/OeBB

All three serviceable Red Arrow units were active on 26th August, with RAe4/8 1021 and OeBB RBe2/4 202 actually meeting up at Winterthur.

BLS/OeBB

Mercian Charters ran their 2006 weekend railtour tour using 3 BLS 1st class coaches and locomotives Re4/4 177, 184, Re465.008 & 465.010, Re 485.005 and Tractors 245.022 and 235.045. It also visited Balsthal on the OeBB utilising Tm 20 and Ce2/2 102.

Club San Gotthardo

The group have acquired Em3/3 506 from the SZU, and B 42 from TMR, allegedly the last EWL coach in original condition.

RhB

G3/4 11 Heidi, returned from the Appenzeller Bahn, is being fitted for oil firing.

It is proposed to operate regular museum fleet trains over the Davos – Filisur line in 2008.



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