

Federal deficit grows

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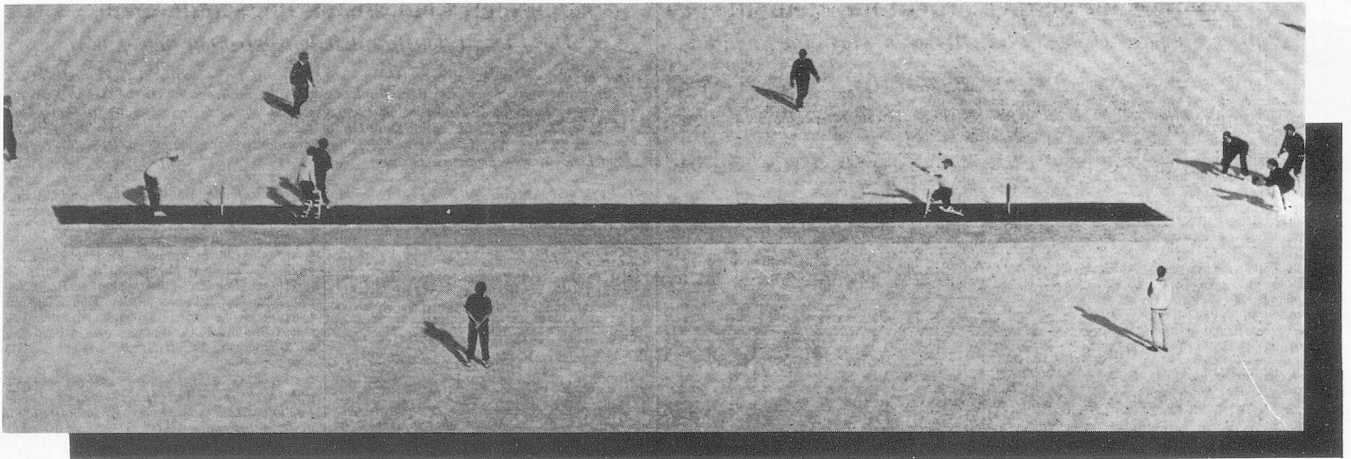
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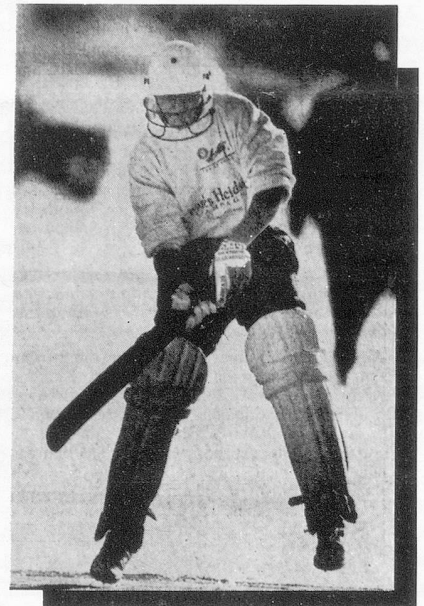
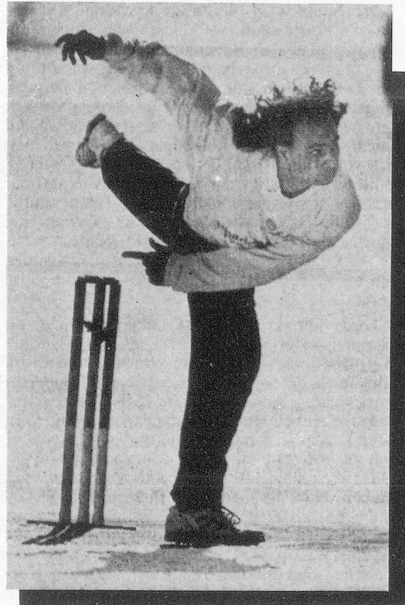


Some games are played with a carpet laid on the ice as seen on this photo, but most games are played directly on the ice.

CRICKET ON ICE

This one hundred percent English Summer game has turned into a Winter sport in St Moritz. Played on the frozen lake of St Moritz, it has lost some of its English stuffiness. Gone are the all white outfits. They are replaced by thick woollies and warm training suits. The ball is made of hard rubber. The original leather ball would become too wet on the ice and thus heavy and unreliable. And whilst in Summer cricket players move silently on the carefully tended turf, in Winter cricket every move and every contact with the ice produces a crackling noise. With the creation of the St Moritz Cricket Club, Winter cricket or cricket on ice has truly become a new sport in Switzerland.

> For bowlers it requires quite some training to maintain the balance during the run and the throw. >> The same also goes for the batsman. Small spikes on the shoes help for a better grip on the ice.



40 HOURS PER WEEK

For generations, Switzerland has been one of the few countries with official working hours set at over 40 per week (average around 45 hours). It has required this present recession with its increasing unemployment to move the Unions and the Government to consider at long last the long overdue reduction in working hours to 40 per week. By this move the Unions hope to stem somewhat the flow of redundancies which is turning life into a nightmare for many employees.

FEWER LEVEL RAILWAY CROSSINGS

In 1960 there were still 10212 level railway crossings in Switzerland whilst in 1990 there were only 7135 left. During the same time the number of underpasses or overhead crossings has increased from 4000 to 5500, most of these having been financed with the petrol tax.

Almost totally gone are the old fashioned and quaint railway barriers operated by a local "Barrierenwärter" or, as in most cases, "Barrierenwärterin".

Note: According to the story, level crossings diminished by 3077 whilst underpasses/overhead crossings increased by only 1500. What on earth happened to the other 1577 level crossings?

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ZUG NO LONGER WHAT IT WAS

For 20 years, Zug enjoyed a tremendous boom. One business after another wanted to set up an office there or at least a "letter box". One luxury building after another was built. But now the wheel has turned. Whilst new businesses become fewer and fewer, the bankruptcies are on the increase, reaching over 200 last year. Over 60.000 square metres of office space is empty.

The reduction of staff by Landis & Gyr (see Helvetia February issue) is not helping either. A rather cruel joke going around Zug at the present goes like this: "What is the difference between Borstadel and Landis & Gyr? (Borstadel is a local prison). "At Borstadel everyone knows at least the date of his discharge".

FEDERAL DEFICIT GROWS

Instead of the planned 1.3 billion deficit, the Swiss Government expects now a deficit of over 2 billion SFR. (Ruth Richardson seems to be in good company as she achieves exactly the same results).