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SBB

Neuchâtel station is scheduled for reconstruction in advance of the 'Expo 2001' show being held there. A link will be provided from the station subway into the new funicular being built from the east side of the station.

The new alignment between Onnens and Concise, part of the improvements to the line between Yverdon and Neuchâtel, was brought into use at the end of October, but only as a single track.

A new Zürich S-Bahn station is under construction at Glanzenberg between Schlieren and Dietikon on the main Zürich - Baden line.

A number of Basel - Chur services are now worked by double deck IC stock. The most unusual working is on IR 1794, which conveys the Paris and Brussels sleepers from Chur. To simplify working at Basel, these are attached to the rear of the train at Chur, necessitating a pilot locomotive from Zürich. The Luzern - Zürich Flughafen service will be worked by three rakes of double deck IC stock from the completion of reprofiling work on the Luzern station approaches. This was scheduled to take place on January 18th.

Linthal is believed to be the last SBB station retaining hand worked points.

Tem^{III} 333 was badly damaged in a collision with a Pendelzug at Grellingen BL on 13th October 1998. The total cost of the damage resulting from this accident has been estimated at 1.5 million francs.

PRIVATE RAILWAYS

Standard Gauge

BLS Lotschbergbahn (BLS)

The first of the new "NINA" units, RABe 525.001 was officially rolled out from Vevey Technologies works at Villeneuve on 30th October 1998, although it had been tested under the catenary at Villeneuve station on 5th & 6th October. It is expected all eight units on order will be ready for service by April 1999.

Mittelthurgaubahn (MThB)

All normal crossing stations on the Seelinie between Romanshorn and Rorschach, including the new loop at Altnau (in use for scheduled

crossings from 24th September) have been provided with platforms. A halt at Langrickenbach Seepark between Kreuzlingen Hafen and Bot-tighofen was opened on 27th September.

The first of the ten GTW RABe2/6 railcars for the Seelinie, RABe 526.680, was delivered on 24th September 1998. It was expected that all ten units will be in service by April 1999. They carry the new standard MThB livery and the side of each end car is lettered "Seelinie" in blue.

Two Tm shunters are on order from Stadler Bussnang for goods train and shunting duties on the Seelinie.

Post

Three Tm shunters are on order from Stadler Bussnang for duties in the new parcels centres at Daillens, Härkingen and Frauenfeld.

Metre Gauge

Appenzeller Bahnen (AB)

Financial constraints have once more put off the plan to replace the rack section out of St Gallen with a adhesion only tunnel section to Riethüsli.

Berner-Oberland-Bahnen (BOB)

The five centre entrance coaches obtained from the SBB Brünig line, AB 221 and B 271 - 274 have been refurbished and repainted in the current BOB livery style.

Brig-Visp-Zermatt (BVZ)

Further to the note in Vol. 5/6, HGe4/4¹ 14 was withdrawn in June 1992. Its bogies and motors have been retained and are kept in a shed close to the main works at Visp. Tm2/2 2921 was withdrawn in December 1992.

Chemin de fer des montagnes Neuchâtelois (CMN)

A new driving trailer saloon, Ast 1, has been delivered from Lauber of Nyon. It is built on the underframe of the withdrawn railcar BDe4/4 1.

Ferrovia Lugano Ponte Terese (FLP)

Subject to the financing being approved the company is to purchase five low floor centre



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coaches for insertion in its Be4/8 railcars. These will be similar to those already on order to the RBS (see Swiss Express Vol. 5/8).

Furka-Oberalp Bahn (FO)

The branch to the AlpTransit adit at Las Rueras was first used on October 10th 1998.

Glisergrund FO depot was commissioned in mid-November, allowing demolition of the old sheds at Brig. This will allow the road which runs parallel to the FO under the SBB / BLS station throat to be widened. However, the plan to rebuild Brig BVZ / FO station and reroute the FO line directly to Naters has been put back to at least 2006 on financial grounds.

Transports Public du Chablis (TPC)

The group have ordered 5 rack - equipped railcars, type Bdeh4/8, from Bombardier, Vevey. Reflecting the different line characteristics, the 2 for the AOMC line have a maximum speed of 75 kph on adhesion, 35 kph rack; the 3 for the BVB will only achieve 35 kph on adhesion, 25 kph on rack.

Regionalverkehr Bern-Solothurn (RBS)

A subsidy to renew the third (standard gauge) rail between Worblaufen and Diesswil has been granted.

Rhätische Bahn (RhB)

The station at Disentis has been resigalled and provided with centralised point control.

The third Pullman car, As 1142, has been released to traffic following overhaul. This leaves only As 1141 awaiting refurbishment.

Four new diesel works locomotives with hydraulic cranes, Tm2/2 95-98, were delivered in the latter half of 1998. They were built by Windhoff and carry yellow livery.

The new electric locomotives for Vereina Tunnel workings, Ge4/4^{III} 650-652 will be fitted with +GF+ couplings.

ABDe4/4 484 and 486 have been sold for further use to the Chemin de fer La Mure, France, whilst ABDe4/4 481-483 & 485 are to be cut up. The remaining two Arosa line DC railcars, ABDe4/4 487 & 488 are in Chur Sands depot pending conversion to driving trailers.

Goods traffic will in future be concentrated on regional centres at Landquart, Samedan and

Campocologno, with local depots at Ilanz, Davos, Zernez and Scoul.

Other Gauges

Wengenalpenbahn (WAB)

In preparation for the arrival of the new six axle articulated driving trailers, BDeh 4/4 124 has been painted in the yellow and green livery carried on BDhe4/8 131 - 134. By the end of 1998 the four driving trailer sets, BDt 241-244, had been delivered.

International

TGV unit 115 was tested between Zürich and Chur between 13th and 15th October - plans exist for a projection of the service into Graubünden, but not in the 1999 timetable. German ICE units will reach Zürich from May 1999, from Schaffhausen via either Flughafen or Winterthur; a proposed service to Chur has been abandoned on technical grounds.

Preservation

Modernised DR 52 8055 was launched at the Sulzer Winpro (former SLM) shops at Winterthur on 21st November. Rebuilt from a near wreck with features previously developed on the 1990's SLM rack tanks and now converted to oil firing, it will be based at the heritage depot at Winterthur.

LoWin GMBH

The old SBB shed at Winterthur has been leased to a preservation group under the above title from 1 December 1998 for 5 years with an option for a 4 year extension. Current residents are most of the Classic Rail fleet, including Ae3/6^I and Ae4/7, BLS Ae6/8 206 and SOB De4/4 21; steam residents are SNCF 141R 1207 and DR 52 8055.

It should be noted that this will be a running shed rather than a museum.

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