

Kandersteg - Iselle once again

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George Hoekstra **KANDERSTEG - ISELLE ONCE AGAIN**

Never say never again! In 1992 the SBB decided that since the road over the Simplon Pass had now been upgraded to a very high standard, it was no longer viable to continue with the Brig-Iselle car transport trains. Then, the car ramp in Brig had to be demolished during modifications to the station layout. Everybody then thought that was it: no more car transport through the Simplon. Customers of the regular Kandersteg-Goppenstein car-transport operations (see Swiss Express Sept. 1999 pages 34-6) kept asking about Iselle, especially the foreign tourists. Last summer, in view of the fact that although they were scheduled to be

which at that time is already sunny and warm. More to the point for this operation, they are also known for very long waiting times at the road tunnels and border crossings. This way after an hour of relaxation the alps are behind you, you have saved yourself a few hundred curves and you are only a few miles from the Italian Superstrada motorways. A few hundred cars and caravans were transported each way over these holidays. For 80 Francs per car per trip it seemed good value. The one Brit. I talked to said "for 30 quid it saves a hel-luva lot of messing about!". From the end of June until the end of September, with the exception of



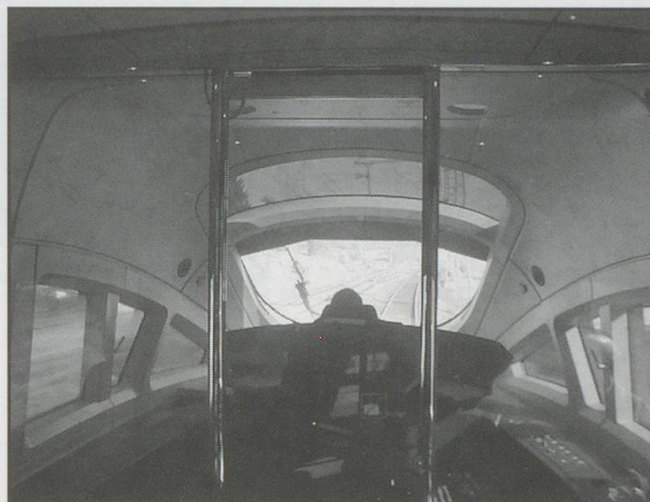
A sight not seen for many years in Kandersteg: Iselle on the destination board. Several foreign number plates and caravans.
Photo: George Hoekstra

demolished years ago, there are still facilities in Iselle, the BLS conducted a survey. The results were encouraging and so the possibility of reinstating the Kandersteg to Iselle car-transport trains was looked into. With the new free-access rules, ie. some of the changes made in Iselle and the two countries involved, it was not easy. But, by early 2000, all necessary permits and rights of way had been obtained and the first trains were operated over the Easter and Whitsun holidays, two very popular periods for short holidays in the south,

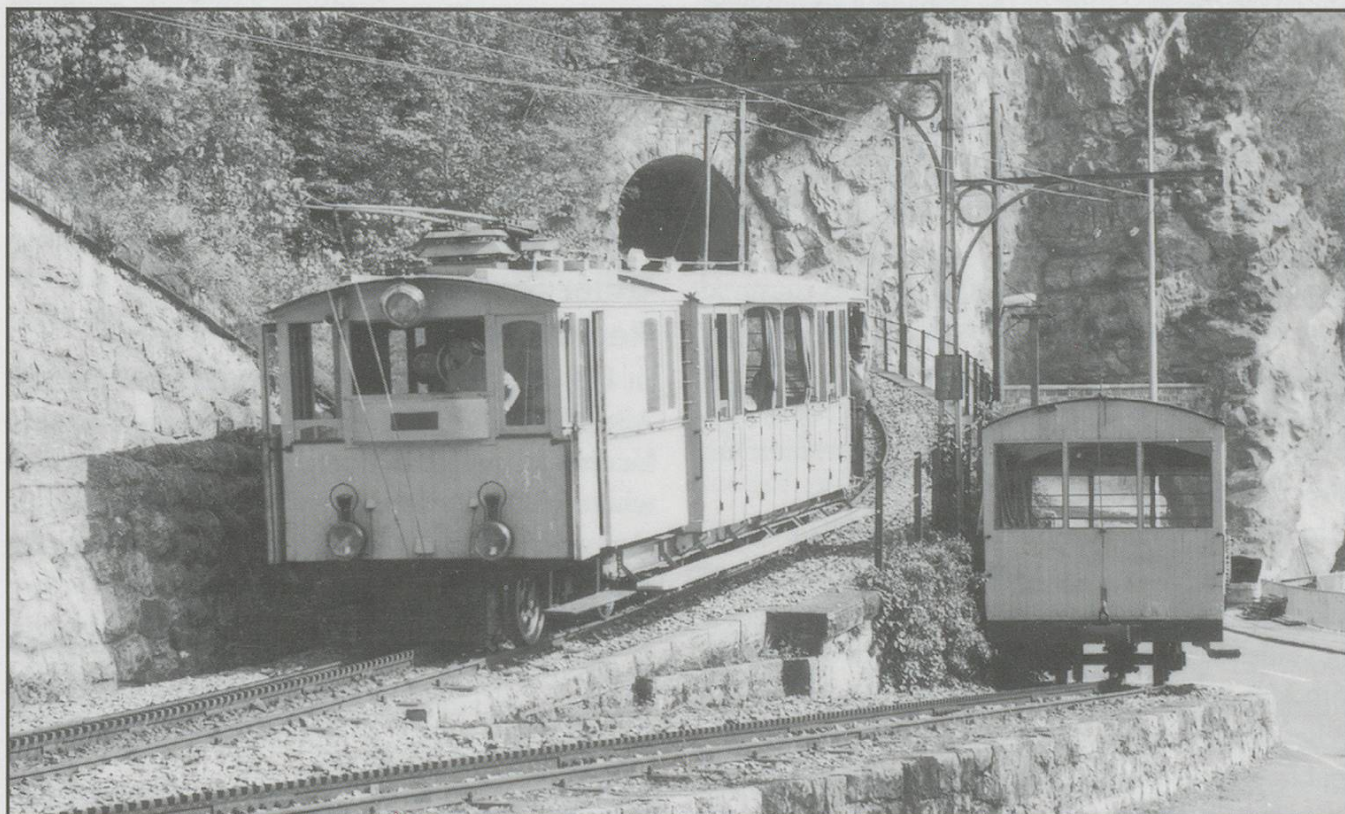
the month of August (as everybody on the continent is already somewhere), the Kandersteg-Iselle shuttle will run through the night Friday/Saturday at roughly 2 1/2 hour intervals. Due to the arrangement at Iselle only the normal (low) transporters and a driving trailer without a pantograph can run these services. Also, unlike the normal Kandersteg-Goppenstein service, a guard has to accompany these international trains.

ALPINLINE-A NOTE FROM PETER BRETT OF WINCO

ROCO told me that when they took over the AlpinLine range they only made short production runs and it didn't sell very well (not surprising really as all they did was to reproduce existing models). I believe if they had produced some new ones - RhB Cement Wagon / new loco etc. the system would have taken off again. As far as I am aware the current range will be run down until existing stocks have been cleared from the factory. There are no plans to re-run anything although there are supposed to be 4 wagons, 2 of which are "Cargo Domizil" vans being made for the Swiss market.



Two digital images by Stephen Barnes, photographic editor. **Left:** SOB Re4/4 in SEEDAM livery at Samstagern. **Right:** A view from and through the front of a DB ICE. The pictures were taken in May 2000.



Train on the Zahnradbahn Brunnen-Norschach-Axenstein approaching the Brunnen terminus. 8/1967

Photo: David Brooks