

Holzhof : a compact HO scale layout by Peter Marriott inspired by Switzerland to demonstrate what is possible as a first step from a start set

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Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal**

Band (Jahr): - **(2017)**

Heft 130

PDF erstellt am: **29.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-853894>

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A compact HO scale layout by Peter Marriott inspired by Switzerland to demonstrate what is possible as a first step from a start set

I have enjoyed building a number of small layouts over the past few years of various locations in Switzerland. This new project is intended to show what is possible as the next step on from a "train set". A train set is probably the best way to start the exciting hobby of model railways and when we start to enjoy operating trains and making scenery we soon find that the hobby has many aspects of challenge and interest. With this in mind I set about building a small layout that is the next step from a train set. I added some additional

track pieces, a couple of buildings, a second train and some nice scenery to turn my train set into a model railway. I used products that are readily available from many model shops and the wish was that the layout could be moved easily around the house by one person, and be transported in a medium sized hatchback car.

I wanted a continuous run layout on a single baseboard with potential for running two trains. The layout would feature a small station, one passing loop and a timber siding. I would use one of the Noch laser cut bridges to cross a wide river. My vision for the layout would be for it to depict somewhere in Switzerland in the summer months. I would aim to use scenery products and techniques that would give good scenic results in the shortest possible time. The layout



measures 1.51 m x 1.08 m on one baseboard.


It took 5 months to build this layout and in total about 120 hours was needed to complete the layout from the bare baseboard to the adding of the final details. This time does not include the drying times for the adhesives and paints. I had the baseboard built for me so I have not included the time for building the baseboard and its legs. The track is Peco Code 100 Setrack that was ballasted using Woodland Scenics fine light grey ballast. The track and ballast were weathered using acrylic paints with a light misting from an aerosol can.

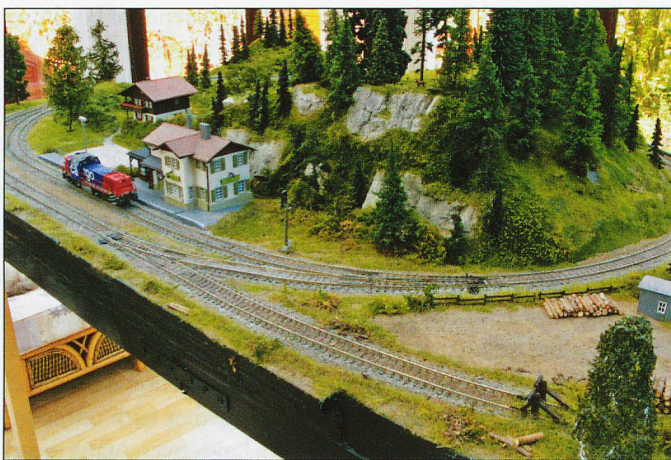
The locomotives used on the layout are by Fleischmann, Mehano, Piko and Roco. The passenger service is provided by one of the popular Piko BLS GTW electric multiple units. The freight services are hauled and shunted by Mehano G1700 locos in BLS and SBB Cargo liveries. In addition a Fleischmann DB Class 212 locomotive bought in a Start Set some years ago is used. The wagons are a selection by Electrotren, Fleischmann, Liliput, Mehano, Piko and Roco. I have weathered some of the wagons using a mixture of glass fibre brush distressing, weathering dyes, aerosol sprays and dry brushing. In some of the open wagons I have added loads of real timber (twigs from the garden).

Holzloch was fun to build and I am pleased how it has turned out. I hope that I have captured a little of the Alpine scene on my layout in Central England! Because I have such varied European railway interests (I like the railways of Austria, France, Germany and Switzerland), from time to time I will change the signs and rolling stock on the layout so it can become an Austrian, French, German or Swiss layout. I still need to add catenary posts and more detailing to the layout.

This layout has been really good to run trains on. It is stored in my garage but it takes me only 5 minutes to position it on its legs, to plug in the controller and the trains are running! It has been reliable to operate and the track does not take much time to keep clean.

I hope that this article has given you some ideas on how to build a simple but attractive layout as somewhere to run your valued locomotives and rolling stock.

This article is based on two that appeared in the February and March 2017 editions of LOKI magazine. 



Swiss Postbuses in Miniature Fritz Jenni introduces his collection of models of these Swiss icons

PostAuto Schweiz AG (PostBus Switzerland Ltd) is the leading bus operator in Switzerland's public transport network. The original organisation was formed in 1906 with the opening of the first regular scheduled postal omnibus services from the capital Berne to Detligen and Worblaufen (Papiermühle). Today's bright yellow buses of the daughter company of Swiss Post AG are in a manner of speaking also a national trademark like cheese and chocolate. With over 3,900 employees and around 2,300 vehicles, PostAuto AG carries around 145m passengers each year on its network of routes that link communities, carry commuters and give enjoyment

to tourists. Martin Fisher's new book 'Swiss Postbuses' from *Swiss Express Publications* is a very good source of interesting information regarding this key player in the Swiss public transport system.

Until 1995 I was fortunate enough to be the Head of Operations at PostAuto AG and now after twenty two years of retirement I still manage a respectable fleet of 250 Postbuses. However, these are not full size vehicles but vary in length from only 3cm to 97cm; my unique collection of Swiss postbus models that with other interesting exhibits form part of my small, private, postbus museum located at my home. In the world of automobile model collecting replicas of Swiss Postbuses are very popular, not only in Switzerland but also in other countries, especially the UK. The high profile of the yellow buses that is known worldwide make them unique, and