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Modelling Swiss Railways; Just a station kit will get you started! by Peter Marriott

If you are like me you will return from a Swiss holiday full of modelling ideas. You may want to reproduce a little of the Furka Oberalp or BVZ or the MOB - the list could be endless. Time, money, family commitments and space prevent us from tackling all the modelling projects we would like to engage in. I have found that to build just a station kit of a particular network satisfies my wish to have a little of Switzerland in Buckinghamshire.

For example for those members wishing to reproduce part of the BLS railway scene in the magnificent Kander valley Kibri retail an HO kit (B-9508) of the station building and Fides produce it in an N gauge kit. The former costs (March 96) approximately £25 and the latter is £10.25. These are just a few notes about the building and displaying of the Kibri HO kit. Whilst most of the prototype facts will already be familiar to Swiss Express readers they may provide a mini-refresher course.

The main BLS artery of the Lötschberg line links Spiez with Brig passes Blausee Mitholz but

local rail services no longer stop at the station because rail services to the Kander valley were replaced by BLS bus services in 1987. According to the BLS booklet for the Railway Adventure Trail (well worth a visit but do not be disappointed if less than half of the one hour central section is within view of the railway tracks) the route carries approximately 70 passenger trains a day, 50 plus freight and 30 light engine movements.

The motive power to be seen on the Lötschberg route through Blausee Mitholz includes the new BLS 465, SBB Re 460, the familiar BLS Re4/4 locomotives together with various other classes from both the SBB and BL. In 1982 one of the latest German Railways (DB) ICE units ran over the Lötschberg line - I wish I had been there to witness such an event! (New Pendolino ETR 470 Cisalpino will use the line on a regular service from June 1996 - Ed)

The station building at Blausee Mitholz was rebuilt in 1948 after the original structure was demolished following a rockfall caused by an



Opposite page: Lima BLS4/4 in front of station.
Above: Re4/4^{IV} in front of Blausee Mitholz station.
 A completely different outlook by changing the backgrounds.

explosion at a nearby ammunition depot. The station facilities include a goods shed, 45 tonne weighbridge, private siding and a spur to a gravel works. The track layout has reversible working possibilities on both through tracks together with several loops.

The Kibri kit has various sprues in brown, green, white and grey which are worth painting before construction so that the finished model will not have a "straight from the box" look. The upper walls are timber and to my eyes the brown plastic used for these pieces is too light. They will certainly benefit from the application of dark brown enamel or acrylic paint. Additionally whilst the kit parts for the main building roof and the canopy roof are red moulded plastic the prototype, today, features grey tile roof for the main building and red tiles on the platform canopy.

The accompanying picture shows the station building with a Lima BLS Re4/4 passing the station running under Somerfeldt catenary, the background is a large format Swiss calendar purchased from Loeb in Interlaken. These seem to be some of the best value gifts in Switzerland. We bought this one in 1994 for £3.30. The layout

to accompany the station building is still to be built!

The Faller, Vollmer, Pola, Fides, Kibri etc. ranges offer a superb variety of kit built Swiss structures. My next modelling project is intended to be Oberreid station but because of the length of the station buildings it will, unfortunately, not be possible to use a single calendar photograph as a back drop for photographic purposes. An attempt will be made to cut and match various Swiss scene pictures to produce a backscene. Only time will tell if this will succeed!

Some of the paragraphs of this feature have been adopted, in part, from an article about Blausee Mitholz which appears in the Spring 1996 issue of *International Railway Modelling*.

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