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INTERNATIONAL

Stadler FLIRT unit 521 011 visited the Netherlands at the start and Romania at the end of October for demonstration and trial purposes.

From 10th December, SBB Cargo are supplying the motive power for the Lötschberg RAlpin trains between Domodossola and Novara. This gives the unexpected sight of an engine change from BLS to SBB in Italy!

CIS

Availability problems have been affecting the ETR 470 fleet in Autumn 2006. CIS 35 / 36 (05 50 Genève – Milano and 18 25 return) were turned over to loco haulage with a predominately FS formation and Re487 haulage. During late October, the only ETR 470's observed on the Gotthard line were working the Stuttgart services. On 22nd October, an ETR 470 failed at Wassen and was recovered by SBB Cargo livery Re420 186.

SBB / SNCF

From the December timetable changes, the morning TGV from Zürich was cut back to start from Bern. This is because the TGV fleet cannot use the Olten – Bern NBS (they aren't equipped for ETCS level 2) and no path is available over the conventional line. From June, the Zürich – Paris service will be rerouted to run via Basel and the LGV Est to Paris Est.

An eight vehicle rake of CFF stock (7 B, 1 A) has been hired to SNCF for use on TER services between Dijon and Lyon. The stock is booked to make two return trips per day; once a week, it is returned to Genève for maintenance.

A Fret SNCF BB 37000 locomotive was used on driver training between 24th October and 2nd November between Basel and Limmatal yard. This was in advance of the introduction of direct freight services between Mulhouse and Hall in Tirol from 5th February under the brand name 'Aline'. It appears that the BB 37000 will work though to Buchs SG, as well as working direct trains between Mulhouse and Limmatal Yard. Although a Fret SNCF / SBB Cargo joint venture, SBB Re 482 engines will not be used as they are not passed for working in France.

SWITZERLAND**SBB**

A halt at Winterthur Hegi, between Winterthur Grüze and Rätterschen stations on the Winterthur – Wil line, opened on December 10th; this is in addition to the halts at Meggen

Zentrum and Hochdorf Schönau mentioned in the last Swiss Express.

The four Kolibri units which were transferred from THURBO to SBB have entered service on Luzern S-Bahn services via Wolhusen. The sets have been renumbered from 566 631-4 to 561 171-4; they have been allocated to Class 561 as they are still authorised to work in Germany.

On 5th October, an embankment between Wangen an der Aare and Oensingen was destabilised by heavy rain, resulting in single line working between the two stations until 21st October. To provide the necessary paths on Mondays to Fridays, the 68xx Olten – Solothurn Regio service was replaced by buses between Wangen an der Aare and Oensingen.

Around 08.30 on 2nd November, the power bogie of THURBO RABe 526 733 derailed while shunting at the Eglisau end of Bülach station. Single line working past the blockage was quickly established, but through trains had to use tracks 5 and 6 which don't serve the platforms. There was no access from Winterthur to Eglisau, so the S22 Waldshut – Winterthur service was suspended between Eglisau and Bülach; extra trains were operated into Bülach from the south, with passengers from Zürich changing at Niederglatt.

The DTZ (4 car double deck EMU's) units of Class 514 entered service on Zürich Line S7 on 29th November.

BLS

New interlockings, remotely controlled from Spiez, were commissioned at Heustrich-Emdthal and Reichenbach on 29th October. From the same date, the Spiez – Reichenbach locals, now a four coach Pendelzug set with Re465 power, were extended to Frutigen, ignoring the now closed station at Wengi.

The Brig - Goppenstein Pendelzug set has taken a multi-coloured approach; the passenger coaches are two EWII (AB, B) in BLS blue and cream and a Kolibri B in RM red, sandwiched by a Re420.5 in BLS blue and silver and a SBB green Dt with 'bls' branding.

Re 465 014, the first of the engines damaged in the collision outside Thun in April, was returned from Stadler Winterthur to Spiez on 7th December following completion of collision damage repairs; electrical repairs will be completed at Spiez. Sister engine Re465 017 is expected to return in March 2007.

LEB

Ex CJ two car unit 601+ 702, which arrived at Echallens from the BOB, has been taken into LEB stock as BDe4/4 28 + Bt 53 and will not be going onto the NStCM as reported in the last Swiss Express.

OC

On 31st October, Be2/2 14 collided with a LEB-owned lorry on the level crossing at Chavornay! The damage sustained meant that services had to be maintained by 1921-built Be4/4 13, as the Uetliberg line set recently purchased from the SZU has yet to be modified for service.

RhB

Six new Tm2/2 to the same design as 111-114 of 2001 have been ordered from Schöma.

On the evening of 6th January, Train 1270, 22 15 Chur – Disentis, ran into a small landslip in the Rheinschlut near the avalanche gallery east of Valendas-Sagogn. The derailed locomotive, Ge4/4 ii 632, then knocked out the first four of the columns supporting the gallery, collapsing the concrete slab roof onto the engine and leading luggage van. Fortunately, neither the driver nor any of the 30 passengers were injured, being walked to Valendas or Versam stations and continuing their journey by road. The line between Reichenau and Ilanz was closed until Wednesday 10th, with passengers transferred by road between Chur and Ilanz. Although the bodyshell of 632 is damaged beyond economic repair, it is hoped that the mechanical parts (bogies, transformer, etc.) can be overhauled and fitted into a new bodyshell.

SOB

The first FLIRT unit arrived from Stadler on 5th December. This series will allow the retirement of BDe4/4 48-59 of 1960-1979.

TPC

The roadside alignment between Aigle and Ollon closed on 18th September, with extra trains provided for photographers between Aigle and En Châlex. The new alignment opened on 28th October.

TRAMS

Zürich

One or two production Cobra Be5/6 3007-3074 are being delivered each month. Their arrival has allowed VBZ to retire the 'Karpfen' series Be4/4 1416-30 + B 771-786 series from December 10th. 14 sets will go to Vinnitsa (Ukraine), with one being retained in Zürich as a museum vehicle.

The first section of the Glattalbahn extension, from Oerlikon Hallenstadion to Auzelg, opened on 10th December as scheduled. It is being worked as an extension of VBZ Route 11 from Rehalp.

HERITAGE

BLS (RM)

On the Emmental 'Slow Up' day, 10th September, an hourly steam service was provided between Ramsei and Huttwil using SMB Ec4/5 11 and BD 64 518.

RhB

G4/5 107 and 108 were named 'Albula' and 'Engadiana' before the main parade of the Untervaz Dampffest on Sunday 29th October.

The 'Tigerli' visible from the RhB south of Chur is identified as 8527, later Von Roll (Klus) 2, previously at Kaufdorf.

SEFT

The group has acquired ASm Be4/4 109, originally built for the Biasca – Acquarossa line in 1963. It is expected to enter service carrying its original number 5 in summer 2007.

TMZ

The Zürich tramway group has received a 1m SFr lottery grant to aid the conversion of the former VBZ Burgwies depot into a museum. It is planned to open the museum in 2007 to commemorate 125 years of tramways in Zürich.

SHEDMASTER

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS - STOCK CHANGES

July 2006

New:

RABe 514 005, 006, 007

RABe 521 023

Acquired:

RABDe 566 631-634

(from THURBO, originally MThB)

Withdrawn:

RBe 540 033 TmII 686, 691, 844

Bm6/6 18501

August 2006

New:

RABe 514 002, 003 RABe 521 024

Withdrawn:

TmII 643 Tm 235 004