

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: - (2007)
Heft: [2]

Rubrik: Sidetracks... a miscellany of items

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SIDETRACKS... a miscellany of items

● Remember, if you are interested in obtaining a copy of Mervyn Jones' book (as reviewed in this issue of Swiss Express), it is available from SRS Sales price at £15.95 including postage to UK addresses. Each purchase benefits the Society. – and it keeps Glyn Jones happy!

● According to the latest UIC-Statistics, during 2005 every Swiss citizen travelled an average of 42 times by train. This compares with 37 trips in 2004. In no other European country is rail used so often. This high rail usage is credited to attractive public transport timetables as well as modern and comfortable rolling stock and facilities. Worldwide, Switzerland is only beaten by Japan, whose population undertook an average of 68 rail trips each in 2005. The UIC's statistics show Denmark and Luxembourg lagging behind Switzerland with 28 annual trips, followed by Austria (24), Germany (22) and the Netherlands (20). Swiss Statistics only include UIC members SBB, BLS and Cisalpino AG. Data for the numerous other private railways, trams and all other forms of public transport are not included. The UIC has not listed the number of rail trips taken in the UK.

Hugh Edgley/Litra, 02/07.

● In 2006 Swiss vessels transported more than 13.4M passengers on Swiss lakes and rivers. This is a new record and represents a 2% increase compared with 2005. The highest increase was on the Ägerisee as high water levels had hampered schedules in 2005. The Thunersee, Brienersee and the Sarnersee have benefitted from a 10% increase in service frequency, whereas services on Lac Léman and the Vierwaldstättersee have increased by 5%.

Services ranked by passenger numbers show:-

1. Vierwaldstättersee - 2.289m;
2. Horgen to Meilen ferry (Zürichsee) - 2.194m;
3. Genfersee - over 1.6m;
4. Zürichsee (including Limmatschiffahrt but excluding No 2 above) - some 1.6m;
5. Thunersee and Brienersee - together some 1.1m.

Winter sailings also contribute to high passenger numbers. During gloomy and cold winter days, travel on the lakes is not only day trippers but also commuters relying on the winter schedule

as part of their everyday commute. Skiers should also not be forgotten, for example the Vierwaldstättersee offers attractive daily connections on the way to the ski run.

For more information regarding 2007 changes to service times and frequencies, as well as special excursions and seasonal themed sailings, go to www.litra.ch. *Hugh Edgley/Litra, 02/07.*

● Starting in May 2007 SBB Cargo will transport raw timber from throughout Switzerland and neighbouring countries to the large new sawmill of Stallinger Swiss Timber at Domat/Ems, near Chur, which has the capacity to process 600,000m³ of wood per annum. SBB Cargo will then organise the export of processed timber throughout Europe and cover all internal shunting requirements in co-operation with the Rhätische Bahn (RhB). Traffic will equate to 30 wagons a day. The contract will be for 2 years and, including other traffic for the RhB, will give rail a 50% share of the traffic. The cut wood will be forwarded to destinations within

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**More details from Eddie Stedman
on 01737 552967 (eve.)
or eddiestedman@hotmail.com.**

Switzerland and for export to Italy and other European countries. Stallinger Swiss Timber wants to benefit from SBB Cargo's dense Swiss network and also its trans-national links across Europe's borders. This contract further strengthens SBB Cargo's position as a strong partner for the wood industry in Switzerland. In 2006 SBB Cargo carried 1.9 million tonnes of wood as part of domestic and international rail freight. This corresponds to 52,000 wagonloads and an increase in volume of 16.6 % in relation to the previous year.

Hugh Edgley/SBB Cargo, 02/07

● Whilst the increasing number of flights by budget airlines makes flying to Switzerland much more economical these days, many people prefer to travel overland (or under sea!) to reach our favourite destination.

● Recent articles by Barrie Doe in his Fare Dealer feature in Rail magazine have pointed-out that if people arrive at a booking office and request tickets to Waterloo, intending to catch Eurostar, they should buy tickets to London International instead of the usual

London Terminals destination. In most cases London International fares are no higher than the comparable "Terminals" fares and the restrictions are often more generous, so that you could buy a ticket at off-peak rates but travel during the rush hour.

● There is a second benefit because tickets to London International are issued under the CIV international conditions of travel. One of the stipulations is that an operator is obliged to ensure you reach your destination, even if a delay on a previous train makes your arrival at Waterloo too late for your onward European connection. Similarly, on the return, if Eurostar is delayed, the UK operator is obliged to get you home. To obtain and use a London International ticket you must be in possession of your Eurostar ticket and I believe they can only be issued for travel to London on the day of departure to the Continent, or the day before in case you are staying overnight in London for an early train. You can also claim an International ticket if you have a through booking from London by one of the continental sea routes.

Kälti



Hotel Frohsinn

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For brochure and reservation details:

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