

Railtalk

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Xtra



Veselé Vánoce / Frohe Weihnachten / Joyeux Noël

Welcome

Welcome to the Railtalk Magazine Xtra, which compliments the main Railtalk Magazine and means that we can put even more pages together every month. As always in Xtra, we focus on life outside the UK, and once again we have some excellent shots from some of Europe's finest photographers. Our "From the UK" section has a second look at Blackpool Trams.

I have to say that this month I am saddened by the news that thieves have stolen loco number plates from the site of the railway museum in Lužná Rakovníka, Czech Republic. What good will this bring, because they surely cannot be resold or shown to anyone as instantly these items will be recognised. Lets hope that they are swiftly returned.

It seems that as December arrived so did the snow for a large proportion of Europe, causing all sorts of delays and cancellations. I was interested to learn that DB are offering free hot drinks for certain services that are over 30 mins late, does that happen anywhere else? As we approach 2011 a big thank you for all your support and photos in 2010, we look forward to an excellent 2011 and hope that you will keep the photos coming, wherever you live.

David

Once again many thanks to the many people who have contributed this month, it really makes our task of putting this magazine together a joy when we see so many great photos. This issue wouldn't be possible without: Colin Gildersleve, Steve Madden, Brian Battersby, Paul Godding, Phil Martin, John Coleman, Pavel Kopec, Tomáš Kubovec, Richard Hargreaves, Martin Grill, Martin Válek, Mark Pichowicz, Richard Webber Filip Štajner, Pavel Šturm, Bea Želtvayová, Petr Holub, Pavel Martoch, Dennis Hübsch, Colin Irwin, Honza Štofaňak, BVT, Miloš and Libor Hyžák

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Submissions

Pictures, articles and news can be entered through the forum, or by email to us at:

entries@railtalk.net

Please include a detailed description and credits.

Cover: T 435.0114 is caught along the riverside whilst working between Český Šternberk and Malovidy on October 30th. [Petr Holub](#)
This Page: Czech Class 451.016 is seen working a commuter service heading for Praha hlavní nádraží on October 27th. [Dennis Hübsch](#)

On a magnificent winters day QRN's 6003, 6008 and CLF1 take the Friday morning intermodal service from Perth to Melbourne. They are seen passing through Herne Hill in the eastern suburbs of Perth on August 27th. [Colin Gildersleve](#)





232 293-1

SA 134-003

East-West Railways Class 232.293-1 and private operated EMU SA134-003 are seen stabled for the night at Wegliniec Yard on October 4th. [Steve Madden](#)



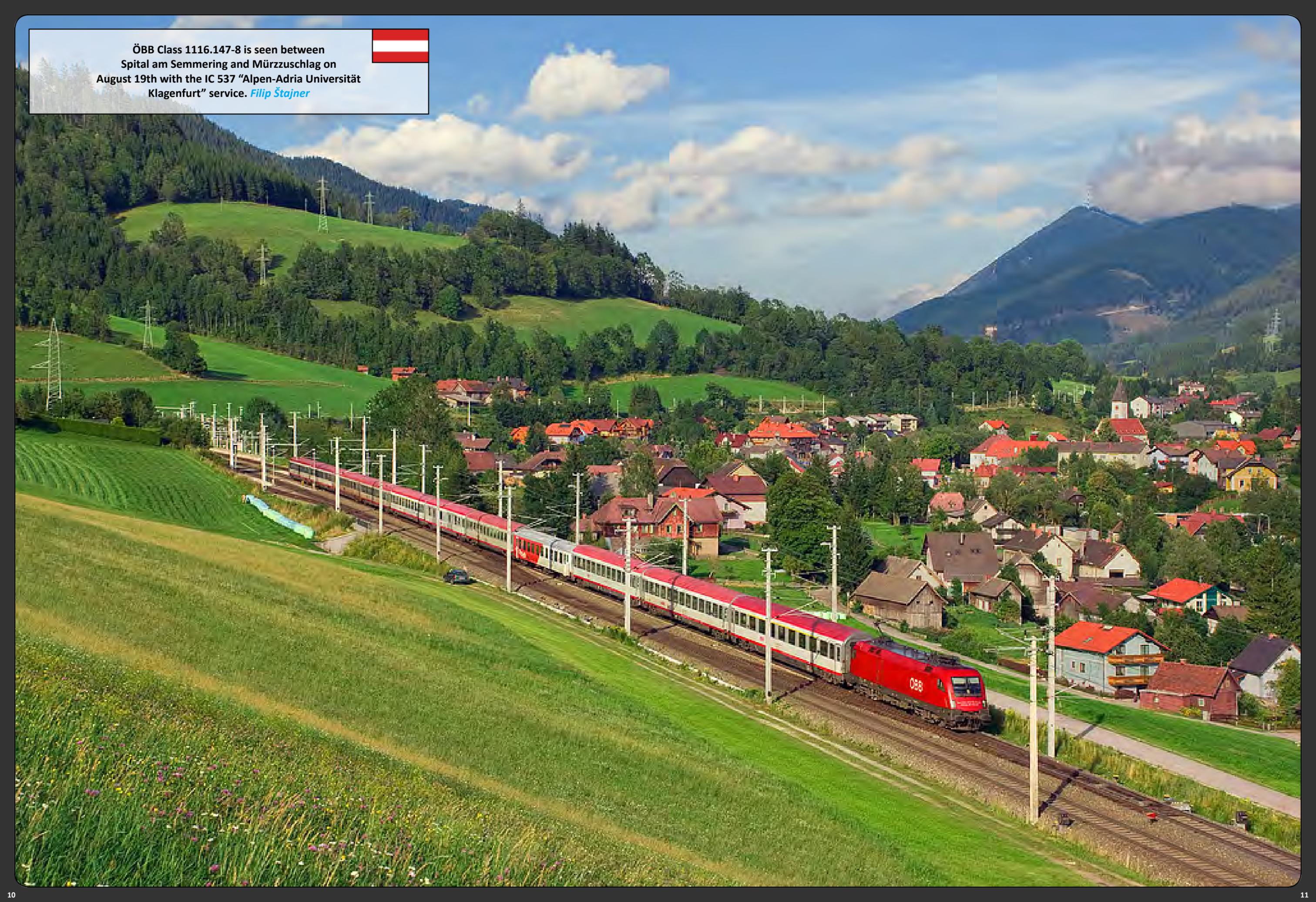
SNCF BB series No. 25637 is seen on the rear of a
push - pull set at Saint Briac on August 14th.



Brian Battersby



ÖBB Class 1116.147-8 is seen between
Spital am Semmering and Mürzzuschlag on
August 19th with the IC 537 "Alpen-Adria Universität
Klagenfurt" service. *Filip Štajner*





With smoke haze still lingering from an earlier bush fire Australian Railroad Group's DBZ2312 heads south through the outskirts of Serpentine, Western Australia with empty hopper wagons on the 3' 6' gauge South West Main Line, on May 1st. [Colin Gildersleve](#)





On October 6th DB Electric Class 155.194-4 is seen on the approach to Seddin Yard with Freightliner's Class 70 007 sandwiched inbetween 12 Cargo Wagons. The Class 70 had been to Berlin for the Innotrans Exhibition at Berlin Messe and was on its way to the UK via the Channel Tunnel. [Steve Madden](#)





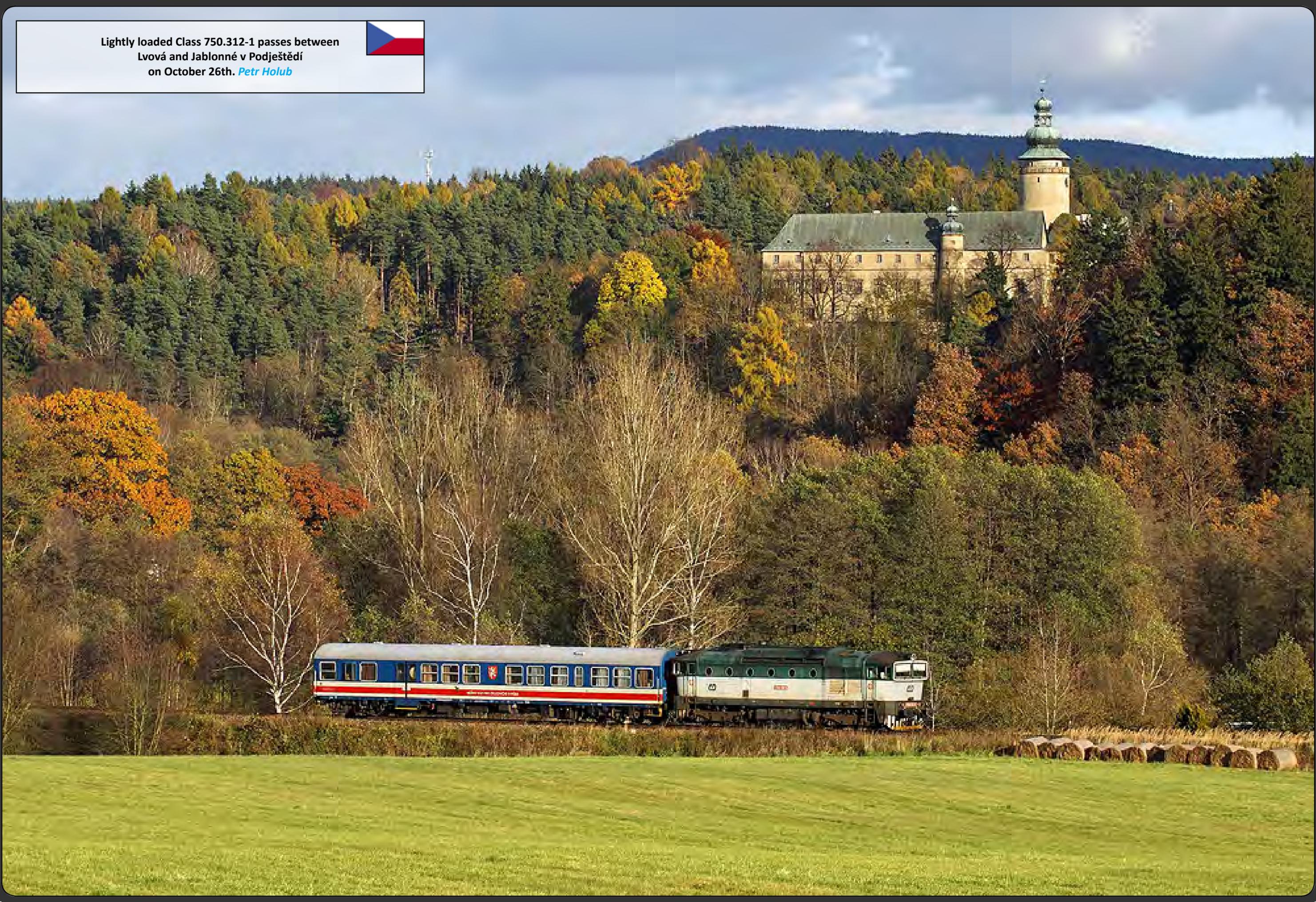
Ceske Drahy Class 742.383-3 is seen with a
Lštění - Čerčany (Lštění) service on August 22nd.
[Pavel Martoch](#)



ARG's narrow gauge DBZ2307 enters the Wellard loop heading south with a short train of chemical tanks on a grey March 27th. [Colin Gildersleve](#)



Lightly loaded Class 750.312-1 passes between
Lvová and Jablonné v Podještědí
on October 26th. [Petr Holub](#)



Slovakian Class 751.171-0 and 751.109-0
along with 751.199-1 on the rear are seen
working between Slavec Jaskyňa and Vidová
on October 9th. [Dennis Hübsch](#)





On September 12th Swiss Ge 4/4 II Nos. 612 and 620 are caught working a RhB service from Ardez to Guarda. *Tomáš Kubovec*



On October 6th, 155.019-3 hauls 5 brand new Euro Cargo Class 77's, Nos. 77049, 77046, 77055, 77054 and 77056 through Michendorf.



Steve Madden



This is Seddin depot, Berlin on October 2nd,
and a row of Class 140s are headed by 140.791-5.

Steve Madden



Possibly the smallest class of Loco. on DB's books.
ASF 86 is seen inside the maintenance shed at Sedden
on October 2nd. [Steve Madden](#)



Cargo
Zuverlässigkeit von
on Verspätungszeiten



Vorsicht
Säureabfluss!

ASF
86



155 266-0

RAILION

Class 742.392-4 hauls a mixed freight train into Všetaty on September 30th. [Class47](#)



Night time alongside the main line at
Brno as service R742 working between
Brno-Slatina - Brno-Černovice (Brno) passes on November 11th.
Martin Grill



Vossloh/Alstom built SNCF Fret shunting loco
460.121 hauls a rake of Transcereals wagons into
Rennes on August 17th. [Brian Battersby](#)



This strange old bubble car DMU passes Ahrensdorf on October 1st. Apparently it is called a WUMAG and was on its way to an exhibition at Lichtenberg, Berlin. Germany. [Steve Madden](#)



SNCF TGV unit No. 617 is seen at Rennes on August 17th, and those with the keen eye will spot the unmistakable sight of an ECR Class 66 just outside the station, behind the TGV. *Brian Battersby*

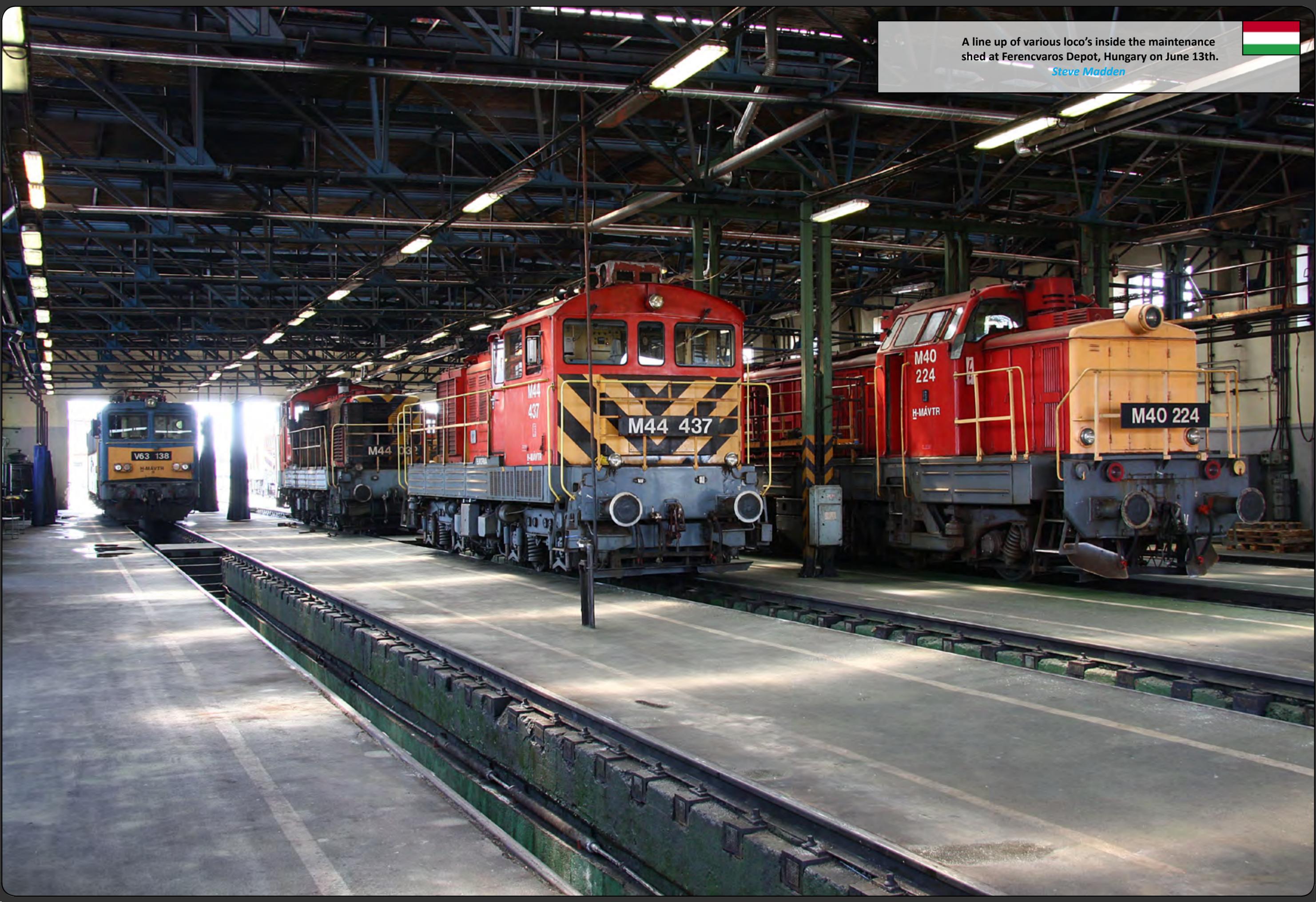


Museum Class 103, No. 103.235-8 passing Halterm am See
with the Sundays only 15:06 Hamburg to Koln service
on August 8th. *Steve Madden*



A line up of various loco's inside the maintenance shed at Ferencvaros Depot, Hungary on June 13th.

Steve Madden



Beautiful in Blue - CD Cargo liveried
Class 122.021-9 heads towards Praha on
October 1st. [Class47](#)



In delightful Autumn colours, Class 754.050-3
is seen between Malé Svatoňovice - Velké Svatoňovice
on October 23rd. *Honza Štofáňak*



Slovakian Goggles Class 754.003-2
works a service between Helcmanovce and Prakovce
on October 9th. *Tomáš Kubovec*



Recently repainted SNCF TER liveried
ZRBx No. 19612 is seen at 19612 Rennes
on August 17th. [Brian Battersby](#)



INTERDIT
AUX CHARIOTS
À MOTEUR

Voie
5





A pair of Unipetrol Doprava
Class 740s are seen at Kralupy on October 1st.
Class47



Siemens secures follow-up orders in Bangkok

Bangkok Mass Transit System Public Company Limited (BTSC) has placed a EUR42 million order with Siemens Mobility for another 35 trailer cars for the Thai capital's elevated rapid transit system, BTS Skytrain. Train service on the Sukhumvit Line is to start gradually from the end of 2012. In addition, the 5.25-kilometer extension of this line is to be electrified by Siemens under the terms of an order placed by Italian-Thai Development Public Company Limited (ITD), Thailand's biggest building contractor. "From metro to elevated railway to airport link, Bangkok is a showcase for our innovative, integrated transportation concepts aimed at solving the mobility problems of the world's rapidly growing urban centers," said Hans-Joerg Grundmann, CEO of Siemens Mobility.

The elevated BTS Skytrain was the first rapid transit system to be built in the capital of Thailand and, since its opening in 1999, has had a major hand in reducing the flow of automobiles in the city. Whereas traffic barely makes any headway on the congested streets, the Skytrain units built by Siemens can move at speeds of up to 80 kilometers an hour on a clear track 12 to 30 meters above the pavement. The rapid transit system consists of the two Sukhumvit and Silom Lines, a total of 25 stations and approximately 28 kilometers of track.

The newly ordered trailer cars are to be put into service successively on the Sukhumvit Line as of the end of 2012 and lengthen the trains already in operation from 3-car to 4-car multiple units. This increase in capacity is necessary in order to cope with the dramatic rise in ridership. Currently, the BTS system transports about 460,000 people per day on the Sukhumvit Line. Each car has 4 seats and standing room

for 240 persons. The 750 V DC power supply comes from the conductor rail. The trailer cars are to be pre-assembled at the Siemens plant in Vienna, Austria and undergo final assembly in Bangkok. The delivery of these cars is to continue into 2013.

The City of Bangkok is not only investing in the availability of existing lines but is also planning to expand its transit network. For the planned 5.25-kilometer extension of the double-track Sukhumvit Line to the east, Siemens is providing the complete power supply for DC and AC operation. The electrification package includes the power supply systems for train traction and the 7 connected stations. In this case, Siemens is acting as a subcontractor to Italian-Thai Development Public Company Limited (ITD). The project must be realized in record time and completed by not later than August 12, 2011, i.e. just in time for the Queen of Thailand's birthday.

Siemens Mobility has played a decisive role in building up public railway transportation in Bangkok. Within ten years, the company has been able to hand three turnkey rail-based systems over to the city: they include the initial rapid transit system in 1999, the first metro line that followed in 2004, and the Airport Rail Link, which since the summer of 2010 has been taking passengers from the city center to Suvarnabhumi Airport in only 15 minutes. A baggage handling system developed by Siemens is also being used on the airport connection. It offers air passengers the convenience of being able to check in at the City Airport Terminal in downtown Bangkok and having their baggage loaded onto the train and transferred to the baggage handling system at the airport – completely automatically

Photo: Sure beats traveling by car: Running 12 to 30 meters above the ground, the BTS Skytrain reaches a speed of 80 kilometers an hour while cars on the streets below average only 10 kilometers an hour



Siemens to supply underground trains to Munich

Munich City Utilities (SWM) have placed an order with Siemens Mobility for 21 new C2 type underground trains worth about 185 million euros. At the same time, SWM have taken out two options on a further 46 underground trains, totaling 276 cars, which can be exercised until 2016 and 2020, respectively. The total volume of the order, including these options, is around 550 million euros. Hans-Joerg Grundmann, CEO of the Siemens Mobility Division, said, "We're proud to be able to continue our longstanding customer relationship with SWM and its subsidiary, Munich Public Transportation Company (MVG). This order represents a milestone project for us in our home market. During the development of the Munich vehicle we placed particular importance on environmentally clean, low CO2 technology." Siemens is one of the biggest suppliers of underground trains on the world market.

The further development of today's C car enables Siemens to build on the success of the previous car generation, for which Siemens had already borne full responsibility as general contractor. This service-proven system is combined with innovative technologies reflecting the latest developments in metro vehicles marketed by Siemens under the name Inspiro. The technologies ensure a high degree of reliability and comfort. For Munich, Siemens will supply metro trains that are especially eco-friendly and energy-efficient. The reduced energy consumption is attributable to a combination of different innovative designs.

When choosing the materials for this order, the Siemens engineers were guided by environmental concerns: for example, avoiding harmful substances, replacing the halogen lamps in the predecessor vehicle with LED lights, and using materials that ensure up to 97 percent recyclability. In this way, the new underground train will enhance the CO2 balance in Munich, and assist both SWM/MVG and the city in their efforts to further reduce the amount of energy consumed in the public transportation sector. The car bodies are made entirely of a lightweight aluminum alloy that lowers the overall body weight and, consequently, power demand of the train. As an option, these trains can be fitted with energy storage units. They are part of the Siemens environmental portfolio that enabled the company to achieve sales of approximately 28 billion euros in fiscal 2010. This makes Siemens the world's largest supplier of environmentally clean technology.

Carrying around 1,000,000 passengers per day, the underground system is the most widely used means of public transportation in Munich. The 21 new trains are to be delivered between 2013 and 2015. They will be deployed in MVG's underground network, which covers a total of about 100 track kilometers. A shorter headway is to be introduced on some inner-city route sections in future. For instance, starting 2014, trains will run at 2-minute intervals instead of the previous 2.5 minutes. MVG will need seven of the new trains to achieve this. It also plans to use 14 trains to replace old rolling stock that has been in service for over 40 years and now reached the end of its useful life. The new trains are being built in the Siemens plants in Vienna, Austria and in Munich, Germany.

More comfort for passengers

The current order for Siemens comprises 21 trains totaling 126 cars. These cars are a further development of the reliable C car design for the previous generation of vehicles, which were designed by the international known car designer Alexander Neumeister. The trains are 115 meters long and 2.90 meters wide. They resemble the latest generation of underground cars which have been in service since 2002. External changes include the front section, which features new LED lighting technology, and colored LED light strips in the edges of the doors for easier recognition of door opening and closing operations. Video cameras, passenger TV and redesigned interior lighting using LED lamps provide a higher level of comfort for passengers. Compared to the maximum speed of 80 km/h of the previous generation, the C2 car not only has a top speed of 90 km/h but can also accelerate more quickly. Other advantages of the train are its high capacity and availability. The new cars have a redesigned passenger area, a new seating concept and wider doors, so they can carry more passengers than the old vehicles they are replacing. A C2 train can accommodate 940 passengers. As separate cars have been eliminated, the train now offers passengers end-to-end accessibility.

Highly reliable technology has been used throughout the new vehicles. The systems used require very little maintenance, which lengthens maintenance intervals and increases the availability of the underground fleet for the operator.

Photo (Right): An impression of the new C2.11 type underground train.

Eurotunnel and Eurostar co-finance purchase of two rescue units

In keeping with its policy of continuous improvement in safety and service quality, Eurotunnel, in conjunction with Eurostar, has taken the decision to buy two further Krupp rescue locomotives. Each loco is powered by a one megawatt engine and together they cost €1.3 million. These new locomotives will be added to the existing fleet of five and mean that Eurotunnel has now significantly increased its safety equipment above and beyond the specifications of the Concession Agreement.

Eurotunnel and Eurostar have worked together to improve safety and comfort of passengers and we highlight that the best way to rescue a broken-down passenger train is to tow it out of the tunnel. The Krupp locomotives enable Eurotunnel to tow any high speed train on HS1 to either Ashford International, Calais Frethun or London St Pancras International stations 24/7 365 days a year.

Richard Morris, Eurostar's Director of Business and Service Continuity, said: "We are very pleased to announce this joint investment with Eurotunnel in additional Krupp locomotives which demonstrates our commitment to the safety and comfort of our travellers."

Bruno Bouthors, Safety and Sustainable Management Director of Eurotunnel, said: "The management of traffic on a high speed railway is a demanding business that requires technical knowledge and experience. Eurotunnel continues to invest to ensure a transport service in total safety particularly ahead of the Olympics Games in 2012. Safety is always Eurotunnel's first priority."

The purchase of this additional equipment demonstrates the importance that Groupe Eurotunnel and Eurostar attach to safety for customers, staff and goods transported through the Tunnel. It is a fundamental requirement and an everyday challenge. In 16 years of operations, 250 million passengers and 50 million vehicles have travelled through the Channel Tunnel. Since 1994, the Group has demonstrated the effectiveness of its people safety systems on a daily basis.



The completion of the reconstruction project of Olomouc railway station

This project is a significant transport construction of the railway infrastructure. Olomouc station is one of the crucial railway junctions in Moravia situated on the branch line Přerov – Česká Třebová, II Railway Transit Corridor Břeclav state border – Přerov – Petrovice u Karviné state border. It is part of the international path of the combined transport C-E 40, route Le Havre – Lvov. The implementation will connect the modernized corridor sections linked to the railway station. The project was co-funded by the European Union under the programme TEN-T.

The junction railway station Olomouc is divided into passenger station, indoor station, right forecourt and left station forecourt. Besides being part of the European Arterial Railway, it has undoubtedly great significance for the regional passenger transport, in particular in terms of launching fast regional connections in the Olomouc region and in relation to neighbouring regions. The freight transport requires train-formation and shunting work with necessary modification of load current. The reconstruction of the railway station Olomouc is listed among constructions beneficial to public according to general planning documentation.

The objective of the construction is to put the railway station Olomouc into construction-technical and operational conditions that will comply with the parameters laid down by the "Principles of modernization and optimization of the selected railway network CR".

At the station, there will be full reconstruction of main tracks and passing sidings, reconstruction of gridirons, including new platforms. New island platforms with grade-separated access for passengers will be built and the existing inconvenient underpass to the platform will be reconstructed. The existing station canopy will be dismantled and a new one will be built.

The main objective of the project is the direction of two main corridor lines through the junction with technical parameters for the speed of 160 km/h. The construction also includes the modernization of bridges and culverts which are within the scope of the construction. All train paths to all track directions will be secured with a new station interlocking system. At the station, there will be new electrical distribution systems, power supply and a lighting system. The construction also involves the modernization of the contact line system along the whole section. The telecommunication equipment will also be modernized, including the installation of new integrated telecommunication device; there will also be a new automated system of the centralized traffic control. The whole construction was designed to comply with the requirements for the interoperability of relevant structural subsystems of the trans-European conventional railway system.

The construction project was developed in compliance with the tender dossier, for 2011 as the implementation start year. The beneficiary and investor of the construction is the Railway Infrastructure Administration, state organization. The general developer is MORAVIA CONSULT Olomouc a.s.



Shift of freight from roads to rail

Railway Infrastructure Administration, state organization (SŽDC) has applied a modification to the track access charge, thus encouraging undertakings to utilize rail for goods transportation. In 2011, the track access charge for freight will be reduced by 11 %.

For instance, the carrier ČD Cargo a. s. shall save ca CZK 270 million due to lower track access charges. The charge decrease also applies to other freight carriers. The reduced charge for the support of combined transport trains and relevant shipment is maintained. The Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic thus implements progressive well-balanced relationship between the state heavily subsidized passenger transport and the so-far disadvantaged freight transport. For that reason, the price of certain segments of the passenger transport will be increased.

The price increase does not exceed the maximum prices set by the Assessment of the Ministry of Finance. The track access charge for passenger trains of the regional transport services remains on the level of 2010. The increased SŽDC income from the passenger transport will be fully used to cover the decreased income from the freight transport.

The Ministry of Transport will encourage undertakings to utilize rail by 50% increase in tolls from motorways, fast highways and 1st class roads till 2013 (in 2011 by 25 % and in 2012 by 25%). At the same time, the toll system will be progressively applied to other 1st class roads, or to selected sections of II and III class roads.

The budget of the State Fund for Transport Infrastructure (SFDI) for 2012 earmarks funds for the development of the transport multimodality, in particular for the support of goods transportation utilizing rail for longer distance and the road transport for the distribution on the spot.

The Ministry of Transport priority is to encourage undertakings to invest in the development of the combined transport and to gradually shift a part of its freight to rail. SŽDC as the railway infrastructure manager supports this step and considers it an incentive to the follow-up modernization and optimization of selected railway lines under the notified enhancement of freight volume transportation by rail.

DB introduces new measures for Winter

Due to the onset of winter in many parts of Germany, the German railway has taken precautionary measures to inform customers and to stabilize the operation.

From now on passengers will receive the toll free service number 08 000 99 66 33 for round-the-clock-date information on service position. Travelers can check the date on www.bahn.de. Mobile users can receive current information on travel m.bahn.de / ris.

DB has also reduced the top speed of its trains nationwide to 200 km. Due to the lower speed, high swirl is prevented that damages the car bottom with falling ice chunks and ballast stones.

For delays of more than 30 minutes the travelers at the main train stations in Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, Mannheim, Frankfurt (Main) and Nuremberg will be supplied from of mobile service teams with hot drinks.

Launch of RCA subsidiary “Express-Interfracht Croatia”

Rail freight forwarder Raabersped and logistics company Transeuropa merged into Express-Interfracht Croatia

The globally active logistics service provider Express-Interfracht – a subsidiary of Rail Cargo Austria AG in Croatia – has been represented in Croatia under the uniform brand name “Express-Interfracht Croatia d.o.o.” since October 2010. The company was formed from the merger of the rail freight forwarder Raabersped d.o.o. Zagreb and the contract logistics company Transeuropa d.o.o. Zagreb.

The consolidation of these two companies into Express-Interfracht Croatia has made it possible to offer a wide range of one-stop transport logistics services: road, railway, airway, waterway as well as customs representation and warehousing. This merger opens up new markets and strategic partnerships for Rail Cargo Austria in Croatia, of which also the customers will benefit. “Thus Express-Interfracht is an interesting logistics and transport partner for the Croatian commercial and industrial sector,” explains Friedrich Macher, Spokesman of Rail Cargo Austria’s Board of Management.

Transport solutions for the global market

The service of Express-Interfracht aims at providing punctuality as well as reliability and is certified according to ISO 9001:2008. With more than 60 branch offices in 20 European countries and the CIS states as well as an international partner network, the company can handle customer requirements for transports of any kind. Due to its extensive international expertise in the sector, Express-Interfracht is considered a transport specialist on the market of the future.

Logistics hub RCA

Rail Cargo Austria has made good use of the location Austria in the heart of Europe and, as total logistics service provider, carries out transports quickly and efficiently to most of the Central and South-Eastern European countries. RCA has become one of the four largest rail freight transport companies in Europe, focusing on the core market Central and South-Eastern Europe.

The Bombardier-Alstom Consortium Confirms it Has Received Notice to Proceed on the Supply of 468 New Metro Cars for Montréal

The consortium comprising Bombardier Transportation and Alstom Transport confirmed today it has received the Notice to Proceed from Société de transport de Montréal (STM) on the supply of 468 metro cars (52 nine-car trainsets).

The contract signature was published on October 22, 2010. With funding approval completed, the contract now enters into force and the final price has been fixed using the applicable exchange rate. The contract is valued at \$1.19 billion CDN (\$1.18 billion US, 869 million euro). Bombardier’s share is \$719 million CDN (\$715 million US, 525 million euro) and Alstom’s share is \$471 million CDN (\$468 million US, 344 million euro).

The design, manufacture and final assembly of the new Montréal metro cars will be carried out at Bombardier’s facilities in La Pocatière and Saint-Bruno, Québec. Alstom’s sites in Sorel-Tracy and Montréal, Québec, will also be involved. The first prototype train is to be delivered in June 2013, followed by the base order deliveries that are scheduled to take place between February 2014 and September 2018.

Siemens to build a new metro line in Rennes, France

The urban community Rennes Métropole in Rennes, France has awarded Siemens the order to build an automated metro line worth more than EUR200 million. Siemens will be responsible for the complete realization of a turnkey project ranging from initial planning of the line to installation of the communication, control and safety equipment and including delivery of 19 Cityval trainsets. The inauguration of this new metro line is scheduled for end of 2018.

Rennes’ first fully automated and driverless metro line, A Line, was built by Siemens and entered revenue service in 2002. The new B Line will run predominantly underground on a 12.6-kilometer northeast-to-southwest axis and serve 15 stations including the city center. The rubber-tired automated trains of the Cityval range of mass transit vehicles are to be deployed on this line and are ideal for operation on short lines with short distances between stations. Even without attendant personnel on the trains and at the stations, the Val system offers its passengers utmost safety and security by means of a radio-based automated train control system linking the metro trains with the trackside equipment (Communication-Based Train Control: CBTC). The trainsets will offer a high level of passenger comfort: large picture windows, modern design, dynamic screens and real-time information systems. Passenger safety will be guaranteed by an onboard video system and secured radio link.

For the Rennes Metro, the Cityval will be designed as a two-car trainset. Each car is 11.2 meters long, 2.65 meter wide and will be able to accommodate up to 100 passengers. The number of trains in operation can be flexibly adjusted to changing levels of ridership, thereby enabling metro trains run every 2.5 minutes during rush hour or even shorter headways. The short headways and the resulting shorter journey times are a huge advantage for the passengers because the rubber-tired running gear ensures quick acceleration of the trains and pinpoint stopping at the station platforms. In the beginning, the system is designed for a capacity of 4,000 people per hour per direction and is supposed to increase by up to 15,000 people.

Since the Val automated guideway system was introduced some 26 years ago, Siemens Mobility has continually kept the AGT system abreast with the state of the art and optimized its operational safety and passenger comfort. Cityval is an evolution of the Val system that Siemens Mobility has realized together with Lohr Industrie within the context of the Neoval research program. The aim of the project was to develop an intelligent, modular trainset for inner-city connections (Cityval) and for passenger transport at airports (Airval). Within this cooperation, Lohr Industrie is in charge of the realization of the design and production of the new vehicle while Siemens is responsible for the complete system from design to implementation and is in charge of overall project implementation, marketing and sales. Furthermore, Siemens is responsible for the train control, communications, passenger information system, platform screen doors, power supply, guideway and depot.

Eleven fully automated, Val type metro lines have already been built by Siemens Mobility around the world – among them, the four airport people movers at Orly and Charles de Gaulle (two lines) in Paris, France and at Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport in Illinois, USA. In addition, urban Val systems are operating in France in Lille (two lines), Toulouse (two lines), and Rennes, as well as in Taiwan, Taipei and in Turin, Italy.

Siemens is also currently constructing a Val system in Uijeongbu, Korea.

Photo: Cityval for the city of Rennes – design study.



Festive completion of the optimization of the railway section Benešov - Strančice



The optimization of the railway section Benešov u Prahy – Strančice has been festively completed by unveiling a commemorative plaque. The railway section from Benešov u Prahy to Strančice lies on km 133,270 157,220 and is a significant part of IV Railway Transit Corridor in the section – state border with Austria Prague. The construction has been co-funded from the Cohesion Fund of the European Union under the Operational Programme Transport.

The investor of the construction was the Railway Infrastructure Administration, state organization (SŽDC). Ing. Pavel Habarta, MBA on behalf of SŽDC commented on today's occasion: "The optimization of the section has enhanced the speed of passenger trains up to 135 km/h. Also, the capacity necessary for the suburban passenger transport has been enhanced. In terms of the freight, it was necessary to enhance the loading line class and clear space. The section thus complies with the conditions to shift freight from overloaded roads to rail." The travelling public can enjoy the benefits of comfort. New platforms at stations and train stops are 550 mm over the top of rail to allow passengers an easier entry and exit. The platform structure complies with the requirements for safe movement of visually-impaired and disabled persons. The access to the platform has been provided barrier-free, without crossing the main track.

In terms of artificial constructions 47 bridges, 40 culverts and one footbridge have been reconstructed. A dominant structure is without question the new railway bridge in Čerčany across the Sázava River. It is a beam interlocked steel-concrete structure of six fields with an overhead reinforced concrete bridge deck. The bridge is nearly 182 m long, 12,3 m wide and 14,3 m high. In addition to that, communication signalling systems of 3rd category have been upgraded – electronic interlocking has been installed at 3 railway stations and a block signalling system of the same category has been implemented along the whole length of the construction. In Benešov, the obsolete unsuitable sub-station has been replaced with a fully new traction sub-station and a transformer sub-station. There are 10 new level crossing safety installations. New electric switch heating has been installed at railway stations. The contractor of the construction was the Association Koridor IV., Benešov – Strančice, including the joint-stock companies Skanska (chief member), EUROVIA CS and Metrostav as members. The developer of the construction was SUDOP PRAHA a.s.

The construction has been co-funded from the State Fund for Transport Infrastructure and from EU Cohesion Fund under the Operational Programme Transport – co-funding level of 70.16 % of the eligible cost of the construction. EU contribution represents the maximum of CZK 2 800 660 283,-. Construction cost amounts to CZK 3 808 905 725.

Accident rate at level crossings continually rises

Despite all warnings death rate at level crossings rises

Drivers, respect the level crossings! This could be the common appeal of the Ministry of Transport, the Railway Infrastructure Administration and the Rail Inspection of the Czech Republic. Accident rate at level crossings continually rises and so does the number of the killed and the injured.

While the statistics of the Rail Inspection for 2009 show the total of 227 accidents at level crossings, as of 18th November 2010 we have already reached the number 233. There is also a rapid increase in the number of the injured which was 85 last year and this year we register 102 so far, which means a frightening increase by 20 %. The Railway Infrastructure Administration adds that the physical damage induced by such accidents has exceeded CZK 55 million.

The saddest statistics, however, shows the fact that compared to previous year more people were killed at level crossings. In 2009, the Rail Inspection registers 38 of such cases; as of 18th November 2010 we are on the number 40 so far. This year has thus overtaken the statistics of all 2009 in every way. „The highest number of the killed can be found at level crossings equipped with flashing light crossing signals“, notes Pavel Halla, SŽDC's press agent. In relation to the increasing number of accidents it is necessary to stress the fact that the rail transport has priority by law to the transport on roads. Jan Kučera, Deputy of the Rail Inspection, adds: „Laws of physics are constant and drivers can hardly fight against multi-tonne carriages going at the speed of up to 160 km/h.“

PREVENTION STILL EXISTS

Due to constant unrespecting of level crossing warning signals by some drivers, several precautions were introduced in the past that should decrease accident rate at level crossings. It is e.g. a briefing film produced by the Rail Inspection entitled Driver, a threat to level crossings, reminding drivers of all the basic rules for crossing the level crossings. The film is available for free download on the website www.dicr.cz and it can be used as a free teaching material by driving schools as well as organizations that annually train their staff who are allowed to drive company cars. An accident prevention film with the topic on safety at level crossings is also presented by the Railway Infrastructure Administration on its website www.szdc.cz.

A unique system of level crossings register was established in the Czech Republic, following safety recommendations of the Rail Inspection. It consists in unique specification of level crossings owned by the state as well as by other bodies (siding track owners, other owners and rail operators). The Railway Infrastructure Administration came up with the unique system early 2009 and after a test run in the Liberec region it spread out to our whole territory on 1st August 2009. Each level crossing on the national and regional rail owned by the state got allocated its own number. The number is unique. The form of the number is in case of a level crossing on a state-owned rail P1, P2, P3 to P9000. In case of a level crossing on a regional rail not owned by the state, the allocated number of the level crossing gets the form P9001 to P9999. In case of a level crossing on a siding track, the specification number is P10000 to P99999, i.e. a five-digit number. The Ministry of Transport welcomes this system since in case of emergency (an accident/obstacle at a level crossings etc.) it is possible to close that particular section thanks to the information provided by the public. Pavel Halla from SŽDC confirms this fact: „On 1st August 2009 a private car crashed at a level crossing near the railway station Pšovany and skidded to a halt on the track. Thanks to a fast communication of the level crossing number to the operational centre IZS, the line was closed within two minutes since the report had been received.“

In the Czech Republic there are nearly 8 300 level crossings. „The ideal situation would be if all of them were secured with gates. However, as this would require hundred millions of investment, safety procedures are always addressed on a case-by-case basis. A complex solution is unfortunately unfeasible in terms of finance,“ concludes Martin Novák, press agent from the Ministry of Transport.

Blackpool Trams - 2010 part 2

Following on from last months photos of the Blackpool fleet, we continue this month with even more shots. Just proving that there is still much to see and enjoy at this popular location.

One of the highlights of 2010 has been the return to traffic of the OMO (One Man Operated) No.8, seen here on November 6th. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Boat car No. 602 pauses at Pleasure Beach, By the look of the sky, it won't be out for long!. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Balloon Car No. 717 "Phillip R. Thorpe" is one of the few trams to be named.
Seen here arriving at North Pier. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Ready for dusk and the start of the Illuminations tour the Western Train is seen in the depot at Rigby Road. *Richard Hargreaves*



Another shot inside the Blackpool Tram depot, with various types visible and just to the far left, one of the stored Boat Cars. Also note the bending of the frames on No. 706 that we mentioned last month. [Richard Hargreaves](#)





Currently under overhaul is Railcoach No. 680,
seen here part way through a repaint.

Richard Hargreaves



VAMBAC Coronation car No. 304 makes a rare outing along the promenade on November 6th. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Open top Balloon No. 706 "Princess Alice" is seen near Central Pier in Blackpool, just a few days later the tram was transported to Heaton Park in Manchester for an event. [Brian Battersby](#)





Another Coronation Car, but without VAMBAC equipment is in much more regular service. This is No. 660 from a modest 1953.
Richard Hargreaves

Balloon Car No. 723 built in 1935 and still going strong.
Wonder how many miles it has clocked up? [Richard Hargreaves](#)



From the Archives



A Netherlands Railways DD-IRM, double deck IC train is seen departing Amsterdam Central on September 2nd 2002.

Brian Battersby



Netherlands Railways push-pull trainset is seen waiting at Amsterdam Central with an intercity service to Brussels-Zuid on September 2nd 2002. *Brian Battersby*



Another Netherlands train, this time an IC3 (Inter City 3) class unit is seen arriving into Amsterdam on September 2nd 2003.

Brian Battersby





Australian narrow gauge sugar cane railways



Above: Bundaberg Sugar Company's loco 14 runs alongside the Murdering Point road at Silkwood in North Queensland, loaded with sugar cane. [Julian Churchill](#)
 Below: Tully Mill loco, Tully-8 crosses The Bruce Highway also in North Queensland both photos were taken on July 28th 2008. [Julian Churchill](#)



The Irish Railway scene has changed dramatically over the last two years, with the withdrawal of the General Motors 141 class from passenger trains, having been taken over by replaced diesel multiple units on most of its routes. The Córas Iompair Éireann 141 class locomotives were delivered in November and December 1962 from General Motors Electro Motive Division (EMD), the first consignment being unloaded at the North Wall, Dublin on 22 November. They were numbered B141 to B177 and were an updated version of the earlier 121 Class locomotives, mechanically very similar but with cabs at each end. Here is seen No. 151, which I took at Killarney on 25th June 1996 working the 11.45 Tralee – Cork service. Killarney is an interesting station, it being a terminus and services which travel to and from Tralee have to reverse outside of the station back onto the main line. [David Mead](#)



Above: On June 30th 2006 Czech "Goggles" Class 754.022 is seen departing Okrisky.
Below: Another "Goggles" Class 750.225 is seen in a rather sorry state at
Havlickov Brod on the same day. *Both: Paul Godding*

