



***WHICH SIDE OF THE TRAIN SHOULD I SIT ON?***

**BLS LÖTSCHBERG ROUTE**    Pages 2 to 3

**JUNGFRAU REGION**    Pages 4 to 6

**RHÄTISCHE BAHN**    Pages 7 to 8

## **The BLS line from Spiez to Brig via the original Lötschberg Tunnel.**

As you may already know, since the opening of the Lötschberg Base Tunnel it is now possible to travel between Spiez and Brig in less than 30 minutes. The tunnel starts at Frutigen and exits just before Visp, very quick but obviously completely lacking in scenery.

A far more interesting journey is to join one of the BLS "Lötschberger" units at Spiez and go to Brig via the original tunnel between Kandersteg and Goppenstein. The journey does take about an hour but the scenery on a fine day is spectacular. The "Lötschberger" units have both low floor and higher seating areas in standard class and I hope the following guide may be of some help. Please note that if you change sides of the train too often it may annoy/mystify your fellow passengers. I am assuming you will want to sit in the direction of travel.

### **Spiez to Reichenbach**

Sit on the right hand side (view of the BLS shed and after the Hondrich Tunnel the River Kander. If you stop at Mülenen Station (this is a request stop) the building itself, on the left hand side, has been renovated and you will see the terminus station of the Niesen funicular on the right).

### **Reichenbach to Frutigen**

Left hand side (view over the Kiental and then as you approach Frutigen the lines for trains, both passenger and freight, going through the Base Tunnel can be seen).

### **Frutigen to Blausee Mitholz**

Right hand side (view as you traverse the Frutigen Viaduct and as the valley gets progressively narrower the train turns left through 180 degrees before passing the famous, but now closed, Mitholz Station).

### **Blausee Mitholz to Felsenburg**

Left hand side (view back along the valley as the railway climbs above Blausee Mitholz Station. The direction of the train changes as the line does a complete curve inside the tunnel)

### **Felsenburg to Kandersteg**

Right hand side (you may be able to glimpse the old Felsenbug Station and as you approach Kandersteg, at about the time the on-train announcement is made, there is a view back down the valley towards Frutigen).

### **Kandersteg Station to Lötschberg Tunnel**

Left hand side at Kandersteg Station to see the pretty village but on leaving you can see the car terminal on the right and the Sunnbühl Cable Car just before you enter the Tunnel).

### **Goppenstein to Brig**

Left hand side at Goppenstein to see the car terminal trains but right hand sides upon leaving, (you are now about to experience the wonder of this line as it enters the Lonza River Valley and then clings to the side of the Rhone Valley on its decent to Brig.

## **The BLS Railway Walks.**

These two walks covering both the North Ramp, Kandersteg-Frutigen, or the South Ramp, Hohtenn-Lalden are usually open from April to October. (If you are alighting at Hohtenn or Lalden the train WILL NOT STOP AUTOMATICALLY unless you press the appropriate button. If you are joining at either of these stations you must press the right button, for your direction of travel, if you want the train to stop and pick you up. The buttons on the station are usually situated near the train timetable.

The walks are well signposted, and leaflets are available at tourist outlets in the area. I would recommend that a good pair of walking shoes are worn and do take suitable clothing. Also, as a precaution, please tell your Hotel/Guest House where you intend to walk. Accidents can happen!

Roger Ellis

(Updated February 2015)

# **Which Side To Sit On Trains Around Interlaken and What to See.**

## **Bern to Interlaken**

Sit on the left hand side – good views of Lake Thun and the far side of the lake as you travel beyond Thun. See the start of the Loetschberg line to Brig on the right hand side as we leave Spiez station.

## **Spiez to Brig over the old Lötschberg Line**

Sit on the right hand side – initially see the base station of the Niesen funicular and the Kander river. By Frutigen we see the Lötschberg base tunnel on our left as it enters the hillside. We cross the Kander viaduct and see the hydro-electric power station 3 times as the line gains height by 2 spiral tunnels with Blausee Mittleholz station between them. The village of Kandersteg is to the left of the station with the car loading platforms to the right. Beyond the Loetschberg tunnel spectacular views all the way on the decent to Brig as we look down on the Rhone Valley.

## **Interlaken to Zweilutschien - BOB**

The front section of this Bernese Oberland Bahn (BOB) train will go to Lauterbrunnen, the rear to Grindlewald, the train splits in Zweilutschien. Sit on the right hand side – but look initially to your left to see “Jungfrau Park, formally Mystery Park, Interlaken’s amusement park” and the disused military airfield. As the train approaches Wilderswil see the base station of the Schynige Platte Bahn (SPB) opposite the station building. Beyond Wilderswil the line follows the Lutschine River. The BOBs works are at Zweilutschien.

## **Zweilutschien to Lauterbrunnen - BOB**

Sit on the right hand side for views now of the Weisse Lutschine River and the steeply sloped sides of the glacial Lauterbrunnen Valley. There are two rack sections on this line. Just before the last accent to Lauterbrunnen the old Jungfraubahnen power station can be seen through the trees on the left hand side.

## **Zweilutschien to Grindlewald – BOB**

Views from both sides but sit on the right hand side, we now follow the Schwarz Lutschine River to Grindlewald. Look out for the Mannlichen Gondlebahn (GGM) and the Wengernalp Bahn (WAB) as it climbs the 25% grade to Kleine Scheidegg - just before the final rack climb to Grindlewald. There are 3 little stations between Zweilutschien and Grindlewald, Lutschental, Burglauenen, and Schwendi.

## **Lauterbrunnen to Kleine Scheidegg Via Wengen - WAB**

Views from both side before Wengen but sit on the right hand side. Firstly we pass the freight yards and works depot of the WAB before the spectacular views of Lauterbrunnen, it’s church and the valley as we cross the bridge over the Weisse Lutschine. See the Staubbach and other waterfalls on the right hand (Murren) side of the valley. The WAB has thoughtfully placed a sign showing a camera here and at other photogenic spots. Just past the bridge and on the incline the start of the “old line” to Wengen can be seen, it was mainly dismantled a few years ago. The best views are now on the left hand side as we look down on the valley below; see the cable car going up the valley side to Grutschalp. This used to be a funicular and although most of the track bed has been removed you

can still see the route that the funicular took. The first passing loop on the line is at Rohrfluh and beyond here through various short tunnels and the 180 degree loop tunnel we pass the request halt at Wengwald. Views now from the right hand side down to the valley and the Breithorn Mountain beyond. We pass the end of the "old line" just before Wengen Station, now just a siding. Wengen is the lower terminus of the Mannlichen cable car (LWM) situated just off the main street – see the old base station at the back of the village, it was moved to its new location following winter avalanche damage in 1999. Following the construction of the new passing loop beyond Wengen trains no longer pass in the station.

Above Wengen sit on the right hand side, see the long double track section where trains now pass at speed and then pass through the Allmend Gallery and Allmend Station, (look down on the village and the valley to Interlaken in the distance). Allmend is the upper end of a chairlift (winter only) that comes from Inner Wengen and the finish point of the Lauberhorn Downhill Ski course, the slalom race follows the course of this chairlift. We next pass the old passing loop and water stop at Wasser Station – now no longer used, before coming to Wengernalp. To the right views across the valley - see Murren and the revolving restaurant on the top of the Schilthorn. To the left, just before the station is the famous Hundschoepf part of the Lauberhorn ski run – you can see the rock even in summer. Beyond Wengernalp the train follows the base of the Jungfrau to Kleine Scheidegg – start of the Jungfrauobahn (JB) to the Jungfraujoch and the WAB line down to Grindlewald.

### **Grindlewald to Kleine Scheidegg via Grund**

Sit on the left hand side as our train must first descend to Grund where the WAB works on this side of the line are situated before reversing for the climb to Kleine Scheidegg. The motive power must always be at the lower end to prevent runaways. Trains no longer pass at Grund but on the new long double track section below Brandegg station. See the Wetterhorn to the left and views of Mannlichen and the Grindlewald valley to the right. The train now follows the foot of the North face of the Eiger for the rest of the journey to Kleine Scheidegg past the request stop station at Alpighlen and then much of the rest of the trip - including the passing loop is in an avalanche gallery.

### **Wilderswil to the Schynige Platte (SPB)**

Views from both sides – sit on one side for the ascent and the other for the return journey. There are views across the lakes during the journey but the summit station faces the Mannlichen and the Jungfrau. It is a walk to the other side of the plateau to look down on Interlaken and its lakes. The Alpine Garden is a feature of the summit and well worth a look around.

### **Kleine Scheidegg to Jungfraujoch – JB**

Kleine Scheidegg is a very busy transfer station from the 80cm WAB to the metre gauge JB on the opposite side of the station. The JB is operated on 3 phase a.c, see the split pantographs and double catenary wires (the third phase is through the rails). As the train spend most of it's journey within tunnels there isn't a great deal to see, however, sit on the right hand side for views back of Kleine Scheidegg. The first passing loop is at Eiger Glacier station where the lines works are situated. . The train stops twice within the mountain on ascent only to allow views through the Eiger's north wall (Eiger Nord Wand) and to the east, Eismeer. There are various activities at the summit including the lift to the observation station that is visible from Kleine Scheidegg, summer skiing and an ice palace made within the glacier.

### **Lauterbrunnen to Murren – BLM**

The first stage of this journey is by cablecar from the base station across the road from the

BOB/WAB station to the summit at Grutschalp where the change is made to single unit rail cars. This used to be a funicular and although only part of the track has been retained it is obvious where the track used to be. At Grutschalp watch the machinery used to transfer goods from the cable car to the railway. The vintage rail car is also usual stored here.

Sit on the left hand side of the train to see views across the valley to Wengen and the Jungfrau, Monch, Eiger massive from a different prospective. Near to Murren station is a plaque to Sir Arnold Lunn who was the English founder of organised Ski racing.

In Murren there is the Allmendhubel funicular (SMA) which goes to a vantage point above the village and the Schilthorn cable car (LSMS). This starts it's journey on the valley floor at Stechelberg (post bus from Lauterbrunnen) and climbs in four sections Gimmelwald, Murren, Birg to the summit of the Schilthorn with it's revolving restaurant which was featured in the James Bond film "On Her Majesty's Secret Service".

A fine level walk from Murren is the journey either back to Grutschalp or to the passing point at Winteregg which follows the railway. There is a good restaurant at Winteregg.

### **Interlaken to Brienz**

This is the only narrow gauge line owned by the SBB, formally known as the Brunig line, it is now renamed the Zentralbahn. Sit on the right hand side for many views of Lake Brienz. The line continues from Brienz to Meiringen where it reverses to cross the Brunig pass by rack assistance to Lucerne.

### **Brienz to The Rothorn - BRB**

The Briener Rothorn Bahn station is situated across the road from the Zentralbahn station. Most trains are steam hauled but there are still occasional diesel services. Views from both sides. Again use one side for the ascent and the other for the return. Many views of Lake Brienz during the journey and from the summit.

Glyn Jones (Updated July 2015)

# Which Side of the Train to Sit Rhätische Bahn

Some co-operation of fellow passengers and some side changing en route is an advantage.

## **Chur to Reichenau - Tamins**

Out of Chur the RhB sidings are to the right but dual gauge tracks and sidings can be seen on the left from Felsberg to Ems. The approach to Reichenau is best viewed from the right.

## **Reichenau – Tamins to Thusis**

Staying the right side gives the best views upon leaving Reichenau but from Rhazuns to observe the Hinterrhein and castles the left is the side to look.

## **Thusis to St. Moritz**

The better views are to the left exiting Thusis until Solis Station is reached. After this, the Solis Viaduct on the right is a must and this side has all the views including the Landwasser Viaduct as Filisur is passed and Bergün reached. You will inevitably look both sides on the dramatic journey to Preda. But on emerging from the Albula tunnel the right side again, perhaps, has the edge until Samedan. The line from Scoul-Tarasp is on the left as the train swings right into Bever.

*On the left at Preda station you can see the construction site for the new Albula tunnel which is scheduled to open in 2020, there is a similar site at the far end of the tunnel at Spinas.*

## **Pontresina to Tirano**

Leaving Pontresina the right is the side to sit for views of the Morteratsch glacier, Lago Bianco at Ospizio Bernina and the Palü glacier at Alp Grum. If you do not get off at the latter you will certainly want to look to the left as you leave the station for the fine view, weather permitting, looking down to Lake Poschiavo and beyond. The steep twisting descent to Poschiavo requires one to look first to one side then the other. The short section to Miralago has the best views on the left but as the train descends to Brusio and into Italy the right again provides the most interesting views.

*As an aside there is an alternative mode of transport between Pontresina and Le Prese, this is Post Bus route 701 which follows the railway as far as Ospizio Bernina and then again between Poschiavo and Le Prese. Sit on the right hand side of the bus.*

## **Samedan to Scoul-Tarasp**

The right hand side produces the most rewarding views on the pleasant journey although the Vereina tunnel entrances are to be found on the left hand side near Sagliains.

## **Filisur to Davos**

On the left a glimpse of the Landwasser Viaduct may be seen through the trees after leaving Filisur and this side is again the best as the train crosses the Weisen viaduct into Weisen station. After Davos Monstein one needs to keep glancing right but the best views are still to the left.

## **Davos to Klosters to Lanquart**

After Davos Dorf the Davoser See can be seen on the left. The descent to Klosters allows a glimpse of the Vereina tunnel on the right near Cavadürli and views on the left of the line up from Kublis and the possibility of a train in the distance. The Vereina Tunnel line is passed on the right as the train swings in to Klosters Platz station with the Gotschnagrät cable car on the left of the station. The line falls, passing the new road bridge to the Vereina (on the left) and reaches the Prattigau Valley where much realignment has taken place over the last decade or so. The left side provides the best

panoramas but as Lanquart is reached the SBB line over the river is on the right.

**Reichenau – Tamins to Disentis – Munster**

Look right on departure (left to see the Albula line to Thusis) and then on the left for the Rhine Gorge until the river switches to the right before Versam-Safien. From Trun the left hand side offers the best viewing.

*See the impressive monastery as the train approaches Disentis.*

Dave Howsam – 2006

*Comments in italics are by the SRS Webmaster - 2015*