



# European Train Enthusiasts



Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter  
MARCH 2007

## Chapter Meeting Saturday, March 10 at:

Don, Mary and David Winslow  
Generation Church  
2811 San Carlos Ave.  
San Carlos, CA 94070

**Refreshments: Please bring items listed if your LAST name starts with:**  
A - G : Desserts H - O: Drinks P - Z : Finger foods

### Future Chapter Meetings

April 14 – Hiller Museum – 610 Skyway Road.  
San Carlos, CA – Module SIG event for 2 weeks !!

May 12 – West Bay RR Club – 1090 Merrill Street  
Menlo Park, CA – This is for the DC guys!!

June 9 – Western Railroad Museum in Rio Vista CA.  
Picnic and get together with the Sacramento Chapter !

### Upcoming Module SIG Events

None listed yet, keep watching this space!  
Rolf is working on this!!

### Have news?

We will publish almost anything you can write as long as it has to do with TRAINS!

NOTE: PRESS DEADLINE WILL BE THE 25<sup>th</sup> OF EACH MONTH! Email articles to:

[ETENEWS@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ETENEWS@sbcglobal.net)

### February Meeting Highlights

MEETING MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 10, 2007

#### Call to Order:

A regular meeting was called to order by Chris Vais at 2:00PM, was held at the New Hope Lutheran Church in San Leandro hosted by Phil and Mary Woods. ETE Thanks Phil and Mary for allowing us to hold our meeting at their church.

#### Treasurers Report:

A reminder, Dues are due! Edwin Rikkleman will be collecting dues.

Current balance From Ed is \$6200.00

### 2007 dues are now due!!

**Dues for 2007 are \$25.00 – please mail your check to: ETE  
P.O. Box 21544  
Concord, CA 94521**



Unfinished Business:

- The El Camino Medical Center layout is almost finished! Layout will be finished in March.
- Euro West 2007. Andreas Hildebrandt and Jens Ullman are the Co-Chairs for the event.
- **Euro west will be held at the Hiller Aviation museum on July 14 – 15<sup>th</sup>.** On Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> is Bastille Day. The idea was put forth to run French trains on the modular layout, in honor of Bastille Day. An important item for those who wish to run your DC equipment. The super details, such as plows, airlines, need to come off, and you need to use the drop-loop couplers, not the close couplers such as Fleishmann and Roco.

New Business:

2007 Club Officers:

- Chris Vais – Chairman, Edwin Rikkleman – Treasurer, John Ruehle – Secretary, Rolf Krumbiegel – Events Coordinator
- Euro west 2007 officers:  
 Andreas Hildebrandt – Co Chair  
 Jens Ullman – Co Chair  
 Edwin Rikkleman – Finance  
 Steven Stern  
 Peter Barnes – Facility Liaison  
 Ian Lorentzen  
 Chris Vais  
 Cees Feith – Publicity

Newsletter:

1. Distribution was handled by Jens Ullman. Per the showing of hands everyone at the meeting received their newsletters. So the distribution of the newsletter is successful.
2. **Important:** Submission cutoff date is the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. So if you want to submit an article you must have is in by no later than February 25<sup>th</sup>. Submit to [ETENEWS@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ETENEWS@sbcglobal.net)

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**EUROSNIPS – By Jim Reckers**

**SWITCH FAILURE DERAILS UK HIGH-SPEED TRAIN**

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 LAMBRIGG, England: Feb 25 -- Inspectors investigating the cause of a high-speed rail crash in Cumbria, northern England, said that a set of switches near the site of the accident had been faulty. Officials from the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) said in a preliminary report that one of three stretcher bars was absent, another had nuts and bolts missing and both were fractured.

An elderly woman died and 22 people, including the engineer, were injured, when the Glasgow-bound Virgin Pendolino tilting train derailed on February 23 at 150 km/h (95 mph) in a remote country area, scattering passenger cars down a steep embankment (see picture 1). All of the train's nine carriages had derailed in the late night accident.



The train involved was a Pendolino train, which has a special tilting mechanism that allows it to reach speeds of 125 mph (200 km/h).



Stretcher bars are bolted across the moving rails, keeping them a fixed distance apart from each other. The RAIB report said one of the stretcher bars was possibly fractured before the crash on the West Coast Main Line and one possibly after.

It also said there was no evidence that the bolts had been "wrenched free" and indications were that the switches (points) were the immediate cause of the derailment.

Network Rail Chief Executive John Armitt said the company was "devastated" and accepted full responsibility. Virgin boss Richard Branson said he took "his hat off" to Network Rail for being dignified in accepting responsibility for the accident.

Transport Secretary Douglas Alexander told parliament that investigators would continue to study the "immediate and underlying reasons" why one of the stretcher bars had been missing. The final report would take some months to be completed, he said. Engineering experts said further fatalities were prevented by the strength of the carriages. On the other hand, Bob Crow, general secretary of the British Rail Maritime and Transport union, said the crash showed lessons had not been learnt from previous accidents.

Rail safety has been a major problem in Britain in recent years. One of the most serious accidents occurred in October 1999, when a train heading out of London's Paddington station went through a red light and crashed into an incoming high-speed train, killing 31 people. Around 400 people were injured in the accident, which was Britain's worst rail crash in 25 years.

Network Rail's was fined £3.5 million for safety violations related to a 2000 train crash at Hatfield, north of London, that killed four people and injured 102 others when an express train derailed after hitting a cracked rail.

### UK PENDOLINO DEAL COLLAPSES

LONDON: Feb 23 -- The surge of passengers riding Virgin's tilting Pendolinos after the UK's West Coast Main Line was upgraded for 200 km/h operation has created an urgent need for two extra vehicles in each of the 53 nine-car trainsets.

Under a 'handshake deal' valued at around £158 million reached earlier this year, Angel Trains was supposed to procure the extra cars from Alstom and lease them to Virgin Trains. However now the Royal Bank of Scotland - which owns Angel - withdrew from the deal. The reason given was uncertainty created by the Department for Transport at the end of last year, when it asked the Office of Rail Regulation to investigate alleged overcharging of franchised train operators for the lease of rolling stock formerly owned by British Rail.

The Department of Transportation is now apparently anxious to see the lengthening go ahead, but has no power to suspend or limit the scope of any investigation by the Commission, which could last two years. Other rolling stock acquisitions could also be affected at a time when new trains are badly needed to cope with sustained growth in rail travel.

### THALYS ENJOYS RECORD GROWTH

PARIS: Feb 23 -- Thalys International celebrated its tenth birthday of high-speed train travel between Paris, Brussels, Köln and Amsterdam and also saw an increase in the number of annual passengers to 6.5 million in 2006, an increase of 6.5 percent over the previous year. Overall, Thalys net earning increased 8.4% to 363 million euros, the highest since the company was founded.

This record year comes even before the high speed link from Brussels to Amsterdam is opened later this year. Current capacity is already at 82% overall. Thalys now expects to reach the 10 million annual passenger mark by the end of this year.

Thalys is also working to broaden its presence in the German market where sales were far behind the other markets Thalys serves. Passenger growth between

Paris, Aachen and Köln were only up by 3.9% with 945,000 passengers in 2006. Thalys expects "impatiently" that forthcoming change in the partner structure of Thalys International will permit it to extend and increase services to the German market. Thalys International's is currently 30% held by the SNCB and 70% held by the SNCF.

#### GERMAN FREIGHT UP 10%

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BERLIN: Feb 14 -- German DBAG and competitors have grown freight traffic to the limit. A transport lobby estimates that German trains transported 337 million metric tons in 2006, an increase of 6.2% over 2005. In contrast to road transport, rail freight has increased since 2003 so that there is now a shortage of track, terminals and staff. Ton-kilometers grew from 95.4 billion in 2005 to 105.5 billion.

#### DB PICKS TALENT FOR REGIONAL EMUs

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BERLIN: Feb 19 -- Bombardier Transportation and Deutsche Bahn AG (DB) have formally signed the framework contract for the supply of 321 new *TALENT 2* trains to be used on its regional network throughout Germany. The total order is valued at about €1.2 billion (1.6 billion US dollars).

The new generation of electric multiple unit trains, the Bombardier *TALENT 2*, will join Bombardier double-deck trains and *TRAXX* locomotives (DB Class 146) as the backbone of DB's regional transport service throughout Germany. The entire vehicle fleet will be developed and manufactured at Bombardier sites in Germany. Delivery of the new fleet is scheduled to start in 2009 (see picture 2)

The new EMU platform is intended to become DB's standard design, succeeding the family of ET 423/4/5/6 low-floor trainsets supplied for S-Bahn and regional operations by several different manufacturers over the past decade.

The four-compartment vehicles of the 425.2 Series are a customized version of the proven 425 family. They can reach a maximum speed of 140 km/h and can accommodate 433 passengers, 204 of which seated. The four-car units are 67.5 meters long and 2.84 meters wide, and have an entry height of 798 mm. Comfortable seats, multi-purpose

compartments, and a nicely unobstructed view throughout the carriage guarantee a pleasant and comfortable journey to the users. Floor heights of 598 and 800 mm will provide step-free boarding from different platform levels.

Operating in formations of two to six cars, the EMUs will be able to operate on 3 kV DC and 25 kV 50 Hz as well as DB's standard 15 kV 16 2/3 Hz. A modular propulsion package will allow different numbers of powered axles depending on train length and local operating conditions. Flexibility will also extend to the interior, with variable seating layouts, extra toilets, provision for mobility-impaired passengers, and multi-purpose areas. Each car will have one or two sets of swing-plug doors as required.

#### CZECH TEST TRACK SPEEDS UP

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VELIM: Feb 01 -- The Railway Research Institute subsidiary of Czech Railways formally marked the completion of a KC60 million modernization of a 5 kilometer section of its Cerhenice test track. Track on the larger of the test site's two loops has been upgraded to permit conventional trains to run at 210 km/h and tilting vehicles to reach 230 km/h. As part of the inauguration of the upgraded track, a CD Pendolino attained a speed of 211 km/h.



**BOMBARDIER**

Originally opened in 1963, the ZZO facility near Velim, 52 km east of Prague, has two loops of 13 km and 4 km. Each has various types of signaling, and can be fed at 3 kV and 1.5 kV DC, and 25 kV 50 Hz and 15 kV 16 2/3 Hz AC, to represent the four major overhead electrification systems in Europe. The site is also equipped to undertake wide range of indoor or static trials. Rail authorities across Europe now test their new locomotives and trains here because of the site's abilities.

#### MÄRKLIN PULLS INTO THE GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS

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MUNICH: Feb 21 -- Two hundred HO (1:87 scale) Märklin locomotives pulled an actual full-scale DB passenger car over a distance of 10 meters (33 feet).

The standard IC 1<sup>st</sup> class passenger car was 27 meters long and weighed in (empty) at 48 metric tons. The Märklin BR143 locomotives (#37433) have a length of 19.1cm (7 1/2") long and each weighed in around 750 grams. For the event, the "Märklin Modellbahn Team" pulled together 625 meters of Märklin C-track, along with 1.5 km of cables and made over 3,000 solder connections. The 200 locomotives were lined up on 50 separate tracks (4 per track), Fifty transformers (set to 3,000 VA) were required to get the passenger coach moving. Guinness officials and the press were on hand to get the feat listed as a world record (see picture 3).



The feat itself was a tremendous challenge, and the physics quite daunting. Yet Märklin engineers, having studied the issues for several months, knew they had a chance because the rolling friction between the steel on a railroad car and the steel rail is extremely low. It is approximately ten times lower than between an automobile tire and the average road surface. On the other hand, could they achieve enough traction power and overcome the initial inertia requirements, along with wheel and rail deformities of even fractions of a millimeter? No one was sure.

An initial record attempt with a larger number of locomotives actually failed! The Märklin engineers had initially calculated that each individual model locomotive has a traction power of approximately 300

gram, which meant that 250 locomotives on 50 parallel tracks would have a traction power from approximately 75 kilograms, enough to get the 48-ton car to move! However, when they tried it out, they had not taken into account that 5 locomotives coupled would increase traction power by 1.5 kilograms for each set, and that extra traction power literally tore off the locomotive couplers!

So a daring decision was made to reduce the number of locomotives, to only 4 locomotives per track drive; a total of 200 instead of 250. New problems with current supply came up, but electric current was reduced so that no locomotive ran out of power. Apparently that did the trick: The IC passenger car was pulled more than 10 meters into the record books, and there were no Märklin locomotive failures.

#### February Heavy Snow Causes Travel Chaos in UK

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LONDON: Feb 08 -- A snow blizzard have caused havoc in many parts of the UK in early February. Commuters suffered rush-hour travel chaos throughout England and Wales after up to four inches of snow fell in a matter of hours. Five airports - London Luton and Stansted, Cardiff, Birmingham and Bristol - were all shut because of snow on their runways

Meanwhile, commuters making journeys to work train all over the southern and central parts of the country were also affected. Commuter train services were seriously disrupted. Southern, which operates rail services into London from Kent and Sussex, ran with delays and cancellations, as did First Capital Connect trains from Bedford and Luton through London to Wimbledon and Brighton. Train services run by Virgin, South West Trains and First Great Western to Gatwick Airport were among those cancelled or disrupted by the snow. Midland Mainline's long-distance trains from major Midlands cities to London and the south were also cancelled, as were trains from the north into London. On the London Underground, services were also affected with some stations in west London closed.

## UPCOMING RAIL EVENTS IN GERMANY

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- June 2, 2007: 50 years Trans Europe Express  
A special exhibition will open at the Railway Museum in Nürnberg for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the TEE. It will include the legendary Bordeaux-red-beige VT-11, which interconnected once important Western European economic centers with high speed as well as the comfort.
- June 30 – July 1, 2007: Summer celebration of railway station gear  
A unique celebration, also in Nürnberg, celebrates hand trolleys and other station gear in the main plaza of the station, along with regional food and drinks.
- September 15-16, 2007: Largest German railway festival 2007 in Fürth  
More than 80 historical locomotives, some from all over Europe, will be presented in the largest railway pageant in Germany in 2007. Theme parades will be included in the program. All proceeds will be donated for the rebuilding of the DB locomotive shed destroyed in a fire in October 2005.



## A WEB GEM

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Per chance, I found a website which allows one to select, generate and print out any Austrian station name (fictitious names as well) in the blue-white design presently found at all ÖBB stations.

<http://www.i-node.at/m.thaller/bahnhof/index.php?ort=Plottenstein>

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH

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How is a locomotive to stay warm? (Taken in the Montzen rail yard, Belgium in January 2007)