

European Train Enthusiasts



Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
May 2004

NEXT MEETING

Saturday, May 8, 2004, 12:00 noon to 4:00 pm (note early start)

Where: Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society
2751 Buena Vista Ave.
Walnut Creek, CA 94596 (925-937-1888)

Hosts: Gordon Laughland and Don Good

Agenda:

- **Layout Tour – Rolf Krumbiegel : 11am – Noon** (see map below)
- **Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society: Noon – 4pm** (see map below)
(See <http://www.wcmrs.org/index.html> for more info about the club)

Special assignment...

Refreshments: If your last name begins with letters as follows, please bring:

A — G: **Drinks**

H — O: **Finger foods and/or salads**

P — Z: **Desserts**

NOTE: we always appreciate picnic plates, napkins, utensils, cups and ice!

May Meeting Agenda

The main event is running DC trains on the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Club's wonderful Diablo Valley Lines layout from 12-4pm.

Before that, as he did last year, Rolf Krumbiegel has again graciously offered to open his home Märklin layout for viewing from 11:00am to Noon. Due to the time constraints, Rolf will not be able to run guests' trains. However, his beautiful layout does not lack for trains to run, so come and enjoy the action. See map below for directions.

The Walnut Creek Model Railroad again has offered to help us run our trains that we bring (DC only, please – they can't run 3-rail AC). Let's have a good turnout with the food and drinks so that we can offer the WCMRR members some treats for their efforts. Please don't bring any alcoholic beverages, since the Club has a policy specifically prohibiting those.

Go to the Internet at <http://www.wcmrs.org/index.html> for more information about the Walnut Creek club and their layout. See the map below for directions.

Recap of the April Meeting

The April chapter meeting was held at the Hiller Aviation Museum in San Carlos at the end of a very successful exhibition there by the Module SIG. The meeting room was convenient and access to the

ETE layout and the museum during the afternoon was certainly appreciated by those of us who attended.

The chapter received a thank you letter from the Museum's President and CEO for the \$63 donation that we collected by passing the hat at our April 10 meeting.

A few members brought some of their aviation-related train models to show us — a popular theme was airport trains and trains that advertised European airlines. An aircraft load on flatcars was also featured.

The "ETE University" workshop plan by Peter Barnes, Joe Driscoll and Jacques Vuye was discussed and several members present filled out questionnaires on what they'd like to learn, and what they would be willing to teach to others (see "ETE University Workshops" below).

Layout Tours

Joe Driscoll and Don Winslow graciously opened their home layouts to tours from 3-5pm following the meeting. Fliers with directions and maps were available. Thank you for letting us visit your fascinating layouts!

Rolf Krumbiegel will exhibit his layout from 11-12 on Saturday, May 8, prior to the meeting event at Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society (see map below).

Upcoming Meetings & Events

June 2004: Monthly Meeting TBA

July 2004: Monthly Meeting TBA

August 21-22, 2004: EuroWest 2004, Basque Cultural Center, 599 Railroad Ave., South San Francisco.

EuroWest 2004: Volunteers Needed

Scheduled for August 21-22 at the same location as last year — see “Upcoming Meetings & Events” for specifics. Andreas Hildebrandt is coordinating again this year and he is looking for volunteers to help with various aspects of the event. Contact Andreas if you can help.

ETE University Workshops

What do you want to know about European railroading, either the prototype or modeling? What do *you* know that you can share with others in the chapter?

Jacques Vuye, Peter Barnes and Joe Driscoll are working to organize individual and team taught presentations and workshops on a variety of European train topics given at the meetings starting later this year. We developed an interest questionnaire for the April meeting aimed at assessing what topics and subjects may interest the members. We have over 20 responses thus far but want to make sure all chapter members have a chance to respond and to encourage additional input from everyone. Thus the “Interest Questionnaire” and “Knowledge and Skill Survey” is inserted in this newsletter.

The easiest way to complete the survey is by going online to the Chapter webpage at www.ete.org, filling in the forms and return them electronically to Joe. Otherwise, please bring the forms to the May meeting in Walnut Creek or mail them to Peter Barnes at 20 Sequoia Ct., San Carlos, 94070. We plan to have a raffle for those who return completed forms.

Reverse Corner: Module SIG Notes

by Tom Melka (melka@pacbell.net)

The Module SIG exhibited its modular layout at the Train Collector’s Association, Cal-Stewart (TCA) meet at the Santa Clara Convention Center, March 26-28. TCA is primarily interested in large-scale Lionel, American Flyer and Marx toy trains, but there was a fair amount of interest in the SIG’s layout. One visitor commented Märklin is “just like Lionel” with its AC “center rail” studs and pickup shoes. Thanks to Paul Canton for coordinating this event.

We held our first layout operator training — Steve Stern conducted a series of instructional seminars on layout operation covering Märklin digital, AC analog, DCC and DC analog for operators who needed a refresh — especially those who had signed up to operate at the Hiller Aviation Museum venue.

The successful Hiller display ran for two weeks over the Easter holidays. Again, the SIG met a broad cross-section of the public and generated a lot of interest in ETE and European Trains. We enjoy sharing the excitement and interest that develops around a great module display. We were also delighted to have such a large ETE Chapter meeting turnout at Hiller.

We also appreciated the participation by many Chapter members. This 7-day-a-week venue created a very demanding staffing schedule. Peter Barnes did his usual fine job in coordinating the event. Special thanks go to Peter and each of you who participated as a docent and in our set-up and tear-downs. The modules are a lot of work. Sharing the effort with fellow club members keeps it fun!

Rolf Krumbiegel is coordinating our next event at the Museum on Main Street in Pleasanton. This is hosted by the Amador-Livermore Valley Historical Society. If you have the May 2004 issue of *Model Railroader* magazine, look us up in the “Coming Events” section on page 34. You will see our upcoming events listed there, and additional events as the year progresses. We are also listed on the www.trains.com website in the “Events” section.

We will be running for 3 weeks starting on May 2. This will be a small layout, filling the main museum display area. Come by and see us in May. Contact Rolf Krumbiegel if you would like to help out as a docent or operator.

Put your ad in *ETE Express*

We are pleased to announce that the ETE Board of Directors has recently approved advertising in our quarterly *ETE EXPRESS* magazine, reaching over 400 European Train Enthusiasts.

For more details on advertisement rates, deadlines, and on how to submit your ad, please visit the ETE website or click the link <http://www.ete.org/express/ExpressAdRateCard.htm>.

The deadline for submitting ads for the next issue (# 102, Q2, 2004) is May 31, 2004. Please submit your ads promptly since deadlines are strictly enforced.

ETE National Board

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ETE Webmaster European Train Enthusiasts
Fremont, CA USA <http://www.ete.org>

European Train Enthusiasts

<http://www.ete.org>

Yahoo! Groups Links

- To visit your group on the web, go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ETE/>
- To unsubscribe from this group, send an email to: ETE-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
- Your use of Yahoo! Groups is subject to: <http://docs.yahoo.com/info/terms/>

Eurosnips *(compiled by Jim Recker)*

Switzerland: SBB-CFF sees profit in 2003

BERN, April 21 – The Swiss Railways SBB-CFF finished a good year in 2003 posting a net profit of SFr 24.9 million (€16 million). In 2002, the SBB reported a loss of SFr 12 million. According to SBB management, SBB Cargo reduced losses from SFr 33.1 million against SFr 96.11 millions in 2002. Freight traffic was up last year, and SBB also experience staff layoffs.

Germany: Buy an ICE for a day

BERLIN, April 14 – Bidding was recently conducted on eBay, the Internet auction site, for chartering a German InterCity Express for a day. The highest bidder will get to determine where the train goes and can bring 368 friends and family. Proceeds will go to street kids. The auction ended April 26th.

Chunnel: Eurotunnel Troubles

LONDON, April 13 – Eurotunnel's board of directors has been replaced following a general meeting last week. The new board wishes to renegotiate its £6.4 billion in debts, but the banks may simply take over the company instead. Freight operator EWS says it will discontinue its trains through the Chunnel in 2005 unless access charges are lowered, but the new board intends to raise them.

Denmark: Øresund bridge troubles

COPENHAGEN, April 9 – While regional traffic and automobile traffic continues to increase on the Øresund Bridge, intercity rail traffic fell last year. The local regional rail operator Linx lost 30% of their Göteborg-København passengers, and averaged only 27 passengers per four-car train when crossing the bridge. Linx has cut the number of trains here from six to three, and moved them to Stockholm-Oslo and Göteborg-Oslo. However Stockholm-Oslo is also performing below expectations. SJ lost 9% of Stockholm –

København volume last year. SJ and Linx blame the business cycle, and competition from automobiles and airlines. The railways served by Linx also suffer from being too slow to have a speed advantage over automobile traffic.

Chunnel: Eurostar Passenger Boom

BRUSSELS, Belgium – April 7 – Eurostar has racked up record passenger numbers for the first three months of 2004, increasing 19% over the same period last year. Travel time was reduced last fall when phase one of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link was opened. In the latest sign that airlines are feeling the pinch, Belgian carrier VLM has cut its services between London and Brussels. As reported in the last ETE issue, Ryanair recently announced its intention to scrap flights between Stansted and Charleroi airport, near Brussels. British Airways has made similar changes, axing its Gatwick to Brussels service and its flights between London City airport and Paris. Good show, Eurostar!

Sweden: SJ X2000 Beats Airlines as Well

STOCKHOLM, April 10 – Four years after Sweden's biggest airport, Stockholm-Arlanda, was connected to the rail network, three smaller airports have closed. Another three, larger ones, are losing money and may be sold or closed. All six serve towns that have 200 km/h X2000 express service to Stockholm. The airport owner Luftfartsverket says airports within 500 km of the Arlanda hub performed worse than other airports in recent years.

UK: Record fine for fatal London crash

LONDON, April 6 – British operating company Thames Trains was fined £2 million (about \$3.5 million or €3 million) for "serious omissions" in driver training which contributed to the head-on collision at Paddington which left 31 dead and hundreds injured in 1999. The train collided with another after the driver failed to stop at

a red signal. The driver, who was killed in the accident, had not been warned about the "infamous" difficult-to-see signal just outside Paddington station — it had been run past while showing red or stop eight times in six years!

OTHER RAILWAY NEWS ACROSS EUROPE

Sweden: The Swedish government-owned rail freight operator Green Cargo may be sold to German Railion. Government officials would earlier dismiss such rumors by saying Green Cargo is not for sale, but now they just say they won't comment.

Austria: Meanwhile German Railion wants to buy state-owned Rail Cargo Austria, but the Austrian government says it is not selling, and that the recent reform envisages RCA expanding market share. Railion believes that in two or three years, there will only be room for 3-4 large rail freight groups in Europe. Perhaps Railion is right, because open access for rail freight will be implemented in the European Union in 2007. Building on the partial deregulation from March 2003, this will be complete deregulation including international, and domestic. Railion has previously swallowed Danish and Dutch freight companies as well as minorities in other rail freight operators. Swiss SBB has expanded outside its borders, and Norwegian CargoNet has bought the Swedish intermodal operator RailCombi.

United Kingdom: Police have apprehended a fifteen-year-old boy who sabotaged track and signals near Paddington station in London. Trains pass the affected area at up to 160 km/h. The damage had the potential to cause injuries and death. A spokesman for Network Rail said: "Crimes of this nature can lead to a penalty of life imprisonment. We would like to see perpetrators prosecuted to act as a deterrent to others."

RAIL NEWS OUTSIDE OF EUROPE

South Korea: Seoul launches its own TGV

SEOUL, Korea – April 1 – Korea's first high-speed HST line opened to the public. The 300 km/h KTX trains, based on the French TGV, complete the Seoul-Busan journey in 2:40 compared to 4:10 by conventional train. 292 km of the track is new and allows high speed, the rest ordinary.

Timings will be reduced further in 2008, when a further 120 km is completed (total 412 km). The project was developed over 12 years and cost \$15.3 billion. There are 46 trains, 12 made in France by Alstom, and the rest in Korea by Rotem. They are 388m long with 18 coaches, seat 935 passengers, and weigh 771 metric tons. The catenary and TVM 430 signaling are similar to that of LGV Nord (Paris-London).

North Korea: Devastating explosion in Ryongchan

The massive explosion of a freight train (or trains) in Ryongchan, 50km from the Chinese border, is feared to have left thousands dead and wounded — South Korean media reports talk of up to 3,000 people killed or injured in the blast.

South Korean media reports quoting unidentified people in and around the area talk of a state of emergency being declared and of phone lines being cut, possibly in an attempt to contain the news (North Korea is a closed, xenophobic state). A satellite photo from BBC shot about 18 hours after the blast shows huge clouds of black smoke, suggesting fires were still raging. The train or trains reportedly were carrying petrol and liquefied gas. Media reports

based on information from unnamed witnesses talked of a massive area of devastation. The station was destroyed as if hit by a bomb and debris was reported to have flown high into the sky.

Ryongchon has a reported population of 130,000, says Associated Press, and is a manufacturing and transport center. The incident is thought to have happened just nine hours after reclusive North Korean dictator, Kim Jong-il, passed through Ryongchon station on his way home from a visit to Beijing.

Japan: Suicide on tracks results in first Shinkansen fatality

TOKYO, Feb.10 — A 500 series *Nozomi* bullet train on the Tokaido Shinkansen suffered damage to its front end after hitting a man on the track at about 270km/h on February 9. The train was en route from Tokyo to Hakata when the driver heard an abnormal whistling noise between Mikawa-Anjo and Toyohashi stations at around 09:20. Stopping at Nagoya, the driver found a hole about 40cm across in the fiber-reinforced plastic nose where it had hit the man.

Another *Nozomi* train (700 series set) going in the opposite direction made an emergency stop at the same place and time. No problems

were found, and all services resumed by 10:00, after some 44 trains had been delayed, affecting about 380,000 passengers.

Police investigation found that a man had climbed the 2m-high fence next to the line and was hit by the two trains in succession. The body was then hurled by the impact over to the adjacent JR 3'6" Tokaido Line, damaging the windscreen of a passing EMU on that line and also causing delays there.

This supposed suicide breaks 40-years of fatality-free service on Japan's high-speed rail network.

Map

Rolf Krumbiegel (Layout Tour 11-12 noon)

151 Park Ave.

Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Map

Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society

(Operating DC and Meeting, 12-4pm)

2751 Buena Vista Avenue

Walnut Creek, CA 94596

