

EasyJet's first three weeks of operations which began on March 28 had a remarkable start with more than 10'000 passengers boarding its planes to and from Liverpool and London-Stansted. The average load is close to 120 passengers per flight (75%) with 84 services offered on both city-pairs. London Stansted is scoring highest with close to 90% occupancy (140 passengers on average) while services to Liverpool are reporting about 110 passenger boardings per leg (70%).

Yet, unconfirmed reports are keeping hopes flying high that additional services and new routes may be introduced over the next six months. Next to Berlin-Schönefeld (commencing on May 20), Stansted may see a second daily flight and new routes to Budapest and Dortmund are reported to be under consideration.

Incoming tourism is taking a lift by easyJet's activities. Liverpool could well be an interesting spot for the tri-national tourist boards provided that observations are correct that passengers of British nationality are representing a majority on the daily Liverpool departures. The manager responsible to oversee incoming tourism projects (one airport – three markets – four cities, see also page two) expressed some surprise about this fact. A closer look at Liverpool may be the right thing to do as the carrier's efforts go beyond Liverpool and the Lake District to include business communities (Basel/Manchester) at both ends, eventually.

easyJet bought GO from BA which set up this airline as a low cost operation. There are frequently aircraft in GO livery on services to the EAP



(M. Brügger)

SAS/CIMBER is also reporting first quarter (loadfactor) results. 9'500 local passengers boarded close to 390 flights offered in the period from January thru March between Copenhagen and the EAP. The carrier has outpaced SWISS in this traffic segment on the same route. The carrier stopped flying at the end of March 2003. SWISS registered about 5'000 local passengers according to the Federal Office of Statistics (BfS) and 4'760 passengers changing flights at EuroAirport.

According to marketing staff members at EuroAirport and company officials of SAS/CIMBER, Copenhagen is holding a promise of higher potentials than presently achieved. The Danish capital is a gateway for passengers ex EAP to other destinations in Scandinavia.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS are surfacing again primarily pushed by the „Forum – Flughafen nur mit der Region“ (airport activities only with the backing of the region). The group is taking to the forefront anxieties, perceptions and arguments held against commercial aviation in general and expansion plans advocated by EuroAirport in particular. Examples include the expresscargo zone, B747-freighter operations and terminal improvements of any size.

Extended night bans and caps on aircraft movements would clearly be contrary to what the business community expects. The size of Novartis and Roche as global companies necessitates a full scale of airport services. An airport confined to a small service concept as demanded by the Forum would not correspond with the economic sector.

VICKERS VIKING and **LOCKHEED L-1049** „Super Constellation“ are close to the hearts and minds of many aircraft enthusiasts.

The date is drawing closer when the Super Constellation is turning final on runway 16 or 34 on May 8. There is much preparation going on to celebrate the aircraft's much heralded arrival including public access, a static display and passenger flights. However, public access to maintenance and apron areas has become a major issue as security requirements set by the French authorities have to be met. Apparently, the stamp of approval has been secured in the meantime.

PS: The Breitling-sponsored Connie left Camarillo (California) on April 26 as scheduled...



Another project involving a veteran plane would like to save a **VICKERS VIKING** still parked at the Musée National de l'Automobile at Mulhouse. The aircraft has to be removed because of construction plans to expand the show rooms for additional rare automobiles.

The plane of British design should be relocated to the EAP for static display if everything goes according to plan. The Viking could be readied for transport by road anytime based on reports issued by the EAA-Alsace (Experimental Aircraft Association).

Everything connected with both projects (Viking and Connie) is volunteer work. For example, putting on the livery of either the defunct Balair or Airnautic which once served Basel-Mulhouse in the fifties and sixties with charters translates into many hours of extra work beside demanding workloads as professionals of different trades.

BRITISH AIRWAYS (BA) has filed preliminary schedules with Swissport about its return to the EuroAirport starting end of March 2005. The schedules are reported to be identical with actual SWISS flight plans including nightstops for outgoing passengers. Originally it was intended to handover the route to BA by SWISS at the end of October 2004.

Banning any (expresscargo) freighter movements would hurt many companies in the airport's catchment area as they are banking on just-in-time deliveries of sensitive shipments to meet their production targets.

The Forum's fears about excessive freighter-hub activities are telling us that it deliberately wants to hold on to a (mis)-conception of airfreight which in the group's mind has little relevance for (regional) prosperity and competitiveness. Arguments such as these show a deep misunderstanding of how air cargo works in a broader context.

The membership of the campaign group is small. Noise and carbon-dioxide emissions may be on the (people) agenda in good times. Now, with major job cuts looming in some sectors, concerns over redundancies are running deep.

Demanding the EAP's departure from playing a crucial role intended to help generate new business opportunities for the entire region is plain shortsighted. Also, the perceived but unfounded risk of the airport becoming a major gateway for air cargo is blown out of proportion anyway.

Yours, Monty's Flying Circus

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COMPETITION FROM NEARBY BADEN-AIRPORT may arise to TUI's flight program ex EuroAirport as the tour operator is also expanding the program out of Karlsruhe/Baden with a dedicated B737-800 of Hapag Lloyd or with aircraft provided by partner airlines.

German airlines enjoy extended traffic rights from German airports to non-EU countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey as mutual agreements include all carriers to operate freely under these accords.

Contrary, German carriers operating ex EuroAirport are only allowed to fly to EU-destinations as French traffic rights do not qualify them to fly to Turkey (Antalya, Izmir), Morocco (Agadir, Casablanca, Marrakech) or to Tunisia (Djerba, Monastir, Tunis).

An expert familiar with charter operations would argue that Germans residing North of Freiburg might rather prefer a domestic gateway to start their vacation. This would leave TUI's holiday program ex EuroAirport at present levels for years to come.

Not so sunny news for SWISS Sun – Some tour operators expect that SWISS Sun will disappear from the skyways again. They also argue that overcapacity among Swiss airlines Belair, Edelweiss, Helvetic.com and Germania's Swiss affiliate is still a problem.

Repeatedly, sources close to the market are insisting that Belair's fleet of two B757-200ER and B767-300 is too big for the Swiss charter market (B757-200 = 210 seats, B767-300 = 270 seats). Yet, unconfirmed reports suggest that Belair and Hotelplan group are eyeing a downsizing of capacity. This may include replacing both B757-200 with Airbus A320-200, terminating leasing agreements for one B757 or looking for other work in the premium-class/business-class market for one B757 addressing corporate business travel needs.

HELLO may also help SWISS Sun's departure with competitive deals. The CEO of the carrier is expecting the airline operating certificate to be approved in three months' time just a couple months away from the Winter season 2004/2005. Tour operator contracting is in full swing. The MD90 fleet of three aircraft will carry the following aircraft registration : HB-JIA, HB-JIB, HB-JIC

CORPORATE JETPORT BASEL is the latest venture opening a base at EuroAirport. The project will receive full financial support from Novartis Pharma and is expected to be operational in late 2005.

The drugmaker has bought two (Bombardier) Global Express corporate jets intending to make travelling more efficient for its top cadres. One aircraft has been registered in Switzerland (HB-INJ, operated by Avcon) and the other one in the US.

The new facility will accommodate both jets or larger versions (BBJ/A319CJ) should they become necessary, and a passenger terminal with a total of 5'000 sqm. groundfloor space (70m x 70m).

The deal is considered a landmark decision in Swiss commercial aviation history because of its nature and size. Aviation experts, however, are not taken by surprise as they expect other companies to follow suit if their volumes were to hit economics of scale making corporate jet travel to pay off.

Corporate travel at the EAP is still small but growing. Security fears on people's minds and tightened airport security measures, are helping new brands such as Club Airways or PrivatAir to take off fast with tailor-made solutions for managers on tight schedules as unique selling point. **Swissport** is handling about 1'000 flights annually. This figure does not disclose the full picture of biz-jet handling as AviaPartner (new), Farnair and Jet Aviation are also in the business. **First quarter results in 2004** show corporate passenger numbers are up (1'781 from 866, +106%) and aircraft movements slightly down (1'005 from 1'028, -2%). BaselWorld 2004 generated 12 aircraft every day (April 15-22).

THE INCOMING TOURISM project team started its work in the fall of 2003 intended to co-ordinate activities to promote tourism in the hinterland of EuroAirport (Basel, Colmar, Freiburg, Mulhouse, see also volume # 34, August 2003).

The team is seeking to find answers to a number of issues such as building a genuine partnership among local service providers and event organizers as well as establishing marketing tools to communicate the region's touristic assets to potential customers. A common agenda promoting incoming tourism in Alsace, Südbaden and Northwestern Switzerland has only surfaced in recent years in the wake of growing competition within Europe. For years local tourism boards have been acting independently. Marketing efforts selling the Regio TriRhena as one destination will be good news eventually, heralding a new era of co-operation.

Questions in connection with incoming tourism are requiring major attention as their solution is crucial to any further planning : how to identify potential markets and local decision-makers once the markets are finally selected – which is the preferred means of transportation - how to select partners for any specific activity – which data base is most helpful for fact-finding purposes – which marketing tools are suitable – how to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities of the region as destination for business, convention, cultural, leisure, sportive and wellness travels – how to build a corporate identity among regional players who will still remain competitors in particular fields such as convention marketing. Answers to these questions and other areas of importance are not yet available by mouse click.

Public internet access and a welcome desk at EuroAirport have been identified as the most pressing projects at this time. Both will be presented to the media this year. Some attention has also been directed to data showing travel patterns of incoming tourists prepared by Focus Management Consulting (Austria). We hope to present this study in full detail in our next volume.