

platformbasket.com

NEW
TR 18.90



TR 1890 TRAILER MOUNTED:

- Working height 18 m
 - Cage capacity 200 Kg
 - Cage rotation 70+70 deg
 - Max side outreach 9,2 m
 - Turret rotation 360 deg
 - Total weight 1800 Kg
- Powered:**
Battery 24Vdc
Electric mains 220 Vac
Combustion Engine
Bi-Energy 220Vac+Engine



- NEW TRAILER MOUNTED RANGE**
- TR 13.70
 - TR 15.80
 - TR 18.90

PLATFORM BASKET Spiderlift and more...



Here to stay

The trailer lift - while still a popular powered access product with a loyal band of users - has appeared to have settled into something of a sleepy backwater of a market sector. Little has changed since our last feature some nine months ago although surprisingly an Italian manufacturer, Platform Basket has decided to dip its toe in the water, in spite of the fact that Italians do not buy trailer lifts.

The main markets for trailer lifts are the Nordic countries along with Germany, the UK and North America, so it is no surprise that these are also home to the major manufacturers - until now - although Spanish-based Matilsa has had some modest success in both its home market and for export. The notion that an Italian manufacturer would enter this market seems as far fetched as one can imagine. However Platform Basket, which showed its first unit at Bauma, is planning a range of at least three models aimed at.....overseas markets. Does Platform Basket know something that the rest of us don't or is it banking on the spread of the rental concept and general (tool hire) rental stores throughout Europe and with it, easy to transport work platforms?

We take a look at the recent developments in the sector and ask does the trailer have a long-term future?

On the surface the trailer lift has a lot going for it - it is a lightweight, uncomplicated, easy to transport and relatively cheap. These features are what drove its strong growth in the early days of the powered access market. However its downsides are that it is not self propelled, it is relatively bulky even when working and is remembered by many as requiring a lot of physical effort to use - pushing into position and cranking up manual outriggers.

As a result its popularity has declined among specialist rental companies at the same time as its appeal has shrunk among regular users to a certain type of tradesman such as smaller scale maintenance



or painting companies, tree workers and the more adventurous DIYer. For all of these users the machine is ideal. It is still widely available from rental stores/hire shops, is no hassle to collect when needed at the beginning of the contract with a car, 4x4 or truck with tow bar and can be rented for one day or as needed. The way the product is rented on a short term ad hoc basis with customer collecting rather than being delivered, has also helped turn off the specialist supplier which prefers rentals where it delivers the product to larger companies for terms of at least a week. Finally another factor is the weather, the trailer lift does tend to be a fair weather machine, when it is nice out they are busy, when cold and rainy they are not, while the spider lift is more of an indoor/outdoor product.

In spite of the overall slide in the popularity of the trailer lift, or maybe because of it resale values for trailer lifts have held up well with good second-hand units being few and far between and consistently fetching good money. The trailer is clearly one of those 'marmite' platforms - you either love it or hate it. Rental

companies that love it say they are more than happy with the return on investment - the daily rate is undeniably good but unless you really specialise and have a big customer base for the product, utilisation tends to be poor in comparison with most self propelled lifts. However, the majority of platform hirers appear to 'hate' the trailer for the reasons we have already mentioned, reducing availability and perhaps popularity. Whatever the reason, trailer lift rental is now firmly the domain of the tool hirer or general rental company.

Perhaps the trailer just isn't 'sexy'. Compared to say a tracked spider lift it does have something of a Plain Jane, DIY image. But as any engineer or designer knows - simple is best and most trailer lifts are relatively simple in design and operation.

Over the past year or two, Cranes&Access has been predicting the rise and rise of the spider lift as the access industry's 'jack of all trades', and increasing sales figures certainly appear to back this up. Yes its crawler undercarriage and often narrow dimensions can get the



Platform Basket has entered the trailer lift sector



A Nifty TD120T

platform into almost any position under its own steam, and yes most can be transported easily on a two axle plant trailer, but it does have several disadvantages when compared to a trailer lift.

At the lower end of the market spider lifts tend to be a few hundred kilos heavier than an equivalent trailer lift, especially when you allow for the trailer required to move the spider, and they are around 50 percent more expensive to buy. The extra weight can lead to towing problems or at the very least require a larger vehicle while the extra cost means a substantially greater rental charge.

One of the main criticisms levelled at the trailer lift, compared to a spider is that it is too long which causes problems negotiating narrow and tight turns such as an aisle or passageway to the side of an entrance door, especially as most of the trailer lifts in rental fleets, at least in the UK and Ireland, are not equipped with self drive as standard. They are also too wide to pass through garden gates or down the side of a house, although the smaller trailer lifts do have retractable axles. Criticism is also directed at large outrigger spreads

and limited outreach at low levels – many of these negative points are in fact related to older product designs, which in some countries still make up the bulk of the rental fleet.

But as Niftylift – which produces both trailer and tracked machines – points out its latest 12 metre trailer lift, the highly developed H120T, is only slightly (550mm) longer than its spider lift which is also 400kg heavier. Apart from these two dimensions - machine height, width, carrying capacity, basket size and outrigger spread are all exactly the same (see table below). Although to be fair Nifty's spider lifts are a little more rugged than many, so for the sake of balance we have added in the Hinowa 14:70 probably the most popular small spider lift.

So while it isn't the most popular type of platform, it will always have its group of dedicated followers.

Platform Basket takes on the market leaders

With a full range of spider lifts (as well as self propelled boom lifts) already in its range, it was a logical, if surprising, step for Platform Basket to introduce a

trailer lift. However, with much of its equipment being exported, here is an Italian manufacturer which thinks there is a bright future in the trailer lift market.

The model launched at Bauma was the 17.7 metre working height TR 18.90. The company says that it already has a 15 metre model ready to go and a 13 metre will follow at the end of this year.

As a new (and late) entrant into the market you might have expected every one of the specification criteria to be more than on par with the leading competitors. However while the TR18.90 has all the latest developments (Bi-energy, fly jib, basket rotation etc...) it does not offer significant improvements in any area. As expected from a manufacturer based in a country that specialises in vehicle mounted lifts, it is the lightest in its class at 1,800kg and is also the shortest at just 5.76 metres. Price then may be the deciding factor but it will have to be very competitive to

break into Niftylift's dominance in the UK, Dutch and Irish markets particularly as the Nifty 170 offers more outreach, a drive option and yet is only slightly heavier.

Perhaps the lack of obvious innovation effectively signals the fact that the trailer lift has reached the end of further major product developments (although they said that about the Hoover before Dyson). Certainly global aerial lift manufacturers such as Genie and JLG, not to mention Haulotte, have not been focusing on new trailer lift product introductions in recent years. Most producers have been looking to refine and tweak their existing designs, reduce long-term ownership costs and improve quality – a tricky feat to continually achieve. Genie says that it has achieved significant improvements in the quality of its TZ platforms at its South Carolina facility particularly in the control system and limit switches, maintaining pricing levels and giving the customer added benefits.

The surprise trailer addition - Platform Basket's 18.90



The 18.90 is the shortest and lightest in its class



Tracked or trailer?

	Nifty TD120T	Nifty 120T	Hinowa 14:70
Type	Spider lift	Trailer lift	Spider lift
Working height	12.2m	12.2m	14m
Basket capacity	200kg	200kg	200kg
Maximum outreach	6.1m	6.1m	6.5m
Length	3.95m	4.5m	3.98m
Width	1.10m	1.50/1.10m retracted	0.78m retracted
Height	1.9m	1.9m	1.98m
Weight	1,850kg	1,450kg	1,700kg
Stabiliser width	3.55m	3.55m	3.0m

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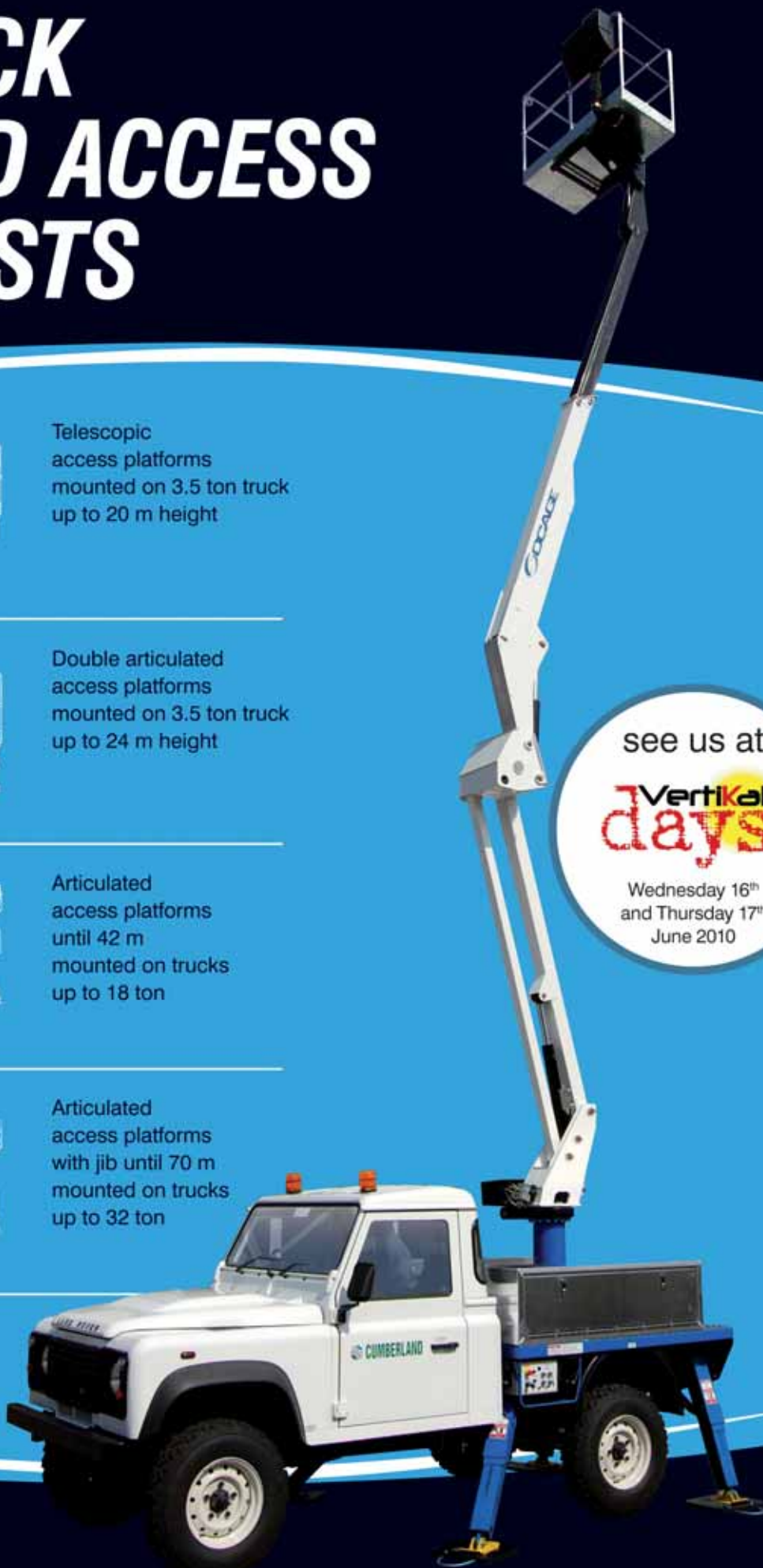


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see us at

**Vertical
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How the Platform Basket TR18.90 compares:

	Platform Basket	Niftylift	Snorkel	Dinolift	Omme	Genie
Model	TR18.90	170	TL49K	180XT	1830E	TZ50
Working height	17.7m	17.1m	17.0m	18.0m	18.3m	17.09m
Capacity	200kg	200kg	200kg	215kg	200kg	200kg
Outreach 200kg	6.8m	8.7m	9.1m	6.9m	10.15m	8.89m
Length	5.76m	6.20m	7.10m	6.57m	6.70m	7.16m
Width	1.65m	1.65m	1.75m	1.80m	1.60m	1.68m
Height	2.14m	2.15m	2.10m	2.29m	1.99m	2.0m
Outrigger spread/m	4.1x4.0	4.4 x 4.4	4.65x4.65	3.8 x 3.8	4.21x4.21	4.37x4.37
GVW	1,800kg	1,900kg	2,250kg	2,100kg	2,550kg	2,025kg
Power	AC Battery Bi-energy	AC Battery Bi-energy	AC Battery Bi-energy	AC Battery Diesel	AC Battery Bi-energy	Battery/ Bi-energy
Platform rotation	70 + 70°	Optional	90°	90°		80 + 80°
Turntable rotation	360°	360°	680°	360° Continuous	400°	359°
Fly jib	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Drive option	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Other trailer lifts

In the UK, Ireland, USA and Australia, and to a lesser extent the Benelux markets, when buyers or users of aerial lifts think of trailer lifts it is usually the articulated boom type. However there are, as we have pointed out before, a number of alternatives. One of these is the trailer mounted scissor lift - in

recent years pioneered by PLE – and were at one time popular in Scandinavia. UpRight (now Snorkel) has been selling its own version of the PLE TP9000 for around two years but it always created more interest than actual sales due, at least in part, to the lack of self drive. The company then introduced the self drive XT24SD which is still

light enough to tow behind a car but now can be driven from the platform when in the stowed position, similar to a conventional self propelled scissor lift. Following the Snorkel ‘orange’ rebranding the machine is now called the Snorkel TS2461SD and has a weight of 1,350kg, a maximum platform height of 24ft/7.3m, a 2.44 x 1.22 metre deck with 277kg lift capacity, self levelling outriggers, operated from the platform and a towing width of 1.5 metres. The unit is very easy to tow and once on site is surprisingly manoeuvrable and light on its feet. There are some applications to which it is well suited such as working on airport aprons and on large plants where work areas are far apart and jobs

short in duration. For general use, while it has a great curb appeal it is still being treated as a niche product.

Straight telescopic

While we covered this in our last feature, it is still surprising that outside of certain markets such as Scandinavia and Germany, the benefits of straight telescopic trailer lifts - which have been subject to some strong development in recent years - do not appear to be fully appreciated. These include faster cycle speeds and greater outreach for often a lighter weight. However with developments being slow in this market, perhaps this is a story for another time?

Straight telescopic trailers are often lighter, faster and have greater outreach



Snorkel TS2461SD elevated



Snorkel TS2461SD in Snorkel orange





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