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Tower crane heaven

A few years ago tower crane manufacturer Wolffkran celebrated the 100th anniversary of the introduction of its first modern tower crane. In order to celebrate the milestone it published a hard back coffee table size book entitled 'Zwischen Himmel und Erde - 'Between Heaven and Earth. The book is bi-lingual, which tends to compromise the design and layout in places as you might expect.

However regardless of this small flaw, the information and illustrations are first class with a great dose of well-illustrated company history - underlined by the major milestones and achievements going on in the wider world at that time. It also includes a good deal of information on tower crane technology and the company's milestone product launches. Overall the book is a must-read for anyone interested in tower cranes or the history of high rise construction.

Where to find it: The book can be purchased via Amazon UK for less than £10 or try Wolffkran.



Sock it to me!

Earlier this year we received a parcel of socks targeting the construction industry with the request to tell our readers about them. Although an unusual request, we thought that most of our readers wear socks, and many of them wear safety boots which is not always the most comfortable form of footwear. The blurb also said that productivity and concentration can be seriously affected by painful feet so we took up the challenge and have been 'road testing' them since the summer.

We received two 'models' to evaluate, the WFHP300 Ultimate Comfort Sock and the more regular Safety Boot sock, both produced by Work Force. The Comfort Sock is a fantastic piece of engineering - that may sound like an odd claim for a sock, but it really is. A variety of materials are used, including bamboo fibres for its good elasticity and anti-bacterial qualities, while thicker terry cushion 'zones' are placed at points where the foot is most prone to pressure and discomfort. As a result the left and the right are different and clearly marked with an L or an R. They are also contoured to match the foot.

The tailoring makes getting them on and off something of a challenge, and this did not change with repeated washing or wearing. However once on they are fantastic...

warm when it's cold, yet cool when it's warm. They made a new pair of uncomfortable steel toecap boots comfortable enough to wear all day during the Vertical Days

The Safety Boot sock.

build up. They also stayed up all day and were a delight in regular walking boots, being both warm and comfortable. They are not cheap but worth every penny if you suffer from bad feet, or buy cheap boots! However if you find putting socks on and taking them off a bit of a challenge, these are not for you, although one does develop a technique after a while.

The Safety Boot Sock is much easier, they slip on just like a regular sock and are thick warm and comfortable. Unlike the Ultimate Comfort Sock the Safety Boot sock sizes cover a wider range of foot sizes. For example if you are size 42 (UK 8) you buy the 39 to 45 (6-11). As a result the clearly defined heel was not always where it is supposed to be when firmly pulled up. While this did not bode well, they did in fact turn out to be very comfortable and stayed up all day, without cutting off circulation in the leg. While not as good as the Ultimate Comfort model, they were certainly better than most socks our testers had experienced. They also retained all of their features and qualities after several washes although not as well as the Ultimates. In summary we would highly recommend both socks, but if you appreciate fine engineering, have troublesome feet and allow enough time to put your socks on, then treat yourself to the Ultimate Comfort model.

Work Force socks can be purchased from various outlets and online expect to pay around £8 for the Ultimate Comfort sock and around £5.95 for three pairs of the Safety Boot sock.

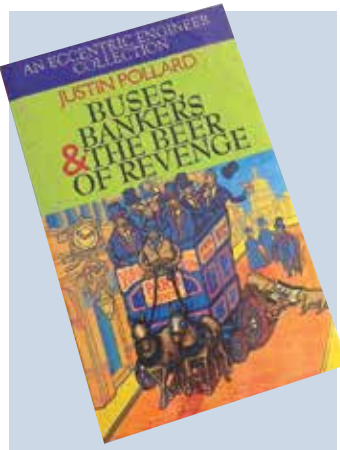


The Ultimate Comfort Sock.



Buses, Bankers & the Beer of Revenge

One of the Eccentric Engineer books, this slim hardback by Justin Pollard contains 50 short stories and musings covering a wide range of subjects and challenges all from an engineering bent. Humorous and entertaining it is a surprisingly good read and will be particularly appreciated by machinery lovers or anyone with a technical aptitude. Where to find it: The book can be found on Amazon UK for around £12.



Around The World with 80 Cranes

A collection of Terex crane job stories, this is a soft back coffee table book containing 80 large lifting jobs around the world. It contains a collection of fantastic crane photographs with a short description on the job and the challenges faced. It is a great book to dip in and out of and an essential book for the crane 'anoraks' among you.

Where to find - You will have to speak to Terex Cranes on this one as it does not appear to be in the company's online shop.



GOING UP IN THE WORLD

A history of Simon Engineering, the development of the powered access industry and a lifetime as an engineer, by Denis Ashworth

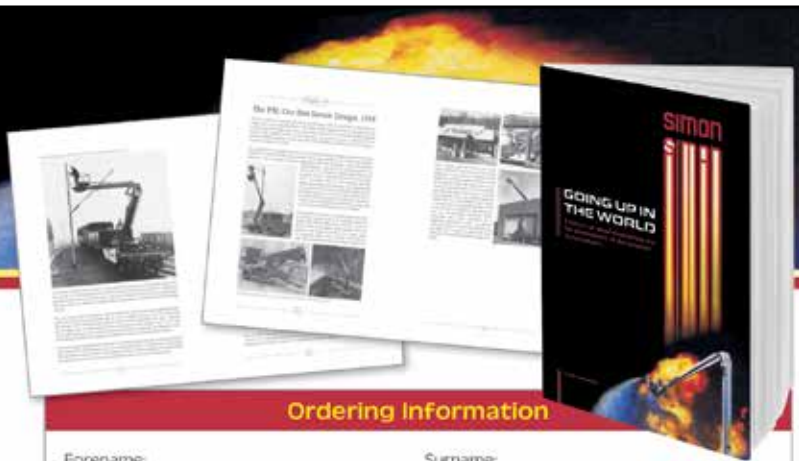
Ashworth was a keen engineer and from an early age found himself in at the very start of the modern powered access industry.

His book is an unusual combination of autobiography and history of Simon Engineering Dudley, a pioneer of the powered access industry and at one time, the world's largest manufacturer of aerial lifts.

The coffee table sized book, is highly readable and includes around 150 photographs and drawings from the very beginning of the industry. It is a 'must read' for anyone who is interested in powered access, the hydraulic equipment industry or in comparing modern day engineering challenges with those of an entirely different era.

The book is available direct from the publishers at £19.50, plus £4.50 postage and packing.

- Continental Europe €23 plus €6.50 postage & packing
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Terex AT20-3

The Terex AT20-3 is a pick&carry crane designed to lift a load and then travel with it, or to simply work statically without the need to set outriggers. It was originally developed in Australia by the Franna company which began business in 1980, and was acquired by Terex in 1999, becoming part of the Terex Cranes business. The AT20-3 can lift a maximum of 20 tonnes at 1.4 metres, and has a maximum lifting height of 17 metres - or 20 metres with its short jib/extension. It is particularly well suited for work in mines and fabrication yards, where mobility without outriggers is appreciated.

This model is by Conrad of Germany and is in 1:50 scale. Looking underneath, the transmission is detailed, with plastic drive shafts and the twin-tyred wheels look impressive. Steering works across the pivot point and a sharp angle can be obtained.

At the front the body shape is captured well and a lifting beam is attached. The cab is fairly simple and unusually there no windscreen wipers have been modelled. Also the door mirrors are simple plastic without silvered surfaces. At the rear the engine area is modelled well with a metal exhaust and good quality metal handrails. Small graphics and painted lights enhance the back end of the model.

The boom sections are metal castings with the second section having nicely formed holes. It can be raised and telescoped and the hydraulic lift cylinders are stiff enough to hold a pose. There are three attachment points for a machinery hook. The boom has metal sheaves and a further lifting point or plastic jib can be added. However there is no obvious

dead-ending point for the main hook, which makes reeving it a little difficult.

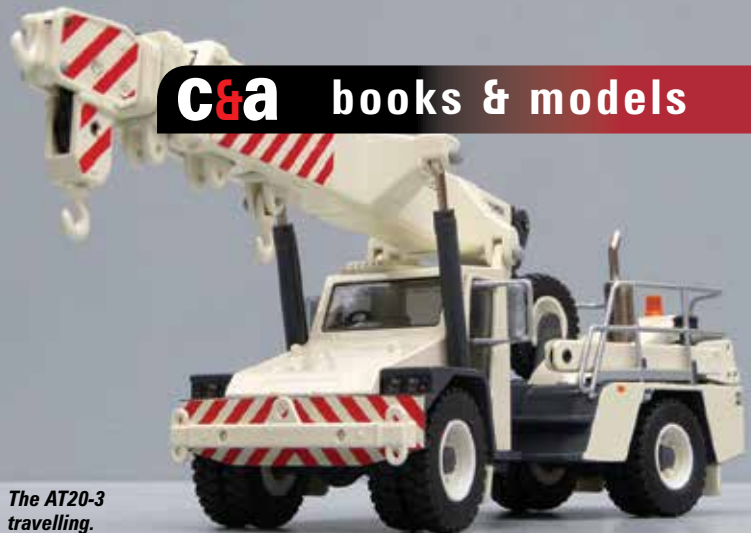
The hook block is metal with metal sheaves and it can be raised and lowered using a small key inserted into the winch drum. The lifting beam can be used and the small jib/boom extension can be fitted either straight in line or at an offset angle.

This is a well-made, highly functional model, with reasonable detailing. It can be obtained from the Terex webshop for around €95 and future versions are expected in the colours of Australian crane rental companies.

To read the full review of this model visit www.cranesetc.co.uk

Cranes Ect Model Rating

Packaging (max 10)	7
Detail (max 30)	20
Features (max 20)	18
Quality (max 25)	20
Price (max 15)	12
Overall (max 100)	77



The AT20-3 travelling.

Chassis details



Good metal handrails



Short jib attached and offset



Lifting onto a giant mining excavator