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# Straight Straight

# Up, Out

C&A straight booms

At the recent American Rental Association convention and Rental Show, Skyjack had its brand new boom lift on display as promised. It was a 45 ft model as widely predicted, however what surprised many Europeans was the fact that it was a straight telescopic, rather than an articulated boom!

## Why should this have been a surprise?

Few if any of the American visitors were at all surprised, when we asked Skyjack managers "why a straight telescopic?" They were surprised by the question, "why not? It is a big market and an ideal re-entry model for us" was their answer. "Surely a 45ft articulated will be your next boom lift then?" we asked "No a straight 60 of course!" was their response.

What this long winded introduction highlights is the wide disparity between the preferred boom configurations on either side of the Atlantic. The articulated boom market has over the years been the only significant sector where volume has been consistently greater in Europe than in North America. The 40/45ft IC boom market is a classic case, in the US there are as many straight telescopics sold as there are articulated. In Europe the 40/45ft straight telescopic boom is a relatively rare beast and the sector too small for local manufacturers to even consider.

While the disparity is not quite so marked on larger models, it is quite evident that America's love affair with the straight telescopic boom is not shared by European users. In trying to explain this difference, all manner of reasons have been given. One of the most popular is that in Europe we have less space and so appreciate the fact that articulated booms are typically a

little narrower and take up less space when stowed. While there is a glimmer of truth in these points, they would hardly cause such strong trends. In reality it is down to history and a myriad of small factors. Older telescopics were very long, heavy and had significant tail swing, making them less than ideal for congested locations. The models that most major manufacturers offer today are quite different. The overall width on all but the smallest models is similar to that of articulated lifts, tail-swings have been substantially reduced to a point where it is no longer a major issue. While the addition of articulating jibs has reduced stowed length, while providing additional reach and versatility.

## So why a Telescopic?

So what does the straight telescopic boomlift offer that an articulated boom does not?

- They are simpler to operate with fewer controls
- They generally have more outreach
- They reach full height faster
- They are less expensive to maintain, with fewer moving parts.
- They are more rigid, having no complex linkages
- They are generally more rugged

So what type of user chooses a telescopic rather than an articulated boom?

Clearly those who want a fast, no-nonsense, rugged workhorse of a



*The highest self propelled straight boom on the market, the JLG 1350SJP has been widely used on Heathrow's Terminal 5*

machine, typical trades include steel erectors and shipyards. In these rough, tough applications the machine is very much used as a piece of heavy duty production equipment. Given the unforgiving work, some regular users turn their noses up at the articulated

jibs that have become so popular, in favour of a simple, straightforward heavy duty straight boom with end mounted platform. One almost gets the feeling from some hardened users that using a machine with a jib is akin to wearing a tutu to work!



*While some users do not like jibs, in some applications such as this, they are invaluable, this one also rotates.*

These trades are certainly hard on the machines, baskets tend to get mashed up on a regular basis as steel erectors use them to push and hold beams in position. In the shipyards constant welding, cutting and sandblasting really takes its toll on a lift, thus the simpler and more rugged a machine is, the better.

When you witness the no-nonsense "get on with it" working style in these applications, one begins to understand the American preference for such machines. With the risk of committing a massive generalisation, this no-nonsense approach to lifts is far more prevalent in North America than it is in Europe. Over here a user is far more likely to appreciate and fuss around with all the "bells and whistles" on his machine.

### Slow development

Given that this is probably the most mature sector within the self propelled lift market, it will not surprise you to learn that significant developments have been few. Progress tends to be limited to gradual evolution and improvement, than radical development. A good example of this is the New Haulotte H43TPX, due to be unveiled at Intermat. Haulotte has a reputation for studying the

specifications of its competitors and then doing all it can to improve a little on each point. Making its new entrant just a little narrower, a little lighter with a little more outreach etc... When designing its H43, which has the same 135ft platform height as the JLG 1350SJP, the JLG was clearly the machine to beat. At first glance, with only preliminary specifications, it looks as though Haulotte has had a tough time improving on the JLG, at least on paper.

### Extending axles a thing of the past under 100ft

Extending axles on booms of under 100ft are now a thing of the past, with the launch of the new Snorkel TBA85J-Fixed this February. At one time all 70 and 80ft machines had extending axles, not only is this now a thing of the past, but it has been done without significant sacrifices.

### Work stations and welders

JLG pioneered the concept of the Sky welder, and work station in the sky in an attempt to tailor its machines to particular trades and has done more in this area than the rest of the industry combined. More recently Genie has introduced the ArcPro 275 Welding System, a welding system developed jointly with the Lincoln Electric Co for



*The new Genie S60HC offers high lift capacity, allowing three men to do the job of two.*

its S-80/85, S-60/65 and S-40/45 telescopic boom lifts. These welding options are ideal for applications where extended welding from the platform is part of the job, it is all on hand and saves trailing leads or a welding machine in the platform.

The concept has been slower to take off in Europe than in the USA to this end you won't find Haulotte promoting such devices in its literature yet. The problem is that adding such equipment carries a cost that rental companies find hard to justify, due to its specialist nature. In the USA rental companies are now working more closely with particular customers and sourcing such specialist machines for them as part of a close partnership and supply agreement.

### Higher capacities

Certain trades have long sought boom lifts with higher lift capacities than the usual 225 or 250kgs and some companies, such as JLG offered multiple lift capacities on straight telescopics on its models in the 1980's. The practice of variable lift capacities had fallen out of favour due to safety concerns, but has made a comeback with the 120 ft JLG 1200SJP and 1350SJP. The operator selects between 230kg unrestricted capacity or a 450kgs lift capacity which then prevents the last three metres of boom telescope.

Genie's has just raised the ante with its own dual capacity feature on the new S-60 HC telescopic boom it offers 340kgs unrestricted capacity to the machines full 15.5 metres outreach or 565 kgs limited to 12.5 metres outreach, enough for three people and plenty of gear.



*A perfect demonstration of the usefulness of 180° Platform rotation fitting bird defences to Blackpool's post office.*



*Both JLG and Genie now offer built in welding equipment such as this JLG SkyWelder*

The Tadano Superdecks with 14 or 19 metre platform heights and crawler or wheeled chassis, top out the high capacity league with their 1,000 kgs lift capacity an automatic load moment

device limits outreach with this load to seven to eight metres. In spite of some clear demand for this scissor lift on a stick concept, the price of the Superdeck prevented any serious take up in Europe and Tadano has now withdrawn it. Tadano also offer a high capacity version of its AW-250TG and AW-370TG 25 and 37 metre straight booms, with 450 kgs out to 15 metres radius. These booms though have never been offered in Europe.



*Tadano has dropped its Superdeck models following poor sales.*

### Bigger platforms

Most straight booms feature a 1.8 metre wide platform as standard with the option of a larger 2.4 metre basket. The number of buyers specifying 2.4 metre platforms has picked up in Europe, and an increasing number of models, particularly those over 80ft, now include the larger platforms as standard. While a larger basket offers more room to work and to carry materials, in applications such as steel erection, where there is often a need to reach locations through a web of steelwork, a big platform can be a major disadvantage. For this reason many manufactures have designed their platforms with a quick change feature. Not only does this allow a user or rental company to quickly modify the boom to suit particular jobs, but also speeds up platform replacement when a heavy handed operator returns the lift with crumpled guardrails.

### Easy repair platforms

The habit of certain trades to destroy the platforms on telescopic booms has resulted in manufacturers attempting to



## C&a straight booms

*In spite of high prices Aichi took a significant share of the European market in 2005.*

address the problem. It is not possible to simply keep beefing up the guardrails and the platform structure, not only does it add weight in the worse possible place, but if the platform is too strong, impacts will be transferred further down the structure resulting in far more serious damage, such as a bent boom.

Some time ago JLG introduced a modular platform that enables an owner to replace only that part of the cage which is damaged. Genie on the other hand has taken the approach of driving down the cost of a new basket, encouraging users to simply replace it, rather than trying to repair it.

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# INTERMAT 2006 gives you 3 good reasons to choose **Haulotte** aerial work platforms



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*A classic application for a 125ft straight boom, installing steelwork together with a crane.*



applications that straight telescopic booms are typically used for. Several users told us that it was just another knob on the control box and another thing to go wrong. However a lot of the larger straight booms are used in refinery and heavy industrial applications, in these environments, with congested areas the additional manoeuvrability can prove to be very helpful.

**New models**

**Same performance – back to basics**

The latest two, completely new straight boom products, the Haulotte H43TPX and the Skyjack SJ40 and 45T, unusually do not introduce any new

**So how does the new Haulotte measure up?**

With only preliminary specifications to go on it is too early to do a proper comparison, however looking at the basic specifications it seems that Haulotte has not attempted to outdo the JLG on specification, but has aimed more at providing an alternative product, possibly at a keener price?

The Haulotte is in fact short on specification, with four metres less outreach, no higher capacity option, a longer transport length, and a little less gradeability, at least on paper. However, some aspects of the new boom will appeal to telescopic boom users.

	Haulotte H43TPX	JLG1350SJP
Platform Height	41m	41.1m
Outreach	20m	24.3m
Lift capacity	230kgs	230/450kgs
O/A width	2.53m	2.49m
Stowed Length	15m	11.86m
Stowed height	3m	3.05m
Jib articulation	140°	130°
Jib rotation	Yes	Yes
Platform size	2.4m x .80	2.4m x .94
Gradeability	40%	45%
Outside turning	5.1m	6.86m
GVW	20,300kgs	20,300kgs

Given the cost and lack of availability of skilled staff, this method appeals to many rental companies, they simply bill the user for the cost of a new platform. The user treats it as a consumable.

**4X4X4**

Four wheel drive is now a standard requirement in Europe, if the notion to buy a two wheel drive boom possesses you, be warned! Be prepared to keep it for a long time, its resale value will be abysmal. Most straight booms are

increasingly equipped with oscillating axles and sophisticated flow dividers that keep all four wheels turning. This provides gradeability of 40 to 45 percent, a far cry from machines of old. An increasing number also offer four wheel steer, the benefits are not limited to a tighter turning radius, but also provide crab steer for getting in close to a wall or fence. While the four wheel steering has been around for years, the benefits are wasted on many of the

technology or specification improvements. Both companies have decided that the better strategy in this market is to launch good competent products that at best match the existing specifications, while offering greater simplicity.

**Haulotte hits the heights**

Haulotte is introducing its highest platform to date at Intermat. The new 41 metre platform height, H43TPX, goes head to head with the JLG 1350SP, currently the largest straight telescopic boom on the market. (When Genie introduced a 41 metre boom last year, it elected to go with an articulated model.) At this height outreach is not an issue, so the only benefits that a straight boom offers is outreach at very low heights, possibly speed to full height, (although this is not as important as it is on 60ft booms), and simplicity.

*The Haulotte H43TPX demonstrates how straight boom design has changed over the years.*



*Telescopic axles are now limited to booms over 100ft*



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It appears for example, to be a simpler machine, without the fold back jib, (thus the longer transport length), dual lift capacity or jib rotation. The most important aspect of this introduction is that buyers who seek a straight boom of this height, will now have a choice and this is likely to eventually impact the price, not to mention the availability, of such a machine.

**Skyjack make a come back**

Skyjack has laid out its plans to become a full line boom producer and

its "target design parameters" are certainly bang on the money, falling right in the middle of the current offerings from the major producers. As Skyjack has said, this time round it is not intending to "outspec" or "out-conceptualise", the others, preferring to build a mainstream product with its signature attributes of simplicity, reliability and ease of service. The CE model will be available at the end of the year.

How does the new Skyjack stack up?

	Skyjack SJ45T	JLG 460SJ	Genie S45	Haulotte H16TPX	Snorkel 47J
Platform ht	13.6m	14.02m	13.7m	13.44m	14.2m
Outreach	11.5m	12.4m	11.2m	12.3m	11.9m
Capacity	227kgs	230kgs	227kgs	230kgs	227kgs
O/A width	2.34m	2.34m	2.3m	2.30m	2.44m
O/A Length	9.4m	8.84m	6.8m*	6.71m	6.5m
Grade 4x4	40%	45%	40%	50%	57%
GVW	6,400kgs	7,850kgs	6,710kgs	6,650kgs	6,125kgs

is determined this time to avoid the errors it made with its first attempt to enter this market. To this end its approach is to bring simpler, no-nonsense products to market. It has concentrated on a simple rugged design, including a heavy duty axle based drive train and easy access to all components for service and repair.

Skyjack has specifically avoided the inclusion of any fancy electronics or non essential niceties. This approach might just hit the "nail on the head" in the straight boom market. Heavy users such as steel erectors will appreciate the no frills, no-nonsense product. Looking at the key specifications for its first models, the SJ40T and SJ45T

*The new Snorkel TB85J has fixed axles and over 23 metres outreach.*



**New Snorkel fixed**

Other new telescopic models include the Snorkel TB85J, which replaces the previous model's (also the TB85J) telescopic front axle chassis with a 2.6m wide, fixed axle design. The revamped machine includes a 170 degree articulating jib, and an excellent 23.4 metres of outreach, as good as anything on the market, and



*An alternative straight boom is the Kesla self propelled that employs outriggers for work at height offering a very low Gross Weight.*

more than the 41 metre models we have covered.

**High Capacity Genie**

The Genie S60HC is also an upgraded model, rather than a completely new design, the new model, based on the company's S60, has not yet been launched in Europe and will not be at Intermat or SED. The plans are to introduce the CE version later in the year. The new model, offers 340kgs unrestricted lift capacity and 565kgs limited to 12.5 metres outreach, three metres less than full outreach.

**New 25 metre Aichi**

Aichi, offers a range of both wheeled and crawler mounted straight boom lifts, largely selling its 18 and 21 metre models in Europe. Its prices are up to 30 percent more than most other manufacturers, and yet it manages to sell a surprisingly number of machines and in 2005 won a



*Skyjack kicked off its new boom range with a 45ft straight boom, the SJ45J.*

significant share of the European straight boom market. The company has now launched a new 25 metre model for 2006, with the first units recently delivered to Doornbos in Holland and Mateco in Germany. The 25 metre is basically a stretched 21 metre model. With slightly longer boom sections and a larger counterweight. With its high levels of reliability and five year warranty, Aichi benefits from a very high level of repeat business.