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# One extreme to another

c&a

scissors

**The UK and Irish market for self-propelled aerial lifts is the largest in Europe, but there are some lifts that have yet to capture the investment interests of rental companies.**

## **C&A reports.**

While more scissors are sold in the UK and Ireland than any other European region, certain sizes have yet to catch on. C&A turned to some of the very largest and the very smallest scissor and vertical self-propelled lifts in particular. Although there are clear applications for them, few rental companies run them and sales outlets tend not to stock them.

The very largest scissors are built in continental Europe with working heights of over 33 metres (100 foot) combined with major deck dimensions and lift capacities. The largest and most mainstream producer of these monsters is Holland Lift, the US-owned company from Hoorn in Holland.

It has produced a 31-metre unit for many years and is currently in the process of re-engineering it into a new 33-metre model, the G300. The first unit destined for the UK has already been sold to Kimberly Access and is due to arrive in time for SED in May. This massive machine offers a deck length of almost 10 metres and a lift capacity of 800 kilograms. However, with a Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) of around 30 tonnes, it takes some moving.

Prior to its closure and subsequent purchase by JLG, Liftlux was working on a 40-metre working height unit to top its 34-metre working height 320. Hi-Reach of

Faringdon near Swindon operates the only unit currently in the UK. London-based Universal also bought a number of 320 units, but these were shipped to the company's Spanish locations. Other UK and Ireland firms operating these big heavy duty machines include Nationwide

Access, which operates a number of 26-metre working height units, Aerial Access in Ireland, which has a 28-metre unit, and Height For Hire, also in Ireland, which runs several 22-metre units.

In Germany and Holland, where the populations of these large units is

the greatest, demand is high with many of them being used on high-rise warehousing. Demand in the UK is less buoyant, possibly due to the fact that availability is limited. The population of these jumbo scissors working in the UK at any one time, however, is doubled, or even tripled, by immigrant units. Doornbos, the Holland-based rental company, is one that frequently has a number of its big scissor lifts on hire to contractors in the UK.

For some applications, these big scissors with their big platforms, massive capacities and impressive working heights, nibble at the bottom end of the mast climber market, because for short-term, or for very mobile work, they are likely to cost less and offer a more versatile solution.

Later this year JLG will re-introduce the first of the Liftlux models -



Dutch producer, Holland Lift has become by far the largest and most mainstream producer of the very large scissor lifts with working heights of over 33 metres (100ft) combined with major deck dimensions and lift capacities. Pictured is the G-300DL.



*Haulotte Star 6 offers all steel construction*

a 26-metre working height unit. The question remains, however, whether or not JLG will extend production up to the 30 metres plus units. This market is small and already well served by Holland Lift, a company much better suited to building and marketing these special, hand-built units. Watch this space!

#### Down-sized

At the other end of the spectrum, the very smallest powered lifts start off with platform heights of under two metres and tend to use a mast rather than a scissor lift structure. Aichi and Crown build the two tiniest models, with Aichi's 015 offering a 1.5-metre platform height, Genie's GR8 Runabout at 2.5 metres and the Crown "Wave" at three metres. The Wave has had some success in Europe, but until now, machines of under five metres were simply considered by rental companies to be too limited in terms of applications. However, the new work at height rules may well change that. JLG must think so as it prepares the UK launch of the SSV10, a three metre platform height unit that, like the Crown Wave, is intended for small scale stock picking. C&A believes that these micro units, such as the Aichi SX015, are simply ahead of

their time, and that their time is sure to come.

Looking at the four-metre platform, six-metre working, height sector, the lowest sector with any serious volume in Europe, the market is led by UpRight and its TM12. A model introduced over 10 years ago, the TM12 offers a platform height of up to 4.3 metres with a two-man lift capacity and the same components used on most mini scissors.

Other producers include Genie with its aluminium-based Runabout, which now outsells UpRight in the US. In the UK, however, only HSS has a significant fleet of them.

Genie says that it will be launching an upgraded Runabout product at Conexpo, which will include a new six-metre model, the GR20, and that it will also drop the GR8 from the new range.

Once again, this is a product that the rental companies and sales outlets have simply not taken to, and yet in Scandinavia rental companies run hundreds of them that often carry out work that 19- and 20-foot scissors do in the UK. The advantages of these small units is that they are lighter, have a much lower entry height, can be driven through a doorway without the operator leaving the platform,



*Genie Runabout will soon have a GR20 six metre model*



*Nationwide Access recently supplied this 28-metre, 16-tonne diesel powered Liftflux LL26X to Donkin Roofing for cladding work on a 25-metre high steel framed bay pallet storage warehouse at Tilbury Docks.*

and are short and light enough to fit in almost any lift.

Other producers include JLG, with its DVL/Axessor series with up to six-metre platform heights, plus the Manlift Toucan Junior. Problems with a castor-type front axles prevented the original model taking off in the Grove Manlift days, but a redesign and JLG colour scheme has turned this into a solid machine with an aluminium mast and steel platform.

More recently, Haulotte also entered this sector with its Star 6, a unit that combines the main steel box-section mast and steel construction features that made UpRight's TM12 popular. It also features a fold up platform floor - great for small hotel elevators and shipping. The key features of these small units are a low GVW of well under 1,000 kilograms and an overall length of ideally no more than 1.3 metres.

When it comes to traditional scissor lift construction, the smallest models are generally between four and five metres (15 feet). Until recently, these units, most often the smaller of a two-unit family (15 and 19 foot), were also ignored by rental and sales companies. This is understandable enough when you consider that they cost the same, or sometimes more, than their bigger brothers. Most buyers, therefore, go for the larger unit,

although the increasing weight of micro scissors has encouraged some rental operators to order the smaller units.

The same company that makes the largest units, Holland Lift, also makes one of the smallest units. Its Mini Star model has a four-metre platform height, but its high price limits it to specialist applications. The mainstream suppliers in this sector include Skyjack, whose 6.5-metre working height SJ3215 weighs just 1,090 kilograms thanks to an innovative light-weight scissor arm construction and new platform construction. UpRight, Genie, Haulotte, Iteco and Snorkel also make similar units, although they tend to be heavier. One leading company JLG, no longer offers a 15-foot version of its ES micro scissor range.



*At the six-metre working height level, the lowest height sector with any serious volume in Europe, the market is still led by UpRight with its TM12.*

So, two very different markets and product sectors, but both offer users tremendous benefits and potential efficiencies, and both offer rental companies very good profit opportunities. How long will it take though for such machines to become popular in the UK?