

on the cover:

According to most industry experts, the UK mast climber market is beginning to gather pace after an arduous journey of acceptance over the years as an alternative to façade scaffold. Improved full contract rental provision, along with increased education, knowledge and training through programmes such as the new IPAF mast climber users course, should encourage more contractors to realise efficiencies to be gained. Pictured is a Scanclimber SC4000 twin mast set up at a recent Allift Nederland job site in Vlissingen, The Netherlands. Turn to page 17 for the full mast climber report.



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Bryn Thomas takes first UK GMK 7450; Terex increases crane price; Hewden parent discloses record profits; Maxim Crane wins Court approval.

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It's been a rocky ride for the mast climbing work platform since its early development days, but the MCWP is impacting markets across the globe thanks to a new lease of optimism. C&A reports.

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Following in the tracks of the crawler-mounted platform, C&A takes a look at why more and more job sites

are looking to the capabilities of these earth-conquering machines.

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survey 2004 24

Turn to page 24 to find out what happened to UK crane and access rental rates in 2004 and take in industry predictions for 2005.



Face-to-Face Hewden 30

With nearly £30 million invested in new cranes and a similar figure spent on powered access in the last three years, these are exciting times for Hewden. C&A caught up with its general manager – Crane Hire and Powered Access, Martin Hender, to find out more.

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C&A looks back over 2004 at some of the issues and developments from the fast-moving knuckle boom sector.

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If you don't have our yellow card,
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Well, here we are. The last issue of C&A for 2004, and a brief opportunity to draw a deep breath and take a quick look back over the past 12 months. As ever, the lifting industry has been its usual hyperactive self

this year producing acquisitions, consolidation, closures, legal battles and, of course, the odd product development.

Above all though, one word that seems to have provided an underlying theme to 2004 is 'refinement'. Since this time last year, both the cranes and access sectors have seemingly become that little bit more toned with a some excess having been shaken off - not quite enough though, judging by some of the comments made by the respondents to our 2004 Hire Rates Survey, which starts on page 24.

There are certainly a few less crane and access companies in operation today and some industry experts predict that a few more will be gone by this time next year. For those that remain, and indeed wish to in the future, it is becoming less and less acceptable, not to mention non-profitable, to offer customers the bare basics. And, some say that their customers are increasingly warming to the idea of paying that little bit extra for value-added service.

As Hewden general manager – Crane Hire and Powered Access, Martin Hender, points out in our Face-to-face interview on page 30, "customers are not settling for the cheapest options anymore. They need to be sure that quality and safety are also integral parts of the overall package. This, he says, may cause some companies to rethink their positions in the future.

On the other hand, for those companies that continue to operate in a professional manner, the future for the UK crane and hire industries is looking bright, as one access industry professional commented in the Hire Rates Survey, "we have an extremely positive outlook for us and the industry as a whole for the next two to three years."

One thing's for sure, all this will make for very interesting viewing over the next 12 months and C&A will, of course, be watching events very closely and reporting them as they happen. We hope that you feel that we have kept you informed and up-to-date with all the happenings and important issues that have gripped the lifting industry in 2004. If, however, you, as a valued reader, feel that we can improve the magazine in any way, we are always open to suggestions and criticisms. Please do not hesitate to contact us. After all, it's your magazine.

From the team at C&A and all at The Vertikal Press, we wish all our readers a fantastic Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Until then!

Warren Wadsworth

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