

CRANES & ACCESS

Telehandlers p31



review p18

City Cranes p22



Show Guide p26



**Trailer and
Crawler
Lifts p35**



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C&a CONTENTS



ON THE COVER:

"The telehandler is much more than a machine for material handling and lift-and-place applications," says Patrice Caulier, telescopic business unit manager at Bobcat, but do they really offer a viable alternative to cranes and aerial platform lifts? C&A turns to those in the know for some answers, while we also round-up some of the latest telehandler products seen at bauma 2004, such as Bobcat's new T40170 model pictured here. The full report begins on page 31.

For the full story see:

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7 NEWS

Liebherr refutes Demag's patent win claims; Manitowoc and JLG complete Manlift deal; Denka and APS part company; New owner for JD Crane; 2004 First quarter financials.

31 TELEHANDLERS

To what extent can telehandlers be used in place of a crane or access platform? C&A asks industry.

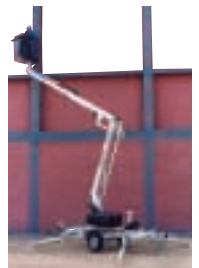
14 BOOK REVIEW

C&A reviews "Telescopic Boom", the new authoritative book on the hydraulic crane industry by Stuart Anderson.



35 TRAILER LIFTS AND CRAWLER PLATFORMS

With the 'temporary work at height directive' set to come into force across the EU later this year, the use of ladders is likely to be increasingly rejected. Enter the trailer-mounted and small crawler platform.



15 FACE-TO-FACE

Leigh Sparrow gets the low-down on Terex Cranes from its recently appointed president, Steve Filipov, and finds out how his first term at company has been.



18 BAUMA 2004 REVIEW

C&A reports from the New Munich Trade Fair Centre and reviews some of the highlight's from what the show's organisers claim was the biggest ever bauma.



41 ESTA AWARDS 2004

C&A joined an all-star lifting industry cast in Munich during bauma week recently for the first ever European association for special transport and mobile cranes (ESTA) awards. Here we review the winners.



22 CITY CRANES

Do city cranes offer an alternative to traditional all-terrain cranes? C&A delves into what is still looked upon as a niche sector and gets the opinions of those in the know.

REGULARS

43 IPAF FOCUS

46 WEB DIRECTORY

47 WHAT'S ON?/ CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

26 SED SHOWGUIDE

A comprehensive guide to this month's SED exhibition in Milton Keynes, UK.



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One particular fascinating issue dominates the news section of *C&a* this issue, and that is the very public, ongoing dispute between Liebherr and Terex-Demag over Liebherr's patent infringement on Terex-Demag's Sideways Superlift (SSL) boom technology.

This Issue has profound implications for the companies concerned, as Demag's SSL system has not only significantly enhanced

main boom capacities offered by its cranes, but more importantly, it provides a very rigid base for the long luffing jibs that have come into use on these big telescopic cranes in recent years, providing very significant capacities, which come into their own on applications such as big wind turbine erection. Liebherr has also taken the idea a step further, by fitting its lateral "Y-Guy" support system to the luffing jib, resulting in capacity increases, said in some cases to be over 50 percent again.

It is hard to imagine that everything can now be "put back in the box", leaving one manufacturer with such a major advantage over the others. However, patents were established to provide protection for new ideas and encourage innovation, and there have been precedents in the crane industry, such as the Manitowoc Ringer and American Sky-Horse system. On one side, it is encouraging to see a patent being so quickly protected - all too often an expensive patent appears worthless when innovative company's are unable to fund a long drawn out legal battle when the outcome can be so uncertain. On the other, the implications for Liebherr of selling big cranes without its 'Y-Guy' system are hard to imagine.

In this case though, it is likely that the two companies will sooner or later sit around the table (if they haven't already) and eventually reach a negotiated settlement. It is in no-one's interest, apart from the lawyers, for this issue to run on for any length of time, particularly with such public exchanges going back-and-forth.

Ending on a lighter note. Like a Glastonbury for the construction equipment industry, only cheaper to get in (for the visitors that is!), SED takes place this month, so be sure to drop in on the *Vertikal Press* at stand O/6C for a chat and your free copy of *Cranes & Access*. And who knows, we may even see a few bands this year!

Warren Wadsworth

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