

The power to lift

In a typically understated Danish kind of way, Højbjerg Maskinfabrik (HMF) has slowly been ramping up its business and has its sights set on being one of the top four global loader crane manufacturers.

World leaders - Palfinger followed by Hiab and Fassi - have broken away from the other manufacturers, so for the foreseeable future, fourth position is, in reality, leading the huge chasing pack.

Like several other construction equipment manufacturers, HMF was formed in 1945 by Arne Bundgaard Jensen as a small bicycle workshop, naming the company after the suburb of Aarhus where its head office is situated. After progressing into agricultural trailers it produced its first truck mounted crane - mounted on a Bedford truck - in 1953.

Today it is one of the largest engineering companies in Denmark and is situated on one of the highest points in the city (the highest point in Denmark is only 173 metres above sea level) in park-like gardens with sculptures. Group managing director Ove Trankjaer even jokes about the time some Japanese tourists were found wandering around the grounds and taking photographs of the sculptures - they thought they were in the grounds of the art museum!

The privately owned company employs about 800 and has two manufacturing facilities one of 75,000 square metres and one of 34,000 square metres with an additional 3,400 square metre painting and boom fabrication area under construction.



Ove Trankjaer

It also owns five body building/service facilities in Denmark as well as HMF sales subsidiaries in Denmark, Germany, UK - started in Peterborough in 1987 - and Sweden. As well as having about a 40 percent share of the Danish loader crane market, HMF exports to 50 countries around the world.

The company now manufactures a comprehensive range loader cranes ranging from 0.5 to 72 tonne/metres along with complete transport systems in Denmark, Scandinavia and Germany including cable and hook lift systems, tipping bodies, trailers, cranes, tail lifts and customised projects.

HMF has invested 150 million DKK (€20 million) in the new paint facility which will be operational at the end of this year. Money has also gone on new robotics to improve



The 72 tonne/metre Thor is the largest machine produced by HMF, here seen lifting parts for a food processing plant in the port of Aarhus. The machine is fitted with the EVS stability system.



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efficiency and increase capacity for smaller cranes from 0.5 - 2.7 tonne metres, and R&D for the new 13-24 tonne metre cranes and other models to be launched in the near future.

The new eight model, mid-range units - from the 1300-K to the 2430-K - are available in two versions - 'single power plus' which features a single linkage on the jib while the

A wide range of options match any application and include ground, platform or top seat operation, independent radio remote control, hoists, two fly jibs and three manual extensions. The cranes also feature the brand new RCL 5300 loader safety system, replacing the RCL 5100 and RCL 5200 controllers with better protection against overload. Combined with HMF's EVS stability safety system - which uses electronic sensors to monitor front to back and side to side inclination - the crane's capacity may be improved by using the truck body and load as counterweight.

The use of high-pressure swivel couplings as well as routing the hoses internally in nylon drag chains help to maximise economic life-span and a sturdy boom system while curved extension profiles provide lateral strength to the boom systems for work with winch and fly-jib or when the vehicle is working on a slope.

The new cranes are available with 4.5, 5.6 and 6.5 metre stabiliser spreads as well as an optional fixed, manual or hydraulic swing-up stabiliser on each side. All models have an over horizontal capability of 15 degrees between the main boom and the jib with extension cylinders positioned alternately to help the balance when used at long reach.

According to HMF UK managing director Richard Everist, the company has achieved strong sales in this country, generally between 200-250 units with the 12 tonne metre 'muck away' sized machine the most popular. It offers 24 hour, 365 days per year service and has a workshop facility with over £500,000 of spares in Peterborough as well as a fleet of mobile engineers.

The competition behind the 'big three' is intense, but HMF's latest models will appeal to those looking for well designed and well built equipment.



Richard Everist



An early version of the new 2200-K being put through its paces by a local contractor. The unit has been designed with fast, heavy duty applications in mind

'double power plus' version has a dual linkage on the column and jib. The 1300 to the 1730 models have up to six extensions reaching to 17.2 metres and the 1800 to 2430 models have up to eight extensions and a reach of 21.7 metres. By using ultra high tensile steel and a light arm profile, HMF has achieved lifting capacities at maximum reach of 340 to 500kg.