

# MOBILE CRANES

An estimated drop of approximately 36 per cent in mobile crane sales into the UK during 2002 would suggest a more refined UK lifting community. So, what cranes made it through the selection process? *Cranes & Access* asked a cross-section of the UK's players.



**Aerial Scaffolding took the first Demag AC 60 to be delivered into London, following its purchase of a 3-axle Demag AC 40-1**

According David Milne, director of Liebherr-Great Britain, 2002 has been a very successful year for the 55 tonne capacity Liebherr LTM 1055. "This crane has fantastic duties and, although it is not the cheapest crane on the market, we have had great success in selling it because it out picks the 60 tonners."

Also delivered by Liebherr during the year were three, 250 tonne capacity LTM 1250s fully equipped with 72 metres of telescopic boom. The first two units were delivered to Nationwide Crane Services and Bryn Thomas respectively, while Ainscough Crane Hire recently took delivery of the third unit.

But its not just the big crane sales that stick out in Milne's memory. Atherston Crane Hire owns one crane that had always, until very recently, been a truck crane. This year, however, the com-



**James Jack Lifting Services and Heddle Construction combined forces to help construct this windmill in the Orkney Islands. Pictured is Heddle's Liebherr LTM 1055/1 (right) and James Jack Lifting's Liebherr LTM 1300/1**

## Best of the bunch



**The Tadano Faun AT550-3 is one of Ainscough's most popular all terrain cranes among its customers**

pany's owner, Pip Smith, purchased his first all terrain crane and chose the 45 tonne capacity LTM 1045, with 34 metres of boom and 16 metre lattice jib, something that Milne is very proud of. A feature of Liebherr's cranes is of course their exceptionally long main booms and this has certainly been an important advantage.

It is the lower capacity machines that Ainscough is also finding to be very popular, in particular, the Liebherr LTM 1050/1, the Demag AC 155, the Grove GMK 3050 and the Tadano Faun

ATF50-3. Early next year will see the first shipments of the ATF50-3's successor from Tadano, the three-axle, 60 tonne ATF 60-3 with 40.2 metres of main boom.

Ainscough says that the reason why it has so many machines around the 50 tonne class is because they are good lifters with generous boom lengths, and being all terrain obviously makes them compact and very manoeuvrable. As the machines are highly versatile, they are used by various industries including construction, Tele-communications and ▶

# MOBILE CRANES

◀ petro-chemical, says Ainscough.

For Peter Hird Jnr, managing director of Peter Hird & Sons, it's the 25 tonne capacity Kato NK 250 E111 that is currently outshining the rest of the bunch. "We chose this crane due to its reliability, build quality and overall performance", says Hird. "It seems to outweigh most other 25 tonners for all kinds of general crane hire."

The company is also the UK distributor for Valle Cranes and according to Hird, the industrial mobile crane is currently selling and renting extremely well. "This product is really beginning to find its own market," says Hird. "In particular, the 20E has really started to show its true identity in the mini mobile crane market. We have imported 10 units since the last SED exhibition – the little beast keeps



**Hewden Crane Hire's Regional sales, depot and operations managers were invited to Demag's Zweibruecken factories for detailed product and technical training on Demag's product range. The picture shows Hewden's staff with its new AC 30 city crane and AC 200 just before delivery to Hewden's Erith depot**

finding a new application every day."

In the eyes of Alec Glover, joint director of Terranova crane hire, "the city

crane is the next big thing in crane rental." The company took delivery of one of the UK's first Demag AC 60 city cranes just a few months ago. Since then it has also added a large crane with the purchase of a 350 tonne capacity Demag AC 350. "With just six axles the AC 350 gives a better access facility than any other crane of its capacity. And, using the latest boom technology, it is comparable to the lifting duties of a 400 tonne capacity machine."

Referring back to the AC 60, Glover points out that "with a main boom of 50 metres, the AC 60 equals that of an 80 tonne capacity truck mount and, with a 13 metre offsetable jib, it gives just 1 tonne less capacity." The company spends a lot of time renting cranes around the London area where lifting space is often limited. So, the compactness of the city machine combined with its lifting capacity makes it a real performer for Glover, not to mention Demag itself.

Other deliveries of the AC 60 made this year included those to Scotland-based Umax, which saw the UK's first ever AC 60 and Aerial Scaffolding, which took the first unit to be delivered into London. This was followed by Aerial's recent purchase of another city crane, namely the 3-axle Demag AC 40-1.

Demag says that other orders for the AC 60 include those from Hewdens, Crane Services and John Sutch, which will also be taking delivery of a new Demag AC 80-2 during the first quarter of 2003.

In addition to its AC 60, Hewden Crane Hire placed an order for a total of 31 machines from Demag earlier in the year, comprising AC 30's, AC 40's, AC 50's, AC 80's and one AC 200.

January will also see Crane Services

## Grove impresses



A big £600,000 step was made this year by Bristol-based King Lifting, with the purchase of its first ever brand new Grove crane. In doing so, the company also took delivery of the UK's first 220 tonne capacity, six-axle GMK6220-L, unveiled to a European crowd for the first time at the recent SAE exhibition held in Bologna, Italy. The company says that, up until now, the largest crane in its fleet was 120 tonne capacity Demag and that previously, the company was limited in the work it undertook by not having a big enough machine for the bigger lifts.

Explaining his reasons for the purchase, Bob King, managing director at King Lifting, said that what tilted his preference away from other brands in the same class was the GMK6220-L's new long boom and the impressive range of duties throughout the chart. A whopping 112 metres is achievable by the combination of a 72 metre Megaform U-shaped boom, a 16 metre lattice extension and an additional 22 metre hydraulic luffing jib.

The unit's boom length was fully utilised during its first ever lift – the installation of a 6.1 metre footbridge in Salisbury. King admits that he has taken a bold step into the big crane class, but anticipates more and more high-lift, high-reach work, particularly in high-rise buildings, and in erecting tower cranes, radio masts and wind turbines.

Grove says that in terms of the general UK mobile market, the 80 tonne capacity GMK4075 and the 100 tonne GMK5100 are proving very popular with smaller, regional rental companies and with specialist contractors. Recent deliveries to the UK include two, GMK4075's, one 50 tonne GMK3050 and a 100 tonne GMK 5100 to Macsalvors in Cornwall. Ready Plant of Jersey, Marsh Plant in the SouthEast and Steelcraft have also each taken delivery of a GMK4075. Grove's presence is also being felt across the shores in Ireland, where McNally is currently taking delivery of a 200 tonne GMK5200, a GMK3050 and a 35 tonne capacity GMK2035 and, moving up the capacity chart, Quigley has ordered a 300 tonne capacity GMK6300.

The picture shows a total of five Grove cranes, comprising two GMK 3050's a GMK4080, a GMK2035 and a 30 tonne capacity Grove rough terrain unit, recently used by Beck & Pollitzer Engineering as part of a contract from Global MSI to lift and re-position a 33 tonne garage forecourt covering at Toddington Service Station on the M1.

# MOBILE CRANES



**Marsh Plant has ordered a total of ten, PPM ATT 400/3's, now better known as the Demag AC 35**

take delivery of Demag's new 140 tonne capacity all terrain crane, followed by the UK's first Demag AC 200-1. Features of the new crane will include a 7-section,



**James Jack Lifting's 300 tonne capacity LTM 1300/1a**

and electronics from another, which is where the problems begin as the many components may not always be compatible. The technical support for the PPM machines is also next to none. There is a saying that the salesperson sells the first crane, but the technical support sells the second. And it has certainly been the case here."

Of course, since

Terex's acquisition of Demag last summer, the PPM-ATT 400/3 has now become the Demag AC 35 and will be the only crane that PPM produces in the future. In fact, this article will probably be one of the last places where you hear the PPM brand associated with cranes as the AC 35 merges into the Demag portfolio. Visitors to the recent SAIE exhibition in Bologna will have seen the PPM crane decorated in its new Terex Demag livery for the first time.

The new machines will be used for general rental duties and will be distributed among Marsh Plant's six depots in the SouthEast, UK. "We have entered into a period of modernisation and the new PPMs will be replacing several of our older Japanese truck cranes," says Marsh.

So, it would seem that early 2003 will see enough new crane deliveries to keep the UK market ticking over for the time being. One major difference that is apparent, however, is that there will certainly be fewer sources to buy them from. ■



**Atherston Crane Hire took delivery of its first ever all terrain crane in 2002 - a 45 tonne capacity Liebherr LTM 1045/1 like the one seen here decorated in East Cork Crane Hire's livery**

68 metre main boom and a 17 metre fold-away jib on just five axles. Commenting on the choice of crane, David Slack, managing director of Crane Services said that the crane is the most compact 200 tonner in the market place with both the longest main boom and the best lifting capacities, while its overall dimensions are similar to that of 120 tonne machines.

Demag says that Slack has been working in close conjunction with its design department in developing both the AC 350 and the new AC 200-1, and that Crane Services was also the first company in the UK to take delivery of the new AC 350 SSL. "The AC 350 is the most compact heavy lifter in the six-axle class, says Slack, "and, in places, is as good a lifter as the old Liebherr 400 tonner - a much larger crane."

Moving back down the capacity chart, Marsh Plant placed a £1.6 million order in late 2001 for 10 PPM-ATT 400/3's. Marsh Plant has since received six of the units, with the remaining four scheduled for delivery between January and April next year. Geoffrey Marsh, managing

director of Marsh Plant says he is extremely happy with his 35 tonne capacity, 2-axle machines.

"Built at PPM's Montceau-les-Mines factory in France, I believe the units to be much less complicated than the German machines," says Marsh. "You may get a transmission from one supplier

## Easy transit

Italy-based manufacturer Ormig says that the "increasing requirements of lifting machinery combined with quick road travel" formed the foundations of the design of its new 80 tonne capacity, 804AC truck mounted crane.

The unit is mounted on a 8 x 4 x 4, commercial truck, available as an Iveco, MAN, Mercedes or Volvo model, with obtainable speeds of up to 100 kilometres per hour. A six-section hydraulic boom offers a 'height from the ground' of 48 metres, while maximum capacity at a 5 metre radius is 45 tonnes.

Ormig says that the 804AC's transportation capacities, such as reduced overall dimensions for operation, easy manoeuvrability and the fact that it does not require a permit for transit makes it ideal for the activity of rental companies.



# All change

**Tim Whiteman**

met **Alexander**

**Knecht** to find out

what's new at Terex

Demag

**S**topping in a quiet street on the outskirts of Zweibruecken, I asked a courier driver the most direct route to the Demag factory. "Ah yes, you mean Terex Demag. Straight on up the hill".

His answer showed how fast and total the transformation has been at Dinglerstrasse and the nearby Wallerschied factory. My visit came just a few weeks after the arrival of Fil and Steve Filipov, Terex's senior management team, but already a new culture had taken hold.

Prominent new signs on both factory locations proudly declared the company's name to be Terex Demag, internal documentation carries the new logo and every crane coming off the production line now bears the Terex Demag logo.

But, at the instigation of managing director Alexander Knecht, the Demag part of the logo looks re-assuringly familiar. Why? Because it uses the old, original Demag typeface and subconsciously helps to link the old with the new.

New signage is, however, just the most visible part of changes at the factory.

Major re-organisation of the production processes is taking place at Terex Demag. Some of these were started before the arrival of Terex others have been added since. Perhaps the most fundamental change is that ALL telescopic booms will in future be built in Wallerschied, which had until now only built booms for the smaller



mobile cranes. Some boom components will still be built in a factory at Pécs in Hungary where Demag has around 120 employees.

But there is also a big change in the mentality at Zweibruecken, one that Knecht is anxious to emphasise: "We no longer think and act like a big company, we are now much closer to our customers and behave more like a medium sized company".

An example of the new approach is that customers are receiving contact lists with direct phone numbers and e-mail addresses for all the senior management.

### **Rapid response**

"The aim is fast decisions and rapid response to customer wishes", says Knecht who is adamant that even in a depressed domestic market his competitors should watch out: "We expect to be able to react to the tough competition and our cost reductions will certainly bring savings to our customers".

Looking to the future Knecht predicts that Terex Demag will sell its 1000th City Class crane during the Intermat exhibition in Paris. Intermat is an important show for Terex, and Demag will be a major part of it. Making their debuts at Intermat will be the AC 160-1 with 64 metres of main boom and the new AC 130 which has been specially designed for countries that use cranes with widely spaced axles.

Also coming soon from Terex Demag is the new AC 200-1 with 68 metres of main boom and a maximum boom length of 93 metres. The first will be delivered to a French customer in March and more than twenty have been sold. However, Knecht knows that there have been some mistakes that customers remember – delays in delivering the AC 350 are a painful memory

for him and something which he describes as "unacceptable" even though he believes that the crane is now "the strongest 6-axle crane on the market".

Lattice boom cranes is the other strength in Terex Demag's portfolio and developments can be expected here. It is no secret that Terex wants to fill the gap in the lower end of Demag's crawler crane range. News from Knecht is that the first 275 tonne CC 1500 lattice boom crane will be delivered in February 2003.

An obvious question is whether the Japanese built IHI cranes that Terex sells under its own name in the US would be suitable for the European market?

Knecht's answer is enigmatic and hints at the discussions that must be going on behind closed doors: "Our crawler cranes will extend into the 150 – 275 tonne area in the foreseeable future, but you'll just have to wait for an exact answer on how we will do it!" ■