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On the cover:

The UK and Ireland's largest truck mounted lift is currently the 90 metre Bronto S90HLA owned by recently formed Zenith platforms.



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SAIE Review



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Lavendon buys DK Rentals, AFI-Uplift buys Central Access, Saez to build telehandlers, United Rentals fights with acquirer, Aichi to build USA plant, First Sany crawler cranes arrive in the UK, Terex and ABG for India, JLG Australia launches Liftpod, Link Belt appoints NRC, Haulotte opens Middle East company, Socage teams up with Metz, Nifty opens in Oz, Jing Cheng eyes Europe, New modular mast climbers form Hek, Results wrap up.



2007 UK/Ireland rental rate survey 17

Once again we report on the trends in UK and Ireland for the crane access and telehandler rental rates and fleet additions. A surprise this year is that while crane rates are positive the powered access rental companies are concerned with softening rates.

Big truck mounted lifts 25

Mark Darwin takes a look at the new British built Ascendant and obtains his PAL card for truck mounts. We also look at developments at the top end of the truck mounted market considering the pro's and cons of the 100 metre truck mounted Bronto and the crane chassis mounted Wumag WT1000.

Loader cranes 33



We look at the articulated loader crane market which continues to grow year on year and yes is getting ever more competitive as the top three or four 'players' fight it out for market leadership. Palfinger has unveiled its new Hi-Performance range possibly its most important to date, Hiab has launched its largest crane yet, Fassi, Cormach and Effer have all introduced new larger machines.



SAIE ..wet but still good 40

This years SAIE show in Bologna was wet and cold, but still attracted plenty of visitors and offered a host of new products. Our review this year is more of a photo tour of the new products on display.

Face to face:

The Wright stuff 48



We spoke with Andy Wright who heads up Lavendon UK, one of Europe's largest powered access companies in its own right. Six months after his appointment we ask about his plans and strategies for the business.

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C&A

comment



Elf and Safety at Christmas?

Christmas is a time of peace and good will to all men - except that is, if they are involved in traditional yuletide celebrations. Even Santa has been forced to belt up by the health and safety police for fear of falling out of his sleigh as it is being towed along at a snail's pace!

This is just the latest in a long list of activities that have fallen foul of Health and Safety diktats. Earlier in the year we had kids stopped from throwing sticks and stones to get conkers - Worthing local authority used an access platform in an effort to reduce collateral damage. Fire-fighters in Amptill, Bedfordshire forbidden to use ladders to take down the town's festival bunting - but they could still climb ladders to rescue people from burning buildings. And, of course, Christmas lights - those seasonal decorations that add so much to getting into the 'mood' of Christmas in the cold dark December evenings - are now too dangerous to erect.

This year more and more towns have declared that the risks from erecting Christmas lights and decorations are simply too great, making it impossible for those who have carried out the procedure - probably very successfully for many years - to continue.

Increased costs associated with safety testing and installation of decorations has also influenced plans to mount displays of Christmas lights for traders' groups and local councils around the country. The additional cost of mechanised access is often cited, but the heart of the problem - according to insurance companies - is the increasingly litigious culture in the UK and therefore the enormous cost of liability cover.

Insurers - taking all of the health and safety rules as gospel - are raising insurance premiums to cover traditional Christmas activities to a level that are too high for traders and local councils to meet.

Many councils say that it is too risky to attach lights to lamp posts or buildings or have them over a street in case they break and fall in the road. Accidents will happen - some of the Christmas lights have been taken down from St Neots High Street after they fell and hit a pedestrian recently - but are we to condemn them all for such a small risk. In the case of Santa putting on his harness, there is more likelihood of him injuring himself getting on and off the sleigh than actually falling out of it.

In recent months, senior Health & Safety representatives have been trying to combat the perceived notion that all risks, no matter how small, must be eliminated. They want us to be able to live a normal life and enjoy all activities - in a safe manner. Yet their message does not seem to have made it through to some of their inspectors on the ground, to government of which they are a part or to the insurance companies.

The way we work at height is changing and affects everyone from changing a light bulb to servicing a wind turbine. But as an industry we must stand up and make sure that more people get the message that the use of the correct access equipment is safer and does not automatically cost more.

Happy Christmas? If I survive the Christmas lights and Santa!

Mark Darwin

Please mail, email or fax any comments you may have, to the editor, stating if we may publish them or not.

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