Bromma adds lift truck spreaders

Bromma has introduced a new range of spreaders for the lift truck market.

Although the Swedish company now manages mobile plant spreader production for its parent company Kalmar in Tampere (spreaders for straddle carriers, reach stackers and container handling mast trucks), these are Kalmar's own spreader designs and Bromma has had no presence with other mobile plant OEMs, whose main outside supplier has for years been Elme.

Product manager for the new mobile spreader line is Bertrand Marion, formerly with Elme and (more recently) VDL Smits. The line has two spreaders for reach stackers (RSX40 and, for combi-handling, RSX40C), two sidelift spreaders for ECH mast trucks (SLV40 for single handling with vertical twistlocks and SLC40T with hooks and side clamps for double handling) and two spreaders for laden-handling mast trucks (TLF40 for standard/inverted fork mounting and, for dedicated container handlers, the gantry-mounted TLG40).

The main selling point of the RSX40 is a tare weight of 7.6t, which is claimed to be "up to 20% lighter than most competitive reach stacker spreaders." Bromma says it has received orders for 220 RSX40s from two OEMs. One is named by Bromma as Indital, now owned by Kalmar, while the other is CVS Ferrari, although Bromma itself did not disclose that.

Up to now CVS Ferrari has fitted its own spreaders (unless the customer requested another brand, usually an Elme). The deal with Bromma may have its roots in the planned takeover last year of CVS Ferrari by Cargotec (through Kalmar), as a rationalisation move that would have enabled CVS Ferrari to concentrate on production of its core mobile plant.

The takeover was ruled out by the competition authorities, but CVS Ferrari itself says that it wants to build up its reach stacker output to around 180 machines/year and it cannot do this unless it outsources spreaders and frees up plant capacity.

The new reach stacker spreader is a part of Bromma's new lift truck spreader line

Adding the production of Kalmar reach stacker spreaders to the 220 RSX40s on order for other OEMs, Bromma claims that it is now the "number one supplier of reach stacker spreaders in the world."

Overall, including production for Kalmar, Bromma expects to supply a total of 2500 spreaders in 2008. It says it has a 60% share of the global market for ship-to-shore crane spreaders, 70% of the mobile harbour crane spreader market and 40% of the yard gantry crane spreader market.

More than 60% of Bromma's yard crane spreader output is all-electric. The company now offers eight so-called "Greenline" (environment-friendly) all-electric spreader models for ship-to-shore cranes and yard cranes and it received orders for no fewer than 75 Greenline spreaders in April and May alone.

More than 90% of Bromma's own spreaders are produced in Ipoh. The Malyasian plant has already been extended twice and Bromma has now purchased a 32,000 m² land parcel near the Kinta Free Trade Zone in Perak to allow it to increase production capacity again in due course.

Pipe handling reach stackers from CVS

F479 reach stacker handling two 15t pipe sections in Sassnitz

CVS Ferrari has supplied, through its German agent Mafo, two F479 reach stackers to Sea Terminal Sassnitz GmbH, part of Buss group, for handling steel pipe sections for the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline that will bring Russian gas supplies to Europe across the bed of the Baltic Sea and via Rügen/Sassnitz.

Each machine is fitted with special attachments able to handle two pipe sections, each weighing 15t and fabricated at a ThyssenKrupp steel mill in the Ruhr. One F479 transloads pipe from rail wagon to truck for local drayage to the port, where the other machine offloads the truck and buffers the pipe sections in pyramid formations - as a container handler the F479 can stack 5 x 9ft 6in high in the first row.

A special plant is being built to provide the pipe sections with a 20t concrete jacket, increasing their weight to 35t, to ensure their stability on the sea bed. The F479s will also be used to handle the "finished" pipe sections, one at a time.

In an unrelated development, Mafo's trading and service division has established an affiliate company in Russia, based in Kaliningrad. Already orders for used reach stackers have been received from a port operator in Kaliningrad. Another used machine has been ordered to handle containerised automotive parts at Kaluga, south of Moscow, for the VW assembly plant.

More orders for Arck

France-based Arck Sensor is understood to have another order for its Sirrah and Spica sensors from Yaskawa Siemens, in connection with a crane control system being engineered for an automated, rail-mounted stacking crane in a Chinese port.

Spica is an optical sensor with infra-red detectors that measures position of the container edge to ensure accurate stacking. One detector is installed at each corner of the spreader and they and the central calculator, which is connected to the main PLC, are protecetd from shock damage and vibrations in a special steel housing with rubber silent blocks.

The Sirrah sensors are used to evaluate beacon angles and measure sway and skew. Normally they are positioned downwards on the trolley while the beacon faces upwards on the spreader. The sensors are connected to the PLC through an RS422 serial interface or a Profibus interface, and they can be designed to measure the beacon's angular speed as well as the alignment.

Details of the new order are not known, but Arck is known to have been working on a tandem spreader application, also believed to have been for a yard crane. In this case the tandems are fitted with six sensors, one on each of the outer corners and one at the same end of each spreader

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while Gottwald states that its Lift-AGV will halve the number of AGVs compared to conventional AGVs.

There is no practical way for Lift-AGV to decouple at the quayside interface. Contrary to what Gottwald argues, some people in the industry believe that this is where decoupling is really needed the most, as the real bottleneck in practice working a 400m long mega-ship with six cranes will be the quay crane/shuttle vehicle interface.

It may be the case that APM Terminals (APMT) takes this view. Rich Ceci, project manager at APMT Hampton Roads, has stated that APMT considers that the performance of manned shuttle carriers exceeds that at AGV terminals and APMT "expects to use shuttle carriers at another terminal."

Speaking at TOC in Amsterdam earlier this month, Peder Sondergaard, AMPT's global operations director, said that the company's new concession at Deltaport, Vancouver, BC would be at least as automated as its Hampton Roads terminal "and perhaps more so."

The logical next step for AMPT is to automate the quay-stack transfer. In practice, substituting Autoshuttles at Deltaport for the Kalmar shuttle carriers at Hampton Roads would be an incremental step. In fact, Autoshuttle could simplify the interchange areas since the redundancy features for driver safety are not required.

But Autoshuttle, as a specific 100% Kalmar product, may not be the only option in future. Patrick Technology & Systems (Asciano/Kalmar joint venture) is developing a 1 over 1 version of AutoStrad called ALS (Automated Lift Shuttle) that Toll (Patrick) intends to deploy at a new automated terminal with an ASC yard that will be developed at Port Botany in 2011-12.

Patrick also intends to increase the number of AutoStrads at Brisbane by six to 29 and to convert its facility in Fremantle (currently a lift truck/trailer operation) to Autostrads by 2010-11.