

July 2nd, 2009: Press Release, extract from IBJ, Issue 2 2009 "Terminal operators' flexible friends"
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Terminal operator's flexible friends

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Belgian manufacturer E-Crane® says this shift has not affected sales due to the multipurpose nature of its equipment.

Bas Tolhuizen, Sales Manager, E-Crane International Europe, says that 18 months ago half of all cranes sold were used for handling scrap but he has seen a shift towards the handling of dry bulk. "The slowdown in the recycling industry means that there is less scrap around and now we are seeing more cranes used in dry bulk handling - coal, iron ore, sand and gravel", says Tolhuizen.

He adds that E-Crane's equipment, like the MH900/MH1200 series material handlers, can be used to unload all manner of bulk products, with a capacity of up to 30,000 DWT tonnes. "It's just a matter of mounting a different grab on a crane. The equilibrium crane, more commonly referred to as the E-Crane®, is a truly revolutionary and multifunctional crane for heavy-duty material handling applications," he says.

Designed for bulk material handling, storage, process feeding at ports, scrap-processing, anywhere high production bulk materials handling is required, the E-Crane® is especially well suited for heavy-duty production cycles and difficult working conditions. The E-Crane® features an unprecedented reach of up to 150ft and significantly reduced power consumption and operating costs.

"The order books for this year and next year are quite full right now," says Tolhuizen. The traditional markets of Europe and the US continue to perform well but E-Crane® has seen a swing towards Latin America and Asia - its new target markets.

Last July, two 1500 Series E-Cranes were installed at the Cargill PGG soya bean oil processing plant 10km south of Rosario, Argentina. Cargill PGG decided to update its logistics system and install a barge handling system in addition to receiving bulk cargo from trucks and Rail. This makes it the only plant in Argentina that has three different modes to receive grains.

"The decision to add a barge handling and offloading system was driven in part by the increased use of the "Hidrovia", a combination of the Paraguay and Paranh River system, which allows for barge traffic from Corumba, Brazil all the way to Buenos Aires and Montevideo," says a spokesman for Cargill PGG.

The Hidrovia has opened new markets for soybean farmers and processors in Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina, he adds, offering a low cost logistics alternative to transport the grains to the processor, as well as low cost transportation for other commodities, such as iron ore for Rio Tinto.

He acknowledges that these are indeed trying times and says: "It's true that we have seen some projects we are working on postponed but our order books remain full so we are confident for the years to come, even though the economic situation doesn't point in that direction," says Tolhuizen. "We are targeting dry bulk operators", he says, "well any cargo that can be moved by a grab crane. Our equipment is for use on up to Panamax ships - using the fixed boom principle - we don't use ropes so our equipment can't handle post-Panamax vessels." However, Tolhuizen doesn't believe this limits E-Crane's potential, adding that it actually offers "greater economies of scale, given the low power consumption" of the cranes.

"In small ports around the world, there is an ever increasing need to offload bulk materials such as coal and limestone at rates from 300 to 2,000 tons (272 to 1,814t) per hour and do it as economically as possible calls for modern equipment with greater efficiency than can be provided by many of the older cranes still in operation today.

"Most of these older cranes are at or near the end of their life cycle; cable replacement is a never ending ordeal; and highly skilled operators are required. Modern cable cranes have hydraulic winches, but are still cable operated. This means there is still cable wear, bucket sway and low bucket fill.

Even the latest electronics cannot overcome these issues. Modified excavators are just that: modified excavators that cannot reach inside a vessel, have difficulties with down reach capacity and the ship's changing draft. Continuous unloaders require a large infrastructure and are very expensive," says Tolhuizen.

The E-Crane's hydraulic control system means that it can be accurately positioned for material pickup and can provide push-down force at up to 50% of lift force "to break up lumpy, sticky and frozen material". Hydraulic control of all machine movements provides short duty cycle times.

E-Crane® is successfully replacing lattice boom and other cable cranes, self-unloading barges, excavators and other devices in ports around the world.

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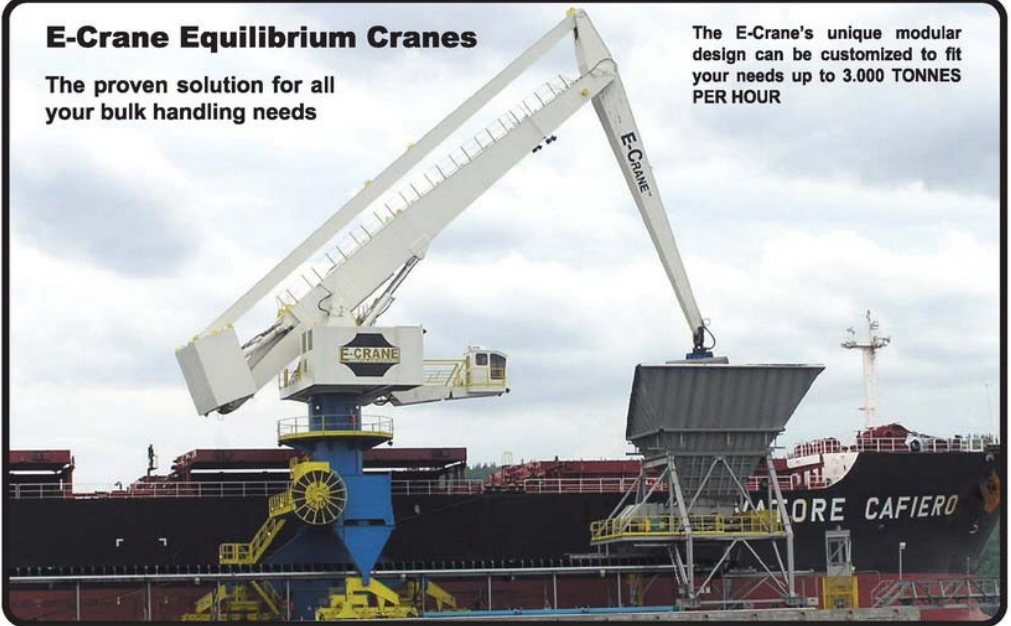
E-CRANE®

Equilibrium Cranes

E-Crane Equilibrium Cranes

The proven solution for all your bulk handling needs

The E-Crane's unique modular design can be customized to fit your needs up to 3.000 TONNES PER HOUR



Electric Motor

MH900
10 tonnes / 26 metres



MH1200
15 tonnes / 32 metres

XL Cab

NEW

MH Series: Electric Main Motor, Free Standing Pedestal or Crawler mounted

E-CRANE MH Series

Material Handling Solutions

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