

Better reach

The Middle East is still bustling with crane activity amidst oil price concerns. It includes a strengthening focus on safety, a surge in residential construction projects and greater demand for longer booms. KATHERINE WEIR investigates

Despite a low oil price, the crane business is still strong in the Middle East, with ongoing projects across several industries, including petrochemical, nuclear, power generation, oil and gas, residential and infrastructure construction.

Nagham Al Zahlawi at Abu Dhabi-based tower crane distributor and rental giant NFT, says, "The luffing cranes are becoming more and more popular as well as the flat tops due to the constraint of having many tower cranes working simultaneously on a single job site. The region has also seen a surge of projects in transport and infrastructure: bridges, railways, metro, revamping roads."

Zahlawi also sees an increase in the demand for tower cranes with lower heights and mobile cranes with heavier capacities; this is due to an increase in the construction of villas and other low rise residential buildings.

Tower crane manufacturer Comansa, based in Spain, is developing a new luffing jib tower crane - the biggest yet, the company states. Martín Echevarría, sales manager at Comansa, says, "The LCL700 will be launched before the end of 2016. It will come in two versions, with a maximum load capacity of 50 or 64 tonnes, and will feature a 200 kilowatt hoist motor to work at speeds of up to 170 metres per minute. The 50 tonne version will offer an optional drum with capacity for 1,270 metres of wire rope, perfect for high rise projects."

Echevarría explains that tall buildings and skyscrapers are the current construction trend in the Middle East, especially in Dubai. Therefore, he says,

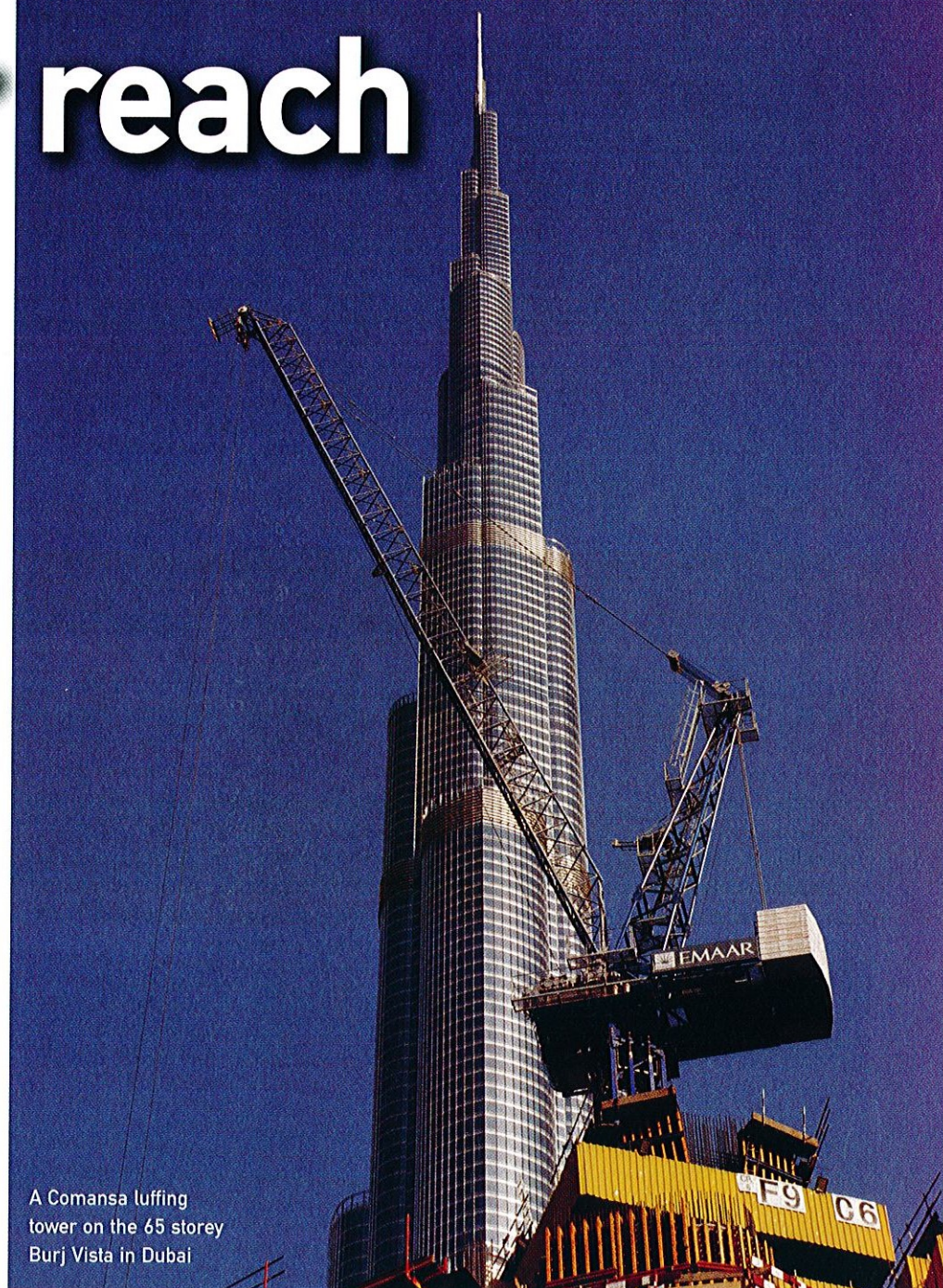
high speed hoist mechanisms and high capacity of wire rope are essential in tower cranes. "Most of our cranes in the region are working in tall buildings, like the DAMAC Towers by Paramount with 67 floors, or the Burj Vista with 65 floors, both in downtown Dubai. Out of Dubai we have other types of projects, like infrastructure, petroleum or shipyards," says Echevarría.

International heavy lift and transport company ALE says that there is an over capacity of small to mid-size cranes in the region but that there is still a good market for larger cranes and lifting equipment in excess of 2,500 tonnes. Paul Sands, commercial director at ALE based in the Abu Dhabi office, says, "The crane developed for the Middle East and the global market is the AL.SK350, which has a nominal capacity of 5,000 tonnes. ALE has

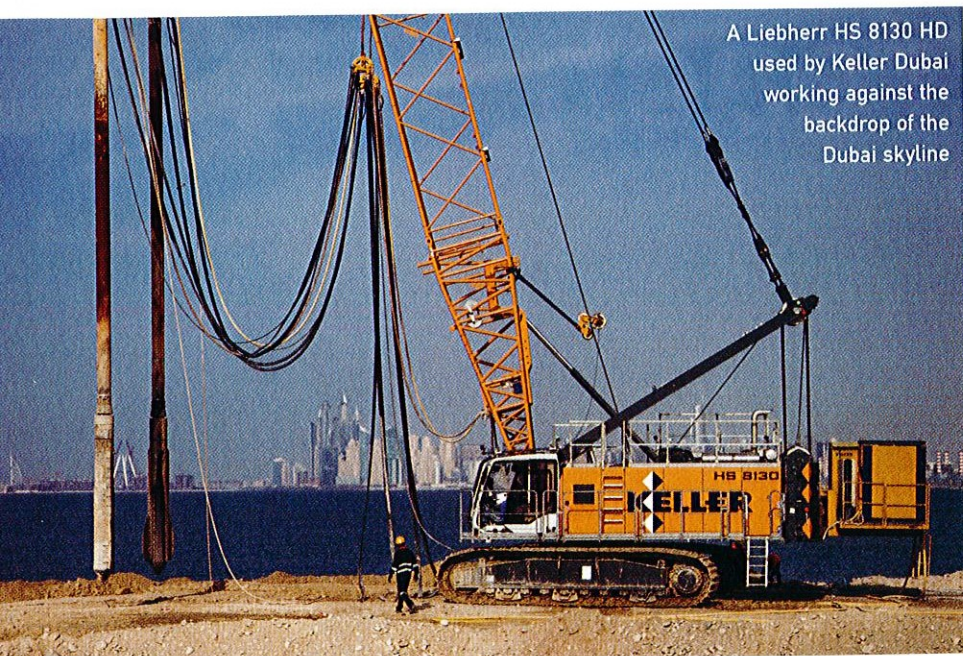
already secured work for this crane."

Other equipment developed with the Middle East market in mind is the 80 tonne capacity QY80V, the 55 tonne QY55D and 55V and the 25 tonne QY25V truck crane from Chinese manufacturer Zoomlion.

The company will also be launching a new second generation rough terrain wheeled crane in the near future that is for the global market but, in particular, for the Middle East. Ken Zhou, product manager at Zoomlion, says, "The ZRT900 will have the strongest comprehensive hoisting performance in the industry. Its full optimal design has solved the problem of the transport overweight of the vehicle, accordant with the laws and regulations concerning roads in the Middle East. In view of the common operations in oil fields and deserts in the area, spark arrester and



A Comansa luffing tower on the 65 storey Burj Vista in Dubai



A Liebherr HS 8130 HD used by Keller Dubai working against the backdrop of the Dubai skyline

radial tyres are adopted, more suitable for the local environment.”

From Tadano there is the GR-500EXL rough terrain for the Middle East and emerging countries in Asia. Launched in March 2015, “This model features a 42 m boom - longest in this class - and manoeuvrability by compact carrier with simple, durable and easy operation,” a spokesperson from the Japanese manufacturer says.

The rough terrain market in the region is also an important one for Terex. It recently introduced its new RT 90 in the 80 tonne capacity class at April’s Bauma exhibition in Germany. Also new is the Demag 5 axle all terrain family in the 130, 160, 220 and 250 tonne capacity classes, which is expected to find sales in the Middle East.

Region trends

International crane manufacturer Sennebogen has the 120 tonne capacity 6113R telescopic crawler and the 300 tonne 6300HD heavy duty cycle crane for the Middle East region. Florian Attenhauser at Sennebogen speaks about the trends emerging in the region. “There is more and more demand for a robust telescopic crawler as a pick and carry crane with up to 100 percent lifting capacity in pick and carry mode. The reinforced cooling systems for HD cranes are popular and there will be more demand for special heavy duty cycle cranes as most of the fleets have to be renewed in the Middle East.”

Heavy lift and transport company Mammoet says that the Middle East remains an important market for the company, especially in the oil and gas and power segments. The company believes

the region’s growth is inhibited by logistics challenges in some areas. Mike Abbas, Mammoet commercial director for the Middle East, says, “There is a need for unique ideas to insure projects are executed on-scope or ahead of schedule. There is a need for companies to look beyond the traditional approaches in heavy lift in the region and propose solutions for difficult and unique problems.”

Last year, Mammoet helped Saudi Arabia-based contractor Nesma Trading move a 2,400 tonne mosque in Jeddah to make room for a new hospital. Mammoet proposed to jack up and slide the building to the new location. The company used skidding equipment including skid shoes, push and pull units, skid tracks and power packs. The mosque was skidded more than 120 m to its new location in less than 48 hours, allowing visitors to continue their prayers, the company says.

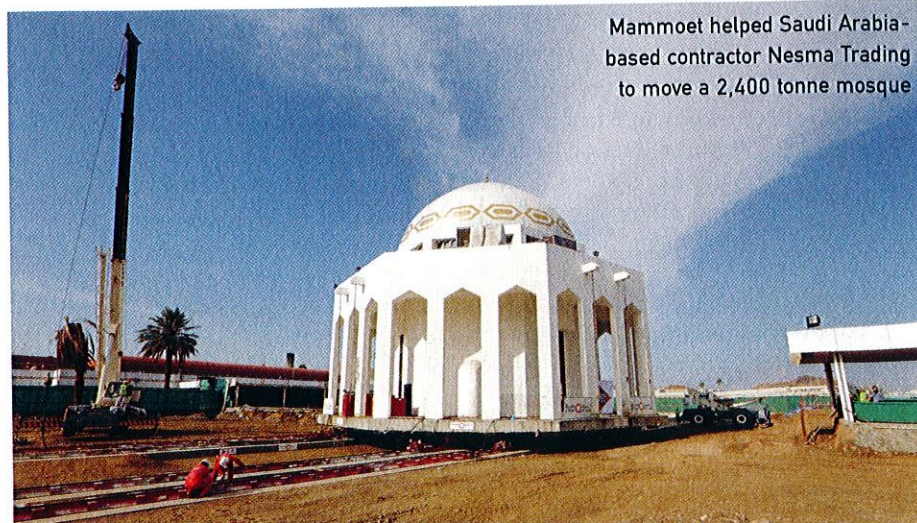
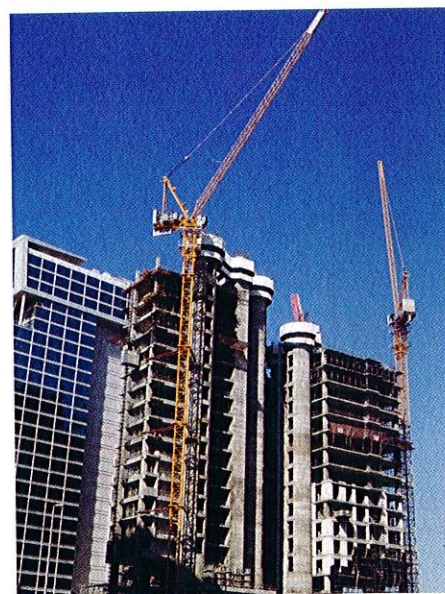
As part of the region’s growth there are new opportunities for unusual lifting jobs as Osman Logoglu, commercial manager

A pair of Potain MCR 225 luffing jib tower cranes from NFT in Dubai’s Business Bay

at Enerpac Europe, Middle East, Africa and India (EMEAI) explains. “In the next 12 months, we expect to see an increase in demand from the following sectors: rail projects, infrastructure projects, power plant projects and the construction of stadiums for the 2022 World Cup in Doha, Qatar and the 2020 World Expo projects.”

Hydraulic lifting systems manufacturer Enerpac has won an order for the design and manufacture of a special gripper jack skidding system from one of the largest oil and gas construction companies in the Middle East, the National Petroleum Construction Company, to facilitate load out of extremely large and heavy structures and platforms. The skidding system will include four gripper jacks with a push and pull capacity of 3,200 tonnes. The system will be used for various load out activities, including the load out of a 28,000 tonne platform, the largest platform built to date in the Middle East, the company says.

Liebherr-Werk Nenzing explains that it is one of only a few crane manufacturers with a dedicated product line for duty cycle applications. The 100 tonne capacity HS 8100 HD and the 130 tonne HS 8130 HD are popular machines for the Middle East because of their robust construction,



Mammoet helped Saudi Arabia-based contractor Nesma Trading to move a 2,400 tonne mosque