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Wilbert tower crane

German-based Wilbert started out in the 1930s as a construction company but by the late 1990s its focus had shifted to plant hire, and just before the millennium it decided to concentrate exclusively on tower cranes. It had built up a large fleet based on Wolff cranes and in 2003 went one stage further by building its first tower crane to its own design. Now Wilbert produces a range of top slewing and luffing jib cranes.

Wilbert has now commissioned the first scale model of one of its cranes and has chosen the crane which started it all, the WT200. This is a flat top tower crane which was designed specifically to reduce transport costs and it achieves this in part with the unusual stepped design of the jib which allows the smaller sections to be inserted and transported within the larger ones.

In fact the whole top section of a 60 metre jib version can be carried on two trucks.

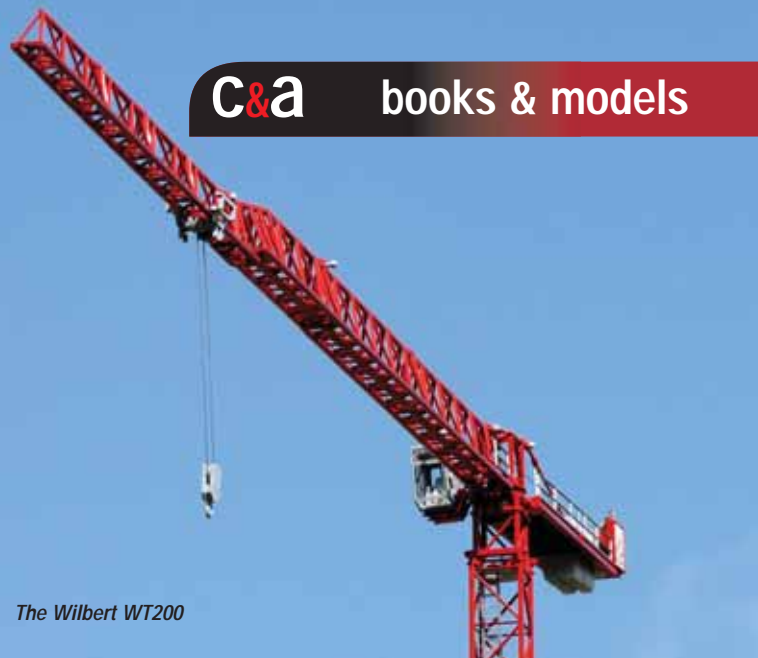
The model has been produced by Conrad of Germany, and is in 1:87 scale which is the standard size for tower crane models. As it represents a crane with a 60 metre jib, the model is still large and is 900mm (3ft) from tip to tip. Sadly no instructions are provided to help build the model but it is not difficult and should take under an hour.

The tower sections are derived from previous Wolff models and fit together using pins which produce connections stiff enough to keep the mast straight. Plastic ladders and platforms give the tower a realistic feel. The operator's cab is a nice piece of modelling as it is fully metal including some nice thin handrails which are difficult to produce in this scale. The window of the cab even includes a windscreen wiper.

Mast base



Straight up



The Wilbert WT200

The counter jib is a heavy piece, which includes counterweight blocks modelled to look like concrete slabs. It also has Wilbert's trademark advertising sign panels which are a design feature of the crane. The main jib is very well made in three separate pieces which simply bolt together. However the real achievement is that Conrad has produced a jib which is dead straight and looks great. It also includes the complicated piece where the cross section of the jib changes and like the other parts it is fully triangulated and is an excellent casting.

Among the features of the model, the hook can be raised and lowered by turning the winch drum, and the trolley can be placed at any position on the jib although this has to be done by hand as the trolley winch is non functional.

Overall this is a very nice model of a rarer tower crane. Apart from the lack of instructions the model has plenty to recommend it. There is enough detail to look convincing, and the model engineering produces a realistic looking crane. It is available directly from the Wilbert web shop at a price of €100.

To read the full review of this model visit www.cranesetc.co.uk

Cranes Etc Model Rating

Packaging (max 10)	7
Detail (max 30)	18
Features (max 20)	13
Quality (max 25)	18
Price (max 15)	9
Overall (max 100)	65%

Advertising sign at the back



The trademark stepped jib



The US aerial lift rental market in numbers



The report is available to IPAF members at £155/€175 or \$235 - Non members - £235/€265/\$355. The European report will cost the same amount or you can order the two together for £235/€290/\$390 for members - £390/€435/\$580 to Non members.

IPAF has teamed up with the ARA and IHS Global Insight to produce what may be the first publicly available in depth survey of the rental market for aerial lifts in the USA, we took a look at the report shortly after publication.

While this is a slim report at 33 pages, including 12 pages of introduction and explanation on how the data was collected, the 21 pages that make up the survey are really all that is required. HIS has used a wide variety of official statistics along with rental company surveys and interviews to produce a report that is insightful and detailed. The survey indicates that the aerial lift rental market more than quadrupled in the 10 years between 1997 and 2007, before dropping back in 2008 and 2009 to levels marginally above those for 2006.

In addition to the specific market numbers and forecasts the report includes several charts on US construction and economic statistics to provide background to its commentary.

This is particularly useful when comparing the economic and rental markets. The report values the total aerial lift population at over \$11 billion as of mid 2008 and looks at average ages and renewal rates to gauge future investment levels. Finally the survey looked at aerial lift rental penetration as a percentage of the total market and while determining that it is extremely high, estimates that it will climb during the current slow down as contractors owning equipment will not replace it preferring to rent during uncertain times.

In summary this is a good concise report with well thought out commentary and none of the stupid and ill informed conclusions that some less well informed independent surveys are guilty of. What shines through here is that the authors have taken the time to speak and listen to industry experts while interpreting the statistics and their survey results. If you are due to make a presentation to a financial institution or investors the material in this report will be highly useful, both in terms of preparation and to reference. We look forward to seeing the European report when it is published.

Universal

New Spider widens the fleet

The new Falcon Spider FS290 has arrived and is ready to hire. With 29 metres of working height and able to enter through a doorway of 0.8 by 2m, it allows internal applications rarely available. Not only will the spider FS290 set up on uneven ground conditions but can give outreach of 14m with one man operation.

Universal Aerial Platforms now runs the UK's widest range of narrow access equipment for hire or purchase. For more information on the spider and any of our machines call today or visit www.universalplatforms.co.uk

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