

Coventry climax

The Executive Hire Show celebrated its fifth anniversary in style at the start of February with its best show ever and a highly positive and upbeat group of visitors. Held in Coventry in the UK, the show is targeted at the tool and general plant hire market. It also attracts low-level access equipment, trailer lifts, lifting gear and alloy towers and this year as last, there was a respectable range of equipment on display. Most of the exhibitors we spoke to reported strong interest, while booking a fair few orders.

A number of exhibitors used the event to launch new access products. Youngman for example, used the show to unveil its first ever self-propelled lift the Boss X3XSP.

While the unit is based on a push-around model, the self-propelled version is more than a push around with drive wheels. In fact it compares very favourable in terms of design features and standard equipment - not to mention build quality - with larger self-propelled scissor lifts. It offers a 3.1m/10ft platform height, a 400m roll-out deck extension, is rated for both indoor and outdoor use and yet weighs just 495kg. A trade-off for the low weight and outdoor rating is the 150kg platform capacity, but this is more than ample for one man and his equipment. Standard features include active pot-hole protection, two forms of emergency descent, an easy to use electric and/or mechanical brake release, sealed component cabinets, full platform overload protection and tilt alarm and an amazing 350 plus lift cycle or 16.1km drive distance battery life and 35 percent gradeability.



With its specification and performance levels this is a product that will have plenty of appeal and is likely to spur on the move from push-arounds to ultra mini self-propelled scissor lifts such as this, although this will of course depend on pricing.

Another company with some significant new product launches was Power Tower, which showed an improved version of its original Power Tower product with a wider, exceptionally generous platform and new entrance gate. However the company's main focus was its more compact Nano product line. The company has created a three model range out of the basic product, by introducing two new versions - a simpler no frills model designated the Nano SP Zero with no platform extension that weighs just 440kg and a top end version the Nano SP Plus with longer two-section one metre deck extension. This actually works rather well, being every bit as stable as a regular roll-out and when extended gives the machine a two metre long platform. The company also showed off a new ceiling tile platform which can be fitted to a regular Power Tower when needed for safe access through false ceiling tiles.

Pop-Up took the opportunity to show its latest product launches which included the new Push-pro models first seen as prototypes at last year's show. Its original models are still available but now branded as Push eco models, indicating their lower prices. The company also showed two self-propelled models, the Drive 10 - based on the



The Youngman X3X SP - its first self-propelled



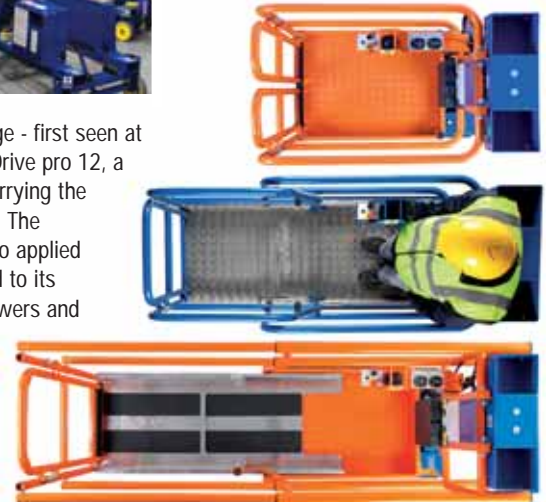
The ceiling platform for the new Power Tower



the Nano SP Plus has a two metre extended platform

push-around range - first seen at Bauma and the Drive pro 12, a Snorkel TM12 carrying the Pop-Up branding. The company has also applied the Pop-Up brand to its Eiger range of towers and podiums.

Russon Access was back with its manually powered, Power scissor range.



The three model Nano SP range - Nano SP Zero, Nano SP and Nano SP Plus



The Pop-Up stand included towers and podiums



The new Power Scissor 600 in Speedy colours

R2 Access had one of the larger stands at the show with the main focus on the Custom Equipment Hy-brid range of low level self-propelled lifts. Custom is the veteran in this rapidly growing sector with 8ft and 10ft platform height machines, both of which are full-blown, full-featured self-propelled scissor lifts designed to be light enough to work on mezzanines and where ground pressure is an issue.

Other new products announced at the show, although not shown, included a new Faraone single person lift, consisting of two models - a push around that weighs just 160kg and a self-propelled version that can drive at height up to a two metre/6.6ft platform height - the benefit being that the machine

The product has been totally revised in the year since its launch and is now a much better product. It has also grown to four metres platform height in the form of the Power scissor 600. Speedy has purchased a small number of the units for evaluation purposes, with a tentative order for more. The units are ideal where power is not available or not wanted, when a little more height is needed and for working outside.

weighs just Faraone has also moved the UK distribution from Kermco to PowerLift.

One of the most innovative products on show, the new Zarges Teletower - a telescopic tower - was voted the most innovative new product at the show. The new tower uses the same technology as that used in telescopic surveyors ladders to create a clean two piece tower that can be erected in seconds. Priced at around £750 all in, it could be a



Custom Equipment's Hybrid HB 830 on the R2 stand



The Pop-Up Drive pro 12



The Teletower winner of the most innovative new product

winner for some applications. It is also available in fibreglass. The company claims that as it does not require any scaffold tower erection skills means that you can use this product on site without a PASMA card.

The softer side

This being a rental show there were also a number of software companies exhibiting, including Higher Concept with its Syrxix rental software and Inspire which was dazzling people with its new i-phone/i-pad app. The app is stunning, particularly on the i-pad, with its extra display area. The app exploits Inspire's mobile management system drawing on the rental software database so that a salesman making a call can quickly - at the stroke of a finger - view all other customers in the area on an interactive GPS map, while a touch on any one of them will

reveal current units on rent, prices, orders, deliveries, outstanding debts, literally anything on the database and then act as a form of sat nav if desire. Add the first class rental rate data and it is also a perfect tool for both helping a salesman achieve better rates while helping eliminate unnecessary discounting.

Higher Concept also had a highly successful show with its short technology seminars, which the company will repeat at Vertical Days, the net effect is that a number of its existing customers decided to move ahead and add mobile PDA and document scanning solutions.

Other access and lifting related companies present included Niftylift with a HR12 and trailer lift, Sumner, Monkey Tower, Eurotower, Lyte and CTE with a Traccess 135 spider lift.



Inspire's app for the i-pad is impressive

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Upbeat ARA

While there was plenty of moaning about holding the American Rental Association convention and Rental Show in Las Vegas less than three weeks prior to Conexpo, there was total agreement among exhibitors at the show that visitor attitudes were significantly more upbeat and positive than the same event 12 months ago.

Even walking into the show on the first day blindfolded, you could sense the positivity. On the downside there was very little new product on show for us to report on, with most manufacturers saving their best for the big show later in the month. In spite of this there was still plenty to see.....

More different than it looks

The most significant new product in the access sector was arguably the new Genie 69 range of compact Rough Terrain scissor lifts. We briefly flagged up the range in our last issue which covers three models the GS 2669 RT, GS 3369 RT and GS 4069 RT with platform heights of 26, 33 and 40ft respectively. While the new models look quite similar to the company's 68 range which they will replace, this is far more than an upgrade. In fact the two ranges have very little in common, apart from their overall 'look'. The new models are longer, taking them to just over three metres. The benefits of the additional length, combined with the

width and weight, translate into better lift capacities - 680kg, 450kg and 360kg with drive at full height possible on all of them including the 4069 which Genie claims is the only lift in its 'class' capable of driving at 40ft. The 'class' being compact RT scissors. Another key improvement is performance over tough ground conditions achieved through more efficient piston drive motors on the rear axle and the company's active axle oscillation system from its full size '90' scissor range which is standard equipment. Front wheel drive is still provided by direct gear type wheel motors. Finally access to the machines components has been given a thorough review with full hinged doors on each side, a fold down electrics panel with separated wiring harnesses and easy circuit test points, a fold down valve block to access the rear and lower hose connections more easily and a full swing out engine mounting. While this development may not look so dramatic, the end product is significant and possibly puts Genie out in front in this 'class'.



The Electrical console folds down for trouble shooting and repair



The valve block also folds down for easy access



The Genie GS3369

ReachMaster, Skako and BlueLift

Moving on to some news... Skako Lift Inc - previously ReachMaster - the spider lift distribution company owned by Danish-based Skako Lift - has replaced the Hinowa spider lift line that it lost to JLG, following the joint sales and marketing agreement signed by the two manufacturers with BlueLift. The show marked the US debut for the Italian spider lift brand and its partnership with Skako. A 14 metre BlueLift C14 was on display. Skako also announced that it is bringing back the ReachMaster name just five months

after it was dropped, as a brand name in the form of "ReachMaster by Skako". The company plans to market at least four BlueLift models in the USA and is working with the Italian manufacturer to develop a Lithium ion battery power pack, as well as 18 and 25 metre models. The product line which currently tops out at 22 metres, dovetails nicely with that of Skako Lift. The show was also the North American launch pad for the 32 metre Falcon FS320Z. Skako Inc has also started to distribute the GM Kraner line of glass manipulators and had a Winlet 770 on display.

The Genie stand



The Skako stand with BlueLift C14 and Falcon FS320Z





The Winlet 770 glass handler

A totally new company – Lift Smart – managed by Genie veteran Steven Citron, showed a brand new material lift which has been designed from the bottom up to be ‘a better mousetrap’ compared to the Genie, Sumner and Alp lift products currently available. Citron makes an excellent presentation of how his machine is better, highlighting the quality of the sheaves, castors, bearings, pins and other moving components, as well as highlighting the two speed winch and clever loading wheels/push handle adjustment. The company clearly has an excellent product, the challenge will be in selling and distributing it.



Steven Citron demonstrates the new material lift

Another long life telehandler tyre

Supergrip tyres showed a new solid cushion-type tyre for telehandlers. It claims that the new tyre which includes a wheel rim extension plate, will at least triple tyre life while providing significantly better ride and ground bearing pressures compared to poly filled pneumatics. The company has worked closely with telehandler manufacturer Xtreme and will show the new tyres on that company’s stand at Conexpo.



The new Supergrip telehandler tyre

Whole lot

Haulotte used the show to launch its latest products from Europe onto the North American market in their ANSI guise. They included the Compact 14 as the 3947E and the HA12CJ as the HA33CJ+. The company, exhibiting in its traditional yellow rather than the funereal black of recent years, also unveiled a major campaign to promote the proper pronunciation of its name - a constant challenge in the USA. Its solution is to say ‘Whole lot’ - simple yet surprisingly effective. The company, with a new senior management team in place also



The Haulotte stand featured ANSI versions of the company’s latest products

talked about its plans to invest heavily in product support. The first part of this plan included the closure of its Atlanta outlet and the opening of a new parts and service facility in Frederick, closer to its main import hub. Snorkel had no new products on display – it is saving them for Conexpo – but had a substantial stand with both Snorkel and Pop-Up branded products on show. It says that the first two months of 2011 have been extremely positive with order intake up substantially on last

award and its Hybrid drive power unit says that its next innovation will be the launch of a new Deck Rider 21 at Conexpo. The Deck Rider, which until now has been a special product with 15 metres working height, was designed to be lifted onto elevated steel frame work by a tower crane, where it can cover work at height as the building progresses saving the use of a much larger platform on the ground, while providing a significantly better working envelope. The 21 metre version is unique in



The Snorkel stand included the Pop-Up range

year and as a result is recruiting again. The Pop-Up range has been present on the US market for 12 months now, but the company confirmed that the going is slow. However with more companies offering similar products, that may be set to change - its all down to economics and return on investment.

Niftylift had a substantial machine-filled stand, including its HR21Hybrid – known as the HR64 Hybrid in the USA. The company which has received numerous accolades for its SiOPs safety system including a platinum LLEAP



The Nifty stand

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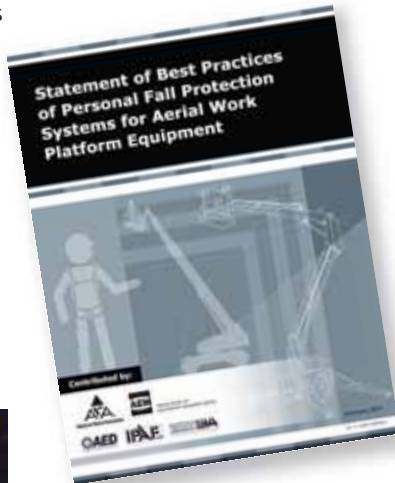


The Tracked Lifts stand with Omme and Platform Basket

Custom - one to watch

Custom Equipment gave pride of place on its stand to its HB1430. The 14ft light weight scissor lift is currently its best selling product in North America. Although it has possibly sold more units of its popular HB830, sales are so strong in Europe that it says that it has not yet had a chance to launch it properly in North America. The company is currently making major changes to its production facility in order to increase production and keep up with demand. Look for some further new models - possibly larger ones? - next year. IPAF had a good show having helped launch the new North American best practice guide to harness and lanyard use on work platforms. The guide confirms the fact that harnesses do not need to be worn in scissor lifts, unless the guardrails have been removed.

that has also been designed to be quickly and easily converted back into a self-propelled HR21 which could make the concept, which has a strong following among those who have used it, more attractive to the rental market. Tracked Lifts showed an RG12 spider lift from Platform Basket alongside a 30 metre Omme 3000. The company says that one year after taking on the Platform Basket range it is delighted with the quality and the attitude of the manufacturer and has made significant progress with the line.



The new guide to harness use with aerial lifts.

A surprise exhibitor was UK-based rental software firm Inshire, which has decided to take on the giants such as Wynne in its own backyard. The company has already a number of installations and is considering setting up a permanent office.



Visitors to the Inshire stand receive a demonstration



The Custom Equipment stand and HB1430



Granite showed the Instant mobile tower range

As usual there were a number of lightweight small steel tube scaffold companies at the show, but as far as we could see only one international alloy tower product. Instant had a tower and a couple of bases on the stand of its new partner - Granite.



The PowerPole in dual mast configuration

Manitou and Gehl had stand adjacent to each other, rather than a joint stand.

The company has made a great deal about the merging of operations in North America but its display at the ARA suggested that it has a long way to go – this looked like two very separate entities, with less traffic than most other stands. Perhaps it will all look different at Conexpo?

Something a little different was the Power Pole which uses a bolt together square pole which incorporates a screw type

mechanism allowing a variety of platforms to be driven by a power drill. Two poles can be used with a longer platform or a single pole with special base for single man platform.

Finally we end with Bravi and its North American partner AEUP, where the new Bravi Lite was on show for the first time. We gave the little machine a good test and can confirm that it is a very smooth and tidy machine.



Manitou and Gehl were back to back



Bravi - all in white launched its new Lite



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