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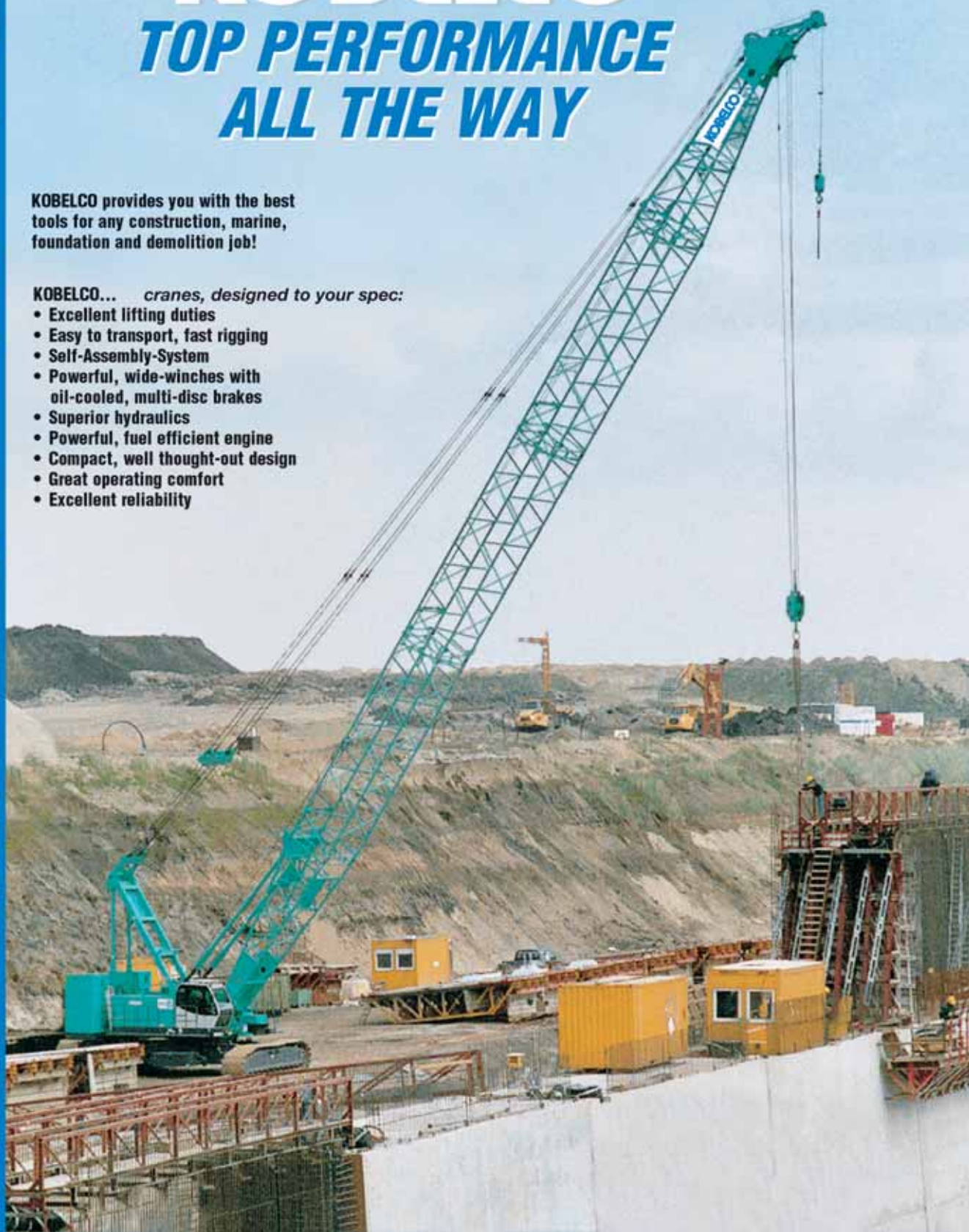
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On the cover:

Grove's 1,100 tonne/metre capacity GTK 1100 provides an interesting alternative to current offerings. Will the massive mobile telescopic top slewing tower crane with up to 140 metres maximum tip height catch on?



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Grove introduces radical new crane concept, London tower crane accident, New president for Genie, JLG to build new scissor in France, Kramer adds to its telehandler line, Maeda launches new mini crane, Mark Butler returns to truck mounted lift rental, Tadano-Faun expands Lauf facility, Near miss in New York, New chairman for ALLMI, Terex sells Tatra, Yong Mao tower cranes arrive in Europe.

Boom time for Crawlers 17

Demand for crawler cranes is probably at its highest for many years. Recognising the growth in certain sectors, manufacturers are now offering application specific machines. We take an in-depth look at the rapidly growing wind power sector and the cranes currently on offer; AGD Equipment is profiled and we check out a variety of interesting crawler applications.



Spreading the Load 27

80 percent of all crane and truck mounted lift accidents are related to ground conditions. Gone are the days of railway sleepers and timber off-cuts - the latest outrigger pads and mats are purpose-made, easy to handle and virtually indestructible. But pads are only half the story - the correct outrigger set-up is essential to reduce accidents. C&A investigates.

Making Tracks 30

Sales of tracked 'spider boom' aerial lifts have soared in recent years. We explore the rarer self propelled crawler lifts, look at some very special crawler mounted scissor lifts and ask why they are not more popular in the UK and Ireland?



In the next C&A

November/December is time for our annual Rental Rate guide, Knuckles booms, attachments and lifting gear, Articulated self propelled boom lifts, and our review of all that is new and interesting at SAIE.

Its Show time

The diversity of shows featuring cranes and access equipment is highlighted this month. We tour Europe - well Germany, Holland and the UK - to bring you the most interesting products from the APF, Platformers' Days and Hoogwerkers shows as well as looking forward to Italy's major construction exhibition, SAIE in Bologna.



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From an inauspicious beginning, Ainscough Crane Hire's growth over the last 30 years has been spectacular. In an exclusive interview, managing director Martin Ainscough charts its route to success

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c&a comment



Paper, paper... everywhere

How did the UK and, to a lesser extent, Ireland, become the land of the paper trail? When I was growing up it was totalitarian states and tin pot dictatorships that had the monopoly on burdensome and unnecessary paperwork.

I can't recall how many films I watched as a boy where I would hold my breath while a Gestapo officer checked through a raft of paperwork of an escaping hero before saying "OK". A similar thing would happen when an escaping family would be subject to a routine stop in the street and then made to produce reams of paper.

In Britain (at least in the films) we were free and did not have all that paperwork which came to represent oppression and darkness. I always recall these films in black and white even if they were in Technicolor. These days, though, the same scenes are re-enacted every day in the crane and access business when you try to get on to a big construction site in this country. How did that happen?

The HSE has said that companies should cut the paper and concentrate on real safety measures. The problem now is should anything happen, the first thing investigators want to see is all the paperwork. All our efforts are concentrated on the paper, with method statements for simple lifts running to small volumes that no one is ever going to read. Certificates have replaced proper checks and inspections. It's almost as if people now believe that as long as they have the certificate, then it doesn't matter if the machine is safe or not. The means has become the end.

We even have the situation where insurance inspectors who cannot find the start button are able to issue Puwer/Loler certificates which are hardly worth the paper they are printed on when it comes to real safety. Site managers ask for multiple training certificates from crane hire companies... and yet once on site you hear stories of them literally letting the tea lady fill in as a signaller banksman, or, dare I say it, an appointed person.

Taking a crane or a big platform on to some sites in the UK has become a paper-chase. If it continues in this vein then a filing cabinet will become a standard cab accessory. Barely a month goes by without a new piece of paperwork being dreamt up by some site agent.

The real problem here is that the preoccupation with paperwork is all too often replacing a practical culture of safety. It is as though running the paper gauntlet is guarantee enough that all is well and safe on site. How did we get to this state of affairs? How can we change it?

Leigh W Sparrow

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