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# Move on up...

Equipment designers are always striving for that little extra in performance, an extra metre here, an additional tonne there.... For spider lifts it is even more difficult trying to achieve greater heights and outreach, while keeping the overall machine compact and narrow so that it can access tight areas. During an interview at the end of 2006 with Teupen mastermind Alfons Thihatmer, he revealed his dream – to create a spider lift with 30 metres working height, 30 metres outreach that was no bigger than a children's pram. Impossible? Yes certainly with existing designs and materials, but it does show how the designer always has an ultimate - if seemingly impossible - target.

However in the seven or eight years since that interview, spider lifts have developed in many areas. In line with Thihatmer's dream working heights and outreach have generally increased and at the same time machines have become lighter. Power sources are changing (lithium batteries are becoming increasingly popular for instance) making the product more efficient and more environmentally friendly. In last year's spider lift feature in *Cranes&Access* we reviewed the 25 metre sector as the up and coming sector. With several introductions at *Bauma* this year it would appear the 30 to 35 metre working height sector is where most of the manufacturers are now concentrating developments.

The main positive that can be taken from the spider lift market is that developments are taking place right across the size range, and involve improvements not only to basic performance but also in regards to making them safer and easier to use with remote controls, self-stabilisation/outrigger setting, movement memory etc...

## Market development

The development of the spider lift market is interesting. It all began with very expensive, niche machines from Falck Schmidt - now TCA Lift - developed for applications with narrow entrances and tall working height requirements. It was the need to pass through a single door and then reach up to 20 metres or more that pushed Falck Schmidt to invent the spider leg as a way to



C&A

spider lifts

obtain a good outrigger spread from a chassis that had an overall width of less than a metre. The company still produces niche machines to cope with applications such as a high atrium and auditoriums, although it is now focussing more providing general purpose models for rental companies.

Fellow Dane Denka Lift soon joined the specialist market by offering an alternative chassis concept for the same applications while in Germany Teupen leaned more to towards general purpose machines as did the other Danish producer Ommelift, while Italian Palazzani initially appeared to offer a Falck Schmidt copycat product for the niche market. However it was the arrival of smaller machines from Italian producers, such as Oil&Steel with the Octopussy around 10 to 12 years ago or so that things started to get revved up in the spider lift market.

## Italian influence

The big difference between companies such as Oil&Steel,

Hinowa and others - many of whom were truck mounted lift manufacturers - was that they offered smaller, simpler and less expensive products that could be transported on equipment trailers used by many small contractors and rental companies for mini excavators and smaller skid steers.

The first of these 'Italian' spider lifts had working heights in the region of 12 to 14 metres and so targeted the trailer lift market, although they were and remain a great deal more expensive. The next big step was the move up to 15 to 17 metres, which almost instantly became the more popular of the two size ranges - mainly because their transport weight and purchase price was not that much greater. And as such they offered the opportunity of faster payback through improved utilisation.

The Italian producers have gone on to dominate the spider lift market in terms of unit production, however until recently only Palazzani offered any machines over 25 metres.



*A Dino 185XTC on a lightweight DT3500 trailer specifically designed for spider lifts*

Having marketed a similar range to Falck Schmidt for many years, it began broadening its product line significantly a few years back and now offers a substantial selection of different products in the over 26 metre market, including its latest model a 52 metre tracked and wheeled unit which it launched at Bauma. Hinowa led the way into the lightweight 20 metre market when it introduced its 23 metre 23.12 in late 2008. The challenge as always was to keep the weight down so that it could be transported on a two axle trailer or the back of the popular 3.5 tonne delivery trucks.

Teupen is possibly the only non-Italian company competing in the sub 25 metre market. In recent years it has completely redeveloped its smaller models in order to keep them competitive in terms of price.

Initially this included building them in Hungary, but having completely redesigned its smaller units for efficient assembly it has moved all production back to Germany.

So the next step has started. The mainstream Italian producers are now moving into the 32/33 metre market with CMC having shown 32 metre prototype, the S32 at SAIE last year and then the final product with some 'updates' at Bauma. Also new at Bauma was a very handy looking 33 metre machine from Platform Basket - the Spider 33.15 - with dual telescopic booms. The company has quietly built up a significant share of the spider lift market, having moved away from the original company's focus on self-propelled lifts. In addition to selling units under its own name it builds badged units for IHLmer.



Hinowa LightLift 20.10



The new 32.4 metre working height Platform Basket 33.15

Platform Basket's managing director Carlo Molesini considers the launch of the Spider 33.15 as pivotal, allowing the company to enter the medium to high market sector. The double boom articulation means a good up and over height of 17 metres as well as working height of 32.4 metres and outreach of just under 13.5 metres with 230kg platform capacity (15.2 metres with 136kg).

Easy Lift has also launched a higher model with its 30 metre R300 both on tracks and more recently on wheels and says it is currently designing 36 and 41 metre models which looks like part of a strategy to target the atrium market with a lower cost alternative. Cela is also developing a 30 metre model by putting its DT30 truck mount

superstructure onto a tracked chassis. Heading in the opposite direction to the others is TCA Lift with its 32 metre Falcon FS320Z, first seen at Bauma three years ago. The heavy-duty machine boasts more than 15 metres outreach and there are a fair few already at work, but it is only now really ramping up production.

With all this 30 metre plus activity going on you can expect others to join in. The big question is how big is this sector likely to be? There are some who expect these new models to take some business away from the truck mounted market, as the larger spiders are a lot less expensive a big truck mount, and if the job lasts a few days they offer a sound alternative.

### How the 30/33 metre spider lifts stack up

	Teupen Leo 30T	Platform Basket 33.15	Teupen Leo 36	TCA FS320Z	CMC S32	Omme 3150RJ	Omme 3000R	Palazzani XTJ 32	Palazzani XSJ35	Easy Lift R300
Platform	28m	30.4m	33.5m	30m	30m	29.1m	27.7m	28m	33m	28m
Outreach	15.7m	15.2m	15.6m	16m	15.8m	12.6m	12.6m	15m	15m	14.5m
Cap at max O/R	80kg	136kg	80kg	100kg	120kg	200kg	200kg	120kg	120kg	120kg
Maximum cap	200kg/ 14m	230kg/ 13.7m	200kg/ 13.9m	200kg/ 15m	220kg/ 14m	200kg	200kg	200kg/ 14m	200kg/ 14m	200kg/ 12.5m
Up&Over	no	Yes/17m	No	Yes/10m	Yes/18m	No	No	Yes/25m	No	No
Jib	yes 180	No	yes 180	Yes 110°	Yes/150°	No	Yes/90°	Yes/170°	Yes/175°	Yes
Levelling	16.7°	17°	16.7°	20°	15°	21.8°	21.8°	19°	10°	16°
GVW	4,225kg	6,000kg	4,850kg	5,900kg	6,560kg	4,000kg	3,900kg	5,800kg	6,500kg	6,000kg
Max footprint	5.5 x 4.75m	4.8 x 4.6m	5.5x4.75		7mx4m	4.6 x 3.75m	4.6 x 3.75m	5.2 x 3,3m	4.2 x 3.3m	4.4 x 3.2m
Variable	yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Platform rotation	180°	180°	180°	90°	180°	82°	82°	180°	170°	180°
Overall Width	1.58m	1.39m	1.58m	1.1m	1.54m	1.1m	1.1m	1.4m	1.5m	1.4m
Overall Height	1.98m	1.99m	1.98m	2.27m	1.99m	1.99m	1.99m	1.99m	2.35m	2.0m
Overall length	7.2m	7.1m	8.18m	6.95m	7.5m	8m	8.25m	6.9m	7.7m	6.7m
Below ground	no	Yes/-5.5m	no	No	Yes/-2m	No	No	yes/-4m	No	No
Power	D/AC/DC	D/AC/DC/HYB	D/AC/DC	D/DC	DC/AC	D/DC/hyb	D/DC/hyb	D/AC/DC	D/AC/DC	D/AC/DC
Platform mount	Bottom mount	End mount	Bottom mount	End mount	Bottom mount	Bottom mount	Bottom mount	End mount	End mount	End mount



After tracking to the job along a river this spider lift is involved with bridge maintenance

**New 52 metre platform**

However it was at the top end of the working height scale and the introduction of the 52 metre working height Palazzani Ragno XTJ52 that was perhaps the biggest spider lift surprise at Bauma. With the tracked unit on the stand already sold to Italian rental company Viviani Noleggio, the second three axle

wheeled unit - two axles at the rear and one steered axle at the front - is already on its way to China.

A large proportion of sales for this size of spider lift are destined for specific maintenance projects on large buildings, hotels or shopping centres with high atriums. The 52 metre Palazzani joins the Falck Schmidt FS520 as the highest

reaching spider lifts in the world - overtaking the older 50 metre Teupens - the Leo 50GT and Leo 50GTX with its 400kg platform capacity.

For many years Teupen was the only manufacturer with a 50 metre spider lift, products with this working height are physically large - all three weigh in around the 13.5 tonnes mark - however the spider design means that they are all less than 1.58 metres wide and as narrow as

1.2 metres with the Falcon although the FS520 follows a different design path and uses a double crawler system which adds to its overall length.

Despite being the oldest design and having two metres less working height, the Teupen has a similar 20 metre outreach to the Palazzani, and has the shortest length but the largest outrigger spread - often the main problem for these large spider lifts. It may be the widest (380mm



Climbing stairs? No problem



A Cela DT24 showing its gradeability



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## How the 50 metre plus machines compare

	Teupen Leo 50GT	Palazzani XTJ 52	Falcon FS520
Platform Ht	48m	50m	50m
Outreach	20m	20m	17.5m
Cap at max outreach	80kg	*	100kg
Maximum cap	200kg/17.1m	300kg	200kg/16.5m
Up&Over	26.5m	*	No
Jib	No Jib	Yes 170	yes 180
levelling	16.7°	9.0°	20.0°
GVW	13,500kg	13,800kg	13,500kg
OAL	8.45m	8.7m	9.25m
max footprint	7.6 x 5.65m	6.2 x 6.2m	5.5x4.75
-variable spread	Yes	Yes	Yes
platform rotation	180°	170°	180°
Min Width	1.58m	1.45m	1.2m
O/A Height	1.98m	2.48m	2.1m
Below ground	No	no	Yes/-4m
Power	D/AC/DC	D/AC/DC	D/AC/DC
Platform mount	Bottom mount	top mount	Bottom mount

\* figure not available

wider than the FS520) but its weight is competitive. The new Palazzani XTJ52 is the match of the FS520 for working height, equals the Teupen for outreach, has a superior 300kg platform capacity and is reasonably compact - apart from its 2.48 metre overall height. And like all Palazzani spiders it has a 250kg lifting capacity in 'crane mode'.

As mentioned the FS520 is the longest at 9.25 metres however it is the only one that offers any below ground capability - a capability that seems to be gaining in popularity. While a number of rental companies

have added Teupen GT50/GTX50 unit to their fleet, this size of machine has never been a very popular rental machine. However Easi UpLifts was the first rental company in the world to order the FS520 although the first deliveries went to end-user projects in the Far East.

Perhaps it is the purchase cost, physical size and relative lack of applications that has up to now deterred many rental companies from investing in spider lifts of this size? With the growth and availability of the larger 50 to 90 metre truck mounted platforms



there are fewer reasons to use a big spider for day work, as long as there is some form of road access. For remote, inaccessible applications such as electricity pylon maintenance the large spider lift is ideal - until utilities companies perfect a tracked high speed carrier with 50-60 metre boom.....

One of the most significant problems with the spider lift sector is its lack of awareness, both in the rental industry, and among end users. Seeing an end user struggling

to reach a job from a distance with what the local rental company had in its yard is exceptionally common place, when a small spider lift could squeeze through a gate, or zip through a building to get much closer to the work. However with the number of manufacturers - around 20 - together with the recent developments and new model introductions one thing is certain. The spider lift marketplace is set to get a whole lot more competitive and perhaps a whole lot larger.

# Seoul spider

The Seoul metropolitan government in South Korea has taken delivery of a 22 metre Blue Lithium C22/11 spider lift from Bluelift to help maintain the City Hall.

The newly built, futuristic looking building opened in September last year directly behind the original City Hall which has been converted into a library. The C22/11 will be used to assist in the maintenance of the building which is almost entirely covered with glazing.

Bluelift said: "It is an eco-friendly project and the operators wanted an eco-friendly machine. The Bluelift lithium machine has zero emissions and having no trailing power leads it does not suffer the usual problems when working with a mains AC powered machine such as voltage loss, cable trip hazards or other safety issues. Also the

functions, especially the travel speeds, are not reduced from the diesel powered machine."

The C22/11 features a double sigma riser, with telescopic top boom and articulated jib. Weighing three tonnes it offers an outreach of 11 metres with a 200kg platform capacity. The machine's overall dimensions are just under two metres in height, 900mm overall width and 5.2 metres in length - which can be reduced to 4.5 with the basket removed. Its lithium battery pack offers up to eight hours use between charges, with the company claiming that its rapid charge system tops it back up to 80 percent recharge within two hours.



The C22/11 being used to gain access to the living plant wall inside the Seoul City Hall.



# Avon calling...

Avon Access has helped an historic abbey save tens of thousands of pounds on inspection and repair work. The Churches Conservation Trust wanted to conduct inspection and repair work to Evesham Abbey Bell Tower in Worcestershire, in the UK, at heights of up to 33 metres. However the only access to the Grade II listed building was via a narrow gate and across the soft ground of the graveyard. The job site was also just above the ancient crypt, which meant weight - and particularly ground pressure - was a major issue.



The rental company solved the problem by deploying its recently acquired 37 metre Omme 3700 RJ spider lift which has an outreach of up to 14 metres, a 130 degree articulating jib and 180 degree platform rotation with a platform capacity of 250kg.

"One of the reasons I bought the Omme is that the 250kg basket capacity allows me to operate the machine and take a specialist stonemason and his materials with me to the required working height," said Lee Roberts, managing director of Avon Access. "The Omme 3700 RJ was an absolutely ideal machine for this job. Being mounted on long tracks means significantly reduced ground pressure compared to an ordinary self-propelled boom lift - and moving through the graveyard and did not create any issues."

"We also had to get through a historic narrow gateway - and although a big machine it is only 1,100mm wide in travel mode. The Omme's mixture of compact dimensions and tremendous manoeuvrability got the job done."

Richard Tindale, managing director of Access Platform Sales the UK distributor for Omme products said: "This is a great example of how specialist, expert rental companies can save a fortune for their customers. The options for the Trust were £30,000 for scaffold or Avon Access with an Omme lift for two days."

Founded in 2000, Avon Access specialises in tracked spider lifts from its depots in Bristol and Cardiff.

## Orchestral manoeuvres in Miami

A Palazzani Ragno TZX 225 has been working in one of the most famous American concert halls - the New World Symphony Orchestra Academy in Miami, Florida - known for its groundbreaking design.

Ragno TZX 225 has been chosen because of its compact overall dimensions and low weight as it has to operate in extremely narrow spaces and on delicate surfaces including the concert hall's precious parquet floor.

Ragno TZX 225 is equipped with a clean and quiet battery powered electric engine lifting the staff to a height of 22.5 meters. Its main uses at the Academy building is to position and change lights as well as carrying out maintenance

including cleaning the building's internal and external panels.



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# Falcon in the Hus

The Confederation of Danish Industry has taken delivery of a 32 metre Falcon FS320 articulated boom spider lift from TCA Lift for the maintenance of the newly revamped Industriens Hus building in Copenhagen.

Situated in the heart of the city, the building is home to the Confederation of Danish Industry, the premier lobbying organisation for Danish businesses. When looking to update the building the confederation decided to strip and remodel rather than completely demolishing it and starting again, retaining and reusing as much as possible of the existing construction. The process has substantially reduced the resources required and the volume of construction waste, while still becoming one of the most sustainable buildings in the capital.

"TCA Lift was consulted at a very early stage of the process and we assisted at the design

stage by showing that the Falcon could actually reach all corners of the building," said sales manager Brian Falck Schmidt.

"The machine is currently being used for the final stages of work being carried out for the buildings official reopening. Following this it will then continue to be used to clean and maintain the building."

The FS320 offers a 200kg platform capacity and an outreach of up to 15 metres with a reduced capacity of 100kg. Weighing 4,150kg it has an overall length of 7.2 metres with an overall width of 900mm, depending on optional equipment.



The Falcon FS320 is being used for maintenance work on the Industriens Hus building



Industriens Hus is home to the Confederation of Danish Industry

## What's in a name?

Giving equipment girls' names might seem a bit peculiar, but for Shane Wakeford of UK based rental company High Reaching Solutions it is paying dividends. The company has two spider lifts and a trailer lift named Delila, Sophie and Sabrina and covers North East Yorkshire and Humberside.

"Customers remember them and ask for the equipment by name," says Wakeford, "giving them a personality means they generally take more care resulting in less damage."

Delila is a 16 metre Dino 160XT trailer mounted platform, Sabrina is a Platform Basket ROG15 with 15 metres working height and 8.7 metres outreach and Sophie, is a 17.7 metre Platform Basket 18.90 with 9.1 metres outreach.

"I got into spider rental by accident after being made redundant, setting up on my own and buying the first machine – the Dino 160XT – from Promax Access. The 160XT was probably the first in the UK and is a great platform. Users love it because it is so sturdy and has an unrestricted platform capacity." Wakeford then purchased Sabrina second hand from Promax which he says has been "100 percent reliable, with just two fuses blown in four years. I then wanted something bigger and saw and tried the new Platform Basket 22.10 at Vertical Days but in the end went for an 18.90 Pro (Sophie)."

"Business at the moment is ticking



Shane Wakeford

over nicely with good demand for the machines from residential and industrial users. Between the three platforms I can cover most requirements - from painting, decorating, gutter and fascia board renewal to roof repairs. Tower users are always amazed at how quick and easy jobs are with a spider lift. All three machines are easy to use and usually go out as self-drive. Alternatively my son and I are qualified operators and can operate them or carry out the work. If customers want something with more height I usually cross hire a 27 metre truck mount."



Shane with Sophie

"I really enjoy the work and the machines have been brilliant since day one. Rates are competitive - I usually charge about £10 a metre of working height per day plus delivery. There are companies asking more for the equipment and operators but I would rather charge a reasonable amount and get repeat

business." The biggest problem? "My son hasn't got his license to tow the machines yet, so delivering machines on the same day can be a challenge. The problem with this type of work is that everyone leaves bookings until the last minute - no-one plans ahead."



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# Keeping the Gherkin clean

C&a

spider lifts

One of London's most iconic symbols and one of the City's most widely recognised modern buildings, 30 St Mary Axe - previously the Swiss Re Building or informally known as the Gherkin - is approaching its 10th birthday.

The unusual shaped building designed by Norman Foster and Arup engineers has 41 floors and two modified Teupen spider lifts that maintain and clean inside and out of the top of the 180 metre tall tower.

Both Teupen platforms - a rail-mounted 33 metre TL33S which is situated on the 36th floor to provide access for window cleaning on the outside of the dome, and a 17 metre GT17S located under the restaurant floor on the 40th storey for cleaning the inside of the dome - are also of a similar age and recently in need a 10 year check-up.

The first machine to undergo its 10

year refurbishment was the TL33S manufactured in 2002. Three companies were involved - Pinnacle Cradles which looks after all of the cradle equipment on site, Teupen the manufacturer and Alfa Access Services which has maintained and carried out the LOLER inspections on both machines over the past few years, but has more recently been appointed Teupen service provider for England and Wales.

The Teupen TL33S moves around the outside of the building on the 36th floor using a twin rail system.

"The platform sort of cantilevers on the outer rail and is located by the upward force of the machine on the inner rail," says Allen Freeman,



30 St Mary Axe - informally known as the Gherkin

owner of Alfa Access Services. "It is a very clever system with the twin rails following the outside of the building until a short section where the tracks deviate into the building so the platform can be stored maintained inside."

"The 10 year refurbishment of the 175kg capacity TL33S included replacing all of the hydraulic hoses, oil, filters and electric cables. It also needed a chain inspection, safety systems and structural checks ending with an operational check and thorough examination. All work apart from the final examination

was carried out with the machine docked inside the building by three engineers, two from Teupen Germany and one from Alfa Access Services taking four days to complete rather than the scheduled five days."

Now where is that 17 metre unit?

The TL33S moves on its rails and is stored inside the building



The GT 17S is kept under the restaurant floor when not in use



The TL33S is used to clean the outside of the dome



A view from the TL33S basket