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on the cover:

Sussex based Southern Cranes & Access was called upon to provide cranes and access equipment to assemble the massive racing car display at Goodwood. It used its Terex Demag AC200-1 working on full main boom and two Genie S65 self propelled straight booms.



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Liebherr launch telescopic crawler crane, and announce details of its new 200 tonne All Terrain. More boom lift deaths due to lack of harnesses, New 26.5m - 1.2m wide scissor lift from Omega Lift. Symon and Taylor to sell Nigg cranes, AFI launch new Resale business, Vanson launch new mid range tower crane. MAN sell Wolffkran, AJ buy Lloyds access, Panther opens in Haydock.

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We review what could be called the biggest dedicated powered access show ever. This years APEX event is the first on the new three year rotation and is the first time that the European access industry has got together since Bauma a year and a half ago. More new products are due to be unveiled at the show than ever before.

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We round up a number of unusual lifting jobs and solutions to tough challenges. Including the building of the UK's first offshore wind farm and substation which is going up in the model of the Irish Sea. We also visit a young inventor who thinks he has solved a signalling challenge on a small Staffordshire boat yard.

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We take a look at the UK/Ireland truck and van mount market, with some unusual applications. Ian Boughton Cranes&Access new associate editor visits the top three van mount producers in the UK and looks at some of their developments.



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Every year at Platformer Days our German sister magazine Kran & Bühne carries out a side by side specification check of a chosen type of access equipment. This year was the turn of 20ft electric narrow aisle scissor lifts. Nine manufacturers took part. We publish a brief overview of the findings.

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Finally qualified, Editor Leigh Sparrow finally takes an IPAF course and qualifies for a PAL card.



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C&A comment



Where did summer go?

It seems to have vanished in a trice and yet a great deal has happened since our last issue. The relentless increase in the price of oil for one thing. This has serious repercussions for crane and truck-mounted

lift hire companies. One major crane owner we spoke to says that his fuel bill is up by more than 50 per cent and, on top of this, depot electricity bills have risen by 45 percent! As if this weren't bad enough, it seems that crane hire rates have softened over the summer as utilisation rates eased.

It doesn't take a degree in economics to understand the outcome of rapidly rising costs combined with downward pressure on rental income. How is it that manufacturers have managed to pass on much of the increase in steel and component costs and are, as a result, seeing some dramatically improving results; and yet crane hire companies are suffering?

It is time for the crane hire industry to get tough on fuel, if the use of rebated fuel, does come to an end, the failure to pass it directly on to the end user will be disastrous. One of the problems dogging UK crane hirers is the distance that some companies are prepared to send cranes with no extra charge. Perhaps if the true cost of this was known on the hire desk things might change. Perhaps it is time for a fuel surcharge that is added automatically to the negotiated hire rate or contract lift as it does in the air travel industry.

The access rental industry is, on the other hand, seeing improving rates and seems to be finally coming of age. As a less mature business than crane hire, and with periods of rapid growth, sloppy practices were often disguised, so it's good to see that the market is beginning to work. High quality operators have prospered while rate cutters and the "over leveraged" have struggled and, in some cases, failed.

Unfortunately some questionable but legal practices permitted by our business administration rules have allowed some such operators to shed liabilities and continue, without consideration of any alternatives. Our coverage of this scandal in our last issue and on the Vertikal website has generated a huge response, with letters and emails which we very much appreciate but that sadly we did not have room for this time. Our October issue is only a few weeks away so we will aim to follow up on the subject then.

In the meantime the international access industry meets in two weeks at APEX in Maastricht and it looks like being the best turnout in years. We have a booth at the show and hope to see a good contingent from the UK and Ireland. Please do stop by and say hello.

Leigh W. Sparrow

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