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Snorkel stand



EuropeLift stand

# CLASH OF THE TITANS

This year, for the first time in living memory, the American Rental Association held its annual convention and trade show during the same week as Conexpo. Conexpo shifted forward a week or so compared to its usual dates, while the ARA moved from its regular mid-February slot to the first week of March. Both changes created the clash, and as both shows are scheduled more than three years in advance, it's hard to believe this was an accident... but what do we know?

When planning our show manning rosters, we faced two issues: One was the high cost of everything in the US these days, especially in Las Vegas, while some team members were nervous about visiting the US, having seen news coverage of ICE rounding up foreigners and reports of immigration control checking visitors' social media posts at airports. So we decided on a substantially reduced team this year, cutting back from the six at Conexpo 2023 to three this year. And this year we had to manage two shows in the same week in different parts of this big country. We agreed that one of us would go to Orlando for the ARA, before moving on to Las Vegas, while the other two team members would fly directly to

Conexpo to set up our booth. Leigh Sparrow drew the short straw, his brief review of the ARA follows...

My journey started on the Saturday, departing for Gatwick airport before dawn, for a nine hour flight to Orlando for the ARA, followed late on Monday night with a five hour flight to Las Vegas, in time for the Conexpo opening on Tuesday morning. Was it all worth it? Absolutely! The ARA is always a good event. It's not too big but is always packed with content and real life buyers, tyre kickers are as rare as hen's teeth. On top of that, at least a dozen lifting related ARA exhibitors were not at Conexpo, including Haulotte, JCB, Dinolift, Niftylift, CTE, GMG, and Cela to start with.



Nifty TL40

The show revolves around the ARA members, many of them small to medium sized rental companies or 'Mom & Pop stores' as they call them, that still proliferate in North America, no matter what the big boys tell you. It is always a great opportunity to gauge the mood from the street and catch rising trends and attitudes, with none of the big ego baggage of the mega shows. Yet the ARA is no small local event, and you overlook the convention at your peril, with its numerous hard-nosed presentations, as well as all the events and meetings that are held alongside.

If you were to ask me what single thing made an impact this year, I would say it was the rising focus on economic aerial lift transport. Trailers that are pulled behind pickup trucks have always been a key form of transport for smaller rental houses or small contractors, but what caught my eye this year was the number of manufacturers offering aerial lift & trailer packages. Are spider lifts and custom trailer combos taking over from trailer lifts? Possibly, despite the massive cost differential.

Another point that caught my eye was that every scissor lift manufacturer displayed 'step-up' platforms offering around 500mm of extra height, and the ability to poke through a false ceiling tile. The best one at the show? Possibly the MEC, which folds neatly away and has some nice design detail. MEC has applied for a patent, although some big players tend to ride roughshod over smaller companies' patents.

And finally, every show these days sees the appearance of a new Chinese telehandler manufacturer, and the ARA was no exception. Foxx loaders had a compact unit on display, while new name Maverick showed two models, a compact and a 4,500kg/17.5m model.



The Skyjack stand including the SJ45AJN

**KEY EXHIBITS**

Hungarian manufacturer EuropeLift chose the ARA for the launch of its new 13 metre 3623AT trailer lift - TM13GT in Europe - with seven metres of outreach. The company sold its first lift to the USA in 2023, and is now one of its best markets.



EuropeLift

The MEC stand was packed full of detailed design introductions and new products, from magnetic gate closing to a new secondary guarding system, along with new scissor and mast models, and a very clever trailer for its 34ft 34J boom lift.



LiftSmart launched the CL Series

Cela created a good deal of interest with its 24 metre DT80 Trailer package, with an unusual single axle trailer.

CMC also introduced a spider lift/trailer combo package, with its 27m/90HD+, but with a more traditional twin axle trailer.

Haulotte's Optimum 8/1931 with 'Extra Step' option, adds almost 500mm extra reach.

Niftylift showed its 40ft telescopic trailer lift however it might have benefited from showing an HR12 boom lift/trailer package?



Cela DT80 Trailer



Tuff Built stand

Something different on the Tuff Built stand was the 4x4 skid steer self-propelled Eco, which offers two mobile anchor points for those working at heights of up to 12 metres, but not from a platform. It also has a trailer package - of course.



GMC 48 SJ-XC

Skyjack launched a new 45ft narrow aisle electric boom lift, the SJ45 AJN or SJ45 ARJN with rotating jib, and showed all of its new scissors.



A new Maverick MVT7.22 telehandler

CMC showed its 27m i27/i75 insulated spider lift, originally conceived for the US market.

LiftSmart started out at the 2011 ARA, 15 years on it launched the CL Series, a compact material lift with capacities from 158kg to 227kg and lift heights up to 3.7m/12ft.

The Ballymore RT-PLD-5K self-propelled portable loading dock has a 1.9m x 1.5m deck with a 2.25 tonne lift capacity to a height of 1.42 metres.

GMG had a packed stand, but the key new product was the 48ft 48 SJ-XC telescopic boom lift with 454kg unrestricted platform capacity.

Imer showed a spider lift chassis with a concrete pump in place of the usual boom and platform.

Nunn Manufacturing's self-propelled Hi Rider scaffold tower base was different.

Magni had an RTH13.85 on display, sold to Lift Works.

Tiresocks, like many other companies, emphasised the growing demand to protect against objects falling from the platform.

LGMG had a large, impressive stand, but is not selling its lifts in the USA at the moment due to punitive tariffs on its Mexican built products. President Craig Paylor explained how the company is changing key material suppliers to overcome the issue. ■



LGMG stand



Haulotte's Optimum 8/1931 with 'Extra Step' option



# CONEXPO 2026

Conexpo 2026 was surprisingly buoyant, given the current tariff-laden global economic situation, and even appeared to be a little busier than the last Conexpo in 2023, with a positive vibe from US visitors all busy responding to the massive infrastructure construction work now coming on stream after several years of planning.

**Manufacturers - both old and new - also stepped up to the mark with a good selection of new and updated models. Highlights included Grove's all new 700 tonne GMK8700 All Terrain, MEC and Sany's new carry deck cranes, Xtreme's mega quad track Trakzilla back again and a surprise spider crane... as well as loads of new models and several new aerial lift companies including Terlion, Anson and Inlifts adding mast lifts, scissors, articulated booms and spider lifts.**

From a visitor's point of view, Conexpo is not the easiest show to navigate. The Festival Lot, where most of the cranes, platforms and telehandler stands are located, is remote from the rest of the sprawling event, and during busy show periods it can take 30 minutes or more using the shuttle buses to travel from one area to another. The illogical hall layout could also be improved.

Having said all that, it was good to see an exhibition with a minimum entry fee of \$295! busy. The organisers claim the show attracted 140,000 visitors from 128 countries. Slightly higher than Conexpo 2023's record 139,000, but the number of countries represented was down from 133, perhaps due to the government's new entry policies?

There were also 400 fewer exhibitors - 2,000 rather than 2,400 - but you would be pushed to tell the difference as the halls and outside areas generally appeared full, although there were a few empty spaces. It was also a major talking point that the ARA show in Orlando, Florida, was held the same week, with several access companies choosing to attend just one of the two. Conexpo 2029 has moved a week later and will take place on the 13 to 17th March possibly to distance itself

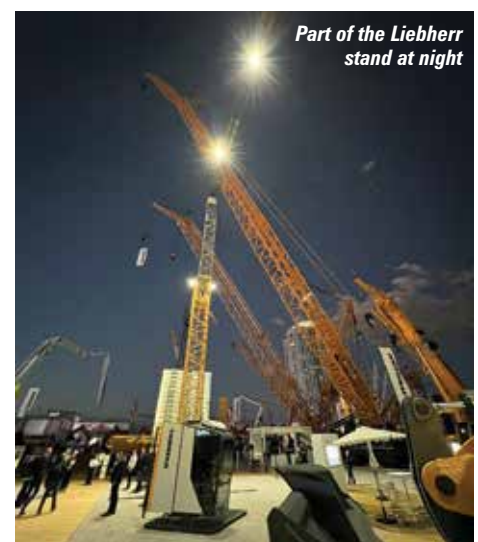
a bit more from the ARA, which is a big event for aerial lifts, telehandlers and spider cranes. It will also return to its usual mid-February schedule.

## SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

There were far too many interesting and new models on display to cover in this pictorial review. However, over the coming C&A issues, we will delve into these in more detail. Hopefully, this extended photo review will at least provide an impression of the show highlights. ■



Jekko's impressive stand



Part of the Liebherr stand at night



Tadano (Oil&Steel) showed this AL68 spider lift



Paus PTK 31 trailer crane



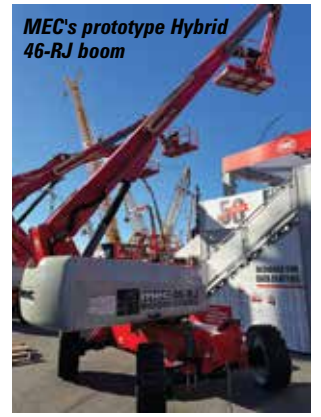
JLG showed an 86ft prototype telescopic boom lift, the 860SJ+



Kobelco CKE1100G-3 sold to Maxim Crane Works



LGMG M2530SE mast lift



MEC's prototype Hybrid 46-RJ boom



Link-Belt's new 160 tonne TCC-1800 telescopic crawler crane



Merlo had a wide range of telehandler attachments including this pipe handler



Latest Sinoboom basket



Part of the impressive Tadano stand



Michel Denis, president and CEO of Manitou, paying a tribute to Marcel Braud, the founder of Manitou who died this year

Marcel Braud  
Founder of Manitou  
1932 - 2026



Sany is ramping up its telehandler range



Sinoboom scissors



Tadano access equipment



Skyjack showed this new Panel Carrier carrying up to 1.2 x 3.7m panels on its slab scissors



Visitors finding shade under a Liebherr crawler crane



Tadano's branded Valla, Nagano and Oil&Steel products



Stros passenger lifts



Star of the show - The impressive 700 tonne Grove GMK8700 All Terrain crane



The cab of the Grove GMK8700 All Terrain crane



*The SpyderCrane Unic stand*



*Uwe Strotmann of Ruthmann*



*Merlo was not showing anything brand new but had an impressive stand*



*XCMG XCA275 U All Terrain and Rough Terrain cranes*



*LGMG H1256 and H1840 Pro telehandlers*



*XCMG booms including the 85ft XGS85J2*



*Sany's new SCD150 carry deck crane on the Bigge stand*



*Zoomlion 150 ton ZRT1500V643A with a 250ft boom and jib combination*



*Link-Belt stand with the 300ATT*



*Aconda tracked carriers*



*Rinoceros KS627 mini telehandler*



*Vita Industrial load manipulator*



*The Sunhunk loader crane stand with the new 24tm K268*

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Sennebogen 360G telehandler



Rear view of the new 700 tonne Grove GMK8700



Sampson rope stand



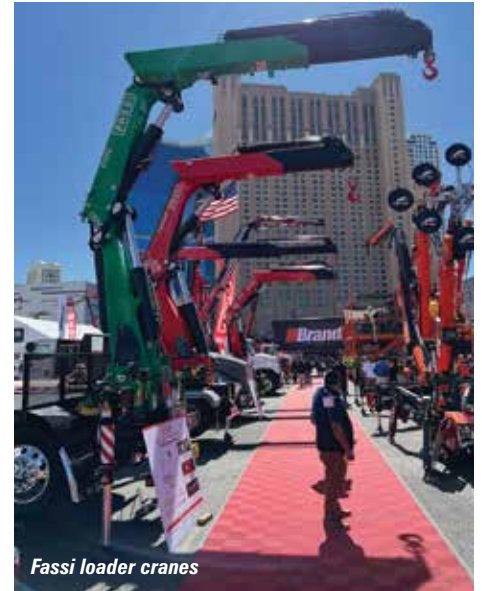
Robert Cox of MEC demonstrating the step up platform



Another new name - Anson - from Chinese company Roshow Heavy Industry but made in Vietnam



First time shown in North America - the Inslift Hybrid spider lifts



Fassi loader cranes



A 37 metre, big deck Dingli JCPT3730HRT RT scissor



Kobelco CKE crawler cranes



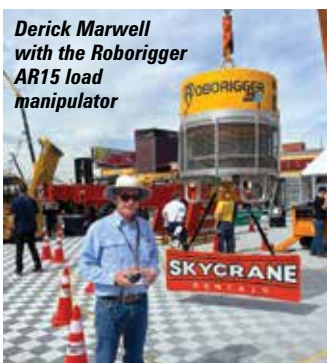
MEC surprised many with the launch of its CD-9T diesel carry deck crane



A Franna AT24 articulated pick and carry crane



Everun compact telehandlers



Derick Marwell with the Roborigger AR15 load manipulator



Bigfoot crane mats



Bigge purchased the new 100 tonne Sany SCA1100TB



Kobelco and Link-Belt stands



Cormach displayed several models



Hyrax Trax 27.41 on a customised trailer



JLG had an indoor stand



MEC's MME30+ vertical mast lift



8.6m 150kg Tadano eAA-22C tracked boom lift



210ft Snorkel 2100SJ sold to Stevenson



Dingli's largest boom the 44 metre BT44ERT... for now



A futuristic Bobcat RX3 Skid Steer concept



Another Chinese manufacturer producing access platforms - Ever Star



Liebherr ground plates to spread the load



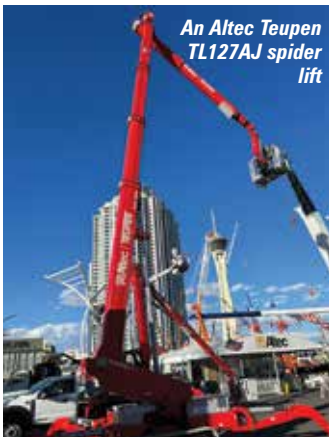
Although Atlas had machines on their stand its administration just prior to the show meant that no personnel were present



A very busy Enerpac stand



A Liebherr MK140-5.1 sold to Wagstaff



An Altec Teupen TL127AJ spider lift



Another new Chinese manufacturer Terlion with mast lifts, booms and mini excavators



Anson AS4046HD slab scissor



Genie had a small external stand with several interesting products



LGMG's 125ft T125J-2



At the press briefing of Liebherr's 91K self erecting tower crane



Sany's new 300 tonne SCA3300A sold to Mid Atlantic Steel Erectors



Broderson stand of carry deck cranes



An unusual podium - the Monkey MX21



The IMT stand



Easylift was showing several spider lifts



Elvis made an appearance on the AXCS stand



Genie is working on numerous projects including this material handling arm



Dingli scissor lifts



Hoefflon C10



CMC customised enclosed spider lift trailer



Bluelift B85 on the Ruthmann stand



Country music on the Sany stand



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