

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER : Saturday 21-04-2001

EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS

Vancouver too busy for tall ships

VANCOUVER may be forced to turn away the Tall Ships Challenge 2002 next summer because of port congestion caused by Alaska cruise ship traffic. The international fleet of barques, schooners and sloops attracted large crowds last summer at Halifax port. However, Chris Badger, Vancouver's harbourmaster has said the Canadian port would be too congested at that time of year to accommodate the tall ships. Victoria has also declined because of concerns about cost and the smaller size of the city's population base. However, the fishing village of Steveston, located near the mouth of the Fraser River, is considering hosting the early August event if it can come up with the necessary C\$400,000 (\$255,000) fuel, crew and moorage costs.

Galana 'not yet an MSC ship'

THE vessel on which three seafarers died in a fire on April 15, Safmarine Galana, had not been delivered to Mediterranean Shipping Co as stated in Fairplay Daily News on April 17. The men, a Greek second engineer, a Lithuanian chief officer and a buyer's representative from India, all died of smoke inhalation while the ship was alongside in Durban awaiting delivery. It was initially thought the fire, which damaged two or three floors of the ship's accommodation block, was started by an electrical short circuit or a smouldering cigarette. The vessel had been under management by Monaco-based Ion T Papadimitriou since 1995 but had been sold to MSC in February for about \$3.25M according to brokers' reports. On delivery, it will be reflagged in Morocco and will operate between Casablanca and Valencia as MSC Amine. A senior surveyor from Cyprus' department of merchant shipping has been sent to South Africa to take part in the investigation.

Philippine owners hit out at STCW

DOMESTIC ship owners in the Philippines have blamed the new STCW Convention for the continuing shortage of officers on inter-island ships. They claim its implementation is lopsided and contentious and argue that the convention should not be strictly enforced in the domestic trade. They state they are being forced to shoulder the cost burden of sending their officers and crew for upgrading courses to keep them because seafarers would not spend their own money to pay the high cost of training courses to work in an inter-island ship. They add that there is no assurance the same officers would then stay within the company for long because of the financial attraction of switching to ocean-going ships. Prohibitive training costs defeat the aim of maintaining more competent seafarers in the country's coastal shipping sector, they complain.

11 missing as ship sinks after collision off China

HONG KONG: Eleven crew members were missing after a ceramic-laden Chinese cargo ship sank after colliding with another vessel off Southeastern China, it was reported on Thursday. Only two of 13 crew of the Nanjing-registered "Sitong 888" were rescued after the collision with "Tongning no.3" in Daping Bay, off southeastern Shenzhen on Wednesday, the *Wen Wei Po* daily said. The cause of the collision was not known. The search for the missing crew was continuing, the paper said.

"Sitong 888" was on its way to Jiangyin in Eastern Jiangsu province, after loading in Foshan, some 200 km northwest of Hong Kong.

Minoan sells N Kazantzakis

Minoan Lines of Greece has sold the ferry N Kazantzakis to Pacific Cruises (Hainan) Ltd of Hong Kong. Transaction terms were not disclosed. The vessel (built 1972), which was acquired by the Greek company in 1989, has sailed for the port of Haikou in China.

Separately, Minoan is tomorrow to take delivery of high-speed ferry Festos Palace from Sestri Cantiere Navale SpA (Fincantieri Group) shipyards in Genoa, Italy. The newbuilding is a sister ship to the Knossos Palace, which was delivered last November.

Festos Palace will join the Knossos Palace on 6-hour itineraries between the Greek ports of Piraeus and Heraklion.

The sister ships measure 210 metres in length and have a carrying capacity for 2,200 passengers, 150 trucks and 100 cars or alternatively 600 cars. Their service speed is 29.5 knots.

Minoan has initiated a newbuilding investment programme for the construction of 8 vessels at a total cost of USD 720 million, to be financed 30% by equity and 70% by debt. Delivery of the vessels, which commenced with the Knossos Palace last November, will be completed in 2003.

Petrobras may call Bingo on P-36

OSLO-listed Ocean Rig's two Bingo baredeck hulls laid up in China's Dalian Shipyard are being touted as replacements for Petrobras' giant P-36 rig, which sank off Brazil last month.

Under the scenario, Petrobras could acquire either one or both the Dalian baredecks, either outright or through an intermediary topside contractor.

Dalian Shipyard itself is being mentioned as a potential candidate for the topside and outfitting assignment.

Sturla Fjoran, president of US-based Ocean Rig Inc, confirmed that his firm was in talks with Petrobras regarding such a transaction.

He said Ocean Rig's sole interest was in getting rid of the hulls, and the firm had no intention of becoming a production contractor.

Petrobras has been under public and political scrutiny ever since three powerful blasts rocked the P-36, killing 11 crew members and depositing the wreck on the seabed 1,360 m under water.

Petrobras officials have promised that the company will have a new rig to substitute the \$360m P-36 "in two to two-and-a-half years".

The P-36 was reputed to be the world's biggest deepwater rig. Christian Huseby, Ocean Rig's Oslo-based boss, said the Dalian hulls were "slightly bigger".

Petrobras has been under pressure to initiate "fast-track action" in the aftermath of the P-36 sinking. Mr Fjoran said outfitting the Dalian baredecks was a more long-term solution, but one which might turn out to be simpler in the long run.

Mr Fjoran seemed convinced that Petrobras had a need for more than one replacement for the P-36. The first Dalian baredeck could be converted into a rig "as close to the P-36 as possible".

The other would subsequently be just a copy, realising cost and time benefits.

Ocean Rig's Dalian baredecks are the third and fourth units in the Bingo series. Plans to build them up into deepwater rigs were shelved after a similar project on the first two hulls at Mississippi's Friede Goldman Halter pushed Ocean Rig into a welter of problems.

Dalian Shipyard is believed to be earning a lay-up rent of \$580 a day apiece on the two baredecks. The pair were capitalised at Nkr302.95m (\$33.2m) and Nkr316.26m respectively in Ocean Rig's last balance sheet.

Meanwhile, Ocean Rig this week revised capital costs on Bingo 1 and Bingo 2 to \$430m and \$420m, respectively. Some \$10m of the first figure is still outstanding, while eeds to fund \$80m on the second.

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

The \$80m includes \$15m promised by Alberta-based Pan Canadian Petroleum towards upgrading Bingo 2, in keeping with the firm's drilling contract with Ocean Rig unveiled earlier this week. The amount will be recovered from Ocean Rig's day-rate earnings.

Ocean Rig is planning to ask for shareholder approval on a \$45m equity infusion at today's annual meeting.

This is expected to foot part of the increased Bingo bill. Sale proceeds of the Dalian baredecks is expected to make up the balance.

Ocean Rig also remains in bank negotiations on a \$100m bridge loan.

Mr Huseby said Ocean Rig was "very close" to finding employment for the first Bingo rig, which leaves for sea trials this month.

He refused to confirm the assignment is in Angola, but said "it is in the opposite direction" from Canada.

Ocean Rig and Angola's state-run Sonangol have a 51:49 joint venture to market and operate the first Bingo rig. Pride Foramer, a subsidiary of Houston-based Pride International, is to manage the rig only if they find work offshore Angola.

Should the Petrobras transaction not come through, Mr Huseby said one of the Dalian baredecks could be employed as a "purpose-built" 1,500 m unit off Angola.

Under this scenario, a South Korean shipyard could be retained for outfitting. This will place the third Bingo rig's capital cost at \$330m, Mr Huseby said

CASUALTY REPORTING

MARINE

BEG AR GADOR (France)

London, Apr 20 — Following received from Etel MRCC, timed 1105, UTC: Wood fv *Beg Ar Gador* has arrived safely in tow at Douarnenez. (See issue of Apr 18.)

DORSET (Panama)

London, Apr 20 — Following received from the Athens based operators of m tanker *Dorset*, dated today: *Dorset* completed main engine repairs at Dubai and resumed normal trading. (See issue of Feb 24.)

FAME (Canada)

London, Apr 19 — M trawler *Fame*, 1,025 gt, (built 1977) reported explosion in engine room in lat 53 00 06N, long 52 37 33W, at 1841, Apr 18. Vessel was taken in tow and sank some 12 hours later. No injuries. Cause of explosion being investigated.

London, Apr 19 — Following received from Halifax RCC, timed 1650, UTC: M trawler *Fame* was reported at 1550, UTC, today to have sank in lat 53 05.185N, long 52 36.584W.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: Two fishing vessels rescued 24 fishermen from sinking m trawler *Fame* that caught fire early today off the south Labrador coast. Bill Dicks of the Canadian Auto Workers said a marine traffic office whose workers belong to the union received a distress call from the vessel. The crew reported an explosion in the engine room and said she was listing and taking in water. The situation became a lot more serious and they had trouble controlling the fire and ended up having to abandon the vessel, Dicks said from St. John's, Nfld. Two fishing vessels in the area responded to the call for help and picked up all the fishermen within hours of the call. There were no reported injuries, despite high winds, fog, snow and swells. The vessel, which sank after the crew was rescued, was headed home from an overnight fishing trip, Dicks said.

FYKAN (DIS)

Trondheim, Apr 20 — Taubatkompagniet AS, Trondheim, owners of mv *Fykan* advise that hull repairs at Verdal are still in progress and the date of completion is presently

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

unknown. However, after completion, the vessel will sail to Trondheim for further repairs and possible sale. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Mar 30.)

IEVOLI SUN (Italy)

London, Apr 20 — Removal of chemicals and fuel oil from the wreck of the sunken m chemical tanker *Ievoli Sun* is expected to take about five weeks according to the Cherbourg maritime prefecture, which is overseeing the operation for the French government. Reconnaissance of the wreck, which got under way on Apr 14 by salvor Smit Tak from its vessel Smit Pioneer, is still being carried out by remotely operated vehicles equipped with cameras. The hull of the vessel poses no problem, says the prefecture, which adds that she has not changed position and shows no sign of leaking. Present efforts are concentrated on locating the vessels different tanks and identifying areas where holes can be drilled for the purposes of pumping. The wreck contains 4,000 tonnes of styrene, 2,000 tonnes of isopropanol and methyl ethyl ketone, 180 tonnes of bunker oil and 60 tonnes of diesel oil. The automated drilling system to be used by the salvor, Smit Tak, and its partner, Frank Mohn, requires two holes to be drilled in each tank concerned in the pumping operation, one at the base and the other at the top. Ten tanks containing styrene, as well as the vessels fuel tanks, have to be emptied and their contents pumped up to vessels waiting at the surface. Methyl ethyl ketone and isopropanol, which are contained in eight other tanks, as well as diesel oil are not concerned in the pumping operation. They are to be released slowly into the sea by means of specially fitted valves. The maritime prefecture said yesterday evening that no holes had yet been drilled in the vessel's hull. Survey work is at present limited to three two-hour periods daily due to the problems posed by currents in the area around the wreck. *Ievoli Sun* went down in 60 to 70 metres of water 20 km off Alderney in the Channel Islands and 35 km from the French coast, on Oct 31 last year after having been flooded in heavy weather. (See issue of Apr 20.)

OCEAN (Panama)

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Japanese trader Shuhei Yasuda, who is seeking justice for his missing mv *Ocean*, confirmed that the vessel was indeed used in the smuggling of imported rice from Vietnam while he was desperately looking for her in 1999. The vessel also assumed another name, *Nato*, for her to be allowed entry into the territorial waters of Vietnam, he said. That is why we could not find the vessel in the Philippine territory, said Yasuda, who arrived in Cebu from Manila noon yesterday. He also learned that the vessel was used to ferry cement in various ports in the Visayas and Mindanao, without his knowledge. The arrival of Yasuda, who will attend a court hearing today, proves that he has no pending criminal or civil cases in Cebu, said his business-partner Jacinto Jack Flores. Lawyer Pepito Suello, Yasudas counsel, has filed an omnibus motion seeking the extension of the temporary restraining order (TRO), inventory of the vessel's equipment and issuance of the writ of preliminary injunction. Without the aid of government maritime authorities, the Japanese trader found, for the second time, his vessel at the Philippine Trigon Shipyard in Sangat, San Fernando, Cebu last March. Yasuda, general manager of the cash-strapped Ocean Fleet Navigation in Manila, estimated a loss of P50 million since he entered into a charter agreement with Bacolod-based Sonny Nava on Aug 21, 1998. Nava, general manager of SN Marine Transport, took 100% control of the vessel and allegedly raked in huge income out of the charter voyages. He also did not remit a single centavo to Yasuda a few months after they finalised the charter agreement. Yasuda said yesterday that Davao-based shipper Raymund Fakiano told him that the vessel was used twice to load bags of rice from Vietnam. Fakiano, whom he met at Hyatt Hotel Manila on Oct 13, 1999, informed him that some 30,000 sacks of rice were unloaded in Ozamis city port sometime in August 1999. Yasuda said Nava earned more than P2 million for one shipment alone. For the vessel to enter Vietnam's territorial waters, Yasuda said she was registered in Cambodia as *Nato*, using fake documents. But by the time she sailed back to the Philippines, assumed again

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

her originally registered name, *Ocean*. Yasudas lawyer also filed a petition before the Department of Labour and Employment (Dole) in Bacolod stating that the vessel was used by a syndicate to smuggle contraband and illegal drugs into the country. The petition calls for the nullification of the auction sale and registration of the vessel. Yasuda was unaware that the vessel was sold at public auction by Dole-Bacolod to satisfy the alleged unpaid wages, totaling over P400,000, for the 18-member ship crew. He believes that Dole-Bacolod Assistant Regional Director Cyril Ticao, labour sheriff Richard Aprosta, Rodolfo Claparols Jr, the new owner, and Nava, all respondents in the petition, connived with each other to dispose of the vessel. Yasuda said that Claparols and Nava are allegedly relatives. (See issue of Apr 19.)

PERFECT CHOICE (Canada)

London, Apr 19 — Fv *Perfect Choice* 116.87 gt, (built 1998) reported beset with damage to bow and stern and taking on water, but in no immediate danger, in lat 52 03 24N, long 55 26W, at 1542, Apr 18.

London, Apr 19 — Following received from Halifax RCC, timed 1855, UTC: Fv *Perfect Choice*: Damage is not as bad as first reported. Vessel is currently locked in ice and an icebreaker is proceeding.

SITONG 888 (People's Republic of China)

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: Eleven crew members were missing after a ceramic-laden Chinese cargo vessel sank after colliding with another vessel off south-eastern China, it was reported today. Only two of 13 crew of the Nanjing-registered *Sitong 888* were rescued after the collision with *Tongning No.3* in Daping Bay, off south-eastern Shenzhen yesterday, the Wen Wei Po daily said. The cause of the collision was not known. The search for the missing crew was continuing, the paper said. *Sitong 888* was on passage to Jiangyin in eastern Jiangsu province, after loading in Foshan, some 200 kilometres north-west of Hong Kong.

TELLA (Sweden)

Istanbul, Apr 9 — Mv *Tella* passed Istanbul on Apr 8, on passage Varna for Leghorn. — Correspondents. (See issue of Feb 10.)

TONGNING NO.3

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: Eleven crew members were missing after a ceramic-laden Chinese cargo vessel sank after colliding with another vessel off south-eastern China, it was reported today. Only two of 13 crew of the Nanjing-registered *Sitong 888* were rescued after the collision with *Tongning No.3* in Daping Bay, off south-eastern Shenzhen yesterday, the Wen Wei Po daily said. The cause of the collision was not known. The search for the missing crew was continuing, the paper said. *Sitong 888* was on passage to Jiangyin in eastern Jiangsu province, after loading in Foshan, some 200 kilometres north-west of Hong Kong.

ZAINAB (Honduras)

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: M oil/chemical tanker *Zainab* had been caught three times by UN naval forces and may have been sunk deliberately. Industry sources said that the *Zainab*, which went down 32 kilometres north of Jebel Ali and released as much as 1,300 tonnes of fuel oil into the Gulf, was well-known to shipping authorities as an environmental disaster waiting to happen. Commander Steve Bennett, Royal Naval Liaison Officer in the Gulf, described the vessel's condition as "appalling". He said that once the vessel started to go down, parts of the structure collapsed, but how that first hole was made has yet to be established. The latest incident was the fourth time since September that the vessel had been caught breaking UN sanctions. Bennett said that twice she was caught in international waters and tugs from Iraq were ordered to escort her back to shore because of her unseaworthy state. She had also been arrested and taken to Abu Dhabi, where her contents were auctioned off along with the vessel herself. She went straight back to sea and was detained by the maritime intervention forces under suspicion of smuggling oil. *Zainab* was then being escorted for

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

hand-over to the UAE authorities when she sank. Explaining why the *Zainab* was allowed to go back to sea, despite being unseaworthy, Bennett said, "There is currently no regional Port State Control legislation which prevents an unseaworthy vessel like the *Zainab* from returning to sea. An implemented policy would have prevented this from happening because it means national ports can take control of a vessel which is sub-standard, according to international maritime conventions." He described the *Zainab* as a typical sanctions-busting vessel and said her history with the authorities was not unique. "No repair works were carried out on the vessel and it was a disaster waiting to happen. The *Zainab* is not unusual for the types of vessels carrying out these operations in the Gulf. Her doors were welded shut to prevent interception force personnel from legally boarding the vessel." Captain Mohammed Alaa Farag, a Ship Inspection Expert for the Ministry of Communications, said that although enforcing Port State Control legislation would cut down on the number of sub-standard vessels in the Gulf, it would not eradicate sanctions busting in unseaworthy vessels. These vessels do not come into the UAE's ports, but unload their cargo into vessels anchored off the coast. Unless they are caught and brought to shore, they will not get inspected and these areas are notoriously difficult to police. The present system of auctioning off the vessel caught sanctions busting is not stopping the vessels from going back to sea. On many occasions the same owners buy them back and they continue with the trade. Farag added that plans to bring in a full port state control system to the UAE were in the pipeline. "Currently plans are drawn up to implement inspectors and offices around the UAE. There will be a main office in Abu Dhabi which controls three regional offices in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah. Then there would be a further six offices placed at key UAE ports. In each of these offices there would have to be at least two inspectors because otherwise there would be too many vessels to check. At the moment the proposals are with the government, and we are waiting for funding." (See issue of Apr 20.)

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Water shortages hit homes in Sharjah yesterday, as the first oil from the sunken oil/chemical tanker *Zainab* hit Ajman's beaches. The Al Liyya desalination plant in Sharjah and the Al Zawra plant in Ajman were closed to prevent contamination. The Zulal water bottling plant in Sharjah remained closed for a second day. Oil patches reached Ajman Beach around 1700, Apr 19. They were small patches, but the oil might go further due to strong wind and high seas, Abdulaziz Al Madfa, Director General of Sharjah Environment and Protected Areas Authority (SEPAA), said yesterday. Teams representing various local and federal authorities continued the clean-up operations along Sharjah beaches. All they are doing is cleaning the polluted areas, but since huge amounts of oil are still leaking from the sunken vessel, the problem will continue.

SEIZURES & ARRESTS

KENT LOYALIST (Panama)

Piraeus, Apr 19 — M bulk carrier *Kent Loyalist*, now named *Wish*, under Malta flag, arrived Piraeus on Apr 13, from Spain. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Apr 16.)

LAVERNA (Bahamas)

Thessaloniki, Apr 16 — Mv *Laverna* is still under arrest at Thessaloniki. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (See issue of Mar 7.)

MINGARY (Italy)

Genoa, Apr 20 — Mv *Mingary* is still under arrest at Genoa. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Mar 21.)

NATTEM XVI (Greece)

Thessaloniki, Apr 16 — Anti-pollution oil-collecting vessel *Nattem XVI* is still lying under arrest at Thessaloniki. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (See issue of Mar 7.)

OBOD (Malta)

Honolulu, Apr 19 — It has been reported that the U.S. District Court issued an Order Granting a Motion of Interlocutory Sale of mv *Obod* and notice of sale. Jacques Pierot Jr. &

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

Sons Inc, ship broker is the principal broker, with a time frame of four weeks. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Feb 6.)

OCEAN POWER (Honduras)

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: The Indian Coast Guard intercepted an illegal Honduras registered vessel, owned by an Indian company off the Gujarat coast on suspicion of carrying out an illegal mid-sea transfer of cargo, Coast Guard sources said in Mumbai today. On detailed investigation, it was found that the vessel had not taken clearance from the Merchantile Marine Department for operating in Indian waters, they said. During routine patrolling, on Apr 17, the Coast Guard vessel *Veera* intercepted mv *Ocean Power*, off the Gujarat coast. The Honduras-registered vessel had sailed from Mumbai with supplies for mv *Ocean Wind*, which was to depart from Karachi for Madagascar, the sources said. On a request from the MMD, the vessel was brought under escort to Porbandar and an MMD inspection was arranged, sources said, adding that the *Ocean Power* has been operating for two years without proper permission. After initial inspection, the vessel has now been detained by the MMD for further investigation, the Coast Guard sources added.

PROFESSOR ANICHKOV (Russia)

Thessaloniki, Apr 16 — M general cargo/training vessel *Professor Anichkov* is still under arrest at Thessaloniki. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (See issue of Mar 7.)

VOLGO-BALT 237 (Russia)

Thessaloniki, Apr 16 — Mv *Volgo-Balt 237* is still under arrest at Thessaloniki. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (See issue of Jan 2.)

YURIY DVUZHILNIY (Ukraine)

Genoa, Apr 20 — Mv *Yuriy Dvuzhilniy* is still under arrest at Genoa. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Feb 19.)

PORT CONDITIONS

ALGERIA

Algiers, Apr 17 — Port delays for last two weeks: Five to seven vessels at anchorage awaiting berth. Average time on roads one to two days. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Mar 16.)

SHIPYARD NEWS

Meyer expands; HDW goes under cover

WORK is progressing on the second huge newbuilding dock at Meyer Werft, Papenburg. The dock, being described as the largest in Europe, will enable the yard eventually to build two large cruise vessels simultaneously. The building hall enclosing the dock will be 375 m long X 125 m wide X 75 m high, with the graving dock itself measuring 45 m wide. The dock will be inaugurated with work on Star Cruises' newbuilding Norwegian Star, the hull of which was built in Meyer's older dry-dock, next month. Meanwhile, at ship builder HDW, dry-dock number 7 is covered by a 235 m long X 43 m wide roof. As well as facilitating passenger ship building, the cover provides privacy: HDW has a 200-m yacht on sub-order from Fr Lürssen, and such contracts are traditionally carried out "under cover."

ROUTE, PORTS & SERVICES

Superfast sets service start date

SUPERFAST'S ferry service between Rostock in Germany and Södertälje in Sweden is to start early next year, a Superfast Germany spokesman told Fairplay today. Opening of the new route was postponed from this year because of late deliveries by German ship builder HDW. The Greek owner has six ferries on order for a variety of Baltic links. Its Superfast VII, with ice-class notation, will undergo sea trials next week before starting a thrice-weekly service from Rostock, Germany to Hanko, Finland on May 15. The number of sailings will be doubled after introduction of the ferry's sister ship Superfast VIII, due in July. Superfast is discussing with a Scottish group of companies a first direct ferry service from Scotland to mainland Europe. The route, from Rosyth to an as yet unidentified port in France, Belgium or the Netherlands, is planned to start next spring.

China launches cruise line

CHINA has officially launched its first cruise line, it is reported, with a ship described as a 27,000 DWT, Liberian-flagged 'luxurious foreign cruise vessel' named Lanzhuanshi. The ship docked at China's Haikou port on April 16, having inaugurated a programme of thrice-weekly sailings to Xialongwan, Vietnam. Tour company Tropical Island International Travel Agency obtained approval for the business last year, becoming the first travel agency in China to operate such a vessel. The ship is dubbed a 'floating four-star hotel,' having 1,000-plus berths as well as dining rooms, bars, cinemas, swimming pools, a library and other facilities. An added attraction for Chinese tourists is that passports are not required of them.

Kiel-Vyborg link to re-open in May

THE Vyborg, Russia-Kiel, Germany ferry service is to re-open next month, after a month's closure following a change of ownership, a Seehafen Kiel spokesman told Fairplay today. The line will employ the Maltese-flagged, 6,128 DWT ro-ro vessel Inzenieris Suhorukovs, formerly serving between Kiel and St Petersburg. The ship is managed by ADG Shipmanagement in Hamburg, whose Russian head Alexander Ouspenski told Fairplay that the vessel's charter arrangements were confidential. A Russian news source indicates that Russian ship owner Sovcomflot and the Vyborg Merchant Port Forwarding Centre (TETs MTPV) have signed an agreement to involve Sovcomflot in the Vyborg line project.

Crowley sets off for Cuba

Cargo shipping between the US and Cuba resumed after a 40 year lapse as a ship departed Jacksonville, Fla, for Havana yesterday. The Crowley owned vessel is to unload its cargo of donated goods in Cuba on Saturday.

The scheduled visit to Havana was added to a weekly route between Florida and Mexico. The service will continue subject to demand, a company spokesperson said. Last year the US Congress authorised sales of food and agricultural products to Cuba, although such transactions are not eligible for government subsidy and finance by US banks is restricted. Cuba is seeking to ease the restrictions saying that it was almost impossible to trade under such terms.

Crowley has discussed shipping to Cuba with over 100 companies, a spokesman said. The Crowley service also will assist organisations that are donating food to Cuba. With no shipping service between the US and Cuba, goods must first be trucked to Canada or Mexico and then transported by sea.

'Ming Bamboo' op maidentrip in haven van Rotterdam

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

Het nieuwe containerschip 'Ming Bamboo' van de Taiwanese rederij Yang Ming Line is dinsdag aangekomen in de Rotterdamse haven. Het schip van 5.551 teu begon zijn maidentrip in Kaohsiung (Taiwan) en heeft tevens Hongkong en Singapore aaangedaan. De 'Ming Bamboo' wordt blijvend ingezet op de Yang Ming dienst tussen het Verre Oosten en Europa.

De 'Ming Bamboo' maakt deel uit van een serie van zeven nieuwe schepen van de Taiwanese rederij. Eerder werden de 'Ming Plum' en de 'Ming Orchid' al in de vaart genomen. De 'Ming Plum' heeft drie reizen gemaakt op de dienst tussen het Verre Oosten en Europa, maar nu de 'Ming Bamboo' er is, verhuist de 'Ming Plum' naar de Verre Oosten-Amerikadiens van Yang Ming.

In juni wordt het vierde schip van de nieuwe serie, de 'Ming Pine', in gebruik genomen. Dit schip zal eveneens worden ingezet op de dienst tussen het Verre Oosten en Europa. De drie overige schepen van de nieuwe serie volgen later en gaan waarschijnlijk eveneens varen tussen Azië en Europa, zegt J. van Doorn, general manager Yang Ming Line bij agent Voigt & Co. "Maar het is natuurlijk afhankelijk van het lading aanbod. Yang Ming zou er ook nog voor kunnen kiezen om de resterende schepen in te gaan zetten op de trans-Pacific."

Tot voor kort had Yang Ming op de Europa-dienst acht schepen van 3.725 teu varen. Als gevolg van de komst van de nieuwe schepen, zullen enkele van de oudere schepen worden overgeheveld naar andere diensten van Yang Ming. Zo zal de 'Ming Pine' straks het 3.725 teu schip 'Ming Heaven' gaan opvolgen. Het totaal aantal teu op de dienst neemt dus toe. Van Doorn: "We hebben meer ruimte beschikbaar, net als alle andere Verre Oostencarriers. De behoefte aan extra ruimte op de markt is er al, al heb ik het idee dat de capaciteit momenteel iets vooruitloopt op de groei van het ladingaanbod."

De nieuwe 5.551 teu schepen zijn de grootste schepen die stuwadoor Hanno in de Waalhaven tot nu toe te verwerken heeft gekregen.

Om de nieuwe generatie schepen te kunnen ontvangen, werd de Waalhaven eind vorige zomer uitgebaggerd tot een diepte van 14 meter. Het Gemeentelijk Havenbedrijf Rotterdam en Rijkswaterstaat onderzoeken of het in de toekomst nog een halve meter dieper kan. Na de zomer wordt in elk geval de ingang van de Waalhaven verbreed, door middel van het weghalen van de kop van de Sluisjesdijk pier.

DFDS Tor Lines neemt Lisco over

Kopenhagen - DFDS Tor Lines neemt de Litouwse staatsrederij Lithunia Shipping Company (Lisco) over. De Deense onderneming heeft hiervoor toestemming gekregen van de Litouwse regering. Het wachten is nog op goedkeuring van de privatiseringsinstantie in Litouwen. De verwachting is dat die goedkeuring deze week nog komt.

DFDS Tor Lines heeft 113 miljoen euro geboden voor de staatsrederij. Daarvan is 57 miljoen bestemd voor de regering van Litouwen. Daarmee kan de Deense onderneming 76,9 procent van de aandelen in handen krijgen. Het resterende bedrag van 56 miljoen euro behelst een investeringsplan. DFDS Tor Lines wil die investeringen de komende drie tot vier jaar plegen.

Het was het vierde bod dat Litouwen voor Lisco had ontvangen. Met de overname wil DFDS Tor Lines een sterkere positie in het Baltisch gebied veroveren. Het Deense bedrijf is vooral geïnteresseerd in de ro/ro activiteiten van Lisco op de Oostzee

NAVY NEWS

A Taiwan Navy FAB (Fast Attack Boat) fires an anti-ship missile off the southern Taiwan Strait during the annual 'Han Kuang (Chinese glory) exercise' in Pingtung on April 20, 2001. Taiwan's military

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

practiced how to repel a Chinese invasion, just days ahead of a potentially explosive U.S. decision on which advanced weapons to sell to the island.

The U.S. Navy ship **USS Coronado** is turned by tugboats as it prepares to dock at the Port of Los Angeles during a visit Thursday, April 19, 2001. The Coronado will serve as the Third Fleet command ship and as what the Navy describes as their only sea-based battle lab



....AT LAST BUT NOT LEAST No Court Martial for Sub Skipper

WASHINGTON (AP) - The admiral who heads the U.S. Pacific Fleet has decided not to court-martial the skipper of the USS Greeneville and may inform him as early as Friday, defense officials said. The decision by Adm. Thomas Fargo is in line with the unanimous recommendation of a three-admiral court of inquiry which investigated the Greeneville's Feb. 9 collision with a Japanese fishery school's training vessel. The collision off Honolulu sank the Japanese ship and left nine Japanese missing at sea.

Fargo intends to tell Cmdr. Scott Waddle that he will receive nonjudicial punishment under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. That means Waddle's Navy career will be ended, although he will not face the prospect of jail time.

Fargo may issue a formal reprimand to Waddle and grant him an honorable discharge with a pension, the officials said. Waddle could also be fined.

News reports on the likelihood that Fargo would forgo a court-martial of Waddle have drawn sharp criticism in Japan. There are strong feelings there that Waddle was to blame for failing to detect the Ehime Maru before his submarine surfaced rapidly in a demonstration of emergency procedures. Navy officials have acknowledged that the demonstration was done only for the benefit of 16 civilians aboard, three of whom were seated at the sub's controls at the time of the collision.

Waddle has apologized for the collision and accepted full blame.

Rear Adm. Charles H. Griffiths Jr., who led a preliminary investigation into the collision, testified at the March court of inquiry in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, that he did not believe Waddle had acted with criminal negligence, although he said the skipper had made serious errors of judgment.

On Friday a Japanese official said the families of those killed will not be satisfied unless Waddle faces a court-martial.

Rear Adm. Robert Chaplin, commander of the U.S. Naval Forces in Japan, and eight other officers, met Friday with Moriyyuki Kato, the governor of the state of Ehime, where the fishing school is located.

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER

``We could expect quite strong resentment from the families" if Waddle does not face court-martial proceedings, Moriyuki was quoted as saying by state official Masaru Inagaki. Moriyuki was citing news reports saying that the skipper will probably be given a lesser punishment.

Chaplin later met with relatives of the victims and students at the fisheries high school in the city of Uwajimain.

School official Toshihiko Nakao said the meeting lasted about an hour. Some relatives asked questions, he said, declining to give details. He also would not comment on the atmosphere of the talks.