

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER 2003 – 016



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Indonesian Navy fires at foreign trawler

JAKARTA - The Indonesian Navy said it fired at a foreign trawler and arrested its 25-member crew in an increasingly violent campaign to crack down on illegal fishing in its waters.

The navy defended the heavy-handed action a week after it sank four boats from the Philippines and detained their crew members for allegedly fishing in Indonesian waters illegally.

The 49 fishermen were eventually sent home, after the Manila government complained that excessive force had been used in their arrest.

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Rear-Admiral I Wayan Argawa said his men acted appropriately yesterday after the trawler - believed to be either Chinese or Taiwanese - attempted to flee when sailors tried to board it.

Two fishermen on the trawler were slightly injured in the incident and the vessel was towed to the Papuan port of Merauke, he said.

He revealed that the crew would be detained for questioning and their haul of 30 tonnes of tuna and shrimp impounded.

'We took this stern action because they didn't have any legal documents,' he said, adding that the boat was not flying a national flag.

'This shooting reflects the firm stand of the Indonesian Navy in enforcing the law at sea,' he declared.

Illegal fishing is common in the waters off Indonesia, the world's largest archipelago nation. The navy often complains it does not have the resources to patrol the vast territorial waters

Tanker *Stemnitsa's* sister ship approaching Primorsk oil terminal



The Russian Primorsk oil terminal in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland reported on Tuesday evening that the *Nounou*, a sister vessel of the controversial oil tanker *Stemnitsa*, was in the Gulf of Finland en route to Primorsk.

The *Stemnitsa* itself reached Primorsk on Tuesday morning after a difficult passage through thick ice. It is expected to leave Primorsk with a load of more than 100,000 tonnes of crude oil. The Russian Ministry of Transport has promised that it would be escorted by two icebreakers.

Once the *Stemnitsa* reaches waters where it no longer needs icebreaker assistance, the breakers are to turn back and help *Nounou* get into port.

Finland considers the *Stemnitsa* unfit to sail under the icy conditions that prevail in the Gulf of Finland. The Minerva shipping company says that because of the controversy, it has tried to change the shipping contracts for the *Stemnitsa* and the *Nounou*.

However, according to the shipping line, this did not suit Minerva's contractual partner, and as a result, the ships are to continue sailing to and from Primorsk until the contracts run out.

The shipping line notes that both ships have visited Primorsk twice this winter and that there have been no problems.

Finland's Minister of Transport and Communications **Kimmo Sasi** (Nat. Coalition) was in touch with his Russian counterpart **Sergei Franck** twice on Tuesday.

Franck agreed to Finland's minimum demand - that two icebreakers should be used to escort the *Stemnitsa*.

The European Commission was also in contact with Russian officials over the affair. The Commission expressed the hope that Russian officials would take the possible environmental impact of the situation into consideration. However, the Commission does not feel that the risk is excessive, in spite of the thick ice that now covers the Gulf of Finland.

"It is no *Prestige*. The *Stemnitsa* was built in 2000 and it has a double-hull", said Commission spokesman **Jonathan Todd**.

The single-hulled *Prestige* sank in November off the Spanish coast, causing massive environmental damage.

The environmental organisation **Greenpeace** held a demonstration about the *Stemnitsa* controversy in front of the Russian Embassy in Helsinki on Tuesday. The Finnish League for Nature Protection, meanwhile, is calling for uniform ice classifications for the Gulf of Finland.

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The organisation also urges Finland and the EU to put pressure on the International Maritime Organisation to declare the Baltic Sea a "very sensitive" sea area.

According to **Mikhail Kotchkin**, the captain of the Primorsk oil terminal, a third oil tanker of the same calibre as the *Stemnitsa* and the *Nounou* has also sailed to Primorsk to fetch oil this winter. Kotchkin said that he understands the concern the Finns are feeling, and he emphasised that Russia has strict safety regulations.

"The speed must not exceed four knots. The vessel must maintain a certain distance to the icebreaker. When necessary, we use two icebreakers", Kotchkin explained.

He also said that some vessels had been refused entry into Primorsk, either because the hulls were too weak or the engines inadequate.

The severe ice conditions prevailing in the Gulf of Finland have caused considerable problems for Russian oil exports. Oil production in Russia is constantly growing, but oil companies are having a difficult time getting their oil onto the world market.

While the price of crude oil is currently quite high on the international market - more than 30 dollars a barrel - Russia is suffering from an internal oil glut, with prices as low as 13 dollars a barrel.

In addition to the thick ice covering the Gulf of Finland, a major reason for the current difficulties is the reported refusal of the Russian oil pipeline monopoly Transneft to deliver any oil to the ice-free harbour of Ventspils in Latvia. Before the completion of the Primorsk oil terminal, much of Russia's oil exports went from Ventspils.

Experts in the trade say that Transneft is trying to pressure Latvia to sell it a share of the Ventspils harbour facility. Officially the reason for the boycott is a protest against the pricing policy of Ventspils. Russia's privatised oil companies are unhappy with the powerful position that Transneft has over the country's oil pipelines.

België woedend na lozing Yerseks schip

BRUSSEL/BRUGGE - De Belgische milieuminister Tavernier is woedend op de kapitein van het Yersekse zandwinningsschip Saeftinghe, van waaruit woensdag olie is geloosd op zee, in de buurt van het wrak van de autotransporteur Tricolor. Tavernier onderzoekt de mogelijkheid om de vergunning voor zandwinning in Belgische wateren in te trekken.

Volgens de bewindsman is woensdag vanuit een patrouillevliegtuig geconstateerd hoe het schip olie loosde in een Belgische zeezone. De Belgische autoriteiten zeggen dat het vaak gebeurt dat andere schepen olie lozen op zee, in de buurt van wrakken waaruit al afvalolie lekt. Nu op Belgische stranden vrijwilligers handen te kort komen om met olie besmeurde vogels te redden, wil de groene bewindsman hard optreden tegen andere lozers.

De kapitein van het schip uit Yerseke is inmiddels verhoord door justitie in Brugge. Hij zegt dat bij het spoelen van ballasttanks juist olie uit de Tricolor in zijn schip terecht is gekomen. Hij is niet aangehouden.

Tavernier vraagt overigens ook om spoedoverleg met de Franse autoriteiten over de Tricolor.

Doric Chariot grounding pilot loses licence

THE pilot on board the **Doric Chariot** when the bulk carrier grounded on the Great Barrier Reef last July has lost his licence permanently after an AMSA inquiry, reports Lloyd's List DCN.

The inquiry found that Willem Boot had been asleep while the ship was navigating in restricted waters off Piper Reef, leading to AMSA taking the rare step of cancelling the pilot's licence.

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An AMSA spokesman said that the licence was removed after the pilot "demonstrated incompetence or misconduct" under Marine Orders section 651.

The authority expects the decision to be taken to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, he said.

The pilot's employer at the time, Torres Pilots, has confirmed that it has lost the business of the Doric Chariot's owners, Chios Navigation of London.

Torres Pilots general manager Perry Sutton said it was disappointing that AMSA had moved to remove the pilot's licence before the Australian Transport Safety Bureau report on the grounding has been published.

Mr Boot had a total 20 years' experience in the reef as a pilot and master of one of AMSA's own vessels, he said.

Pressure from the green lobby is leading to zero-tolerance of accidents at a time when traffic on the reef routes is increasing rapidly and standards of crewing on ships under pilotage is dropping, Mr Sutton said.

Australian pilotage services also face ageing staffs, compounded by recruitment of regional pilots to higher-paying jobs in capital city ports. The rate of accidents proportional to traffic on the reef is actually falling, he said.

Bedrijven vragen meer tijd voor plan berging Tricolor

VLISSINGEN - De berging van het gezonken autoschip Tricolor begint op z'n vroegst in maart. Tien bergingsbedrijven zijn door de verzekeraar van de Noorse eigenaar Wilh. Wilhelmsen gevraagd in te schrijven.

Oorspronkelijk zou de inschrijving morgen sluiten, maar dat is uitgesteld tot maandag 17 februari. Volgens woordvoerder T. Ronnevig van Wilh. Wilhelmsen is de deadline verschoven, omdat de inschrijvers meer tijd nodig hebben. „Het gaat om een ingewikkelde bergingsoperatie. Wij nemen daarom liever in de voorfase extra tijd dan dat wij tijdens de berging op problemen stuiten.“ De beoordeling van de inschrijvingen zal nog eens twee weken vergen, denkt Ronnevig.

Smit Internationale is een van de tien bedrijven die zijn benaderd. Als de Rotterdamse firma de opdracht in de wacht sleept, wordt dat een van zijn omvangrijkste bergingsoperaties ooit, aldus voorlichter L. Walder. Het in 1987 bij Zeebrugge gezonken veerschip Herald of Free Enterprise was ongeveer de helft zo groot. Walder vergelijkt de Tricolor vanwege de afmetingen met een flatgebouw: 190 meter lang, 32 meter breed en 30 meter hoog.

De Tricolor zal niet meer in de vaart komen. Het schip is total loss en kan waarschijnlijk alleen in stukken verwijderd worden. De berging gaat vermoedelijk een paar maanden in beslag nemen. „Maar we blijven op die plek, op open zee, sterk afhankelijk van de weersomstandigheden.“ Smit Internationale wist al de opdracht te verwerven voor het wegpompen van de 2000 ton brandstof uit de autocarrier. De olie moet er voor de berging uit, omdat er anders grote kans is op ernstig milieuverontreinigende lekkages.

Wilh. Wilhelmsen is de eigenaar van de Tricolor, die half december ten noorden van Duinkerken zonk na een aanvaring. Dit bedrijf heeft het schip verhuurd aan de dochteronderneming Wallenius Wilhelmsen Lines in Noorwegen. Om fiscale redenen staat de Tricolor geregistreerd op de Bahama's.

'Tienduizenden lekkende vaten liggen in zee'

Tienduizenden vaten met radioactief afval die tot en met 1982 onder meer vanuit Zeebrugge in de Atlantische Oceaan werden gedumpt, zijn lek. Daarvan is de Belgische staatssecretaris Deleuze van Energie overtuigd.

Deleuze trekt die conclusie uit de melding van een oud-directeur van het kernenergiecentrum in Mol-Dessel dat meer dan 400 daar opgeslagen vaten lekkages vertonen. De staatssecretaris wil daarover zo snel mogelijk overleg met de Belgische instelling voor radioactief afval, al zegt een woordvoester daarvan dat de situatie minder alarmerend is dan de oud-directeur heeft beweerd. Deleuze heeft ook spoedberaad aangekondigd met de burgemeesters van de betrokken gemeenten.

In het najaar van 1982 leidden treintransporten met nucleair afval uit Zwitserland en België tot felle protesten, onder meer in Zeebrugge, waar Nederlandse dumschepen de lading innamen.

Belgische baggerschepen voor Indonesische kust zijn vrij

De drie Belgische baggerschepen van Jan de Nul en DEME die voor de kust van Indonesië aan de ketting lagen, zijn weer los. Dat heeft Jan Piet de Nul, gedelegeerd bestuurder van baggeraar Jan de Nul, donderdag gezegd. De drie schepen liggen terug in Singapore. Jan de Nul lag met de baggerschepen Vasco da Gama en Alexander von Humboldt al een zestal maanden vast voor de Indonesische kust. DEME verkeerde met zijn schip De Lange Wapper in dezelfde situatie. Jan de Nul en DEME werden door de Indonesische regering, samen met de reders van een tiental andere schepen, beschuldigd van zanddiefstal. Jakarta wou de schepen pas laten gaan na het betalen van een schadevergoeding.

De Nul en DEME betalen zowat 20 miljoen dollar 'losgeld' voor de drie schepen, bevestigde de Nul. "Een schandalig bedrag", zegt de gedelegeerd bestuurder. Eén van hun schepen bereikte woensdagnacht al Singapore. Het tweede schip en het DEME-schip bereikten donderdag Singapore, waar beide baggeraars aan een opspuitingsproject werken.

De Nul ontkent in alle toonaarden de zanddiefstal. Hij wijst er nog eens op dat ze ook door een rechtbank zijn vrijgesproken. Volgens de baggeraar had de Nul enkel contact met Indonesische concessiehouders. Het zijn die concessiehouders die de overheid misleidden, aldus de baggeraar. "De overheid pakt die concessiehouder niet aan, maar wel de derde partij die er niets mee te maken heeft".

De Nul laat zich niet afschrikken door de problemen in Indonesië. "We zijn trouwens verplicht om opnieuw in Indonesië te gaan werken", luidt het bij de Nul. De firma heeft contracten lopen in Singapore en is verplicht ofwel in Maleisië ofwel in Indonesië zand te gaan halen. "We werken waar ons werk wordt aangeboden". De schepen lagen zo'n zes maanden vast voor de kust. Het is de bedoeling dat ze direct weer worden ingezet.

CASUALTY REPORTING

Ship sinks in Beirut Port after collision

A ship carrying 7,000 tons of iron sunk in the Port of Beirut, in what is believed to be the first such instance since the civil war.

A late-afternoon collision between the **Irina-D** and the **Future** in the port caused the **Irina-D** to sink with its load, official sources said.

Ironically, a meeting of the committee regulating the Port of Beirut's activities was taking place when

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news of the incident spread.

The **Future** had loaded its cargo and was executing a turn in preparation to leave the port when it hit the **Future**, according to port sources. The **Irina-D** sunk in a shallow basin.

Public Works and Transport Minister Najib Mikati, who was told about the incident as he chaired the meeting of ministry and port officials, issued instructions to start making the necessary arrangements for salvaging the ship. "We have issued instructions to deal with the problem and we have asked them to hold a meeting later this evening at the port's director's office," said a statement issued by the Port of Beirut.

Mikati recommended the ship be unloaded prior to a salvage attempt, "without causing more damage to it." The minister said that an inquiry into the incident would be opened and pledged to "prosecute anybody who is found to have failed in his duties."

The **Irina-D** was moored next to pier nine and was carrying about 7,000 tons of iron, the statement said. **Irina-D** is owned by Sea Shipping. The other ship involved in the collision, the **Future**, carrying containers owned by the local Henry Hilde shipping agency, remained afloat.

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BigLift sets sights on bigger Buccaneer

BigLift Shipping, following its extensive newbuilding and fleet replacement programme, is currently enjoying high utilisation rates.



placed on the ship's deck.

At the yard of Kone Cranes in Finland, **Happy Rover** loaded three 280 tonne shipboard gantry cranes for Beaumont in Texas, where they will be mounted US Navy supply vessels to provide self-sustaining capabilities.

The 22 m high Munck-type cranes (Kone now has the licence to manufacture this type of shipboard gantry crane) have a span of 31 m and were therefore too wide to be

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This was solved by placing tweendeck hatch covers both on the weatherdeck and coaming of the vessel, thereby giving extra width on deck.

In a project taking up three voyages, **Happy Rover** transported ship sections from Gdansk in Poland to St. Nazaire in France, and while possibly it would have been cheaper to use barge transport for this requirement, the shipyard decided that carriage by ship offered a more secure solution as loss of a module could considerably delay ship delivery.

Each voyage contained sections of different cruise vessels, which will be assembled and finished at the Alstom Marine Chantier de l'Atlantique shipyard at St Nazaire. The last shipment of this current contract included sections for the long-awaited **Queen Mary**. At Rotterdam, the Cosco-owned but BigLift-managed **Da Fu** loaded a 21,000 cu m cargo, comprising a complete, but dismantled, brewery for the east Siberian city of Vanino.

With most of the knocked-down brewery stowed under deck, there was just enough space for two navy craft of 100 tons each to be carried on deck, which were to be delivered to Jeddah en route. Also at Rotterdam, **Tracer** loaded a full deck-load of offshore equipment destined for Heerema's crane barge **Balder**. At Port Fourchon in the US, the **Balder** will unload the cargo herself using its own crane.



At Tampico in Mexico **Happy Buccaneer** loaded nine pieces for the Mega Methanol plant being built at Point Lisas, Trinidad. One piece, a 490 tonne boiler measuring 19 x 8.22 x 12.50 metres, needed to be flipped over on its side before actual loading on board could take place.

After a voyage of some seven days, **Happy Buccaneer** discharged all cargoes at Point Lisas.

In the course of the last two years or so, HRSG (Heat Recovery Steam Generation) modules turned out to be a major cargo, mainly from the Far East. BigLift moved a volume of around 105,000 frt of these voluminous (but fairly light weight at between 86 to 160 tonnes) flat packages to the US. HRSG modules are used in the power industry to store heat between production and further use.

The two Project vessels have been taken out of the fleet and followed by the two Scan vessels which were redelivered to their owners. All of these 9,800 dwt vessels will leave the heavylift market because although reasonably well geared with twin 175 tonne derricks, they are not considered competitive for today's modern fleet requirements.

The new Cosco ships, which BigLift manages, have easily compensated for the lost fleet capacity of these older ships, with 17,000 dwt capacity and equipped with two 250 tonne deck cranes. Although approximately the same size as the R class ships, also constructed in China, these have two 400- tonne cranes, while the smaller 8,200 dwt T class are fitted with two 275 tonne units.

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Meanwhile, BigLift is believed to be in the advanced stages of planning a dedicated heavylift flagship exceeding the present capability of the **Happy Buccaneer** which may well see Jumbo's 1,600 tonne lift design outsized.

Although Arie Peterse, BigLift managing director, has spoken up against the current trend in newbuilding activities, nevertheless, he considers that at 17 years old, **Happy Buccaneer** is nearing the end of its productive life in the front line of the company's specialised heavylift business.

With new technology, particularly in crane design, competitively available, it may well be that the company will opt for a 1,800 tonne lift or even go for a record twin 1,000 tonne crane configuration.

THE BIGLIFT FLEET

Happy Buccaneer

Length o.a.	145.89 m
Breadth moulded	28.30 m
Summer draft	8.24 m
Deadweight summer (seawater)	13,740 mt
Heavy lift gear	2 cranes, each 550 mt

Happy River/Ranger/ Rover/ Enchanter

Length o.a.	138.04 m
Breadth moulded	22.80 m
Summer draft	9.52 m
Deadweight summer (seawater)	15,634 mt
Heavy lift gear	2 cranes, each 400 mt

Tramper / Tracer / Traveller / Transporter

Length o.a.	100.50 m
Breadth moulded	22.40 m
Summer draft	8.20 m
Deadweight summer (seawater)	8,200 mt
Heavy lift gear	2 cranes, each 275 mt

Project Europa

Length o.a.	139.00 m
Breadth moulded	22.89 m
Summer draft	8.67 m
Deadweight summer (seawater)	13,426 mt
Heavy lift gear	2 derricks, each 350 mt

Envoyager

Length o.a.	152.64 m
Breadth moulded	26.80 m
Summer draft	9.528 m
Deadweight summer (seawater)	21,183 mt
Heavy lift gear	1 crane of 426 mt

Da Fu / Da Qiang / Da Hua / Da Zhong

Length o.a.	153.00 m
Breadth moulded	23.00 m
Summer draft	9.12 m
Deadweight summer (seawater)	16,957 mt
Heavy lift gear	2 cranes, each 250 mt

NAVY NEWS

Hr.Ms. Witte de With terug uit Middellandse Zee



Het luchtverdedigingsfregat **Hr.Ms. Witte de With** keerde vrijdag 7 februari terug uit de Middellandse Zee van deelname aan de internationale strijd tegen het terrorisme. Het fregat kwam 's ochtends binnen in de Nieuwe Haven te Den Helder.

Hr.Ms. Witte de With vertrok op 29 augustus 2002 vanuit Den Helder richting de Middellandse Zee. Daar fungeerde het schip als vlaggenschip van de commandant van de Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED), de Nederlandse commandeur H.P. Wirth. Dit eskader neemt deel aan de internationale strijd tegen het terrorisme in de NAVO-operatie "Active Endeavour". **Hr.Ms.**

Witte de With is afgelost door **Hr.Ms. Abraham van der Hulst**, een multipurpose-fregat, dat tevens de staf van het vlootverband accommodeert.



Left :

The Dutch frigate **Hr Ms Van Nes** escorting the US transport roll on/off vessel **USNS FISHER** in the Red Sea.

MOVEMENTS

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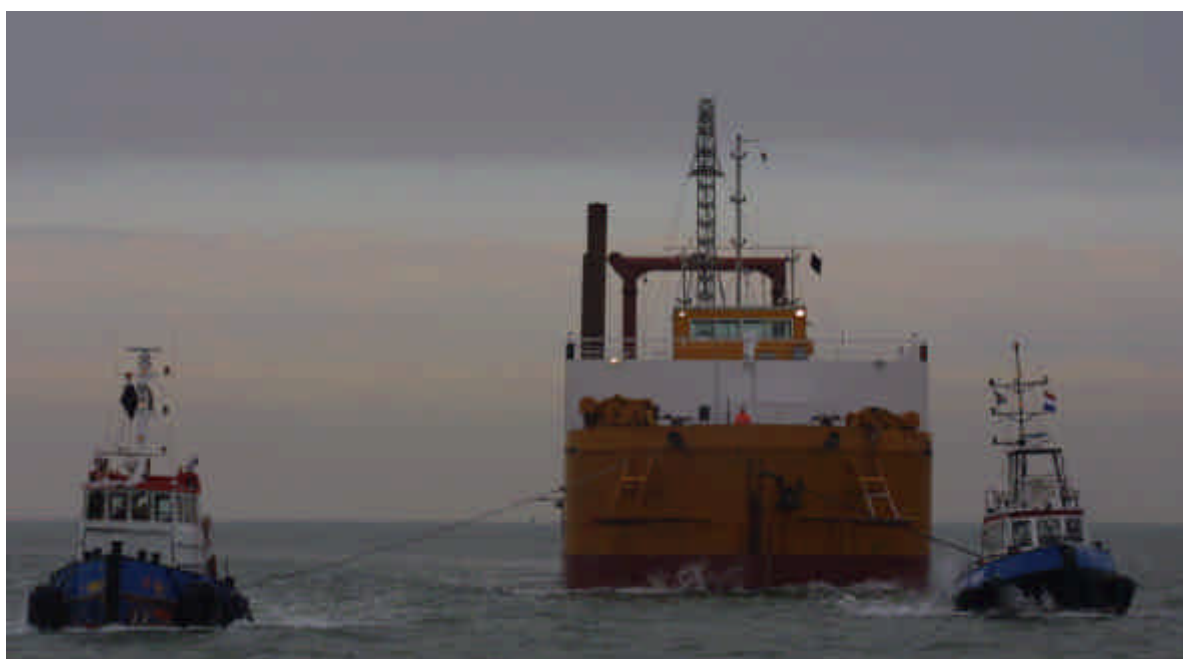
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Two pictures of the **COASTAL SPIDER** (Former **MEDA** of Van der Stoel) under tow by 2 Rederij Waterweg tugs **COASTAL POWER** and the **TIJGER** from Delfzijl to Den Helder.

Photo : Rederij Waterweg BV – Den Helder



THE TUG “HUA AN” (Former Smit New York) IS EXPECTED AT THE MAAS CENTRE BUOY SATURDAY MORNING 08:00 HRS WITH THE BARGE “OCEAN SEAL”

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The **BATTLEAXE** operating in Swansea Bay – [photo : Chris Jones ©](#)



Top : The **STIRLING ISLAY** is renamed in **ISLAY** as well the **STIRLING JURA** (below) which is renamed in **JURA** are now owned by BUE and departed Friday morning from OTP Walker on the Tyne to Istanbul for works in the Caspian Sea

At Istanbul the wheelhouse will be cut off for the passage to the Caspian Sea.

[Photo's/info : Kevin Blair ©](#)



AIRCRAFT / AIRPORT NEWS

Ryanair's Q3 profit up 50% as passenger growth jumps 46%

Ryanair Holdings posted a 50 per cent increase in fiscal third-quarter profit after expanding its network and almost doubling passenger numbers.



Mr O'Leary: 'We are charging lower fares but carrying more passengers on newer, bigger aircraft which give us lower operating costs' attracted travellers with lower fares.

Net income for the three months ended Dec 31 rose to 43.2 million euros (\$81.3 million), or 5.63 cents a share, from 28.8 million euros, or 3.92 cents, in the year-earlier period. Sales rose 37 per cent to 186 million euros. The no-frills airline raised its full-year profit forecast 2.2 per cent to 235 million euros.

'We are charging lower fares but carrying more passengers on newer, bigger aircraft which give us lower operating costs,' CEO Michael O'Leary said.

The airline is adding planes and expanding its network of routes and base airports as it plans to become Europe's biggest scheduled airline. Ryanair carried 46 per cent more passengers in the third quarter than a year earlier as it

During the third quarter, Ryanair carried 3.9 million passengers, filling 86 per cent of its seats, compared with 79 per cent in the year-earlier period, after it cut fares by 8 per cent.

The carrier has to achieve a load factor in the 'low' 50 per cent range to break even, and that figure is falling, Mr O'Leary said.

Ryanair has said it will probably carry 15.7 million people in fiscal 2003. Mr O'Leary said he expects as many as 24 million passengers in fiscal 2004, higher than his earlier forecast of about 20 million, after Ryanair said last week it plans to buy KLM Royal Dutch Airlines NV's low-cost Buzz unit for 23.9 million euros.

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The Buzz 'purchase price made this deal, in our view a very attractive proposition,' Mr O'Leary said. 'Fortune favours the brave, and as Warren Buffett has proven many times, the time to buy is when everyone else is selling and prices are low. I believe that this is one of those times.'

Mr O'Leary said he expects to make Buzz profitable by June and sees its traffic doubling to four million passengers a year.

Ryanair last week increased a firm **order for 103 Boeing Co 737-800s to 125**, and added 78 new options to its existing 47. It also announced its fourth mainland Europe base at Stockholm Skavsta last week, adding to existing sites at Frankfurt-Hahn, Brussels Charleroi and Milan Bergamo

RIJNMOND WEATHER

Vooruitzichten van zaterdag t/m dinsdag:

Weinig verandering!

Veel bewolking, ook af en toe en vooral zondagmiddag wat lichte regen.

© Ed Aldus 2003	ZA-08	ZO-09	MA-10	DI-11
Maximumtemperatuur:	7	7	6	7
Minimumtemperatuur:	3	4	3	3
Zonnekans in %:	20	20	30	30
Neerslagkans in %:	20	40	20	30
Windrichting kracht:	ZW-3-5	Z-4-5	ZW-3-5	W-3-5

.... STORY OF THE DAY

Dockwise plans \$50m annual fleet upgrades

Not content with the acquisition of OHT's newbuildings **Blue Marlin** and **Black Marlin** and the jumboisation of its **Mighty Servant 1**, Dockwise is set on an ambitious fleet renewal programme which will see it invest some \$50m annually over the next decade.

The company has been encouraged by the jumboising of its **Mighty Servant 1** which underwent a major \$18m conversion to widen the beam by 10 m to 50 m and length to 190 m.



This increased its deadweight from 27,720 tonnes to 45,000 tonnes, although this is still smaller than the two Marlin ships at 57,000 dwt.

Left: The Dock Express 11 departing from Rotterdam February 17th, 2002

Photo : Piet Sinke ©

Even this massive load carrying capacity Dockwise considers will not be sufficient for the future, as it anticipates at least one transport in the

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60,000 to 70,000 tonne range every year.

Currently, for instance, it is looking at eight ultra large projects between 2004 and 2005 plus a further seven between 2006 and 2008, including the transport of Petrobras' P51 and possibly P52 which are under serious discussion.

At some 70,000 tonnes, the Aker P-56 design will be one of the largest moves ever made.

While the **Mighty Servant 1** conversion was speculative, although the contract to carry the 32,750 tonne P36 production rig was possibly under consideration but had not been awarded, its latest conversion project is being undertaken following the contract to carry BP's ultra large deepwater semi-submersible BP Thunder Horse rig from the Daewoo fabrication yard in South Korea to the Gulf of Mexico.

At around 56,000 tonnes, the ultra-deepwater rig due for completion late 2003/ early 2004, will be the largest cargo ever carried on a heavylift ship, beating the previous record when the 41,100 tonne P40 was carried in 2000.

The BP Thunder Horse rig is designed for operating in 6,000 ft water depth at the Thunder Horse field in the Gulf of Mexico, which with some 1bn boe potential, is the largest in the region and set to come on stream in 2005.

This conversion has sparked off interest in even larger tonnage leading to the contract placed with Hyundai Mipo Dockyard of Ulsan, South Korea for the jumboisation of the semi-submersible heavy transport vessel **Blue Marlin** at a cost of around \$25-30m.

The vessel will be widened by 21 metres to create a stable platform of 63 metres breadth providing an unobstructed deck area of 11,227 sq m.

The conversion, which will take place during the second half of 2003, will also include the installation of additional propulsion in the form of retractable thrusters, upgrading of the ballast system and reinforcing some of the deck areas, particularly in the region of the stern.

After jumboisation and upgrading, the **Blue Marlin** will have a deadweight of 78,000 tons, enabling the vessel to carry heavy structures up to 73,000 tons.

This will not be the end of the group's fleet renewal programme however.

In addition to a potential rebuild of **Black Marlin**, probably to the same dimensions as **Blue Marlin**, Dockwise intends to embark on a newbuilding programme.

Several years ago it carried extensive investigations and tank testing into a new ultra large delta form semi-submersible but concluded that the risk-reward ratio was not right.

It then investigated a more conventionally shaped 200 m x 62 m vessel, tank tested at MARIN, but once the Marlinships were acquired, Dockwise management concluded that a conversion would provide a more practical and viable solution.

Accordingly, the board has now given approval to place an order next year for a dedicated yacht carrier which will probably replace two of the Dock Express ships.

The design of the new ship is still under discussion, but will probably resemble the lengthened 170 m by 32 m beam **Super Servant 4** and incorporate the features highlighted in a questionnaire sent to all previous and existing yacht clients.

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While the ship will be designed for yacht transport, it will also have sufficient strength to enable it to operate in the conventional heavy lift market when required.

At the time of delivery of this ship, probably around 2004, Dockwise then intends to order another new-building which is planned to be a larger Mighty Servant type ship as a replacement for one of the existing semi-submersible vessels.

However, Dockwise stresses that this programme is for replacement and fleet renewal, not expansion, as over-capacity continues to be the biggest underlying problem the industry faces.

Next year two Chinese-built semi-submersible vessels ordered by Cosco will enter service.

Sized between the Mighty and the Super Servant class ships, these ship will pose a serious threat to its Swan class ships as Dockwise admits it "cannot compete with Chinese pricing".

However, if this is the case, it will probably withdraw two or more of its Swan multi-purpose class from the heavylift market and place them in the wet products trade where, although the rates are bad, at least they can be kept trading.

.....PHOTO OF THE DAY.....

CORRECT MANOEUVRE ???



top : A Maersk container vessel passing the English Channel changing course for a fishing vessel.

Who you think was sweating more ?? the person on the wheelhouse of the Maersk container vessel or the helmsman (if any) at the fishing vessel.

Photo : Netherlands Coast Guard Airplane