

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER 2003 – 050



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The **MAERSK ACHIEVER** seen here arriving Saturday at Stavanger – **photo : Terje Moen ©**

EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS

Cruise ship sold at auction for \$1.75 million



Forced to the auction block because of unpaid bills, the **Regal Empress** passenger ship was sold Friday for \$1.75 million to a Fort Lauderdale-based cruise line.

Imperial Majesty Cruise Lines was the high bidder for the 900-passenger ship, which was sold to pay creditors of its cash-starved owner, Regal Cruises. Imperial Majesty president Arthur Pollack said the vessel will retain the **Regal Empress** name and likely begin two-day, two-night cruises from Fort Lauderdale to Nassau, Bahamas, next month. Regal Cruises shut down operations in the wake of unpaid bills and the seizure of its only ship by federal marshals on April 18. The company owed \$750,000 to a Fort Lauderdale company for engine repairs and \$300,000 to Port Manatee for dockage and other fees that date back to November.

Towage take-over 'imminent'

HONGKONG United Dockyards (HUD) has declined to confirm or deny reports that it is about to acquire a 55 per cent stake in Australian towage operator Australian Maritime Services. Two media reports claim an announcement may be imminent. AMS in Melbourne has also been tight-lipped, although today's Australian Financial Review claimed industry sources had confirmed the deal. An HUD spokesman was quoted in the paper as saying: "HUD and AMS have been exploring a number of ways the two companies can expand their current business relationship in the future. No definitive agreements have been reached." HUD group's Hongkong Salvage & Towage owns AMS's Brisbane tugs Yam O and Ngan Chau and Melbourne tugs Yarra and Flinders. John Moller, MD of hard-pressed Adsteam Marine, commented that his company was prepared to meet the challenge of rival operators,

but added that Adsteam's new business plan announced earlier this week will ensure Adsteam remains "a formidable competitor" in Australian and UK towage.

'De Rotterdam kan nog wel 500 jaar mee'

door : Alexander Bakker

De kennismaking met het cruiseschip Rotterdam heeft Bert Kloosterziel blij verrast. Het schip, dat als Rembrandt nog in de haven van Freeport op de Bahama's ligt, verkeert volgens hem in een verrassend goede staat. „Zeker als je bedenkt dat het schip ruim twee jaar heeft stilgelegen,” zegt Kloosterziel, die namens de RDM-werf aan boord van het schip is.



De **SS Rotterdam** als **SS Rembrandt** arriveert in oktober 1998 bij Hoek van Holland.

Foto : Piet Sinke ©

Kloosterziel is de vertegenwoordiger van de eigenaar. Twee weken geleden is het voormalige vlaggenschip van de Holland America Line (HAL) door de RDM-werf gekocht. Op last van de bank van de inmiddels failliete rederij Premier Cruise ligt het schip al ruim twee jaar 'aan de ketting' in de haven van Freeport op het eiland Grand Bahama, één van de grootste eilanden van de paradijselijke archipel.

„Voor een schip van vijftig jaar oud én na ruim twee jaar opgelegd te hebben gelegen ziet ze er prima uit,” laat Bert Kloosterziel vanaf het schip weten. Helemaal verwonderlijk is dat niet, want hoewel werkeloos aan de kade, heeft er toch al die tijd een kleine bemanning op het schip gezeten. „Een man of acht, verdeeld over twee ploegen en onder leiding van een officier,” vertelt Kloosterziel. „Zij hebben zich beziggehouden met onderhoud en wachtlopen. Kortom, ze hebben op het schip gepast en er voor gezorgd dat alles in orde blijft.”

Die bemanningsleden hebben enthousiast gereageerd op het bericht dat het schip van eigenaar is veranderd. „De mensen die aan boord zitten vinden het een prachtig schip,” vertelt Kloosterziel. „Ze hadden het zonde gevonden als het schip naar de sloop zou zijn gegaan. Daar zag het op een gegeven moment echt naar uit. Een ander schip van Premier Cruise, de Big Red Boat 3, dat ook in Freeport lag opgelegd, is wel aan een sloper verkocht.”

Kloosterziel had in zijn koffer folders van de stichting Behoud Stoomschip Rotterdam. Ook had hij de Nederlandse kranten bij zich, waarin de koop van het schip door de RDM-werf is gemeld. „De mensen aan boord waardeerden het enorm dat er zulke enorme inspanningen zijn gedaan om het schip naar huis terug te brengen,” zegt Kloosterziel.

Dat het cruiseschip van eigenaar is veranderd is vooralsnog aan de bevolking van de Bahama's voorbij gegaan. Het nieuws heeft de plaatselijk krant nog niet gehaald. „Ik heb er in ieder geval nog niets over gehoord,” meldt Kloosterziel. „Als er wel wat in de krant zou hebben gestaan, dat hadden de bemanningsleden het me wel verteld.”

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Zelf heeft Bert Kloosterziel nog nauwelijks tijd gehad om aan de wal te gaan. Hij heeft zich, sinds hij ruim tien dagen geleden na een reis van veertien uur aan boord is gegaan, gevestigd in de hut van de hoofdwerktuigkundige. Direct na aankomst heeft hij een eerste inspectieronde over het schip gemaakt. „Ik was enorm onder de indruk van alle kunst aan boord.”

De komende tijd zullen meer technici van de RDM-werf zich aan boord van de Rotterdam bij Bert Kloosterziel voegen. Zij moeten bezien wat er allemaal nog moet gebeuren voordat het schip kan beginnen aan de thuisreis naar Rotterdam. Of de Rotterdam die reis op eigen kracht kan maken is nog de vraag. Als het te veel moeite kost om het schip 'vaarklaar' te maken - waarbij moet worden voldaan aan strenge eisen van een klassificatiemaatschappij - dan zal een sleepboot de Rotterdam naar haar thuishaven slepen.

De algemene conditie van het schip is in orde, oordeelt Bert Kloosterziel. „Allemaal massief staal,” zegt hij. „Dat is er over vijfhonderd jaar ook nog. Natuurlijk, de boel moet wat worden schoongemaakt en opgeknapt, maar het schip is bijzonder mooi en gaaf. Het was leuk te merken dat een paar pompen, die ik tijdens mijn verkenningen heb laten opstarten, het meteen deden. Zoiets lukt je niet bij een auto die ruim twee jaar heeft stilgestaan.”

SHIPYARD NEWS

Alstom prepares to sell Chantiers

SHIPBUILDING at Chantiers de l'Atlantique appears more uncertain than ever following an announcement by Alstom chief executive Patrick Kron that buyers could be sought for a "majority stake" in the marine division. "Although we have not begun negotiations yet, the status of the shipbuilding division will inevitably change," Kron said, explaining that Alstom could retain only a minority in the business. A few weeks ago Alstom said it was looking for partners for its marine division, either in France or overseas, to help it survive the collapse in the cruise shipping sector, the builder's main source of work. "No one knows when the cruise market will recover; this is critical for us," a spokesman at Alstom added. One possibility is to team up with French naval builder DCN, but there has been no announcement as yet. Chantiers de l'Atlantique has won no cruise ship orders since 2000 and has had to work hard to secure orders for a ferry and gas carrier, both from domestic owners.

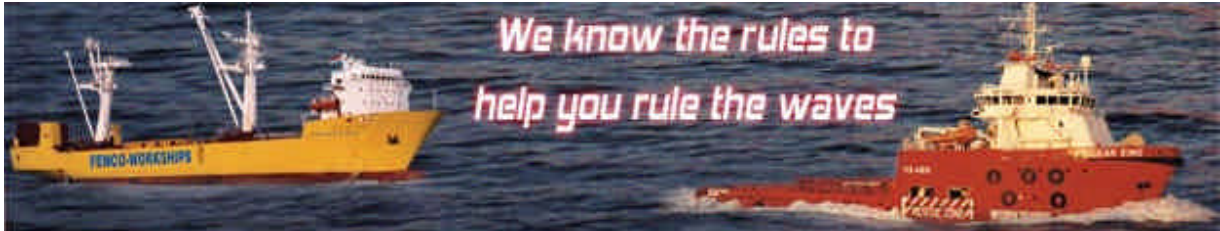
Fincantieri in restructure plans

A PLANNED restructuring by the Italian government of its industrial activities could see shipbuilder Fincantieri incorporated into a new state-controlled conglomerate. The plan foresees the separation of commercial industry from aerospace and defence industries. Some of these activities (including Fincantieri) are currently owned by Fintecna and others by Finmeccanica. The latter is part Treasury-owned and part traded on the Stock Exchange. Under the plan Fincantieri would move to new holding company Finmeccanica 2 – which could be listed – together with the non-core activities of Finmeccanica. The Fincantieri Group encompasses engine maker Isotta Fraschini, research and development centre Cetena and Orizzonte Sistemi Navali. The whole is 83 per cent controlled by Fintecna, which also owns ferry operator Tirrenia di Navigazione, and 17 per cent owned by a pool of banks. Fincantieri was created in 1959 after a merger of eight shipbuilding, ship repair and engine manufacturing companies, and re-emerged as an operational company in 1984. Fincantieri's current chief executive, Giuseppe Bono, is a former general manager of Finmeccanica.

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CMB releases gas activities

BELGIAN shipping group CMB is to de-merge its gas shipping and offshore activities into its affiliate Exmar, as from mid-June. In practice, this means CMB will create a new Exmar, listed on the Euronext market and operating as an independent concern. Exmar operates a large fleet of LNG and LPG carriers. The company is a major LNG player, with five ships of 138,000 m³ on order from South Korea's Daewoo and Samsung shipyards, due for delivery in 2004 and 2005. These vessels will join the current LNG fleet consisting of two further 138,000 m³ vessels and the 131,000 m³ Methania, which has just become the first ship re-flagged to the new Belgian flag. Exmar also runs a fleet of 24,000-85,000 m³ ethylene and LPG carriers. While Exmar will become a separate entity, CMB will continue its bulk activities within Bocimar, and its tanker business, represented by Euronav, will remain in the group. The de-merger of Exmar has fuelled speculation of a sale of the whole company in the future. CMB has confirmed it could re-flag up to 30 ships under the new Belgian flag.

ThyssenKrupp buys Dutch operator

GERMAN steel group ThyssenKrupp has bought Dutch inland waterways shipping company Europese Waterweg-Transporten for an undisclosed price. EWT operates two pusher vessels and 24 barges largely between Rotterdam, Antwerp and Amsterdam to points along the river Rhine. ThyssenKrupp said the take-over would guarantee just-in-time logistic supplies of iron ore and coal imports at its main steel works in Duisburg in central Germany. It added that more steel production has been concentrated at Duisburg, necessitating reliable transport for the 20M tonnes of ore and coal it will import annually at the plant. JIT logistics enables companies to cut costs by reducing their inventories. The take-over was effected through the steel group's shipping subsidiary ThyssenKrupp Veerhaven.

Eurogate reports throughput surge

EUROGATE, the German container terminal joint venture between Hamburg's Eurokai and BLG in Bremerhaven, reported an 18 per cent surge in cargo throughput last year at the two ports. Total volume hit 1.3M TEU with Eurokai traffic rising 24 per cent to 483,000 TEU and Bremerhaven achieving 15 per cent growth to 784,000 TEU. Eurokai has benefited from Hamburg's increased role as a transshipment port to and from east and central Europe plus Scandinavia. Joint chief executives Thomas Eckelmann and Emanuel Schiffer said the group plans large investment to increase security and guard against terror attacks, which will be paid for by a security surcharge of €9.00 (\$10.40) per container to be introduced from July 2003. Eurogate reported its net profit for 2002 up by ten per cent on the year

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to €27M on increased turnover of €365M, up from €350M in 2001. The first quarter of 2003 has started "very satisfactorily", the company added.

K-Line sets up Indonesian venture

KAWASAKI Kisen Kaisha (K-Line) is to set up a logistics joint venture in Indonesia, PT 'K' Line Mobaru Diamond Indonesia (KMDI). The venture will be 49 per cent owned by the Japanese line and 51 per cent by Mobaru Diamond, Indonesia's largest car carrier owner. It will be based in Jakarta and aims to provide intra-ASEAN services linking with K-Line's existing vehicle transport network. KMDI has paid-up capital of \$725,000, employs 130 staff and is expected to operate a total of 30 ships. Earlier this week, K-Line announced it was to set up a US energy division based in Houston, "reflecting K-Line's growing LNG import business into the US". K-Line currently operates 22 LNG carriers and has a further seven on order in Japan and South Korea.

Frontline profits from sale of suezmax quartet

FRONTLINE is reported to be selling four modern suezmaxes in two deals which would reap handsome profits for the world's largest tanker group.



Top : The **FRONT SKY**

Shipbrokers report that Frontline is selling the 159,999-dwt **Front Sky** and the **Front Sun** (both built in 2000) to OMI, its partner in Alliance Chartering, for \$49m apiece.

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Frontline is said to have struck a deal at \$43.25m in cash and one million OMI shares at a guaranteed price of \$5.70 in the next six months. OMI' shares are currently trading at \$5.62, up eight cents.



Frontline is also reported to be selling the 150,500-dwt **Front Melody** and 139,100 dwt **Front Symphony** (both built 2001) to German finance house Dr Peters.

Left : The **FRONT MELODY**

That deal is said to have been concluded at \$54m for each vessel, with a 12-year bareboat charter-back. Frontline refused to comment.

However, the company is understood to have originally ordered the vessels at substantially below the latest selling price.

K Line expands operations into southern China

K LINE, which has just officially opened a new branch office in Shenzhen, has several new vessels on order and plans to expand its share of the China trade further. Yoshikazu Minagawa, the company's MD, who was a former GM of corporate planning with the company in Tokyo until last March, sat down with the Shipping Gazette earlier this month to discuss how he intends to strengthen the company's position in the Pearl River Delta.

The three-month-old Shenzhen branch office currently accepts freight and issues Bills of Lading. "Most documentation is handled in Hong Kong," said Mr Minagawa. "Like many other carriers we plan to do it in China in the near future." The severe acute respiratory syndrome outbreak has slowed things down, Mr Minagawa said. Once the virus has been brought under control, Mr Minagawa will decide on the Japanese company's game plan for the Pearl River Delta as well as tackle the documentation shift.

Mr Minagawa said the company may try to accommodate the increasing number of customers in the Delta, working closely with their Shenzhen and Guangzhou offices and their subagent who has a large network of sales offices in the area. The company's recent efforts at enhancing container fleet capacity will also benefit southern China operations, the MD said. Five 4,000 TEU panamax size vessels will be delivered starting at the end of 2004 and on into the beginning of 2005. The company has an option for three more vessels as well. Mr Minagawa is confident the option will be exercised. "Eight vessels are usually enough for one complete loop between Asia and the east coast of the United States or between Asia and West Europe," said Mr Minagawa. The company is also targeting the east coast rather than west coast ports in North America this year because WC ports are nearing capacity and retailers are increasingly positioning their distribution centres farther and farther east, Mr Minagawa said. Mr Minagawa added he's drawing up alternatives to the company's liner operations, which have been underperforming lately. K Line's net profit doubled to JPY10.4 billion (US\$88.68 million) in the fiscal year ended March 31, from JPY4.8 billion the previous year. Helping the company's uptick in profitability was a significant cost reduction programme of JPY20 billion during the past fiscal year.

NAVY NEWS

'America's Flagship' Docks in Hawaii



After seven months at sea in support of military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the aircraft carrier **USS Constellation** arrived Thursday in Hawaii for a brief stopover.

The carrier and other ships in the battle group will depart Tuesday to their home ports in San Diego. The **USS Constellation** is nicknamed "America's Flagship" because it's considered the centerpiece of the battle group and because it shares the name of first commissioned ship in the U.S. Navy

The guided missile destroyer **USS Milius (DDG 69)** proudly displays her large American flag during a practice sea power demonstration for USS Constellation's upcoming "Tiger Cruise."



MOVEMENTS

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The Pushertug **MAAS** owned by **SMIT** transport seen here working at the Westerschelde wreck removal project

Photo : Willem Kruit ©



The **DEA CHALLENGER** arrived from Leith at A&P Wallsend No 2 Drydock

Photo : Kevin Blair ©



The **FAR SWAN** arrived from Peterhead bound for A&P Walsend dock no 4 – **photo: Kevin Blair ©**

RIJNMOND WEATHER

Vooruitzichten van zaterdag t/m dinsdag:

Vanaf zondag ook wat zon en alleen op zondag en dinsdag nog kans op een bui. Er zijn aanwijzingen dat het vanaf woensdag eindelijk warmer gaat worden.

© Ed Aldus 2003	ZA-24	ZO-25	MA-26	DI-27
Maximumtemperatuur:	16	16	18	17
Minimumtemperatuur:	11	10	10	9
Zonnekans in %:	20	30	50	30
Neerslagkans in %:	50	30	20	30
Windrichting kracht:	ZW-2-4	W-3-4	ZW-3-4	WZW-3-5

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY

DMS RAVEN



The **DMS RAVEN** departed from Rotterdam Saturday afternoon - photo : Jas Louwen ©



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OUDER DAN HET KONINKRIJK

Goedkoop Havensleepdiensten

17 MEI 2003

26 OKTOBER 2003



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