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**The brandnew ZWERVER III seen passing the Dutch coast experiencing Northwesterly 7 Bft
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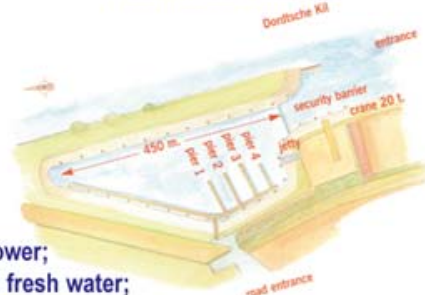
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Above seen the 1975 built NLD flag ocean going tug **ROTTERDAM** entering Grand Harbour, Malta for the first time on Tuesday 6th December, 2011 bound to Palumbo Malta Shipyard Ltd Somerset Wharf after completing the towage of the ssdr **NOBLE PAUL ROMANO** from Mexico to Egypt.

Photo : Cpt. Lawrence Dalli - www.maltashipphotos.com (c)

Eagle Bulk Shipping Said to Discuss Restructuring Options With Jefferies

Eagle Bulk Shipping Inc. (EGLE), the world's second-largest owner of supramax dry-bulk ships, is discussing restructuring options with Jefferies Group Inc. (JEF), said three people briefed on the talks.

Eagle Bulk is examining whether to raise new financing or overhaul borrowings, said the people, who asked not to be identified as talks are private. The company has \$1.13 billion of long-term debt under its \$1.2 billion revolving credit line that matures July 2014, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The fleet operator's market value has shrunk by more than \$2 billion from a May 2008 high as shippers struggle with slumping freight rates. Single-voyage rents for dry-bulk ships have plummeted in 2011 to the lowest in at least five years as the supply of vessels exceeds demand.

Eagle Bulk shares fell 0.9 percent to \$1.17 at 4 p.m. New York time, giving the company a market capitalization of about \$73 million. The company first sold shares in an initial public offering in June 2005. Oaktree Capital Management LP, the lender that agreed last month to make a \$175 million investment in bankrupt General Maritime Corp. (GMR), is the largest shareholder of Eagle Bulk, Bloomberg data show. Analysts on average predict Eagle Bulk will post its first annual loss this year, following back-to-back years of declining profit, according to estimates compiled by Bloomberg. The company amended terms in September on an agreement scheduled to expire in April, gaining more time to meet the liquidity requirements laid out in its credit pact. **Source: Bloomberg**



On the left a picture from the ECR of the (old) **Nieuw Amsterdam** in 1986. On the right a picture from the **Rydam** ECR at present. The engineers participated in this year's Movember prostate/ testicular cancer awareness month"

MSC-CMA CGM Pact Worries European Shippers

European shippers are worried they will see rates rise because of a lack of competition caused by Mediterranean Shipping Co. and CMA CGM joining forces on key routes. "Shippers will quite naturally worry about the possible dominance of the new liner shipping pact, making the second and third largest carriers in the trades the biggest," said Jean-Louis Cambon, chairman of the Maritime Transport Council at the European Shippers' Council. "With competition based on market share alone, shippers are now being confronted by two mega-carriers on some of the most important trade lanes in the world today. That has to be a worry for shippers looking for service and price differentiation," Cambon said. At the same time, Cambon said the combination of services on key routes demonstrates two things: "The lack of volumes in the market as a consequence of the economic crisis and the difficulties of managing to utilize the vessels they operate; and secondly, that in order to compete for supremacy head-on with Maersk Line they need to join forces." The combination of services announced by the two family-owned carriers is widely seen as their response to the Daily Maersk service, which the Danish carrier introduced on the Asia-Europe trade in October. Cambon said that while the action by the two carriers is of an operational nature, "vigilance is required to ensure that the arrangement remains an operational cooperation and does not restrain capacity beyond what would be justifiable during a slack season." **Source: Journal of Commerce**



The **CLIPPER BOURGOGNE** seen enroute Rotterdam – Photo : Frits Janse ©

New market leading VLCC Pool

Four large tanker owners have signed a Letter of Intent to set up a new VLCC pool, controlling around 50 modern VLCCs. Partners in the VLCC Pool will be MITSUI O.S.K. LINES, LTD. / PHOENIX TANKERS PTE. LTD., A.P. MØLLER - MÆRSK A/S (Maersk Tankers), SAMCO SHIPHOLDING PTE. LTD., and OCEAN TANKERS (PTE.) LTD., SINGAPORE - all financially strong and quality focused tanker owners.

The Partners are in detailed discussions and the VLCC Pool is expected to become operational from 1 February 2012 with offices in Singapore, Copenhagen and New York. The VLCC Pool will operate a combined fleet of around 50 quality VLCCs by the end of 2012 with an average age of only 3 years. The flexibility of a large, young and reliable fleet ensures that the VLCC Pool can, at all times, offer relevant vessels of the highest standard to cater for our customers' need for safe and environmentally friendly marine transportation. Until the Pool become operational each owner will continue their own operation. Source: Mitsui O.S.K.Lines, Maersk Tankers

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The car carrier **TAGUS** seen arriving in Willemstad (Curacao)

Photo : Kees Bustraan – <http://community.webshots.com/user/cornelis224> (c)

Mitsui Sells Newest Double-Hulled Supertanker to Be Scrapped

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd., owner of the world's largest shipping fleet, sold a double-hulled supertanker for demolition that would be the newest such ship ever scrapped after vessel earnings plunged this year. The **Atlantic Liberty**, built in 1995, is the youngest very large crude carrier to face demolition, data from Clarkson Research Services, a unit of the world's biggest shipbroker, show. The tanker will be the world's second VLCC with a double hull to be scrapped, Nafees Zaman, a spokesman for Maryland, U.S.-based Global Marketing Systems Inc. said. GMS is the biggest cash buyer of vessels for demolition. An oversupply of the tankers and falling demand growth is driving earnings for VLCCs to the lowest in more than 14 years, pushing prices for tankers older than 15 years 38 percent lower over the year. "It's positive for the market balance to see medium-old tonnage disappear like this," Petter Narvestad, an analyst at Fondsfinans ASA, an Oslo-based investment bank, said by phone today. "Tankers normally have a lifetime of about 25 years." The price paid for the Atlantic Liberty equated to \$20.1 million, HSBC Shipping Services Ltd. said in an e-mailed report Dec. 2. A 15-year-old VLCC is worth \$20.2 million, according to Seasure Shipping Ltd, a London-based shipbroker that assesses vessel values. That's down from \$32.4 million on Dec. 31. The scrapping of the Atlantic Liberty meant the owners took a "pragmatic, and arguably courageous decision to take a hit on the price, as opposed to the risk of facing her as competition for cargo in the future, under different ownership," Clarkson said in a weekly report published Dec. 3. Tokyo-based Mitsui didn't respond to three phone calls and two e-mails seeking comment.

Too Many Vessels

The sale highlights the struggle facing vessels more than 15 years old to trade profitably, London-based shipbroker Galbraith's said in a weekly report on Dec. 2. Galbraith's, Clarkson and HSBC Shipping all reported the sale, saying the vessel will be broken up in India. Tanker owners ordered too many new vessels during a four-year boom that lasted to 2008, creating an oversupply that's depressed returns and ship prices as global demand growth for crude weakens. Returns for VLCCs will average \$15,000 a day for the next two years, less than half of the \$34,500 they need to break even, Pareto Securities ASA said in a report in October. Average earnings for the vessels, which peaked in 2004 at \$97,000 and were at \$93,000 four years later, fell to \$19,000 by 2011, according to the Oslo-based investment bank. The first double-hull VLCC scrapped, the 1991-built **D Elephant**, was sold in May, Zaman said by e-mail. **Source: Bloomberg**

READERS for READERS, WHO CAN HELP ?



On 19th November 2011, upon entering Montevideo harbour, Newscippings reader [Arie van Zoomeren](#) while on board HAL's "[Veendam](#)", spotted a historic tug which was situated on the western inner breakwater. Upon investigations, was informed through Mr. Mey (Histarmar Argentina) and Mr. Castillo of ANP Montevideo that this tug was the '[Diego Capella y Pons](#)' (built 1895 ??). In the early seventies, while [Arie](#) was board m.v. "[Amstelland](#)" of the KHL, same tug was spotted (afloat), moored in between tugs "[Antonio D. Lussich](#)" and "[Tiburón](#)". Does anyone know particulars about the "[Tiburón](#)" ???

If you can help Arie please revert to him via : Bona-spes@planet.nl





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With super-carrier disabled in its port Vale's shipping strategy is keel hauled



Reuters reports the largest bulk carrier ever built, designed to carry iron ore to China from Vale's mines in South America, is disabled in a Brazilian port. The **Vale Beijing**, a 361-metre-long vessel that can carry 400,000 tonnes of iron ore, has a leak in a ballast tank and shipping agents told Reuters the vessel had

ruptured its hull. If the \$110 million vessel – one of up to 19 ordered from Korean shipbuilders – should sink it would severely affect operations at the port from where Vale was hoping to ship 130 million tonnes this year.

It could also turn out to be the final nail in the coffin of Vale's disastrous strategy to tighten its grip on the world's annual 1 billion tonnes sea-borne iron-ore trade. China, the world's number one market for the steelmaking ingredient to which Vale ships about 45% of its output, turned away another carrier in the fleet earlier this year. MINING.com reported a fortnight ago Vale's fleet of super carrier has not made one voyage in six months of operation. Chinese shipowners say the carriers will worsen overcapacity and depress freight rates, while steelmakers are also against the leviathan-size ships, because they will give Vale even more control over pricing and delivery.

Bloomberg at the time quoted an analyst at China Merchants Securities Co. saying the company could face large penalties for cancelling the shipbuilding contracts: "I'm pretty sure that Vale themselves have by now realized that they made a big mistake," he said. "I find it really incredible that they committed so much money in this project without first getting written assurances from the Chinese side that they would be able to use the ships." The shipping strategy appears to have hastened a management shake-up at Vale. CEO Murilo Ferreira, who took on the job in May, in November named a new logistics head and replaced the company's CFO. **Source: Mining**

WAGENBORG EN DUC DIVING BERGEN GEZONKEN DROOGDOK



De bergingscombinatie **Wagenborg Towage (Delfzijl)** met **DUC Diving (Urk)** heeft succesvol het bergingsproject van het gezonken droogdok in Sluiskil afgerond. In november heeft deze combinatie reeds met succes het wrak van het gezonken binnen-vaartschip "**Jonas**" welke in Amsterdam was gezonken, onderwater doorgezaagd en in delen geborgen.



De Combinatie heeft nu gezamenlijk het gezonken droogdok in Sluiskil geborgen. Het dok, met dokmaat van 96 m x 16,5 m, was na een technisch defect, in de haven van de werf gezonken naar een diepte van 9 m. Uit een uitgebreide duikinspectie is gebleken dat tijdens het zinken het dok ernstig was beschadigd en dat naast 2 grote gaten van ca. 6 x 2 m diverse grote scheuren in de zijkasten waren ontstaan. Het duik- en werkschip **RAM** van **DUC Diving** is vervolgens na het verkrijgen van de bergingsopdracht, direct naar Sluiskil gemobiliseerd. Met een door **Wagenborg** en **DUC Diving** samengesteld bergingsteam van 12

personen (waarvan 5 duikers) zijn de scheuren onderwater afgedicht en zijn de grote gaten gedicht met staalplaten. Met de inzet van divers bergingsmaterieel van Wagenborg, zoals een tiental grote bergingspompen, en luchtzakken waarmee de luchtkasten binnen in het dok zijn versterkt, is het dok op maandag 5 december weer drijvend gemaakt. Het dok blijkt zodanig beschadigd dat dit zal worden afgevoerd naar de sloperij.

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The TSHD **GEOPOTES 14** seen enroute Rotterdam – **Photo : Ria Maat ©**

Koninklijke Nederlandse Vereniging van Technici op Scheepvaartgebied

Lezing deze week

Afdeling	:	Rotterdam
Datum	:	Donderdag 8 december 2011
Onderwerp	:	High Speed Sailing
Spreeker	:	Mark Leslie Miller



The Sailrocket team recently launched its second-generation high-speed sailing boat Vestas SailRocket 2 to challenge the 'Outright World Speed Sailing Record'. Since the team started with its first boat in 2002, the record has improved by almost nine knots. The team felt that the kite surfers were going to be the ones to watch. The new design has to hit speeds of up to 60 knots. Malcolm Barnsley will explain what it takes to get there.

Locatie	:	Deltahotel, Maasboulevard 15, Vlaardingen
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The **CABALLO XANTHUS** seen in the Dutch port of Harlingen - Photo : Marco Leistra ©

CORRECTION



In yesterday's clippings the above photo could be found of the tug SINGAPORE arriving with the SMIT BORNEO in Tauranga, this photo was made by Alexander Gorter. Alexander, sorry for the inconvenience.

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The **PLV Audacia** installing the FLET structures in J-lay mode on the 10 inch pipe in to the Mediterranean Sea for the **Noble Tamar project** offshore Israel. - **Photo : Pieter Kos**

De enige keuze die je hebt is doorgaan!



WESTCOASTCHALLENGE



Op zaterdag 10 december 2011 gaat de **3e KNRM West Coast Challenge** van start, een unieke run-bike-run van Hoek van Holland naar Den Helder langs de kust van Nederland. De koppels die meedoen doen dat met één mountainbike en wisselen samen het fietsen en lopen af. Doel van de challenge is om fondsen te werven voor de Koninklijke Nederlandse Redding Maatschappij (KNRM).

Een team van twee man/vrouw krijgt de uitdaging gezamenlijk met één fiets de afstand van Den Helder naar Hoek van Holland op eigen kracht af te leggen. De totale afstand bedraagt 135 kilometer en loopt vrijwel volledig over het strand. Door afwisselend hard te lopen en te fietsen moet het team de passende mix van snelheid en duurvermogen vinden om deze enorme afstand af te leggen. De lengte maakt dat de teamleden ieder ongeveer 65 kilometer hardlopen en 65 kilometer fietsen. De start is om 5 uur 's ochtends en de organisatie hoopt dat iedereen om 8 uur 's avonds binnen is. Onderweg krijgen de teams support van de gele KHV's (Kust Hulpverlening Voertuigen) van de KNRM en bij IJmuiden worden de teams door reddingboten van de KNRM overgezet.

Uitdagende ondergrond, onvoorspelbare omstandigheden

Eigenlijk is de West Coast Challenge niet in beelden te vatten. Je moet het beleven. Initiators en deelnemers Raimond Schikhof en Walter Pennekamp besloten voor dit jaar nog meer teams te zoeken die mee wilden doen. Vorig jaar werd voor het eerst de mogelijkheid geboden om een halve challenge te doen en dat kan dit jaar weer, samen met de nieuwe mogelijkheid de challenge als bedrijventeam te volbrengen. Op dit moment hebben zich 14 teams voor de hele afstand ingeschreven en 20 voor de halve en doen er 6 bedrijventeams mee die met twee keer twee man een hele challenge afleggen. Wat ooit begon als een 'leuk duursport evenement in de wintermaanden' is inmiddels uitgegroeid naar bijzonder fondsenwervend evenement ten bate van de KNRM. Met de huidige weersvoorspellingen weten de deelnemers dat het 'bepaald geen gemakkelijke tocht gaat worden', maar toch gaan ze. 'De vrijwilligers van de KNRM laten zich ook niet afschrikken door slechte omstandigheden, dus dan kunnen wij natuurlijk niet achterblijven' aldus Pennekamp. 'Met een evenement als deze krijg je met elkaar een echt familie gevoel, iets wat de geleden pijn weer doet vervagen.'

Support?

Ergens tussen 10 en 11 uur verwacht de organisatie de doorkomst van de teams op de hele afstand in IJmuiden. De deelnemende teams aan de halve afstand starten eveneens om 10.00 uur in IJmuiden bij strandpaviljoen Noordzee of Sea You in Velsen Noord. De sporters zijn via een GPS-transponder op de fiets te volgen via de website www.westcoastchallenge.nl. Door de GPS-transponders is het ook voor de thuisblijvers leuk om de WCC te volgen en op gezette tijden op te duiken langs de route.

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The **A 432 TASUJA** seen in IJmuiden - Photo : Cor van Niekerken (c)

Lessons Learned from First Littoral Combat Ships Lead to Improvements in Follow-on Ships

The U.S. Navy and its shipbuilding partners have incorporated lessons learned from the first two Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) in the design and construction of the follow-on ships. "I think the lead ships are pretty good," says Rear Adm. Jim Murdoch, the Program Executive Officer for LCS (PEO LCS). "I think LCS 3 and 4 will be better."

LCS 1 is the **USS Freedom**, built at Marinette Marine in Wisconsin by a team led by Lockheed Martin, and commissioned in November of 2008. The ship deployed to U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command as well as participated in the RIMPAC fleet exercises around Hawaii in 2010. Freedom is currently in a scheduled maintenance period in San Diego. Commissioned in 2010, **USS Independence (LCS 2)** was built at Austal USA in Mobile, Ala., and recently called at Naval Station Newport in Rhode Island for the 20th International Seapower Symposium. Independence is conducting tests at sea with both the Remote Minehunting Vehicle and MH-60S Seahawk helicopter using the AQS-20 sonar in simulated minefields.

Several ships of each design are under construction at the two builders' shipyards. **Fort Worth (LCS 3)** completed builder's sea trials in Lake Michigan on Oct. 24., and is due to be commissioned next year. **Coronado (LCS 4)** will launch next month at Mobile. **Milwaukee (LCS 5)** is under construction at Marinette, and construction of **Jackson (LCS 6)** has begun in Mobile. Murdoch said that criticism regarding the cost overruns of the first two ships was well founded. But thanks to a robust competition, the follow on ships will cost much less. "We have two great contracts in place to provide ships at a very affordable price, and maintain a stable design," Murdoch says.

The Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) is new kind of combatant designed to operate in the littoral—or coastal—waters of the world, to address the serious threats of mines, quiet diesel submarines and small, fast armed boats that can deny access to these waters.

LCS is the first ship built to address these focused missions of mine countermeasures (MCM), anti-submarine warfare (ASW), and surface warfare (SUW), and can be configured for those missions by changing modularized mission packages. The ship itself has ample internal volume to carry mission packages to address one of the three focused missions, and these mission packages can be quickly changed to give the ship an entirely different combat capability depending on the specific threat being addressed. These mission packages come in containerized modules which carry offboard vehicles and sensors. Employment of off-board manned and unmanned vehicles at a distance from the ship allows the Navy to rapidly engage threats while the ship stays at stand-off ranges.

The Navy had planned to select just one of the two competing variants to be the Navy's choice for LCS. But in a surprise announcement last December, Lockheed Martin Corp. and Austal USA each received a fixed-price incentive contract for the design and construction of a 10 ship block-buy, for a total of 20 littoral combat ships from fiscal 2010 through fiscal 2015. The average ship target-price across the entire dual-block buy for the Lockheed Martin LCS variant is \$362 million; and the average ship target-price for the Austal USA LCS variant is \$352 million, according to Navy officials.

The Marinette ship had some reserve buoyancy issues, structural cracks, corrosion problems in the vicinity of the water jet tunnels, and water was coming through the anchor hawse pipe in heavy seas. To provide additional buoyancy on LCS 1, buoyancy tanks were attached on the stern on each side of the stern door. In LCS 3, the hull was lengthened below the water line providing more buoyancy without the tanks, and space for an additional 10 percent fuel capacity. With the extra length, the ship is actually faster.

LCS 1 has a "clean focsle," Murdoch says. The anchor windlass, used to raise and lower the anchor, usually found on the main deck of most combatants, is actually inside the ship on LCS 1. But water came into the ship in heavy seas. By having the opening on the deck, any water coming through the hawse flows overboard. "The new design will allow the ship to go faster in high seas."

"With that longer underwater hull, the ship is a little more efficient," says Murdoch. "Just operating on the diesel engine alone, she's about a knot faster. We're probably one to two knots faster on the gas turbine (engines) alone than Freedom was."

The LCS 1 design will have a more robust shaft seal system and improvements to the stern door leading from the waterborne mission zone top the sea so as to reduce the impact of salt water corrosion, as well as larger bridge windows. LCS 1 has a 5-meter ridged hull inflatable boat (RHIB) as a lifeboat, mounted on the port side. "We want a larger boat. A design change is in the works." Design improvements will permit heavier loads to be carried on the LCS

1 stern ramp. This way the 11-meter RHIB can remain on the ramp between evolutions instead of being stowed and unstowed each time, a time-consuming task.

"These are small ships with a lot of propulsion plant in them," Murdoch says. However, Murdoch says care is being taken not to make structural changes that increase weight. "Either you want a ship that goes 40 knots or you don't."

Murdoch said LCS 2 construction required too many labor hours. The Austal ships now feature a more modular and economic construction process. Large blocks of the ship are built with all the installed piping and wiring, and are mostly complete and tested when fitted to the other parts of the ship. In addition, the LCS 4 centerline waterjets are larger so as to take full advantage of the General Electric LM2500 gas turbines. The Austal ship has also experienced corrosion problems.

Both designs need more cathodic protection, he says. The Navy and the builders are installing both additional sacrificial anodes known as zincs and an impressed current system, "An Impressed Current Cathodic Protection System (ICCP) will be installed in both the cone assemblies and the water jet tunnels on Austal variant ships to reduce the effects of galvanic corrosion," says Naval Sea Systems Command spokesman Chris Johnson. "The General Dynamics and Austal USA approach to prevent corrosion on LCS 2 was based on commercial practices and included a coating system on the exposed metal, electrical insulation of dissimilar metals and cathodic protection via sacrificial zinc anodes in the water jet tunnels. This design proved to be less effective than intended due to multiple factors including improper electrical insulation during installation. To provide more comprehensive protection, an ICCP system and additional sacrificial protection design is being finalized and will be implemented on LCS 2 during its Post Shakedown Availability (PSA); has already been installed on LCS 4; and will be included on LCS 6 and follow as a baseline change prior to the start of construction." With the changes, Murdoch says both production lines should now be quite stable. The key to keeping costs down, he says, is avoiding changes. "We don't introduce any changes we don't absolutely have to," he says. [Source : MarineLink](#)

China's Hu to PLA Navy: Be Ready for Combat

Chinese President Hu Jintao on Dec. 6 urged the People's Liberation Army Navy to prepare for military combat, amid growing regional tensions over maritime disputes and a U.S. campaign to assert itself as a Pacific power. The PLA Navy should "accelerate its transformation and modernization in a sturdy way, and make extended preparations for military combat in order to make greater contributions to safeguard national security," he said. Addressing the powerful Central Military Commission, Hu said: "Our work must closely encircle the main theme of national defense and military building." His comments, which were posted in a statement on a government website, come as the United States and Beijing's neighbors have expressed concerns over its naval ambitions, particularly in the South China Sea. Several Asian nations have competing claims over parts of the South China Sea, believed to encompass huge oil and gas reserves, while China claims it all. One-third of global seaborne trade passes through the region. Vietnam and the Philippines have accused Chinese forces of increasing aggression there.

In a translation of Hu's comments, the official Xinhua news agency quoted the president as saying China's navy should "make extended preparations for warfare." The Pentagon however downplayed Hu's speech, saying that Beijing had the right to develop its military, although it should do so transparently. "They have a right to develop military capabilities and to plan, just as we do," said Pentagon spokesman George Little, but he added: "We have repeatedly called for transparency from the Chinese and that's part of the relationship we're continuing to build with the Chinese military."

Said another Pentagon spokesman, Navy Capt. John Kirby: "Nobody's looking for a scrap here. Certainly we wouldn't begrudge any other nation the opportunity, the right to develop naval forces to be ready. Our naval forces are ready and they'll stay ready." We want to see stronger military-to-military ties with China and we want to see greater transparency," State Department spokesman Mark Toner said. "That helps answer questions we might have about Chinese intentions." Hu's announcement comes in the wake of trips to Asia by several senior U.S. officials, including President Obama, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. U.S. undersecretary of defense Michelle Flournoy is due to meet in Beijing with her Chinese counterparts on Dec. 7 for military-to-military talks. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao last month warned against interference by "external forces" in regional territorial disputes including those in the South China Sea. China said late last month it would conduct naval exercises in the Pacific Ocean, after Obama, who has dubbed himself America's first Pacific president, said the U.S. would deploy up to

2,500 Marines to Australia. China's People's Liberation Army, the largest military in the world, is primarily a land force, but its Navy is playing an increasingly important role as Beijing grows more assertive about its territorial claims.

Earlier this year, the Pentagon warned that Beijing was increasingly focused on its naval power and had invested in high-tech weaponry that would extend its reach in the Pacific and beyond. China's first aircraft carrier began its second sea trial last week after undergoing refurbishments and testing, the government said. The 990-foot (300-metre) ship, a refitted former Soviet carrier, underwent five days of trials in August that sparked international concern about China's widening naval reach.

Beijing only confirmed this year that it was revamping the old Soviet ship and has repeatedly insisted that the carrier poses no threat to its neighbors, and will be used mainly for training and research purposes. But the August sea trials were met with concern from regional powers including Japan and the United States, which called on Beijing to explain why it needs an aircraft carrier. China, which publicly announced about 50 separate naval exercises in the seas off its coast over the past two years - usually after the event - says its military is only focused on defending the country's territory. **Source : DefenseNews**

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ThyssenKrupp close to sale of shipbuilding unit

German industrial conglomerate ThyssenKrupp AG is close to selling its Blohm + Voss civil shipbuilding business to U.K. private equity fund Star Capital Partners, German daily Financial Times Deutschland reported Monday, without citing specific sources, Dow Jones reports. A deal could be signed in the next two weeks, the report said. ThyssenKrupp's effort to sell its stainless steel operation has drawn interest from several parties, though the sale process remains at a very early stage, the report said. **Source : Portnews**

Successful naming and launch ceremony for SHANTI SAGAR XVI



The naming and launch ceremony for the 13,000kW stationary cutter suction dredger, **SHANTI SAGAR XVI**, took place on 6 December 2011 at the IHC Merwede shipyard in Sliedrecht, The Netherlands. IHC Merwede is building the ship for Mundra Port Special Economic Zone Ltd., which is part of the Adani Group. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Sonali Mahadevia, the spouse of Dr. Malay Mahadevia, Director of Mundra Port Special Economic Zone Ltd. The contract for the design, construction and delivery of the vessel was signed in November 2010, and the keel was laid on 11

May 2011. The vessel will be delivered in the second quarter of 2012.

During the ceremony, IHC Merwede announced that it has made a donation to the Adani Foundation. This NGO looks after the Adani Group's CSR-related activities, including the development of education, health and rural affairs. The

new cutter suction dredger is an IHC Beaver® 9029C, which is capable of dredging a wide range of materials. The vessel is equipped with three Cutter Special® dredge pumps, which are specially designed with a large sphere passage for cutter suction dredge operations. The anchor boom and spud-tilting installations allow the dredger to operate in remote areas with limited support equipment. The large fuel oil carrying capacity also allows for a high level of autonomy. Dredging is critical to the development of Mundra Port and the work is managed by Mundra Port Special Economic Zone's dredging fleet. This consists almost exclusively of cutter suction dredgers built by IHC Merwede and the **SHANTI SAGAR XVI** will be the largest vessel supplied to date.



Photo : Jan van Heteren - fotojvh@gmail.com ©

Additional information

Name	SHANTI SAGAR XVI
Type	Stationary cutter suction dredger
Customer	Mundra Port Special Economic Zone Ltd.
Builder	IHC Beaver Dredgers BV
Length overall	104m
Breadth	18.6m
Depth	5m
Maximum dredging depth	29m
Suction pipe diameter	900mm
Total installed power	13,000kW
Accommodation	26 people

Drydocks World, AET sign vessel conversion deal

Drydocks World, a major player in the maritime and offshore industry, has signed a contract with Singapore-based AET, a global leader in petroleum shipping, for two tanker-to-modular capture vessel, or MCV, conversion projects, Khaleej Times reports. AET will be converting these vessels as part of the Marine Well Containment Company's (MWCC) well containment system.

MWCC is a not-for-profit, stand-alone organisation with 10 member companies, including ExxonMobil, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Shell, BP, Apache Anadarko, BHP Billiton, Statoil and Hess. The conversion will be implemented at the Drydocks World's Dubai facility. The conversion shall allow the tankers to continue to operate normally in the Gulf of Mexico, with a capability to be deployed as an MCV within the shortest possible time. The first vessel is expected to arrive at the yard this month and the second vessel in February 2012. Each project will be completed within a period of nine months. Each vessel will handle about 100,000 barrels of liquid and about 200 million standard cubic feet of

gas per day. The MCVs are capable of operating at depths of 10,000 feet. The vessels will be equipped with new state-of-the-art containment system provided by MWCC. The conversion scope includes installation of four off-power generators, four off-retractable type azimuth thrusters one tunnel thruster, dynamic positioning, pipe racks on deck and supports for process module, flare tower, turret and many others

"We are extremely happy to sign this prestigious contract with AET, a well-known global service provider, as part of our well-articulated strategy of building our presence in the oil, gas and energy industries. We already have an established reputation and strong expertise in carrying out sophisticated vessel conversion projects for world-leading companies. Our thrust on expanding our knowledge base and creating a technology-driven state-of-the-art facility has borne fruit and we are able to effectively serve the industry," said Khamis Juma Buamim, chairman of Drydocks World.

Drydocks World is one of the most prominent names in the maritime industry with facilities in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. **Source : PortNews**

Keel-laying ceremony held for Indian dredger

IBN reports that the keel-laying of one of the two dredgers constructed by the Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation for the Irrigation Department has been carried out at a yard in Palluruthy. Leading officials, including the executive engineer of irrigation department, assistant executive engineer of dredger division and other officials from the KSINC were present.

The vessel is the first dredger to be constructed in the state. The machine is capable of excavating 100m³ of sand in an hour. The keel-laying of the second dredger will take place shortly and the two dredgers will be handed over to the irrigation department in January next year. **Source : Dredging News Online**

Malaysia to boost shipbuilding and repair sectors

Malaysia's prime minister Najib Razak announced on Tuesday a comprehensive plan to develop the country's shipbuilding and ship repair industries. The Malaysia Shipbuilding/Ship Repair Industry Strategic Plan 2020 aims to generate RM6.35bn (\$2bn) in gross national income and create 55,500 jobs by 2020.

Key contributions will come from the potential uptrend in building and repairing oil and gas support vessels and replacing state-owned oil firm Petronas' ageing vessels, Najib said. The plan seeks to capture 80% of the local newbuilding market and 2% of the global newbuilding market, up from 50% and 0.8% respectively last year.

Source : Seatrade Asia

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Vroon Offshore Services renamed the **SUPPLY EXPRESS** in **VOS PROMINENCE**, The **RIG EXPRESS** has been renamed **VOS PRODUCER**, she is in Harlingen shipyard at the moment. The **POWER EXPRESS** will become the **VOS POWER** on her next drydocking. - Photo : Sake van der Sluis (c)

DP World plans \$850 mln investment for Jebel Ali port

DP World, the world's third-largest port operator, will invest \$850 million over the next three years to create additional capacity at one of its key ports in the United Arab Emirates, the company said in a statement on Monday, Reuters reports. The expansion of the Jebel Ali port would create an additional capacity of four million TEU, or twenty-foot equivalent container unit, taking the total capacity of the port to 19 million TEU by 2014, the statement said.

The port operator said the investment will be financed from existing cash resources and cashflow. The company, one of the more profitable assets of debt-laden Dubai World, warned of tough conditions for its customers in 2012 but said it would achieve throughput growth of more than 7 percent. DP World has been pushing forward with growth into Europe and announced earlier this year that it would go ahead with the construction of its new London Gateway deep-sea container port, to be operational by the fourth quarter of 2013. The company also listed in London in June, but this move has done little to boost liquidity in the stock, with the London listing on average trading less than 35,000 shares per day. Source : PortNews

Caterpillar to provide more than 100 engines for Bourbon

Caterpillar Marine Power Systems has been selected to provide over one hundred engines and generator sets to Bourbon Offshore for anchor handling tug and supply vessels currently being constructed in China. 60 Cat 3516C diesel electric propulsion (DEP) engines will be packaged with Kato generators for 24 anchor handling tug supply (AHTS) vessels with 80 tonne bollard pull. Bourbon has also elected to order 80 3512C DEP engines for 20 PSVs. The engines and generator sets will be delivered over the course of the next two years, with construction occurring at the Sinopacific shipyard in China. Source : offshore shipping online



Above seen the bulk carrier **BLUEWING** assisted by Svitzer tugs **SVITZER KATHLEEN** and **SVITZER LAURA** at King George Dock Hull. She arrived from the United States with a cargo of biomass. **Photo : Simon Smith ©**



Alphatron Marine is officially factory approved for ECDIS training courses on **JRC (Japan Radio Company) ECDIS Systems**. In November 2011 our in-house trainers, had a successful audit on board of the **M/V Bow Plata**. Earlier this year they already received official factory approval from Transas.

From now on Alphatron Marine is authorized for type specific training, class room training at our headquarters, training on location and onboard training for JRC ECDIS as well as Transas ECDIS systems. Japan Radio Company has been a close partner of Alphatron Marine for over 20 years. Quality and trust are the keywords to this relationship, not only for sales but also for service and development.

Please contact us for more information: +31 (0)10-4534000 or e-mail training@alphatronmarine.com website: www.alphatronmarine.com



The **MSC PILAR** (ex Magleby Maersk , ex Magleby) seen enroute Antwerp
Photo : P., M. & Ph. van Luik - www.shipsoffterneuzen.nl ©

Russian icebreaking tanker set to deliver fuel to Alaska town

A Russian tanker with icebreaking capability will make an emergency fuel delivery to Nome, Alaska, after a massive winter storm turned back a barge carrying the city's last regularly scheduled fuel delivery, Reuters reports. The Sitnasuak Native Corporation said it had signed a contract to have a vessel owned by the Russian company RIMSCO deliver 1.5 million gallons of fuel to Nome by year's end.

The operation, if successful, will allow Nome residents to avoid a serious fuel shortage later this winter resulting from the missed barge delivery, said Jason Evans, Sitnasuak's chairman. Nome, a city of about 3,600, lacks outside road access and depends on ships and aircraft for supplies. Fuel prices are already high -- averaging about \$5.40 for a gallon of gasoline -- but a shortage later in the winter could have added several dollars to that per-gallon price.

Sitnasuak, which owns one of two local Nome fuel distribution companies, had missed the year's final scheduled barge delivery of fuel. A barge carrying 1.6 million gallons of gasoline, diesel fuel and heating fuel failed to reach the port of Nome because of bad weather and sea-ice chunks blown into the harbor by hurricane-force winds in a storm last month that was considered the strongest in western Alaska since 1974.

With the barge delivery canceled, Sitnasuak had been considering flying in fuel later in the year, an expensive option. Delivery by the Russian vessel is more expensive than the traditional barging method, but is substantially less than flying in fuel, Evans said. Sitnasuak said its contract is with Vitus Marine LLC, an Alaska shipper that came up with the idea of using a RIMSCO ice-breaking fuel vessel, Evans said.

"We were reaching out to everyone and anyone that had any sort of possible scenario to get fuel to Nome," Evans said. If successful, it will be the first marine delivery of petroleum products to western Alaska conducted in winter, Sitnasuak said. The RIMSCO ship, called the Renda, will carry fuel from Inchon, South Korea, to Nome, Evans said. It is expected to take 20 to 25 days for the ship to make the journey from the port at Vladivostok to Inchon and then on to Nome, Evans said.

The U.S. Coast Guard has pledged to help the Renda make the voyage and will use the icebreaking cutter Healy to help clear a path for the tanker if necessary, Evans said. The fact that a Russian ship will be delivering Korean fuel to oil-rich Alaska "does have some irony to it, Evans said. "But certainly we live in a global economy nowadays." Sitnasuak is owned by 2,400 Inupiat Eskimos who live in Nome or have family ties to the area. **Source : PortNews**



Above seen the "Topaz Salalah" arriving at Doha port/Qatar. - **Photo : Capt.Geert Dijkema ©**



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Bulgaria invites Hamburg Port Co to check out Port Varna

Bulgaria hopes that Hamburg Port and Logistics Company, the operator of Germany's major port, will express interest in the concession of the Bulgarian Port Varna on the Black Sea, Transport Minister Ivaylo Moskovski stated in Berlin, Novinite reports.

"We are currently preparing the procedure for the concession of Port Varna, and I hope that the operator of Port Hamburg will be interested," Moskovski stated at a meeting with Klaus-Dieter Scheurle, State Secretary of Germany's Ministry for Transport, Construction and Urban Planning in Berlin. He added that Bulgaria's Cabinet plans to offer on concession four or five Danube Ports as well as Sofia Airport and Plovdiv Airport.

"The program of the Bulgarian government provides for granting the Bulgarian ports and airports on 35-year concessions since the national budget does not have sufficient funds for investments," Moskovski explained in Berlin.

German transport company Fraport is already a major German concessionaire in Bulgaria. The airports in Black Sea cities Varna and Burgas have been granted on concession to Fraport Twin Star Airport Management company, a German-Bulgarian consortium between the Varna-based TIM group's holding "Chimimport" (40%) and the German "Fraport", since 2006. In 2010, Fraport Twin Star Airport Management paid the Bulgarian state a total of BGN 13 M for the concessions of Varna Airport and Burgas Airport, which slightly less than the BGN 14 M profit made by state-run Sofia International Airport. Sofia Airport, however, has more passengers than Varna and Burgas combined. **Source :**

PortNews

China group lobbying to block Brazilian Valemaxes

Shipowners group says the ships will erode China's iron ore buying power

Brazilian miner Vale's plan to build mega carriers to ship iron ore will diminish China's bargaining power for the raw material as seaborne supply is dominated by global miners, an official with the China Shipowners' Association (CSA) said.

For the past several months, the CSA has been lobbying the government, local maritime authorities and port agents to block these so-called Valemaxes from entering China, the world's largest iron ore consumer. China buys around two-thirds of global seaborne iron ore, a market controlled by Vale and its Australian rivals Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton, and Zhang Shouguo, executive vice-chairman of CSA in Beijing, said that the Valemaxes would put Chinese buyers at the mercy of these suppliers.

'Vale's control of transportation means increasing monopoly of iron ore delivery to China, which puts Chinese steelmakers in a more passive position for bargaining prices,' Mr Zhang told Reuters. 'We tried to explain the situation to the government in Beijing and local ports and hope they can understand that Vale's move will not only weigh down the oversupplied shipping sector, but also the domestic steel sector too,' he said. Vale, the world's largest iron ore producer, aims to operate as many as 35 400,000-tonne dry bulk vessels to sharply reduce its freight costs and better

compete Rio Tinto and BHP. Earlier this week, an official with the National Development and Reform Commission, China's planning agency, said that domestic ports were not yet ready to receive Vale's mega carriers due to a few 'small issues'.

Among the issues still unresolved is how the ships will be safely guided into the ports. China's fragmented steel sector has been producing at poor margins since last year, overshadowed by the three foreign miners. 'What steel mills are concerned about is that they will not be able to share in the benefits of falling shipping costs, while Vale gains more power in the control of iron ore delivery to China,' said an industry source in Shanghai. 'Chinese steel mills are actually the real users of logistics facilities, so they should decide what to do.'

China's shipping sector - led by state-owned Cosco Group - has strongly opposed Vale's presence in the maritime industry as the freight sector struggles with low freight rates, high bunker fuel prices, and an oversupply of vessels. 'Vale should do what a miner does, and leave the shipping duties to the shipping sector. Vale's additional capacities will be a huge waste. The market faces a huge overhang,' Mr Zhang added.

A Vale official told Reuters in September the company was in talks with ship owners to sell or lease its planned fleet of giant bulk carriers. The Brazilian firm did not want to be a major freight operator or make money out of the volatile shipping business, the official said. **Source : Reuters**

OLDIE – FROM THE SHOEBOX



The **BARENTSZ ZEE** assisted by **ARGUS** seen leaving her homeport Maassluis for the last time, on the left are seen the pilot cutters **RIGEL** and **FOMALHAUT** and on the right the **CARAVELLE** - **Photo : Henk Ros (c)**

In yesterday's newsletter **Ian Forsyth** refers to the **SD-14 AN DONG JIANG**, originally Lamport & Holt's **BRONTE**, newsclippings readers **Simon Smith**, **Anton de Krieger** and **Bernard McCall** came with additional information about the vessel, The **BRONTE** was renamed in **AN DONG JIANG** in 1983, followed by **SAFE STAR** in December 1990 and was flying the Maltees flag and operated by COSCO GUANGZHOU but renamed **AN DONG JIANG** again in 2003, in February 2010 COSCO sold her to Tianjin Fu Yun Tai Shipping for 900 million Yuan and she was renamed **JIN CHENG XIN 8**. Like most of the former COSCO SD-14s she operated in the domestic Chinese coal trades and probably had her gear removed. In November 2010 she was delivered to Chinese shipbreakers at Xinhui.

There are now only **25** SD-14s in active trade. Of these seven are on the Chinese flag in the domestic trades. Five are flagged in North Korea and another five in Vietnam. The most recent sales to breakers were the Vietnamese pair **DONG BINH** and **STRUDY FALCON**, the later arriving at Alang last week.

..... PHOTO OF THE DAY



Heavy clouds and pouring rain over BRESKENS, located on the South bank of the Westerscheldt river estuary, as seen from the passing **DEO-GLORIA** - Photo : Wouter Blom ©

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