

# Pipeline MACHINERY Review

## Maats Pipeline Equipment, The Netherlands

Celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, Maats Pipeline Equipment is one of the leading suppliers of equipment and services to the pipeline industry. The Netherlands-based company is also the exclusive worldwide distributor of Liebherr pipe layers and welding tractors.

In addition to providing turnkey project services and other related support services, Maats sells a wide variety of construction equipment, both new and used. However, a large portion of its business involves rental of equipment for pipeline construction. The company's rental equipment inventory includes more than 500 items for short-term and long-term projects. Many major manufacturers are represented in the

inventory, including Liebherr pipe layers and welding tractors, for which Maats is the official rental partner.

Prominent in the Maats equipment line-up are Liebherr pipe layers with lifting capacity of 20 to 80 t. In addition, the range of Liebherr pipe layers (the RL22B, RL42B and RL52 models) will soon be extended with the introduction of new models with lifting capacities of approximately 50 to 90+ t.

The upcoming Liebherr pipe layer models are designed with forward-looking features. They are equipped with special safety devices, and meet the latest emission standards that are applicable for the EU, USA and Canada.

Maats also offers another innovative product: the

**RL52 (Russia-Novosibirsk)**  
Liebherr pipe layers have a lifting capacity of 20 to 90+ t and are available in special versions for ambient temperatures from -40 °C to +50 °C.



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**RL42 multi-purpose** - The Maats/Liebherr multi-purpose machine, combining welding tractor and pipe layer, performs several pipeline construction tasks simultaneously or in sequence, making it an ideal machine for tie-in jobs.



(Below) Crane control of RL42 multi-purpose - In the fully enclosed, ergonomically designed cabin of the Liebherr pipe layer and welding tractors, the operator has an optimal view of the work area and can easily operate all functions from the operator's seat inside of the cabin.



Liebherr welding tractor, engineered to meet customers' requirements for ease of operation and reliable performance. Building the welding tractor begins with the production of the basic tractor at the Liebherr factory in Telfs, Austria. Then all of the welding-specific equipment is mounted to the tractor at the Maats workshop in Holland – the welding platform, generator, compressor, welding sources and Hiab crane. For comfortable working conditions, the Liebherr welding tractor is equipped with a canopy or with a fully enclosed cabin. The operator has an optimal overview of the work area, and the control for the crane and compressor is located next to the operator's seat.

In addition to comfort, the Liebherr welding tractor has many other advantages:

A diesel machine engine. The heart of the Liebherr welding tractor is a diesel engine, providing reduced emissions, exemplary performance, a low level of fuel consumption and a cooling system specially adapted to high ambient temperatures. Able to go for longer periods between service intervals, the diesel is the reliable workhorse of the welding tractor.

A hydrostatic travel drive. In contrast to conventional systems, this drive offers decisive advantages in pipeline construction, such as a permanently high ratio of efficiency, optimal overload protection, excellent precision controls, stepless regulation of speed combined with exact straight travel, and high maneuverability (including turning on the spot). All functions of the tractors are controlled with only two joysticks.

Economical working attachments. The generator, compressor and the loading crane are all hydraulically driven, and all aggregates are driven by the standard diesel engine of the welding tractor. Up to six modular welding positions can be used, and welding and power cables are premounted to the crane.

Maats customers can choose from a wide selection of welding equipment – two to six electrically powered welding sources can be mounted on the platform in a lockable cabinet.

As an option, the tractor can be prepared for automatic, semi-automatic and manual welding. On customer request, different generators, compressors and cranes can be mounted.

Another important option on the welding tractor is the winterkit, which allows the machines to work in areas where the outside temperature goes as low as -40 °C. The winterkit contains a pre-heating system for the double-glass cabin, engine and starting batteries, so that the tractor can function under extreme conditions without problems. A separate heating system is located in the isolated cabinet on the back platform to heat the welding equipment, generator and compressor.

With customised solutions in mind, Maats engineers developed a special multi-purpose vehicle that is a combination of welding tractor and pipe layer. For the design and construction of this innovative machine, Maats won the BP award during an annual convention of the IPLOCA.

The multi-purpose machine was designed by Maats in co-operation with Liebherr. It is based on the hydrostatic





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travel drive principle, which permits the machine to perform several onshore pipeline construction tasks simultaneously or in sequence. This feature delivers maximum flexibility and a considerable reduction of investment and operational costs, plus increased safety and environmental protection. Operations that can be executed with this machine include pipe welding, air compressing, pre-heating, pipe-facing, crane handling, and pipelaying. All of these options are combined in one machine, using a single-source diesel engine. Contractors benefit from lower investment costs because one machine can be used for multiple purposes. Non-productive hours are reduced, since the machine can be used for other tasks, whereas standard machines have to wait to perform the next operation.

The multi-purpose machine minimises environmental impact. The diesel engine, designed according to the latest standards, protects the environment from excess levels of emission and noise. Bio-hydraulic oils can be used in the machine.

Orest M. Serafin, chief technologist of Sroytransgaz, comments on his company's experience with Maats: "Over the last few years we acquired more than 40

Maats/Liebherr SR712 welding tractors equipped for both Arctic and standard conditions. At the present time, we are using this equipment to build oil and gas facilities in many countries of the world. The high level of the welding tractors is most notable. We have found Maats and its Russian partner, Argus Ltd, to be reliable partners."

Maats Pipeline Equipment is based in Goor, Holland, where it has its own workshop and a team of specialised mechanics. The company also has business units in Datteln, Germany and Ankara, Turkey, as well as a global network of agents, representatives, partner and service stations. This worldwide Maats network, together with the global Liebherr office network, ensures that projects can be serviced by experienced mechanics anywhere a problem arises. Spare parts can be provided quickly for any jobsite. This quick response protects contractors from enormous costs caused by equipment downtimes.

With a quarter of a century in the supply of pipeline construction equipment, Maats has the proven expertise to bring extra value to customers' projects anywhere in the world. ●●●