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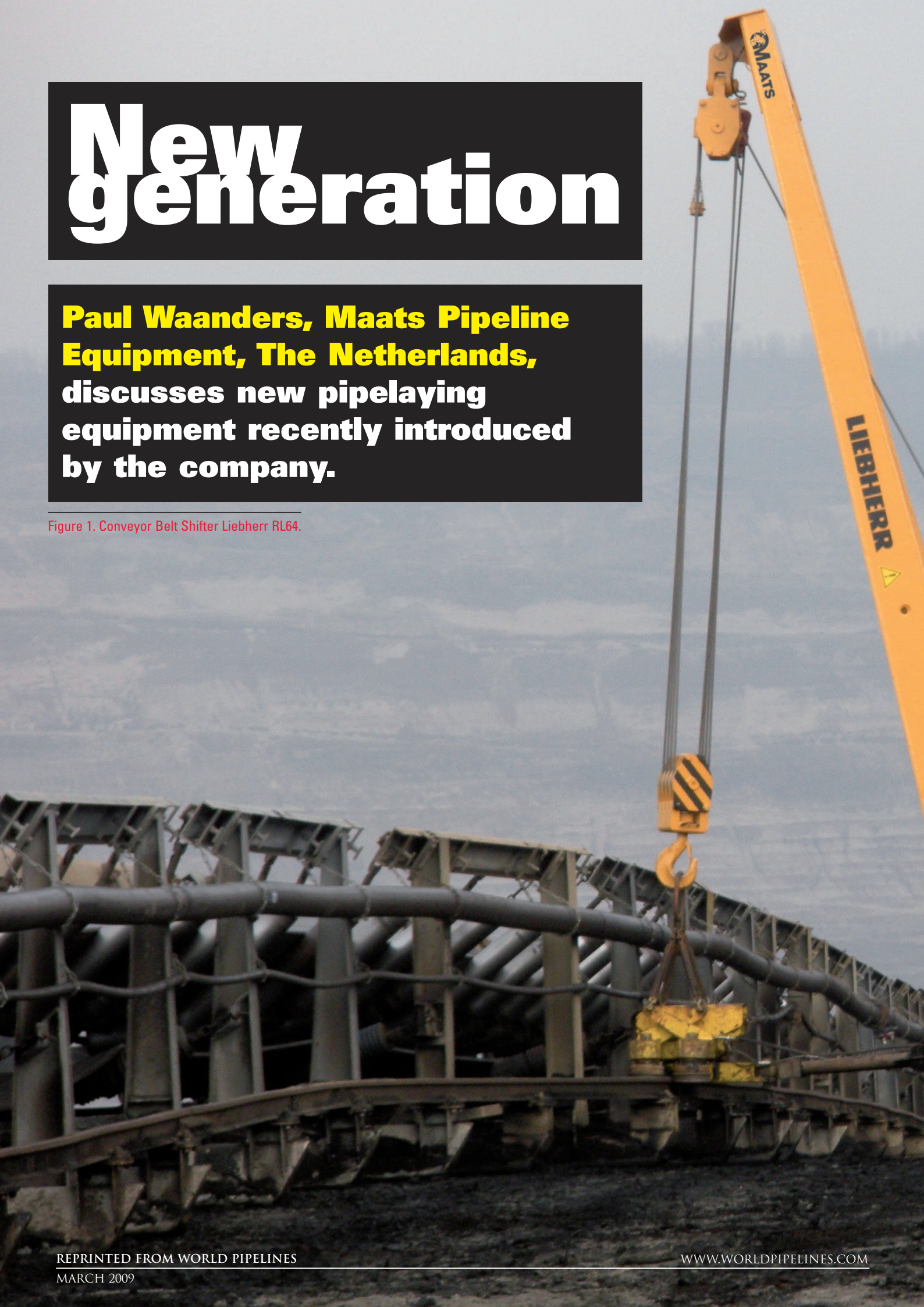


 **MAATS** PIPELINE EQUIPMENT

New generation

Paul Waanders, Maats Pipeline Equipment, The Netherlands, discusses new pipelaying equipment recently introduced by the company.

Figure 1. Conveyor Belt Shifter Liebherr RL64.





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(mostly) lignite and overburden. One of the adjustments is the addition of a potentiometer. With this, the operator can adjust the driving direction from straight forward to a continuous sideways drive. Some of these machines are being equipped with GPS, making it possible to shift the conveyor belt within 5 - 10 cm of a registered location.

Liebherr multi equipment

The Liebherr multi combines a regular pipelayer with a welding tractor by adding a front and rear platform with the necessary equipment for welding. This machine can be used for all types and systems of welding, just like a normal Liebherr welding tractor. The same machine can be used for lowering in the pipe afterwards. This means fewer machines on the project; resulting in less maintenance, less fuel consumption and even fewer operators. This option can be supplied for all types of Liebherr pipelayers.

The sale and rental programme

More generally, the Maats sale and rental programme can be divided into three main categories:

Pipelaying equipment

- Pipelayers: 20 - 90 t
- Roller cradles: 4 - 60 in.

Pipe welding equipment

- Pipe facing machines: 28 - 60 in.
- Internal line-up clamps 6 - 100 in.
- External line-up clamps 6 - 56 in. (sale only)
- Welding tractors.

Pipe bending equipment

- Pipe bending machines 6 - 66 in.
- Hydraulic and pneumatic bending mandrels 6 - 56 in.

Additional equipment is also available, such as compressors that can be used with the above machinery. Also available are padding machines that can be used in combination with either pipelayers or dozers.



Figure 2. Liebherr welding tractor SR712BM.

Full service also means flexibility. As a result, Maats does not publish a full equipment list. This gives room for offering alternatives and the possibility to source equipment elsewhere. Maats has established an equipment pool with several companies that own pipeline construction equipment, making sourcing and finding alternatives even easier.

Most recently added to the equipment pool are two new Liebherr pipelayer models from the 4th Generation - the RL44 and RL64. To complete the programme of Liebherr pipeline equipment, in 2009, Maats will also introduce the replacement machines for the pipelayer RL22B with a lifting capacity of 20 t and for the welding tractor SR712BM.



Figure 3. Multipurpose Liebherr Tractor RL42 MP.



Figure 4. Liebherr Pipelayer RL44.

Two new Generation 4 pipelayers

Based on the successful product ranges of the new Generation 4 dozers and crawler loaders, Liebherr has recently introduced two new pipelayers. The launch of these include the new RL44, with a 48 t lifting capacity; driven by a Liebherr Diesel engine with 175 kW/238 HP and an operating weight of 35 100 kg. The new RL64 pipelayer has a 91 t lifting capacity, with an engine output of 275 kW/367 HP and an operating weight of 58 000 kg at the top end of the line.

Strictly following customer demands and the experience of over 35 years in manufacturing hydrostatic driven dozers and crawler loaders, Liebherr pipelayers have set industry standards over the years. Asymmetric track width for best load distribution, hydrostatic travel drive and the joystick control concept for maximum operating safety and easy and precise operation are only a few examples.

Liebherr's pipelayer, in the compact class with a fully automatic folding boom for easy transportation, has been awarded with the British Petrol Innovation Price for groundbreaking new technology in the pipeline industry.

Both new Generation 4 pipelayers - the RL44 and the RL64, have been designed with a focus on both buyer and operator requirements. Customers in the pipeline industry can now benefit from the added value of the new machine; with the highest performance, best economy and reliability as well as excellent operator comfort and safety. Further advantages of the new machines are discussed below.

Performance

The new machines feature a revolutionary drive concept from Liebherr, with uninterrupted power on both tracks, wear-free service brakes and an unmatched manoeuvrability including turning on the spot. The stepless speed control eliminates the need of gear shifting, providing easiest operation with just one travel joystick. This results in the highest drawbar pull over the full speed range - not only important for best performance on the job site but also for working safety. A hydraulic hoist winch with infinite and precise speed control, including an automatic multi disc brake, is also standard on all Liebherr pipelayers.

Economy

The robust Liebherr diesel engines operate at a constant low and very economical speed of 1800 rpm. This reduces fuel consumption, is important for a long component life of the engine and – together with the on demand hydraulic cooling system – keeps the noise level at a minimum. Centralised service points with easy access,

including a 40° tiltable cab, long service intervals and a service friendly layout help keeping service and operating costs down.

Reliability

Well-proven technologies and high product quality are what keeps machines ready for use. Liebherr develops and builds its own components and assemblies specifically for use on construction and pipeline machinery. As a result, their strength can be assured however arduous the task. Liebherr's range of pipelayers feature hydrostatically driven fans and wide mesh radiators to ensure optimum cooling performance, even in very hot and dusty environments. With well dimensioned and long-term tested components and a range of deep temperature kits, Liebherr's range of pipeline equipment withstands the roughest ambient conditions - from the desert to the arctic winter.

Comfort

Another highlight of the new Generation 4 pipelayers is the brand new cab, with generous dimensions and a strong air conditioner. The new cab design provides the best possible visibility on the load and the hook, and an outstanding view to all sides. The well-planned cab layout makes conditions ideal for a stress-free and efficient operation of the machine. All instruments and controls are clearly laid out and easy to reach. The operator's seat, with a wide range of adjustments, is turned 15° to the left for the optimum view.



Figure 5. Interior view of operator's cab of Liebherr Generation 4 pipelayers.

Safety

All Liebherr pipelayers feature one separate joystick for all travel and steering functions, and another for the control of the boom and hook - making the operation of the machine easy and precise. An integrated ROPS protection is standard on all machines. Together with the standard free fall device and a hydraulically stabilised boom, the machines provide maximum safety for the operator. **WP**