

Lasco and Potain give building a lift

Ron Laczko has developed a sound reputation over many years for getting difficult lifting jobs done quickly and safely. Laczko's practical experience, together with an eye for finding new ways to improve a task, led him to design a portable crane. This new crane could work from the slab of a building and undertake a range of smaller lifts - which took up much of the time of tower cranes, or became very costly when large mobile cranes were the only other alternative.

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Lasco steps into the world

This crane (the Lasco Lift) was used successfully in Asia. While displayed at an Italian trade fair, it attracted the attention of Potain, the largest maker of construction cranes in the world. This led to an agreement under which the Lasco Lift is now sold as a Potain crane on all markets except Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, where Lasco Cranes continues to sell and hire the cranes under its own brand name. Potain recently displayed the crane at a major fair in Paris, and it now appears on the Potain Web site as a new product, the 10t Portable Crane.

"Lasco Lift plans to introduce a compact self-erecting crane suitable for use in domestic housing."

The most recent development for the Lasco Lift is a set of attachable rubber tracks which gives the crane mobility. The first of these units will be used by Macquarie Street Sydney.

The association with Potain introduced Lasco Cranes to the Potain HD series self-erecting cranes - the most advanced such cranes in the world. This type of crane is used widely in Europe on low- to medium-rise building sites, largely as an alternative to hiring mobile cranes onto a job. The cranes remain on-site for the duration of a job, meaning there are no hold-ups through inability to co-ordinate the delivery of materials with the availability of cranes.

These cranes travel to site as a trailer, and can be readily moved around a site. Erection, after removal of the dolly axle and attachment of counter-weights, is by a simple lever control to operate a winch which sequentially tensions the

Minimal site preparation is required. With simple back propping the cranes can operate from a commercial slab.

They require comparatively little room in which to operate, and have hook capacity at long reach. This, and the ability of the hook to travel on a trolley along the jib, means that loads can be distributed around the slab by the crane, giving greater effective working range than a mobile crane. The largest of the cranes offered in Australia has a 34m hook height with the boom in the horizontal (53m with the boom luffed up) and can lift it at a 45m radius, but a wide range of heights and capacities is available in the Potain range. Sections of the jib can be folded to allow the crane to slew in confined spaces.

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Simplicity and practicality

Being electric, the self-erecting cranes are quiet in operation, and do not generate fumes. They are simple to operate and can be controlled using a joystick pendant control or a radio remote control which allows the operator to position himself close to the load for greater accuracy. While these cranes work well with traditional building materials, they are being used to great effect in Sydney in conjunction with the Rapidwall and Ultrafloor building systems. High erection rates are possible, and the ability to complete the slab and walls of one floor before moving on to the next means that crane has virtually unimpeded access to the whole of the floor being worked on.

Lasco Cranes plans to introduce a compact self-erecting crane suitable for use in domestic housing. Changes in WorkCover safety requirements mean that manual lifting will be replaced by materials handling systems on small as well as large sites, and the Self Erecting crane has an important role to play in this.

Lasco Cranes, the exclusive Australian distributor, has a range of Potain Self Erecting cranes available for sale or hire, and further information can be obtained from: Lasco Cranes, PO Box 921 Nerang QLD 4211

mast and jib sections so that they quickly unfold to form a compact tower crane which slews from the base.

Ph 07 5578 4186 - Fax 07 5578 1271

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