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The
Containershipping -Newsletter



March 2007, 10th week

Danaos Order Pending On Yang Ming's Decision +++ Zhejiang Ouhua to Build Innovative Panamax +++ French Line Prepares CNC Takeover +++ Moroccan Interests Buy Boxship Quartet +++ Sietas Delivers Violetta +++ Samsung's Standard Post-Panamax Ships +++ Corrected

Danaos Order Pending On Yang Ming's Decision

Some months ago, we received information that the Management of Danaos Shipping of Greece was negotiating a containership order with Far Eastern shipyards. More recent reports suggest that Danaos intend to sign four 6,800-TEU carriers in China. Reportedly, the vessels are earmarked for trading with Yang Ming. Presently it looks like Danaos' ordering decision is pending on a go-ahead by Yang Ming. Press reports speculate the ships would cost some USD 95 million apiece and might be ordered from Jiangnan Changxing shipyard. The vessels' delivery would be in 2010. Some sources recently suggested the order might have gone cold and put on hold or even discarded, since Yang Ming no longer wants the vessels. Some ship brokers believe the Taiwanese carrier has secured a 15-year charter two (or even three) Koyo-built 6,350-TEU vessels from Shoei Kisen.

Zhejiang Ouhua to Build Innovative Panamax

Chinese Zhejiang Ouhua Shipbuilding recently presented a newly-developed design for a rather progressive panamax-sized box carrier. The ships are to be delivered to GB Shipping of Germany. GB Shipping, a member of the German Buss group, had busily ordered a large number of container vessels from Chinese shipyards over the last few years. Most of these ships however, are actually either mid-sized vessels or container feeders. Such vessel types have been ordered in China by several shipping and ship finance companies. A large number of such ships was signed by German owners. Buss however, was among the very first foreign shipping companies to eventually order large container ships from Chinese shipyards.

Beyond Containers: Cruisers, Bulkers, Reefers and Tankers at Hamburg



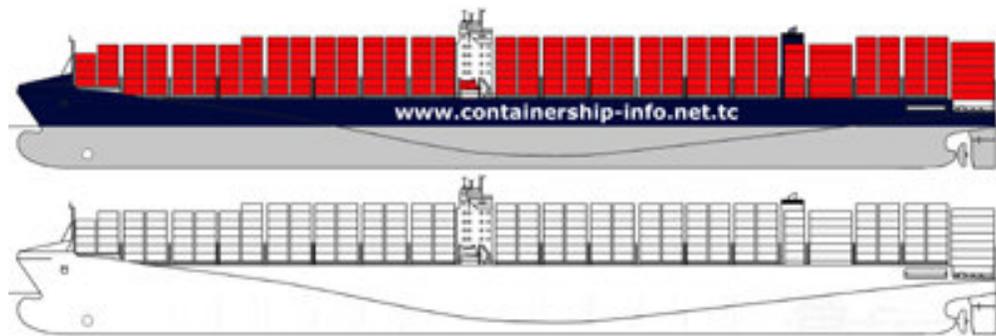
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The company's pipeline now actually includes at least four container carriers of panamax dimensions. The ships are to be built at Zhejiang Ouhua Shipbuilding. Very recently, some specifications of the vessels' design have been unveiled. Rather surprisingly, Zhejinag Ouhua has chosen a rather unique and innovative design for their first-ever panamax-sized containership: The design includes a deckhouse that will not be fitted above the ship's engine room but in a more forward position, eight bays from the bow. Containers will be stowed above the engine room and a single funnel is placed in the middle of a bay for 20-foot-containers. The new Venus-class vessels, so-called by GB Shipping, will have a length of 294.13 metres and a beam of 32.20 metres. They weigh in at GT 53,000 and displace 64,500 metric tonnes. Powered by a 40.1MW main engine, they will reach a service speed of 24.6 knots. At 5,303 TEU, the ships will be able to carry some 200

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TEU more than any of today's more conventional panamaxs. Reefer capacity is provided for 1,200 TEU. The ships will receive their class from Hamburg's Germanischer Lloyd, but a charterer has not yet been named. The first unit is scheduled for delivery in 2009 and the series of four is to be completed until 2010. Looking back a few years, a rather similar concept for an optimised panamax carrier was presented by Aker Ostsee in 2003. Using a layout with a forward deckhouse and engines aft, Aker believed it was possible to squeeze 5,600 TEU into and onto a panamax ship. Allegedly IRISL was close to ordering the Aker design, but eventually opted for vessels to be build in South-Korea. Aker thus shelved their plans and successfully continued building sub-panamaxs.



This is how the new vessels will look like.
lateral plan drawing: Jan Tiedemann

French Line Prepares CNC Takeover

Some months ago, we reported that the Marseille-based CMA CGM was looking to strengthen its presence in the Far East, particularly in the intra-Asian container trade. Reportedly, the French were therefore eyeing the takeover of an established local carrier. Rumours suggested a Taiwanese shipping company could become the target of this move: Some sources claimed that CMA CGM planned to either buy Wan Hai Steamship or CNC Lines. Wan Hai quickly denied any such talk. It later became obvious that CMA CGM was targeting CNC. Last week, the French came up with a USD 159 million offer. The management of CNC Lines now finally decided to support the deal and recommended shareholders to give it a nod. Presently, CNC's route network covers an area between Malaysia and

Indonesia in the south and China, South Korea and Japan in the north.

Moroccan Interests Buy Boxship Quartet

The joint-venture company AL Ships has recently sold four 1,600-TEU containerships to undisclosed Moroccan investors. The quartet changed hands for (unconfirmed) USD 123 millions enbloc. The four vessels are: Maersk Valetta , Maersk Venice, Maersk Vigo and Maersk Vancouver. The ships were built at the Hamburg-based Sietas Shipyard in Germany. Three of them date from 2001, while Vancouver was delivered in 2002. Presently the ships are on a (rather low) USD 12,950 charter to Maersk Line until late 2008. Maersk holds options to extend this deal up to 2012. Industry sources suggest that the buyers are Casablanca's International Maritime Transport, who already operate a fleet of small and mid-sized container ships. Two of the V-classes, namely Maersk Vigo and Maersk Vancouver, were recently introduced to Maersk Line's Baltic Feeder Network. Allegedly, Maersk plans to make some slight modifications to the ships to allow them to pass through the Kiel Canal. The vessels' air draught presently forces them to sail to the Baltic via the Skaw.



Maersk Vigo at Cuxhaven, bound for Hamburg
photo: Marion and Helge Barth

Sietas Delivers Violetta

Last week, Hamburg-based Sietas shipyard delivered the 1,856-TEU Violetta to Reederei Peter Döhle. The vessel is

chartered to Mitsui OSK and will trade as MOL Drakensberg. It will support the fleet of the SAECS-II. This Europe-to-South-Africa service is jointly operated by Maersk, Safmarine, Mitsui and DAL. The introduction of the new ship be upgrade the loop to weekly departures. Mol Drakensberg measures 178.57 metres in length and 27.60 metres in width. The ship's top speed is 21 knots. Violetta will be followed by a sister vessel named Valentina in May.



MOL Drakensberg returning from sea trials
photo: Jan Tiedemann

Samsung's Standard Post-Panamax Ships

South Korean Samsung Shipbuilding & Heavy industries is one of the world's leading builders of container vessels. Over the last decade, the company built up a reputation as an efficient and innovative shipyard: Samsung was the first Asian yard to produce an own design for a post-panamax containership and delivered the first such units three years ahead of its Far Eastern competition. The ship was named CGM Normandie. At 4,734 TEU she was the world's largest containership at the time of her delivery in 1991. The ship traded as MSC Napoli until early 2007 when it was damaged in a severe storm and subsequently grounded off the British coast. The 17-row-wide Normandie remained an only child and Samsung did not build

another post-panamax container ship until four years later, when Hong Kong's OOCL ordered a pair of 5,344 TEU twins. The first of these vessels, OOCL Hong Kong, was delivered in 1995. The two ships were earmarked to sail alongside a fleet of five similarly-sized vessels OOCL had ordered from Japanese Mitsubishi Heavy Industries. Measuring 276 metres in length and 40 metres in width, the ships were one row of containers wider than the 1991-built CGM Normandie. They were to become something like the forefathers of Samsung's standard post panamaxes.



**OOCL Hong Kong visits her namesake port
photo: Jan Svendsen**

The vessels displaced 67,000 tonnes on a summer draught of 14 metres. Their gross tonnage was GT 66,000. Like their Japanese-built near-sisters, they were fitted with a Sulzer 12RTA84C main engine, rated at 48.6MW. The vessels' top speed is 25 knot. The deck hose with its characteristically large funnel was arranged in a 2/3 position with 11 container bays in front of it and five bays aft. The rear bay above the poop and mooring deck was fitted with a massive cell guide structure. A feature that should be repeated on many later Samsung ships. OOCL deployed the ships to their Asia – Europe service where they traded successfully. Many years later when the Grand Alliance introduced larger ships to their mainline services, the

first-generation post panamax vessels were redeployed to the transpacific trade. In the second half of the nineteen nineties, post panamax carriers of around 5,500 TEU developed into the standard for high-capacity liner services. Not surprisingly, Samsung would contribute quite a lot of these ships to the world fleet. The yard's next customer was Neptune Orient Line of Singapore who ordered four ships for delivery in 1997 and 1998, respectively. The NOL vessels basically followed the earlier ships' design, but were a few metres shorter. They also lacked the characteristic cell guides on the sternmost bay. Their TEU-capacity was only 5,016, but they carried a higher number of reefer boxes. The first ship of this so-called gemstone family was NOL Agate, followed by sisters NOL Cyprine, NOL Pearl and NOL Coral. All four ships traded between Asia and Europe. They were renamed with APL prefixes, when Neptun Orient bought American President Lines and merged the two liner brands into today's APL.



APL Cyprine at Hamburg
photo: Jan Tiedemann

For the next ships, both OOCL indirectly remained customers of Samsung Heavy: They long-term chartered carriers ordered by Hamburg's ship finance and management company E.R. Schiffahrt who ordered eight identical ships. Five of these went to OOCL while three ships were chartered by the Anglo-Dutch

P&O Nedlloyd, both members of the Grand Alliance. For this series of ships, Samsung developed an improved design and managed to slot 5,762 TEU into and onto the ships without adding much to their exterior dimensions. Compared to the first OOCL ships, reefer capacity was almost doubled. The superstructure design was revamped with the lifeboats tucked away into sheltered compartments. Again, massive cell guides were fitted to the aft bay. Instead of a Sulzer Diesel, the ships were powered by an MAN B&W 12K90MC main engine with an output of 54.8MW. This was sufficient for a service speed of 26.2 knots. The series' lead ship was E.R. Hong Kong. Delivered late in 1999 it left the yard under the charter name OOCL New York. It was followed by OOCL Shanghai, Los Angeles, Malaysia and Germany. The P&O Nedlloyd vessels followed in the third quarter of 2000. They were delivered as P&O Nedlloyd Vespucci, Magellan and Torres and deployed to various services of within the Grand Alliance's route network. As P&O Nedlloyd was taken over by Maersk Line in 2005, the ships reverted to the project names. Since scheduled docking was due, they were repainted in the house colours of E.R. Schiffahrt. Maersk however decided to maintain the charter and placed the ships on a service between Asia and the Arab peninsula. They were later redeployed to an Asia - USA service. Samsung's next standard post panamax vessels were ordered by Danaos of Greece who had secured a long-term charter for four ships with APL. The carriers' design was very similar to that of the E.R. ships, but the vessels' TEU intake was slightly smaller at 5,514. This new series was led by APL England, delivered March 2001. Until January 2002, Samsung also delivered the sisters APL Scotland, Holland and Belgium. The quartet was placed on routes between Asia and Europe, but later also sailed across the Pacific. The original charter deal included a purchase option and APL very recently announced to buy at least two of the ships in the near future. Samsung's next customer was again E.R. Schiffahrt of Hamburg.



This time, the company opted for another seven ships. One was to be chartered out to OOCL, four ships went to APL and the remaining two units were taken by the rapidly expanding China Shipping Container Line. The series started with E.R. France, which was actually delivered before the last of Danaos' APL ships was finished. The ship was named OOCL France by its charterer. France was followed by E.R. Kobe and E.R. Los Angeles. These ships went to CSCL who named them CSCL Kobe and CSCL Los Angeles, respectively. The Chinese carrier used the ships on its (at that time) only Asia-Europe service, where they sailed in company with three similarly-sized ships built at Hyundai Heavy.



**CSCL Los Angeles on the river Elbe
photo: Boris Paulien**

The four remaining container carriers were finally delivered between late 2001 and the summer of 2002. They came on stream as APL Canada, India, Denmark and Sweden. At 5,762 TEU, they were the biggest units in APL's fleet at the time. The next two post panamax container ships Samsung delivered were handed over to Hamburg-based Claus Peter Offen. The company had placed its orders shortly after E.R. and the ships very much resemble the vessels delivered to Erck Rickmers. The ships were chartered to OOCL who named them OOCL Korea (originally Santa Victoria) and OOCL Thailand (Santa

Virginia). In 2003, the long series of rather similar Samsung ships was finally interrupted by a number of slightly larger half-sisters. These ships are easily recognisable by their lengthened hull and their individually designed superstructure. They also lack the prominent cell guide arrangement over the aft mooring deck. Five of these ships were delivered to NYK Line of Japan. They are known as NYK's L-class consisting of NYK Leo, Libra, Lodestar, Lynx and Lyra. The ship sailed alongside the large fleet of NYK's similarly-sized carriers of Japanese origin. Another big vessel order had meanwhile been secured from the French Line CMA CGM. The carrier wanted a series of eight identical ships. The vessels were designed to upgrade an entire Asia-Europe sling. CMA CGM wanted to use the ships they replaced to launch an entirely new service. These ships were to become known as the composer class carriers. Their design represents a reworked version of the ships delivered to E.R. Schiffahrt, Claus Peter Offen and Danaos. The container carriers' main particulars remained unchanged, but the hull shape was slightly altered, as was the superstructure. Furthermore, the aft cell guides disappeared. The most significant advance in design was the installation of a new main engine, an MAN B&W 10K98MC-C. This ten-cylinder diesel is rated at 57MW and drives the ships at 26 knots. Samsung managed to deliver the entire series within less than eight months. The lead ship, CMA CGM Bellini was handed over in April 2004. It was followed by CMA CGM Chopin, Mozart, Puccini, Rossini, Strauss, Verdi and Wagner. The composer vessels originally sailed in CMA CGM's NCX service. In 2005 they were transferred to the MEX Asia-Med loop, since the French Line introduced some ultra-large ships to the well-known FAL and the existing fleet of vessels subsequently cascaded down to smaller loops. Since the completion of CMA CGM's composer class, Samsung Heavy did not deliver any further standard post panamax ships. Most of today's mainline container services were switched to larger tonnage of 8,000 or even 9,500 TEU and Samsung allocated yard capacity and building slots to ships of that size range. However, the story of the standard post panamaxes is not over by far: In 2005, MSC figured the company would need ships of 5,800 TEU and ordered six such units at Samsung. The ships, scheduled for delivery in 2008, are believed to build on the design of the

composer class. Apart from the six firm orders, MSC holds options for two more vessels and allegedly even negotiates another four.

Corrected

In our last newsletter we accidentally referred to Shenzhen as 'Shanghai's neighbouring port'. Of course we actually meant to point towards to the proximity and competition between Shenzhen and Hong Kong, not Shanghai. Sorry.

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For assistance with the present issue, the editors gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Bert Vernimmen, Helge Barth and Klaus Masuch.