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March 2007, 13th week

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MSC Signs 13,200 TEU Jumbo

Your editors would have suggested MSC Emma as a fitting name for the Mediterranean Shipping Company's latest containership order, had this name not already been given to a standard panamax vessel. South Korea's Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering has bagged up an order from MSC for a mammoth 13,200 TEU containership. According to a statement from Daewoo, the new ship will be built, based on a June 2006 contact for 9,700 TEU vessels. According to Lloyd's List, the price of the new mega-carrier is USD 165 millions. A delivery date has not been released so far, but with the South Korean shipyards' latest re-allocation of capacity, the carrier might come on stream as soon as 2010.

Malacca Strait Toll Proposed

A proposal that was made during a maritime conference in Kuala Lumpur last week earned quite some media attention: A

group of consultants suggested the introduction of a passage toll to be levied on ships transiting the Malacca Strait. The idea is to use the additional income to fund the promotion of safe navigation and the fight against piracy. The proposal suggested a toll of USD 0.01 per deadweight tonne. Thus, an average 8,000 TEU container vessel would have to pay some USD 1,000 per passage. Since traffic in the straights presently amounts to some four billion tonnes per year, the toll would generate about USD 40 millions. This would be expected to rise to USD 64 millions until 2020. However, it is still unclear whether the nations adjoining the straight would have the right to implement such a toll against the interests of the shipping industry: This is certainly a question of territorial rights and the ambit of national jurisdiction – a thorough look at the United Nations' Convention on the Law of the Sea recommended. Previous proposals to charge users of the Malacca Strait never materialised due to concerns that contributors would demand a say on how the waterway is managed.

Pimp My Orderbook

Yes, this year has seen a bit of a slow start in terms of containership orders – but the world's large shipping companies finally seem to want to make amends for this weak period and launched a terrific shopping spree, mostly at Far Eastern shipyards. Deterred by the thread of a looming boxboat overcapacity, many shipping lines were reluctant to place more orders on top of what already looks like a spectacular vessel pipeline. Nevertheless, confidence into a strong market has returned and the industry leaders finally let their hair down in truly big style: Reportedly, Hanjin Shipping and Samsung Heavy have agreed upon an order for a trio of 8,100 TEU vessels. Danaos of Greece signed five 5,700 TEU ships in China and is furthermore said to have closed a deal for another five 6,500 TEU ships with Hanjin Heavy. The latter of these ships, slated for delivery in 2010, will probably come on stream for Yang Ming, with whom Danaos have been negotiating for a rather lengthy period. China Ocean Shipping's Container division Coscon extended their pipeline at Jiangnan Shipyard and ordered another four 5,700 TEU ships. The Shanghai-based carrier's pipeline for this ship type now stands at a dozen

vessels. Not surprisingly, German ship management and ship finance companies were responsible for a great deal of new orders too. The Buss group fixed four 5,303 TEU panamax vessels from Zhejiang Ouhua – the ships will be built to an innovative design which we already briefly introduced in newsletter 10/2007. Shanghai Chengxi Shipyard and Hansa Treuhand reportedly added another two units of the yard's rather popular 3,500 TEU design to their common pipeline. Three more of these ships were bagged up by Hamburg's Schulte Group. A very interesting vessel order comes from Delphis of Belgium: The short sea feeder operator seemingly plans to introduce a new dimension of Baltic feeder ships and ordered five 2,550 TEU ships from Hyundai. To be delivered with a high ice class, the ships are earmarked for the trade between the European North Range ports such as Hamburg and Rotterdam and the Baltic Sea Area. In addition to the abovementioned deals, a large number of smaller vessels in the size range of 1,300 to 2,000 TEU has been signed, mainly from Chinese builders. Together, Zhejiang Ouhua, Mawei Shipyard, Guangzhou Wenchong and Jiangsu Yangzijiang Shipbuilding accounted for more than 30 new ships within the last two weeks. Again, the majority of these deals originates from Germany, with the occasional order from the Netherlands. The current order frenzy also includes a numerous vessels in the category below 1,000 TEU. The Dutch Damen shipbuilding group reported ten new contracts to build 812 TEU ships at their Turkish and Chinese yards. In most cases, the ships will be towed to the Netherlands as mere steel hulls to be fitted out at Damen's Dutch facilities. At this point in time it looks like the tidal wave of new contracts will continue to sweep into the next few weeks, too. Your editors have reason to believe that Claus Peter Offen of Hamburg is negotiating several substantial orders with Asian yards. As we already stated in last week's newsletter, Offen is believed to lead the race for container ship building capacity that was generated at short notice, when several large-scale LNG-carrier projects were postponed. Reportedly, Offen is very close to signing six 4,300 TEU ships from Hyundai Heavy for delivery in 2008. Additionally, Claus Peter Offen is believed to be negotiating ten more such vessels for delivery in 2010. The German ship finance and management specialist is also said to prepare a deal for four 4,250 TEU ships

to be build at Samsung's Koje Island yard. These ships might come on stream before the end of the year 2010. Another company from Hamburg, the Döhle Group, is linked to a potential order for up to ten 3,600 TEU ships to be built by the Taiwanese China Shipbuilding Corporation. Allegedly, these ships are destined to trade for the French Line CMA CGM, who already operate an almost similarly-sized ship type delivered by China Shipbuilding, the CMA CGM Sambhar. Moving towards larger vessels, Singapore's Pacific International Line, PIL, is believed to be close to signing a sextet of 6,500 TEU ships at Dalian Number Two Yard, formerly known as Dalian New Shipyard. This northern Chinese yard already built the largest ships in PIL's present fleet, the 4,253-TEU L-classes, of the Kota Lagu type. The Daewoo Shipbuilding Group and Tsakos Shipping of Greece might soon announce the closure of a contract for four 4,860 TEU ships. These ships could either be build at Daewoo's South Korean or Romanian yard. According to very recent sources, Guangzhou Wenchong Shipyard could soon bag a whole number of vessel orders from Germany. Although the client still remains nameless, Leonhardt und Blumberg, Columbia Shipmanagement, Thien and Heyenga or Karl Schlüter might be worth a guess: All these Companies are already on Wenchong's list of costumers for the 1,740 TEU design. Drifting further into the field of speculation, Singapore's American President Line, is believed to be in the marked for four or five vessels of around 8,000 TEU. Taiwanese Yang Ming is said to consider buying another five units of 8,200 TEU as well as planning to sign two 6,500 TEU ships to trade alongside the similarly-sized vessels from Danaos.

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Hyundai Hands Over NYK Venus

Two months after NYK Vega, Hyundai Heavy now handed over the second ship of Nippon Yusen Kaisha's 9,200 TEU V-class. The Japanese carrier had ordered four such vessels in South Korea, as well as eight similarly-sized ships from IHI's Kure shipyard in Japan. The most recent unit was recently named NYK Venus. Like her earlier sister, Venus is bound to enter the Asia-Europe services of the Grand Alliance. The is scheduled to call at Rotterdam in April 20th. NYK Venus will continue her voyage to Hamburg, were she is expected on April 23rd. The vessel than returns to the far East via Southampton.



**NYK Vega, pictured here at Hamburg, was the lead ship of NYK's V-class of 9,200 TEU vessels.
photo: Jan Tiedemann**

Maersk Kuantan Delivered

Hanjin Heavy Industries, who are currently working on a series of 6,500 TEU ships for Maersk Line of Denmark, recently finished the third unit of this new type, Maersk Kuantan. After Maersk Kowloon and Kwangyang, Maersk named the ship after a Malaysian city, the capitol of the province of Pahang. Situated near the estuary of the Kuantan River, the city's port adjoins the South Chinese Sea. Kuantan has a large port, but so far

does not play an important role in the container shipping business. Its 400-metre-quay has a maximum clearance of 11.2 metres, and can handle ships of up to 35,000 tonnes deadweight. Maersk Kuantan will be introduced to Maersk Line's EA10 Asia-Europe service. She will only perform one voyage in the AE10, since Maersk is about to revamp a large number of its services in April.

Fourth E-class Plagued by Teething Troubles

Maersk Line's new 13,500 TEU jumbo boxship Evelyn Maersk has broken down during its first sea trial off the Danish coast. Odense Steel Shipyard, who designed and built the ship, took the vessel to sea more than one week ago, but problems with the main engine's fuel supply unit appeared while the ship was cruising near the island of Samsø. A bearing had chafed within the device. The piece will have to be replaced before sea trials can continue.



**Evelyn Maersk in the Odense Fjord
Photo: Bent Mikkelsen**

K-Line Reveals Jumbos' Names

Japanese shipping companies traditionally are rather secretive about the designated names for their new vessels. In most cases, the ships' names will not be revealed until vessel delivery is imminent. Breaking with this tradition, K-Line has announced the names of a quartet of 9,040 TEU ships to be delivered from late 2008. The ships will follow the design specifications of K-Line's present series of the Harbour Bridge type. In terms of vessel names, the carrier will continue to build its H-class of ships with a new Henry Hudson Bridge. The

vessel will replace a similarly-named 3,500 TEU unit. It carries the name of a steel arch bridge that links Manhattan's northern tip to Bronx County, New York. The vessel is scheduled for delivery in September 2008. It will be followed by sister vessel Hammersmith Bridge. Named after one of London's oldest crossings of the river Thames, this ship is slated for delivery in March 2009. Four months later, K-Line will take delivery of a vessel that carries the name of Germany's second largest city and its largest port: Hamburg. There is no actual bridge named Hamburg Bridge, but Hamburg's elegant Köhlbrand Bridge has developed into one of the city's landmarks: container carriers bound for Hamburg's Altenwerder terminal pass beneath this curving suspension bridge that links the eastern and western parts of the huge port. Unless additional orders are placed, Hong Kong Bridge will close Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha's series of jumbo carriers in September of 2009. The shipping company still disposes of an option for a ninth ship from IHI.

Editors' Notice: Ship Arrivals

Please notice that our bi-monthly list of 'Ships of Interest in Northern Europe' will no longer appear in this newsletter. The list is now available as a pdf-download from our misc-section. This move allows your editors to update the sailing schedule at irregular intervals, according to the availability of voyage details for new container ships.

This Newsletter is edited and compiled by Jan Svendsen and Jan Tiedemann. This pdf-file is available for download at "www.jantiedemann.de" and "www.containership-info.net.tc". Feel free to contact the editors by e-mail at jantiedemann@hotmail.com and jan.svendsen@gmx.net. We greatly appreciate your feedback and your input. More contact details can be obtained from the above websites. Please note the disclaimers displayed on the download pages. All information given in this newsletter is believed correct, but not guaranteed.

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by Jan Svendsen and Jan Tiedemann

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