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Hyundai Unity Delivered

Despite the fact that only very little time has passed since the delivery of Hyundai Forward, the vessel's owners, Hyundai Merchant Marine, have now received the second 4,922 TEU panamax-sized sister from the Hyundai group's Samho yard. The two identical vessels were built almost simultaneously: Their hulls were constructed next to each other in the South Korean shipyard's giant graving dock. The second ship of the series was now brought into service as Hyundai Unity. She will be employed in HMM's new liner service between the Far East, the Indian subcontinent and ports along the Persian Gulf. Samho is bound to hand over one more ship of Hyundai Unity's type, before Hyundai Heavy's Ulsan yard takes over with the delivery of four more sister ships. The entire series of vessels is bound to be completed before the end of this year.

Samsung Hands Over MSC Sindy

The Geneva-based Mediterranean Shipping Company has recently taken delivery of the first unit of a new series of container vessels. Built by Samsung Heavy Industries, the new ship's design is very much based upon the layout of the South Korean yard's earlier series of 9,178 TEU ships of the MSC Pamela type. Without greatly altering the vessels' overall dimensions, the shipbuilders managed to squeeze some 400 TEU of additional container capacity into and onto the ships. So far, MSC has ordered four units of the improved type. Interestingly, MSC Sindy has already lived through two name changes during her project phase. Originally, the ship was intended to be launched as MSC Sylvana. In summer of 2006 the ship's project name was changed to MSC Rosalba. This decision however, did not last very long and the unfinished hull was renamed MSC Sindy late last year. Presently, it is uncertain, whether MSC Sindy's three remaining sisters will be built as planned. Earlier this year, MSC tried to significantly boost the TEU capacities of many containerships within the carrier's shipyard pipeline. Since work had already progressed too far on the earlier ships, Samsung was not able to redesign them into 11,300 TEU ships. The vessels at the far end of the series might however emerge as bigger units than originally planned. As for MSC Sindy, the new vessel will be introduced to her owner's Lion Express service. She will thus trade between the Far East – including Japanese calls at Hakata - and northern Europe. Late in June, her European calls will include Antwerp, Hamburg and Bremerhaven. As usual, a summarised view of the new ship's main particulars, can be found in our online data base.

Xin Beijing's European Debut

The penultimate unit of a series of eight 9,600 TEU vessels that Samsung built for China Shipping has premiered in northern Europe over the weekend. The vessel that carries the name Xin Beijing, first called at Felixstowe and later continued its voyage to Hamburg, where it arrived on Saturday. After leaving the port on the river Elbe, the new container carrier is scheduled to

perform a call at Antwerp. The ship will then return to the Far East. Xin Beijing is employed in her owner's AEX-1 Asia Express service. After the delivery of the remaining 9,600 TEU unit from Samsung, a ship to be named Xin Long Beach, the AEX-1 will employ a fleet of four 8,500 TEU and four 9,600 TEU ships. Xin Beijing's dimensions and specifications are available from our online vessel data base.



Xin Beijing approaches the port of Hamburg
photo: Michael Witt

APL Launches Suez Express Loop

Singapore-based APL has announced to launch an all-water container service via the Suez Canal, linking Asian ports to the US east coast launched from July. Labelling it as an industry first, APL's chief executives obviously forgot to take a close look at their competitors' sailing schedules: Both the Grand Alliance and Maersk Line already offer a range of such connections. According to APL, the new service aims at avoiding port and rail congestion in North America, especially on the west coast. Styled Suez Express or SZX, the new service will employ five ships of 4,000 to 4,500 TEU. Mitsui OSK Lines and Hyundai Merchant Marine, APL's partners in the New World Alliance, will contribute a further three vessels of similar size. Transit times on the new sling are 21 days from Singapore to

New York. The port rotation is: Singapore, Colombo, New York, Charleston, Savannah, Norfolk, Jebel Ali, Port Kelang and back to Singapore.

TNAW and CMA CGM to Cooperate in Transpacific Loop

At times one might feel puzzled, trying to find a pattern behind the logics of cooperation and competition within the liner trade business. Several companies who fiercely compete in one trade, peacefully coexist or even cooperate in another. This week, we have witnessed another example for cooperation among what used to be – and still are – competitors. The New World Alliance that consists of APL, MOL and Hyundai Merchant Marine and the French Line CMA CGM announced to launch a jointly operated service. The new loop will be aimed at connection China's main export hubs with port on the United States' east coast. It will run via the Panama Canal. The new service will be marketed by the TNWA as the ESX. The French have decided to call the loop the SAX. The service will employ vessels of 3,500 to 3,800 TEU. CMA CGM will contribute two ships and Hyundai will bring in three units. Mitsui will add another two units and APL one. The service will become operational on June 4th. Its port rotation will be Ningbo, Shanghai, Chiwan, Hong Kong, Manzanillo, Panama, Savannah, New York, Norfolk and back to Ningbo. Traditionally, CMA CGM has not been very strong in the transpacific trade, but the company recently launched many new services that will strengthen its position in the Asia-America trade.

Shop 'til You Drop: Order Boom Continues

Again this week, the constant stream of recent orders for very large container ship tonnage did not ebb down. These days, the pipelines of most Far Eastern shipyards keep growing and growing. If one only counts vessels of 8,000 TEU or more, a total of twenty new orders was placed within the last seven days: The biggest deal is believed to have been bagged up by Hamburg's Hapag-Lloyd who ordered a series of eight identical 8,750 TEU sisters from Hyundai Heavy Industries of South Korea. Originally, Hapag-Lloyd was believed to eventually opt for larger tonnage, but the company recently stated to favour a

more homogenous – and thus more flexible – fleet of vessels between 8,000 and 9,000 TEU. The new container carriers will thus follow the design of Hapag’s contemporary Hyundai ships of 335 metres in length with a beam of 42.80 metres. The latest unit of this kind is scheduled to arrive in her home port for the first time later this week. As for the new ships: Two ships of Hapag’s new batch of vessels will be delivered in December of 2009. The remaining six units will follow in the first half of 2010.

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



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Hapag-Lloyd was however not the only shipping line that signed new vessels: Last Wednesday, a news report claimed that Korea’s Samsung Heavy Industries had won a deal from an unnamed European owner for six big containerships. The vessels will have a capacity of 8,500 TEU and are slated for delivery in the second half of 2010. Your editors have reason to believe that it was the French Line CMA CGM who signed the USD 772 million deal with Samsung. Returning from Marseilles to Hamburg, Norddeutsche Reederei H. Schuldt has turned to Daewoo to sign up for eight vessels, including four units of 8,400 TEU and four smaller ships. This order is believed to be worth some USD 782 million. It is not yet known who will charter the vessels, but all eight units are to be delivered until mid-2010. Furthermore, Hansa Treuhand AG placed an order for two 8,500 TEU ships to be delivered from CSSC’s Hudong shipyard. The vessels will most probably turn out as more or less identical sisters of China Shipping’s large series of container vessels of 105,000 tonnes deadweight. The first ship of this type will be launched in a few months while Hansa Treuhand’s pair will come on stream in 2010. Another German company that ordered new container vessels was Thien &

Heyenga. The company will have four panamax-sized 4,400 TEU carriers built at Daewoo. These ships might either be constructed in South Korea or at Daewoo's Romanian outlet on the Black Sea. Judging from the orders that were placed in the first five months of this year, German shipping companies and ship finance specialists seem to be able to defend and to further strengthen their position as the world leaders in the container shipping business.

PIL's Kota Latif Concludes Capacity Upgrade

With the delivery of the 4,250 TEU Kota Latif from Dalian Number Two Shipyard, PIL's and Wan Hai Steamship's joint Asia-Europe Service has lately been fully upgraded to a homogenous fleet of vessels. Now, a few weeks later, the new ship premiered on the far end (at least from her owner's point of view) of the two companies' joint service loop. After visiting the Dutch port of Rotterdam earlier during the week, Kota Latif called at Hamburg's Tollerort terminal on Sunday. The new ship is 263 metres long and 32.20 metres wide. Powered by an 8-cylinder engine that is rated at 36.5 MW, Kota Latif has a top speed of 24.5 knots. Please visit our online data base for additional vessel particulars.



Kota Latif at Hamburg's Tollerort terminal
photo: Jan Tiedemann

Lack of Export Slots Hits Sri Lanka's Economy

Some weeks ago, this newsletter featured a short article about the port of Colombo and its proposed large-scale terminal development scheme. If the project goes ahead as planned, Colombo will significantly boost its cargo handling capacity over the next decade. The Sri Lanka port is located conveniently close to the main trading route between the Far East and Europe. Nevertheless, the port is presently not very well equipped and has become notorious for causing delays. Many ships have to wait off shore at Colombo's anchorage, before they can berth at one of the congested terminals. The abovementioned port expansion project will surely help to alleviate the degree of congestion at Colombo, but its first phase will not be ready before 2010. The port's recent poor performance prompted some shipping lines to skip calls at Colombo altogether. Especially now that competing Indian ports have upgraded their facilities, Colombo is losing business. Hanjin for example dropped the Colombo call in one of its Asia-Europe services, a loop on which K-Line and USAC are chartering slots. Furthermore Both Norasia and ZIM decided to avoid Colombo on their weekly service to northern Europe. Sri Lanka exporters presently lack some 600 TEU slots of weekly export capacity on European services. The lack of capacity has led to exporters fighting over the last available slots: Rates out of Colombo have increased by up to USD 300 per TEU. If additional cargo handling capacity is not created soon, it is expected that foreign investors will soon move production lines out of Sri Lanka.

Ebba Maersk Christened

Early this week, Odense Steel Shipyard presented its latest newbuilding, a 13,500 TEU container vessel for the Møller-Maersk Group. The new ship was christened on Monday by Gunilla Nyman, the wife of the CEO & President of the IKEA Group – the well known manufacturers and retailers of home and office furniture. The new ship now carries the name Ebba Maersk. The vessel's port of registry will be Copenhagen. The 397-metre giant Ebba Maersk will sail under the command of captain Sverri Asmund.

The Weekly Containershipping-Newsletter
by Jan Svendsen and Jan Tiedemann

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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