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The
Containershipping -Newsletter



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Danaos is the Mystery Owner

A week after our initial report of a five-ship jumbo order at Hyundai Heavy Industries, your editors finally gathered sufficient evidence to identify the owner who signed the massive vessels: According to our sources, the ultra-large container quintet was ordered by Danaos of Greece. The five vessels, all slated for delivery in 2010, will allegedly enter a long-term charter with Hyundai Merchant Marine. The South Korean shipping line will thus be the first New-World-Alliance member to enter the league of ULCS-operators. Presently it is not known whether the ships will be employed in a service between Asia and Europe, or if they are earmarked for the Transpacific Trade. The number of vessels would be ideally suited for a weekly service between the United States' west coast and the Far East. If supplemented by smaller units or

similarly-sized ships of a partner, the new ULCS could also trade between Asia and Europe.

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HHI Order: Seaspan Inks Jumbo Octet

Just minutes after our last newsletter went to press, your editors received information that suggested Hyundai Heavy Industries had not only bagged orders for the abovementioned five ultra-large container ships, but additionally contracted eight more vessels of roughly similar size. A day later, the Canadian Seaspan Corporation announced that it had signed contracts to build eight new 13,100 TEU container ships. The deal is split in two and includes orders at Hyundai HI and Hyundai Samho HI. The Ulsan-based yard will build five vessels whereas Samho is set to deliver three units. The octet is slated for delivery between January and October 2011. All eight vessels will be chartered to Coscon for a period of twelve years. The Chinese carrier will reportedly pay USD 55,000 per vessel and day. This new contract marks the second large vessel deal between Coscon and Seaspan. Only in April, the two companies had signed a charter for eight new 8,500 TEU vessels.

Odense Hands Over Elly Maersk

Very recently, Denmark's Odense Steelship again completed a new 14,500 TEU container ship for Maersk Line. After quite a lot of teething troubles with the first few ships of this type, things went swimmingly this time: The giant new vessel could be delivered on time and it successfully absolved its sea trials. The Danes thus finally seem to be able to make these very advanced ships function straight away. Maersk Line named its

newest ship Elly Maersk. It is the sixth of eight E-class vessels ordered so far. The new carrier has been deployed to her owner's AE-7 service – a loop that connects southern China and the European North Range ports. As far as your editors know, the vessel name is a premiere: Elly is used for the first time of a Maersk ship. Elly's remaining two sisters are slated for delivery in December of this year and in February 2008. Odense Steelship will then continue to build a family of 10,000 TEU vessels for Maersk. These ships might either be carbon copies of Maersk's existing G-class carriers or an entirely new type of vessel. Contrary to the earlier E-classes, Elly Maersk will perform a three-day call at Zeebrügge before she heads for China.

Xin Ya Zhou Delivered

In its race to become the world's leading shipbuilding nation, China has now taken yet another step up the ladder: Earlier this week, the aspiring maritime nation celebrated the delivery of the first-ever Chinese-built +8,500 TEU containership. The new vessel had been ordered by the Shanghai-based China Shipping Container Line. The ship's design and construction were supervised by the renown German classification society Germanischer Lloyd of Hamburg. Some Chinese sources claim that the vessel's design process had stretched for almost six years – a fact that illustrates how much effort has been invested into the new ship type. Christened Xin Ya Zhou, a name that translates as 'New Asia', the new cargo ship weighs in at 8,530 TEU. It was constructed at Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding, one of the nation's leading shipyards for the construction of container vessels. Xin Ya Zhou is 335 meters long and 42.8 meters wide. The ship is powered by an MAN B&W designed 12K98MCC Engine. Rated at 68.5 MW, the diesel drives the vessel at a service speed in excess of 25 knots. Despite the lengthy design process, Hudong-Zhonghua managed to deliver the new container carrier almost one month ahead of schedule. The yard's order book still includes eight more ships of the same design: Four of these will be owned by CSCL. The remaining four units have been signed by Costamare Shipping of Greece, who will charter the ships to CSCL. Xin Ya Zhou has been deployed to the transpacific AAC-service between southern China and California.

Jade Weser Port in Trouble

Complications with the proposed Jade Weser Port project at the German town of Wilhelmshaven have now incited a political row within Niedersachsen. The federal state's liberal-conservative government, one of the project's main driving forces, now faces further delays following what is widely described as a botched construction tender. Last week a regional court had ruled that the award of the USD 660 million infrastructure package to the construction group Hochtief be revoked. Furthermore, Hochtief was excluded from the tender retroactively. The court had gathered sufficient evidence and came to the conclusion that Hochtief had illegitimately modified its tender after the official submission. The charge was initially brought by the Bunte Group, a competitor in the tender and – allegedly – the first runner-up after Hochtief. Political forces in Niedersachsen have accused the Jade Weser Port development company of mismanagement. Nevertheless, the state-owned company's management is still being backed by regional governments of Niedersachsen and Bremen, who claim that no disciplinary action is planned at this stage. The construction start for the new terminal is now likely to be put off to 2008, with appeals and injunctions by local residents and environmentalists still pending.

Hyundai Heavy Delivers Hanover Express

The fleet of the Hamburg-based container line Hapag-Lloyd traditionally includes a ship named after the city of Hanover: Located some hundred miles south of Hamburg, Hanover is the Home of travel and leisure giant TUI, Hapag's parent company. Until very recently the city's name – in its original German spelling – was carried by a Samsung-built 4,639 TEU panamax form 1991. This vessel was however renamed Kiel Express early in summer. Obviously, Hapag wanted to vacate the name for a newer and larger ship. The new Hanover Express – according to all sources, Hapag-Lloyd has now opted for the English spelling- has now been handed over by Hyundai Heavy of Ulsan. Hanover Express will be the sixth unit of Hyundai's proven 8,750 TEU design. Hapag-Lloyd who recently denied any plans of acquiring large tonnage in the ULCS size class, confidently ordered no less that 14 additional ships of the type.

Hanover Express is bound to join some of her earlier sisters as well as a quartet of slightly larger NYK V-classes in the Grand Alliance's EU-4 sling. Her maiden call in northern Europe is scheduled for early November, when the ship will dock at Rotterdam, Hamburg – her German port of registry – and Southampton.

CMA CGM Swordfish Delivered

The French Line CMA CGM continues to extent its container fleet of owned vessels and has now taken delivery of another 5,078 TEU panamax from Hyundai Heavy. Just like the ship's earlier sisters, the new unit was given a 'marine fauna' name: CMA CGM Swordfish. The new vessel is set to follow her sisters into CMA CGM's PEX-3 service. This sling connects the Far East, with ports along the Gulf of Mexico and the United States' East Coast via the Panama Canal. The addition of an extra ship has enabled the French Line to extend the service's port rotation further north and include Norfolk, Virginia. With only a single 3,400 TEU ship left in the PEX-3's vessel fleet, the loop's upgrade to +5,000 TEU units has now almost been completed. The last unit of Hyundai Heavy's and CMA CGM's series of identical panamax ships will be delivered in November. Quite likely, the ship will de deployed to the PEX-3 too.

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Hanjin Heavy Hands Over Cosco New York

Chinese Coscon has now taken delivery of their second 5,060 TEU panamax ship from Hanjin Heavy Industries of Pusan. The carrier was originally planned to come on stream as Cosco New York – part of a four ship family. The vessel's owners however decided to charter the ship to CMA CGM instead of employing it

within Coscon's own service network. Thus we can expect the ship's name to change very soon. The French Line will deploy the ship to its rather successful BEX – the so-called Bosphorus Express, which connects Far Eastern ports with the Black Sea Region. The French are presently in the process of upgrading this sling's fleet to panamax ships. It is not unlikely that Coscon will eventually charter the entire Hanjin-built quartet to CMA CGM for employment in the BEX.

Makutu Concludes Series for Safmarine

With the handing over of Safmarine Makutu, the South African carrier has now taken delivery of its last 5,078 TEU panamax from Hyundai Heavy. The ship carries Safmarine's characteristic white livery with the sweeping blue trademark writing. It carries the name of the Makutu Mountain range – Zambia's highest elevation at more than 2,100 metres. The new vessel will join her sisters Safmarine Mafadi, Mulanje and Meru on the Safari-1 service between Asia and Southern Africa. Since Safmarine Makutu will replace a 3,000 TEU Maersk T-class ship, the service now employs a homogenous fleet of Maersk and Safmarine panamaxes.

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