

## WITH A BUNDLE OF SHIPS AROUND THE WORLD

ITC was contracted to supply a tug and barge combination to transport 26 new-building river vessels to Rotterdam. The hulls were built in China, completed at various Dutch shipyards and destined to sail European rivers and canals for private owners. For ocean transport, a wide barge was required and SEACAMEL 393-12' – with her 40-metre beam and large loading capacity – could easily accommodate the 16,000 tons of cargo.

**M**arine Heavy Lift Partners was entrusted with the engineering, whilst HMC supervised the loading as warranty surveyors. The 26 hulls were to be loaded four tiers high, the first layer by submerging the barge; floating sheerlegs would lift the other layers on.

On the arrival of tug SABLE CAPE and barge at Shanghai River, it became clear that the originally anticipated 20 days for loading would not be realised. It was late May when Captain Charlie Jagolino finally departed from Shanghai with the heavily

loaded barge in tow. After a one-day bunker stop offshore Singapore, where also the cargo was inspected, the convoy headed for Sunda Straits for a southerly passage of the Indian Ocean, realising an average speed of well over 7 knots.

The original voyage planning for the voluminous cargo scheduled departure from China in November and passage round the Cape during the summer season, but now the convoy ended up in this treacherous area with its notorious bad weather, during mid-winter. Despite the weather routing, the wind and sea conditions deteri-

orated rapidly and at that location the only option left was to keep as far as possible from the 100-fathom line.

However, with force-10 south-westerly headwinds and rough seas running well over seven metres high, Captain Jagolino's only option was to let the barge ride with the storm and the seas. However, the magnificent forces were too much for the towing connection, which broke on the bridle chain. During the following days, SABLE CAPE's master and his crew displayed excellent seamanship, common sense and patience.

Continued on page 2

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The transport just before entering Europort with Sable Cape towing and Simoon escorting.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1: WITH A BUNDLE OF SHIPS AROUND THE WORLD

The tug stayed close to the barge, monitoring her behaviour and the condition of the cargo, which remained remarkably good considering the amount of water spraying over the barge.

After five days, Captain Jagolino managed to get three men aboard the barge – a feat which was not without danger considering the way the cargo protruded on all sides. Captain Jagolino manoeuvred his tug close under the bow of the barge so that the towage connection could be reinstated, and the convoy slowly proceeded to Port Elizabeth, where it was met by HMC surveyor Mr van den Hoonard, London Salvage ASS. Mr Paul Binks, ITC fleet manager Captain Jan Kikers and ITC naval architect Alexander Gorter.

A thorough inspection revealed that although the cargo was hardly damaged, the sea fastenings had been seriously damaged by the continuous stresses brought about by the heavy rolling and pitching of the barge. Local contractors restored the



sea fastenings. After a 25-day repair period, the surveyor signed the certificate approving the onward towage to Europe. With a favourable 5-day weather window, the transport left Port Elizabeth. The Cape of Good Hope was rounded, but this time did not live up to its name: four days later, SABLE CAPE's master reported that the barge was listing to port and the bottom layer of the cargo was touching the sea. It was decided to seek refuge in Walvisbay. Fortunately, the weather improved going up north and the same welcoming committee

was flying south again to meet the barge.

In Walvisbay, the boarding party took soundings of SEACAMEL's tanks and found that one of the port wing tanks was leaking through a crack in the deck. The crack resulted from the cargo, which had battered the deck when the sea fastenings were damaged. Another repair period followed, and it was mid-October before naval architect Alexander Gorter again waved the transport goodbye.

Continued on page 4



## IN MEMORIAM OSCAR VAN DER WALLE

Our commercial manager, Oscar van der Walle, passed away in the late evening of 13 February 2001 after almost ten months of hope and fear. He was forty-three and has left behind his wife – Christien – and two young children, Iris and Bastiaan. For Oscar and his family, what started as a sore back turned into a nightmare: lung cancer. Despite being diagnosed as having this disease, Oscar continued in his usual fashion: optimistically fighting his illness, which he said 'wouldn't beat him'. Neither he or Christien ever displayed any pessimism, even though both knew that the odds were against them.

Oscar never gave up, and when the results of his medical examinations were not too optimistic, he simply tried to find another way – and this was precisely the manner in which he approached his work. Last year, if one asked Oscar how he was, his answer was always 'good' – that is, until his return from a business trip in December, when he noticed that he sometimes stumbled. An examination revealed that the cancer had spread to his brain; from then on, things rapidly went downhill. Despite knowing that the time left was very limited, both Oscar and Christien continued to cope impressively with their situation. Visiting them was a pleasant experience, and there were many good laughs to be had. Both Bastiaan and Iris had their birthday early in the year, and then Oscar let go: it had been enough. We have lost a friend.

Oscar started his career with ITC back in 1978 when he applied for a job in Operations. However, Joop Timmermans found him better suited for commercial work, and his decision was never regretted by Oscar or by ITC. Edward Punch in Houston groomed him at the ITC USA office at a time when many rigs were transported dry on ITC Seacamel barges. The Sibig Venture joined the ITC fleet and in Houston it all happened. Oscar's love for the US originated from that time. Right up until his death, he tried every

year to obtain a work permit and found very ingenious ways to get his application filed in time.

Salvage was Oscar's cup of tea. He was at his best while trying to talk a shipowner into accepting a salvage contract; he was always convincing and always had more arguments why ITC was the company to award the contract to. Oscar initiated the salvage of the Bovec, which ran aground off Prince Rupert, Canada. It was to be his last visit to a working site.

Over the years, Oscar developed an extensive network, thanks to the way he approached people: he was always interested, always in a good mood and always displayed good knowledge of his trade. He was the face of ITC. A dinner invitation was never declined, since wining & dining was both his weakness and his strength. His healthy appetite was even evident in the office: when the new catch of herring came on the market, Oscar would always buy a goodly amount to consume with his colleagues, and at lunchtime he would fry bacon and eggs for us all. Later, while bed-ridden, he expressed his regrets that he had never tasted McBacon. However, his dear wife Christien quickly solved that problem.

Many friends and business associates attended the impressive memorial service for Oscar, which was held on 19 February.

Joop Timmermans spoke on behalf of his friends at ITC. Oscar was then brought to his final resting place. En route, the procession paused in front of the ITC office, where the company flag was at half-mast to honour the man who was of great importance for the development of ITC.

Oscar van der Walle will be missed by all of us, each and every day. ●



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2: WITH A BUNDLE OF SHIPS AROUND THE WORLD

After a last-minute stop offshore Dakar and a final bunker call off Las Palmas, the convoy headed north. In the Bay of Biscay, during the final part of the towage, SABLE CAPE received assistance from ITC tug SIMOON, which was sent down to escort and, if necessary, assist the transport during wintertime with its

usually frequent spells of bad weather. The scheduled arrival at Rotterdam was cancelled yet again when Captain Novero rightfully decided to head for the open sea in the face of a strengthening force-8 south-wester. Finally, in the early morning of 29 November, the tug SABLE CAPE towed the

barge SEACAMEL 393-12' into Rotterdam New Waterway. The delays during the preliminary construction phase of the river barges resulted in a chain of events that inevitably delayed the delivery. This 'Slow boat from China' was the result of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. ●



## ROWAN GORILLA III

After a prolonged period of activity in subsea support work on both US coasts, the 196-ton bp KIGORIA was again awarded a long-haul ocean towage. Three-legged Le Tourneau jack-up rig ROWAN GORILLA III was to be towed from Halifax, N.S. to US Gulf port Sabine with full leg length of 150 metres. Under subcontract with Secunda – who imposed the condition that KIGORIA was only to utilise one engine – and tug MAGDELAN SEA joining up, the convoy got underway in late November.

**T**he convoy left Halifax with a fresh breeze, but within four days the wind increased and the tow was battling a force-10 south-easterly and swells of up to 10 metres. Capt. Dijkdrenth on board the KIGORIA promptly engaged the vessel's second

engine in order to obtain maximum manoeuvrability. In the early morning, however, the MAGDELAN SEA lost its steering power. To prevent a collision between the Secunda tug and the rig, KIGORIA pulled the rig away from MAGDELAN SEA. ROWAN GORILLA III was kept



in the wind by KIGORIA in order to give his colleague the opportunity to get in front of the rig again. The sharp change of course required for this under the hazardous weather conditions caused the gogwire to give way. Because the heavily rolling KIGORIA was encountering swells of 9-10 metres – sometimes abeam – and had almost continuously water on her deck, there was no way the gogwire could be reinstalled.

When KIGORIA was set away with the wire at a 45-degree angle, the towline parted. Captain Dijkdrenth was keeping KIGORIA near the rig in order to reconnect when the wind abated, when a big wave smashed into the ship and green water poured into the winch room and bosun store through the towline openings. With all doors closed the water could not drain away and KIGORIA was forced to head for a sheltered location near Cape Cod to clear the winch room. Within eight hours, the vessel had left its shelter and was proceeding back towards the transport for reconnection.

Apart from one day of force-9 winds, the bad weather was history and the convoy proceeded at an average of 4 knots. When KIGORIA engaged its second engine for two days, the speed increased to 6 knots. The riding crew aboard the rig was able to celebrate Christmas at home and the Kigoria crew enjoyed their suckling pig on a steady ship inside the port. ●



## GULFSTREAM PROJECT

Stolt Offshore Inc. Houston has been awarded the contract for the installation of the Gulfstream natural gas transmission pipeline from Mississippi Sound to Tampa Bay, Florida. The project includes the installation of 437 miles of 36" diameter concrete-coated pipe by the giant pipe-laying barge LB 200. Support will be provided by the derrick/laybarge DLB 801, which will be employed in the shallow waters leading up to the shore approaches. For towage of both laybarges, Stolt contracted three ITC tugs through Mr Sonnenberg of Marseilles-based Fostrans.

In mid-December, the tug SOLANO departed from Sharjah with the DLB 801 in tow for a 13,250-mile voyage around the Cape of Good Hope. Bunkers were lifted offshore Maputo and offshore Angola out of shuttle tankers, thus saving the high port expenses for tug and tow. Picking up the equatorial current, the convoy made the passage across the South Atlantic to Recife and onwards to Port of Spain for bunkers. The towage

was blessed with fair weather until shortly before arrival at Fourchon, when a low hit the convoy bringing with it a force-8 north-easterly. Two days later, the barge entered the port of Fourchon having completed a successful 90-day tow.

In early March, ITC reached an agreement with Stolt's Mr Pierre Rivollier for the towage of the submersible laybarge LB 200, employing the 110-ton bp SABLE CAPE and the 196-ton

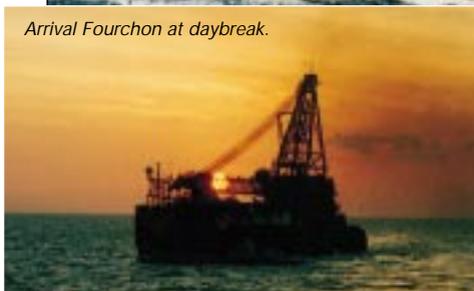
bp KIGORIA. With a length of 167 metres and a beam of 59 metres, the LB 200 is one of the world's largest laybarges designed for rapid pipe-laying in the harsh conditions of the North Sea.

In early April, the convoy sailed from Haugesund for the estimated 75-day Atlantic crossing. The tow took off with SABLE CAPE under the command of Capt. Arano and ahts STATESMAN, which was hired in as substitute

*Solano veering out the tow wire after a bunker stop at Trinidad.*



*Arrival Fourchon at daybreak.*



*LB 200 transport underway; Kigoria joined to take over from Statesman.*



till KIGORIA with transport commander Capt. Gijs Dijkdrenth joined the convoy off IJmuiden.

Under weather routing, the convoy headed for Madeira before starting the Atlantic crossing. Passage of the Bay of Biscay was blessed with a favourable force-7 north-easterly. KIGORIA will lift bunkers underway from the tow; the fuel capacity of the SABLE CAPE is more than sufficient to reach St Eustatius.

The pipelaying barge LB 200 is expected to arrive at its destination early June. ●



## CLEARING THE FIRST INTERCONTINENTAL CABLE

Last October, KIGIORIA worked off New Jersey clearing part of the first intercontinental telephone cable connection. Contracted by Mr Bill Wall of Margus Company Inc. (Edison, N.J.) through Marcon Coupeville, KIGORIA operated out of Elizabeth, N.J. using standard and detrenching grapnels to recover the historic cable.

**M**onitors and computers to control the operation and movements of the vessel were installed on the navigation bridge. An A-frame, a cable tank, cutting machine and additional equipment were put on the work deck. For the 24-hour operation, additional crew was flown in and Captain Gerrit Verweij was host to 23 operators from Margus and France Telecom. Thanks to fine weather and the crew's experience, the job was tackled rapidly and efficiently. Utilising bow and stern thrusters, the bridge crew was able to maintain the vessel's position in winds of up to force 7.

The collected scrap cable was disposed of at a designated area offshore.

The laying of the first Atlantic cable was completed in 1866 by the largest steamship of that time – THE GREAT EASTERN – which was the only ship large enough to carry the single length of cable needed to span the Atlantic. Previously named LEVIATHAN and used as passenger vessel between Australia and the Far East, the 18,000-ton vessel was bought by the Greenwich-based cable manufacturer Glass Eliot, which installed three large cable tanks and thus gave the vessel a new life as a cable ship. The mere GBP 700,000 it cost to lay the first Atlantic telegraph cable was of a different order than today's rates! ●



*Captain Gerrit Verweij.*



## PERE & GRINE TO BANGLADESH

During more promising times for the offshore industry, Falcon Drilling Inc purchased some bulk carriers to be converted into drill ships. However, the worldwide setback in offshore activities – a result of depressed crude prices – made the conversion an uneconomic option. Eventually both vessels were sold for scrap by Hamburg-based Eckhardt GmbH. ITC was taken on board for the towage of both hulls from Setubal around the Cape of Good Hope to Chittagong.

After being matched up together for the Saipem tows, SIROCCO and SOLANO proceeded to the Portuguese port to pick up the stripped hulls of PEREGRINE VI and VIII, which were renamed for the voyage PERE and GRINE.



*Departure of Pere from Setubal.*

This time Capt. Arano, aboard SIROCCO, took the heaviest vessel in tow. PERE had its moonpool installed whilst a large part of the propeller frame and stern plating had been cut away, which caused considerable turbulence and seriously reduced the towing speed.

At Setubal, Capt. Jan van Driel on behalf of ITC and the warranty surveyor of Bureau Vogtschmidt took care of the

preparation of the tows, and in mid-July both towage transports were underway. All bunker stops were made offshore, avoiding large expenditure for our clients. SOLANO was delayed for eight days offshore West Africa when the only bunker supplier decided that it might be more beneficial for him to supply another vessel, rather than the ITC tug. SIROCCO also spent eight days off the Maldives when a

consignment for the tug was dropped into the water by the launch crew taking it out to the tug. After a 70-day tow, Capt. Aranador in command of the tug SOLANO beached GRINE at Chittagong. SIROCCO then delivered PERE, thus chalking up another 22,000 towing miles between the two tugs. Both contracts were fixed through Mr Carsten Solander of Andrea Shipping, Denmark. ●



## WINTER IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC

In early February, ITC tug SIMOON took over the towage of Roro KATIE from two Canadian icebreaking tugs, which had towed the 32,600-grt vessel from Montreal via the ice-covered St. Lawrence River to offshore Halifax. The ill-fated vessel was auctioned and its new owner decided to have the ship scrapped, despite its excellent condition. The ship's gas turbine engines would have resulted in a daily fuel bill of USD 25,000, which made economic exploitation very difficult.

In January, SIMOON's crew assisted in removing huge piles of snow from KATIE. Her large deck was covered with a thick layer and the low temperatures in combination with the wind did not create a nice working environment. On top of that, it was a rather unusual job for seamen from the Philippines! Capt. Kees de Ru – who supervised the towage preparations – also had a hard time: he had to defrost his big moustache every day.



Offshore Dakar, SIMOON rendezvoused with the fully bunkered SUMATRAS, after which the latter took over KATIE for the onward towage to Alang. Refuelling offshore Cape Town was carried out by tug Pentow Salvor. In mid-April, the Cape of Good Hope was rounded under good conditions and course was set for the Indian subcontinent, where the convoy expects to arrive mid May ●

Sailing the North Atlantic in February is asking for bad weather, which was exactly what Capt. Aranador and his crew got. During the first 20 days of towing, the transport encountered eight days of force 8-9 winds and seas and swells of 7-10 metres. This was too much for the towing connection, which twice gave way. Each time, however, SIMOON's crew was able to reconnect under difficult circumstances, displaying their courage and professionalism.



## CASTORO DUE AT CAKERAWALA GAS FIELD

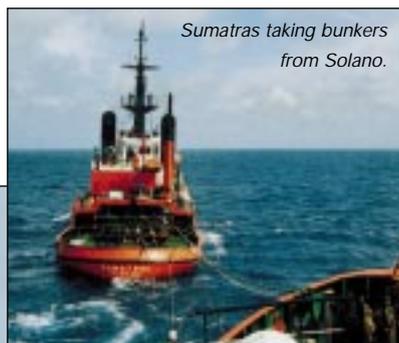
On 1 November, Capt. Kees de Ru reported the arrival of SUMATRAS at Palermo in preparation for towing Saipem's derrick/laybarge CASTORO II. The tug was contracted by Saipem Malaysia through Mr Leonardo Coldani of Saipem San Donato Milanese, for a Suez Canal tow to Singapore, where the barge will be used for the Cakerawala Gas Field Development project.

Passages through the Suez Canal by tugs with tows are becoming a rarity due to the extremely high tolls charged; however, in this case time was of the essence. After an offshore fuel stop near Jeddah, the southern Red Sea proved to be the most difficult part of the voyage. The convoy had to battle strong headwinds and counter-currents, which abated after passing through the Strait of Bab Al Mandeb. The 135 by 32.4 metre barge again proved that it follows well but is not easy to tow; nevertheless, an average of 5.5 knots

was maintained throughout the voyage. Well before Christmas, CASTORO II was moored at Singapore's Keppel Shipyard and redelivered to Saipem's project manager, Mr Leandro Menichelli.

Thailand's most active area of gas exploration is the well-known Malaysian-Thailand Joint Development area, with its estimated resources of 10.6 trillion cubic feet of gas. Production will start in 2001 and continue for at least 20 years. A consortium comprising Technip France, Samsung and Saipem will take care of the

engineering, procurement, construction and installation. Saipem's share will cover project management, engineering, procurement and installation of the FSO, laying of the subsea pipelines and infield lines, and installing and commissioning the three wellhead platforms and the central processing/production platform. CASTORO II is responsible for the 350 km of offshore pipeline. ●



*Sumatras taking bunkers from Solano.*



## VARYAG SAGA

By the time of going to press, ITC was still awaiting the final decision of the Turkish administration whether the former Ukrainian aircraft carrier VARYAG will be permitted to pass through the Bosphorus. Months of diplomacy by the Chinese authorities on behalf of the buyers of the vessel did not yet convince the local authorities that safe passage of the Turkish Straits is possible.

TC tug SUHAILI left Nikolayev in June 2000 with the 306-metre hull for what was an estimated 60-day tow to China via the Suez Canal. However, when the transport arrived near the Bosphorus for transit to the Mediterranean, permission to pass through the Turkish Straits was refused despite earlier undertakings. It was said that the problem was not the fact that VARYAG was an aircraft carrier, but that as it is not equipped with engines, it was too large to be towed in safety through the Bosphorus. The convoy would have a total length of 480 metres, which was said to be too much to negotiate the 12 sharp turns in the Bosphorus, four of which are 90-degree turns. ITC's submission that with its masters experience and the assistance of local tugs, safe passage was guaranteed, did not change the view of the officials.



*Buyers are not giving up on their efforts to negotiate a passage of the Turkish Straits.*

Months of intensive negotiations by the buyers followed and the possibility that permission would eventually be obtained remains realistic. In the meantime, SUHAILI was replaced by SANDY CAPE, which kept the huge carrier going at minimal speed. Occasionally, Capt. Jan Nieuwhof and his crew faced the rapidly changing weather conditions of the Black Sea,

prompting the tug to use its full power. The 55,000 tons carrier VARYAG was launched in the 1980s as a sister ship to ADMIRAL KUZNETSOV, part of the Russian's Northern Fleet. The construction of VARYAG was halted after the break-up of the USSR and the carrier passed into Ukraine's hands as part of the division of the Black Sea Fleet. ●



## ACCOMMODATION MODULES FOR CANTARELL FIELD

Anchor Marine Transportation Ltd., U.K. under contract by Odebrecht Oil & Gas Services, transported a total of six large accommodation modules from the Middlesborough construction site to the installation site at Pemex Offshore Cantarell Field. AMT contracted ITC to deliver the tugs for the four voyages which all sailed from the River Tees during 2000.

The first two modules were handled simultaneously by the SOLANO and barge AMT TRANSPORTER; the SIMOON / AMT EXPLORER combination transported the third and fourth module in two voyages. Barge AMT TRADER towed by ITC tug SUHAILI delivered the final pair. Just before Christmas, the final tow sailed from the River Tees. The modules were loaded by roll-on, roll-off and discharge was to take place by lifting off. AMT's John Evans supervised the sea fastenings and preparations for the ocean towage, after which Global Marine Surveyors issued the towage certificate. On stream, Capt. Leen van Dijk manoeuvred SUHAILI in front of the barge and, with a favourable weather forecast, the transport set sail. The master was instructed not to proceed at full speed since the modules could only be received in the field towards the end of January.



*Loading AMT Explorer.*



*Departure of AMT Trader from the River Tees.*

Apart from two stormy days just after Christmas, the tow experienced favourable weather and arrived on schedule, only to have to wait for a long time – sometimes at anchor and sometimes steaming at reduced power – in the Cantarell field until the jacket was placed and the cargo could be received. After two months, Capt. van Dijk brought AMT TRADER alongside the DB 101 and the modules were lifted off and placed on the installed jacket. Within 12 hours, the tug and barge cleared the anchor pattern of the derrick barge and set off for Brownsville. ●



#### GOUWEDIEP

Whilst proceeding towards Malta, SUHAILI responded to an emergency call for assistance from the Dutch flag vessel GOUWEDIEP. This brand-new container feeder had fouled her propeller whilst towing another vessel, proving that ocean towage is still a job for professionals. The tug connected up some 180 miles east of Sicily and towed the vessel to La Valetta, Malta. The contract was fixed through Samuel Stewart. ●



#### CLIPPER PIONEER

KIGORIA proceeded from its Key West salvage station to assist the 32,745-grt chemical tanker CLIPPER PIONEER. The Greek-owned vessel was loaded with 28,000 tons of caustic soda. KIGORIA connected up west of Key West and towed the vessel to Miami. Some delay occurred due to the non-availability of assisting tugs. Marint Offshore Services UK was instrumental in this fixture. ●

#### SILVER SAND

Through Banchemo Costa Genoa, SUHAILI was fixed for the rescue towage of the general cargo vessel SILVER SAND. The 5,850-grt vessel was drifting in the Straits of Gibraltar with a broken intermediate shaft and was taken by Capt. Novero to Cartagena for repair. ●

#### THETIS

SUMATRAS proceeded from its salvage station Penang to Port Kelang where mbc THETIS had run aground near the port entrance. The 54,310-dwt vessel was partly loaded. Under the direction of salvage master Mr Rainer Kasel, Capt. Jan Nieuwhof soon refloated the vessel. ●

#### TANKO

Promptly thereafter, SUMATRAS was called in by Andrea Shipping of Denmark to assist mt TANKO at Chittagong Roads. The scrap VLCC was partly aground but in the wrong position. SUMATRAS refloated the 370-metre vessel and beached it at the intended location. ●

#### PACTOL RIVER

Tug SANDY CAPE interrupted its tow with AMT DISCOVERER at Vigo to assist chemical tanker PACTOL RIVER, which was drifting approximately 450 miles north-east of the Azores with a total blackout. Fixed by Marint Offshore Services UK, the 32,000-dwt tanker was towed to Cascais Bay, after which Capt. Ray Abagatnan

returned to Vigo to complete the tow with the AMT barge to Rotterdam. ●

#### ALNILAM

Mobilising northbound in the Red Sea, SUMATRAS went to the assistance of the loaded livestock carrier ALNILAM. The vessel was drifting 120 miles south of Jeddah with reduction gear problems. Marint Offshore Services UK was involved as broker. Captain Jan Nieuwhof towed the 4,750-grt vessel to the Egyptian port of Adabiya, where he was thanked by a happily bleating cargo of lambs. ●

#### HELEN MARY

Tug SABLE CAPE was called in from its salvage station at Falmouth to assist the large fish factory HELEN MARY. The vessel was fishing west of Ireland when it required assistance due problems with its crankshaft. Even in the face of a force-8 southwester, SABLE CAPE's 9,000 bhp was sufficient to tow the Dutch Parlevliet & van der Plas controlled vessel to Cork, where it was put into dry-dock for repair. ●



*Pactol River.*



### HYUNDAI 423

Derrick barge Hyundai 423 was towed from Ulsan to Kaohsiung by SUMATRAS, marking what was to be the last tow for Capt. Willem van Beek. This experienced tug master had served on ITC tugs since they were first delivered from the building yard, almost 25 years earlier. His impressive track record was highlighted in the first issue of NewsWaves. ●

### J-LAY TOWER SAIPEM 7000

Earlier ITC tugs had towed the barges CASTORO 9 and S-42 loaded with the J-Lay tower for derrick/laybarge SAIPEM 7000 from Rotterdam to the US Gulf. Now mr Piero Quaglia of ERS Schiedam, on behalf of Saipem SpA, exercised its option for the return tows of the same barges, and ITC mobilised tugs SOLANO and SIROCCO to Fourchon.

### CB 202 & CB 17

In Sharjah, Captain Rodger Foden of the Salvage Association supervised the towage preparations of barges CB 202 and CB 17. Both loaded barges were taken in double tow by SUMATRAS with destination Escravos River, Nigeria, for account of Stolt Offshore Services SA France. During the non-stop voyage, the tug was under the command of Captain Novero. SUMATRAS took on fuel from a shuttle tanker offshore Maputo, and completed the 7,645-mile double tow at an average speed of well over 7 knots. The fixture was made through Fostrans Marseilles. ●

Other than during their voyages to the US Gulf, which were undertaken during the winter, both transports enjoyed fine weather and sea conditions. In addition to the predominant favourable currents, a fast Atlantic crossing was anticipated and eventually realised. Capt. Heertje Starrenburg, commanding SIROCCO, towed barge S-42 and averaged well over 8 knots. After running 270 miles in just one day, a message was sent to the tug asking them to check that the barge was still on the end of the tow wire! Capt. Aranador of tug SOLANO took in tow the heavier launch barge CASTORO 9 and covered the 5,055 miles to Holland in just over 30 days. ●

### S-45

Tug SIMOON proceeded to Stavanger to tow Saipem's launch barge S-45 to Verolme Botlek, Rotterdam. Contracted by ERS Schiedam, the 180-metre barge was redelivered by Capt. Gerrit Verweij on Santa Claus night, which in Holland is celebrated on 5 December. Faced with a force 6-7 sou'wester, the tug still maintained a speed of over 5 knots and was in time for the scheduled dry-docking. ●

### UR 161

During the winter, the North Sea is known for its less favourable weather conditions, and Capt. Leen van Dijk certainly received his share during the towage of barge UR 161 from Trondheim. The Uglund barge was loaded with reels and baskets for delivery at Le Trait, upriver Seine. During the early part of the nine-day tow, the convoy experienced a force-9 southerly, which significantly reduced its speed. The fixture was made through Samuel Stewart & Co. ●



S-42 loaded with part of the J-Lay Tower.

## TOWING THE WORLD



For the fourth time, ITC was contracted to tow a newbuilding hull of a passenger vessel from Bruce's Shipyard at Landskrona to Trondheim's Fosen Mek Verksted. The vessel was to be turned into a luxurious, floating apartment ship for ResidenSea Atlantic Ltd. At 44,000 grt and with a length of almost 200 metres, THE WORLD will carry 1,090 passengers on what is described as being 'more of an ocean-going luxury resort than a cruise liner'.

**W**hen tug SABLE CAPE arrived at Landskrona in late February, THE WORLD was still on the slipway. The tug moored at the bow then rigged the emergency gear and installed pumps and hoses as a precaution. On 1 March the vessel was launched, and a day later SABLE CAPE connected up. The 72-hour weather forecast was favourable for departure and Capt. Arano manoeuvred the tow out of the harbour. However, again forecasts proved to be just that: an approaching low pressure area was deepening and producing winds of force 8-9 near Stavanger. ITC tow master Capt. Kees de Ru decided that the convoy would head for shelter at Bjornafjorden. On 6 March, the Norwegian tug Bamse arrived to render steer-

ing assistance as the hull was bearing the brunt of force-10 winds. On the morning of the 7th, the Trondheim Fjord was reached and THE WORLD was redelivered that evening, completing a tow that had required careful weather monitoring and navigation through Norwegian coastal waters. The towage contract was fixed with Capt. Jarlleif Fiskerstrand of M/J Enterprises.

The vessel is scheduled to be completed in December (two more decks will be added at Trondheim), after which it is scheduled to spend 250 days a year in port, typically at such events as the Cannes Film Festival and the Rio de Janeiro Carnival. The vessel is designed to have a lifespan of 50 years. The 110 spacious private apartments have a price tag of NKR 20 - 65 million. ●



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