

# Booms boom on

This year, few manufacturers will launch new machines, following a bumper year of launches in 2000. **Cranes & Access** looks at why they will be consolidating and building sales of existing and recently launched models.

**W**hat is the UK customer looking for this year when it comes to buying self-propelled booms? "Mid-range articulated diesel booms," is the immediate reply from Leigh Sparrow, vice president of UpRight International. "Bi-energy booms were very hot in the UK for a couple of years, but now the trend is towards diesel booms. And customers are also demanding rough terrain forward drive machines which come fitted with jibs." Sales of straight booms are, however, suffering because of the "diabolical rental rates", according to Sparrow.

But the good news for many manufacturers is that while the self-propelled boom sector is very much user led with the cost of hire often dictated by the cheapest machine for the contract, a growing number of rental companies and contractors are now beginning to realise that the technical advantages of a machine can affect the length of the hire.

Rod Lean, general sales manager for Europe at Snorkel, says: "An increasing number of forward looking rental companies are closely working with customers so that they can supply a machine with special features which make the access platform ideal for a specified contract and advantageous to the hirer." He adds that while sceptics could say that financially this is not good business for a rental company, if customers feel that the rental company has their interest at heart and helps them to reduce costs in one area, they are liable to use it for other hirings - bringing further business.

"Take for instance the simple task of working down the face of a building with a telescopic boom," he says. "When it is

lowered, the working basket describes an arc making it necessary on most units to retract the boom, lower the boom and extend the boom which is a time consuming process. But Snorkel's technically advanced Envelope Management System with its "saw-toothing" effect eliminates these three individual boom functions in a stepless operation considerably reducing the overall time element and resulting in a smoother ride for the operator.

Who's got the longest boom? Self propelled articulating booms		
Manufacturer/Model	max. horizontal outreach	max. working height
1 JLG 150HAX	24.2 m	47.6 m
2 Grove Manlift AMZ131XT	21.3 m	39.9 m
3 Grove Manlift AMZ86XT	19.7 m	26.2 m
4 Time Condor A80	18.3 m	26 m
5 Skyjack SJB-66TK	18 m	22 m
6 Grove Manlift AMZ106XT	16.5 m	32.3 m
7 JLG 800A	16.1 m	26.2 m
8 Cela	16 m	28 m
9 Autoguns Rigo	16 m	23 m
10 Crane Manlift	15 m	26.5 m

### Trends

As for sales, Steve Coullings, UpRight UK's national accounts director, believes the self-propelled boom industry has had a difficult time during 2000. "It wasn't the easiest of years. But we are confident about 2001. It is shaping up to be an optimistic year with a rocky first six months and then a steady up in the second half. All the indications are there as a lot of independents are placing orders."



Jonathan Till MD of Geoff Till Access (pictured right) with UpRight UK's Northern Territory sales director Steve Moody check out the UpRight Boom46 Bi-Energy Articulated Boom.

**JLG's new 450AJ articulating boom lift forms part of a £10 million order from JLG by A-Plant**

growth in the self-propelled boom in the rest of Europe but not in the UK," says Perrick Lourdain, Pinguely-Haulotte's marketing manager. Instead the company will be promoting its Compact range the HA 16 PE and HA 12 DX self-propelled articulated booms it launched last year.

Snorkel, however, plans to launch several new technically advanced units but is reluctant to give details. There are several projects on the drawing board, but which one will be unveiled at Bauma yet remains to be seen, according to Lean.

British manufacturer Niftylift is also an exception. It plans to launch a rough terrain version of its popular Height Rider Narrow (HR15N) that it launched at Hirex in 1998. John Keely, Niftylift's managing director, says: "Since the launch of the successful HR15N two years ago, customers have been expressing the need for a rough terrain machine but with the same innovative features and working envelope that the HR15N already offers. The HR15 is a natural extension of the existing product range and opens up a new segment of the access market for Niftylift to develop."

Asked what's different about the HR15, Keely replies that it has 2 metre more outreach than competitor machines in its class, as well as a flyby and cage rotation at no extra weight or cost. And since it has been designed using 3D CAD technology, boom sections are stronger, lighter and safer than in the past.

Genie, which is about to move its UK headquarters from Newark to larger premises in Grantham, will be not adding new booms but will be instead revising its range, according to John Fuller, Genie's divisional director. At Hirex 2001, Genie will be exhibiting the Runabout series of small battery-powered self-propelled booms it launched last year. With a width of only 750mm, the GR8, GR12 and GR15 feature working heights of 2.54 metres, 3.58 metres and 4.62

**Genie will be exhibiting the Z-30/20N RJ with an optional hydraulic rotating jib at Hirex 2001**

metres respectively. All three utilise the same vertically extending mast system as used on Genie's AWP Super Series platforms. The three units also have an optional 113kg capacity platform extension.

Genie will be aggressively marketing its Z30/20N RJ articulating boom this year. This features an optional rotating jib and provides 200 degrees of horizontal rotation and a 144-degree working range.

### Alliances

A strategic alliance between Grove and Skyjack which was announced last year has resulted in Skyjack dropping its boom range with the exception of the small SJLJB-12T electric powered boom which was launched at Apex 2000. Since the show the company says orders approaching 100 units have already been secured. As a result of the new alliance the Skyjack subsidiary company was renamed Skyjack UK and took over from Russon as its new UK dealer. The new company will also market the Grove Manlift range in the UK. The downsizing of this range as announced at the end of last year by Grove chief executive officer Jeff Bust will mean future emphasis is likely to centre on the production of larger models such as the latest A60J, T80 and T86J.

Meanwhile, Manitou's sales and marketing agreement with Aichi that was announced at Apex means that Manitou Site Lift will be aiming to make inroads into the British self-propelled market. Nick Egan, Manitou's Powered Access Product manager, says "the first Manitou tracked booms will arrive in the UK in February followed shortly by wheeled telescopic booms".

