AROUND THE WORLD

Wabush Mines Adds Third LeTourneau Loader

During the first quarter of 2004, an L-1850 wheel loader joined the two LeTourneau L-1400 models that have been operating at Canada's Wabush Mines since the mid-1990s.

Wabush lies upon the rich iron deposits of the Labrador Trough, on the mainland portion of Newfoundland and Labrador, the easternmost Canadian province. The company mines specular hematite and employs 775 people. It can produce as many as 6 million tons of pellets per year. The operation is jointly owned by Stelco, Dofasco, and Cliffs Mining Company, which also manages the property.

Machinery at Wabush Mines must contend with the challenges posed by the bitterly cold and persistently long winters of northern Canada. The performance of the company's L-1400s in temperatures as frigid as –40 C figured prominently in the decision to acquire the L-1850 — as did the reputation of the LeTourneau 50 Series for high productivity and swift loading cycles. An additional factor was the dependable efficiency of the L-1800 in service at another operation managed by Cliffs Mining Company, the Hibbing Taconite Mine in Hibbing, Minnesota.

Equipped with standard lift arms, a 24 cubic-yard bucket, and a 2,000-hp Detroit Diesel 4000 Series engine, Wabush's new L-1850 will be used for loading iron ore and performing auxiliary functions. Its acquisition was completed

LeTourneau, Inc.

Built On Experience. Driven By Vision.

P.O. Box 2307
Longview, Texas 75606 USA
Telephone: (903) 236-6500
Fax: (903) 236-6585
www.letourneau-inc.com

Information for the Mining Industry from LeTourneau, Inc.
Issue No.19 • June 2004

"Esperanza" Becomes First LeTourneau Loader in Venezuela

Hard on the heels of the historic sale to Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD), which placed six L-1850s in Brazil, came another momentous achievement for the LeTourneau Equipment Group: shipping the first LeTourneau loader for service in Venezuela.

"The acquisition of an L-1350 by Ferrominera Orinoco — FMO — is an important event for LeTourneau Incorporated," said Joey Berry, vice president of sales and marketing. "The employees of FMO are calling the machine 'Esperanza,' which means 'hope,' because it gives them increased optimism about earning their production bonuses in 2004. For us, Esperanza carries the hope of increasing our presence not only in Venezuela but in South America."

Ferrominera Orinoco is one of 13 state-owned affiliates of the Corporación Venezolana de Guayana (CVG), a development agency charged with the mission of stimulating the settlement and economic growth of Venezuela's vast Guayana region, the territory south of the Orinoco River comprising almost half the country's land mass. CVG has responsibility for Guayana's infrastructure, hydroelectric power generation, lush forests, and rich mineral deposits, among which iron ore — and therefore FMO — figures prominently as a contributor to future prosperity.

FMO exports fine, coarse, and pelletized ore to countries in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. With an annual production capacity of 25 million tons, the company places a premium on mining equipment offering proven advantages in reliability, ease of operation, and performance — attributes abundantly provided by LeTourneau 50 Series loaders. The L-1350 acquired in pursuit of those advantages has been put to work loading 190-ton haul trucks and carving pit benches at FMO's Puerto Ordaz "open sky" mine.

Esperanza's specifications include a 1,600-horsepower Series 4000 Detroit Diesel engine and a 19.5 cubic-yard bucket on standard lift arms. Availability since commissioning has been in the vicinity of 93 percent.

LeTourneau's local agent, Grupo MM, C.A., was instrumental in completing the ground-breaking sale that put the first LeTourneau loader on the ground in Venezuela — a transaction which everyone at the Equipment Group fervently hopes will be the first of many, and which has the English equivalent of *¡Viva la Esperanza!* reverberating through the halls in Longview.

MINING FACTS

It's a fact . . .

The United States produces more than one billion tons of coal per year. Foremost among the coal-producing states is Wyoming, which contributes more than a third of the total output. Since the latter 1970s the U.S. coal industry has reclaimed more than 2.0 million acres of surface-mined land, equivalent to an area larger than the state of Delaware.

Source: The National Mining Association

OUTLOOK:

Improved Communication Is Improving Customer Support

Sean Hopkins
Manager, Product Support & Training
LeTourneau, Inc. Equipment Group

Efficient and effective communication is truly the lifeblood of customer support, and two new communication techniques — "train the trainer" and the LeTourneau Issue Tracking System (LeTrak) — are dramatically enhancing that support at LeTourneau, Inc.

In place since 2002, our train-the-trainer program for creating authorized service trainers at the dealership level is communicating essential information in a way that's convenient and accommodating for those who have found it all but impossible to send people to Longview. Now, dealership and end-user technicians can receive the next best thing to factory training without traveling or scheduling around a factory trainer.

The Authorized Trainer program improves communication by making more training available to more people, more often. Common course outlines ensure across-the-board consistency. And annual supplemental sessions at the factory school — required to maintain certification — will ensure that all trainers have the latest product information and instruction materials at their command.

On the service side, sharing the latest information with our dealer network and end users more efficiently and effectively is what our new Web-based LeTourneau Issue Tracking System is all about. LeTrak encompasses a searchable knowledge base containing more than 700 servicing issues, some 350 knowledge-base articles, and the 600-plus SILs (Service Information Letters) published since 1980. LeTrak users can determine if a specific problem has already been resolved; if not, they can submit unique issues for immediate response from LeTourneau. To ensure prompt follow-up and proper tracking, problems presented via LeTrak are simultaneously e-mailed to the appropriate product-support personnel and are copied to the design engineers and area sales manager. All responses become part of each issue's LeTrak record so that everyone knows what's going on; photographs can be posted to enhance communication even further.

LeTrak protects the privacy of both the customer and the dealer by keeping an issue confidential unless it is deemed to have global import, at which point the issue becomes accessible to all authorized users via the knowledge base. What's more, LeTrak users are automatically notified of all knowledge-base additions.

It just doesn't get more up-to-date than LeTrak. Or more immediate — because the new LeTourneau Issue Tracking System knows no time zones and is always instantly available, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATE: The LeTourneau Equipment Group has assigned product support oversight responsibility to Sean Hopkins, whose role in developing the LeTrak system was pivotal. As product support and training manager, Sean will not only be notified of all service-related issues as they arise, but will be able to coordinate their resolution with our engineering activity and address them when necessary in the Authorized Trainer program. This strategic measure reflects the strong and natural interrelationship between support, engineering, and training, and streamlines our ability to meet the needs of our customers.

Now Available: Electronic Parts Catalogs

"Shop" for loader parts the easy way, with the new Electronic Parts Catalog now available on CD-ROM from the LeTourneau Parts Sales Department. Individual catalogs in LinkOne format — widely used in the mining industry — can be obtained for all loader models manufactured since 1990.

The catalogs enable parts selection from master lists or, in many cases, simply by clicking on an illustration. Items are stored in a virtual shopping cart and subsequently exported in "CSV" format for printing out or for use in many Windows-based programs. A generated shopping list may even be sent directly to the LeTourneau Parts Sales Department via the Internet or by fax.

LeTourneau authorized dealers and owners of LeTourneau loaders may order electronic catalogs: dealers may receive them for the loader models operating within their respective territories; owners may receive them for the specific models purchased. Eventually, the catalog library will be accessible through the LeTourneau Web site. For further information call the Parts Sales Department at (903) 237-6570.

MINING FACTS

It's a fact . . .

A mere 25 percent of the world's silver production comes from silver mines. The balance is a by-product of mining gold, copper, lead, zinc, and other minerals. In fact, almost as much silver gets produced each year by copper mines (about 24 percent) as by silver mines — the largest of which, BHP Billiton's Cannington mine, lies in Queensland, Australia. Mexico, however, is the world leader in silver production.

Source: The Silver Institute

LETOURNEAU HISTORY

The Trunk of the Family Tree

If the forerunner of the 50 Series was the L-700 LeTro-Loader (Full Load No. 18), then the forerunner of the L-700 LeTro-Loader was a curious machine called the Pacemaker SL-10 Short Lever Shovel. Although devoid of hydraulic equipment — in keeping with R. G. LeTourneau's unswerving loyalty to racks and pinions and cable-based controls — the SL-10 and its offshoots gave LeTourneau engineers a solid platform of experience for developing the company's subsequent breakthrough wheel loaders.

Inspiration for the SL-10 occurred in mid-1960, when a customer attached a dump bucket to the lower tongs of a LeTourneau Log Stacker. Intrigued by the possibilities, LeTourneau engineers pursued the concept, and by December of that year had produced a prototype front-end loader unlike any piece of earthmoving equipment the world had ever seen. It had three drive wheels, two up front and a third at the rear for steering, and a 31-foot-tall hoist-rack at the front of the machine for raising and lowering a 10-cubic-yard bucket.

The company spent the next several years refining this design, and in late 1964 and early 1965 introduced what it hoped would be a commercially viable line of Pacemaker front-end loaders — the SL-15, SL-20, SL-30, and SL-40. These model designations reflected the then prevailing LeTourneau practice of tying product nomenclature to payload capacity in tons; thus, the SL-40 provided a 40-ton bucket rating, and so on.

The SL-15 retained the original three-wheel configuration, which proved a bit too unusual for prospective customers (only one unit was ever built). The other models offered the more familiar arrangement of four drive wheels — along with some striking innovations in the case of the SL-20.

Three versions of the SL-20 were available: a basic front-end loader; a combination front-end loader and dozer; and a front-end loader with a revolving bucket. As if those alternatives weren't enough, a "Double Cab" variation was built for a customer in Canada. It included a second operator's cab for the rear-mounted dozer blade — a real "two machines in one" proposition.

The big brother in the Pacemaker line, the SL-40 model, would be the largest rack-and-pinion wheel loader the company would make before moving into the hydraulic era. With its 19-yard rock bucket and twin 12V-71N Detroit Diesel engines, the SL-40 was also the largest and most powerful wheel loader of its time — inaugurating a LeTourneau tradition the company would repeatedly renew over the years. A tradition embodied in the present-day L-2350, the uppermost branch of the family tree.