A MAN OF EXPERIENCE

Setting a world distance record of 17,300 miles in a two-tug operation on one of his first assignments is a good start for any prospective tug master. This is what happened to Philippine national Captain Roy Castor Abagatnan when he was second officer aboard ‘Simoon’ in 1978. The record was set off the large tanker ‘T.S. 100’ from Korea to New Orleans. Now 46-years old Roy is one of ITC’s most experienced tug masters.

In 1980, because promotion prospects at that time were limited as ITC sailed also with Dutch chief officers, Ray left ITC to gain additional experience as a chief officer with other tug and supply vessel operators. Early in 1987 Ray returned to ITC as chief officer on ‘Simoon’. Shortly afterwards he was promoted to acting master. Experiencing a master as a chief officer quickly for he joined with three Pacific crossings, towing scrap vessels from both US East and West coast ports to Far Eastern destinations.

While busy with the removal of the wreck of the ‘Welsh Falcon’ from the port of Djibouti, several rescue tows were undertaken culminating with the LOF inspection and to evaluate salvage possibilities. On 31 March his re-floating plans were accepted and the contract for the work awarded to Titan, a company which has a close association with ITC. In anticipation of the contract ITC had already sent the 196 tons 4g ‘Nigoria’ to the grounding site.

The salvors had only a limited time to prepare for the salvage attempt because in its grounded condition the ‘Bovec’ was being subjected to excessive longitudinal stresses. If the vessel could not be re-floated at the spring tide from 6 - 8 April, there was a serious threat that she would break her back, resulting in a major wreck removal operation and the possibility of pollution in the harbour.

Additional staff and salvage equipment, such as high capacity pumps with hoses, welding machines and high volume air compressors, were flown in from Fort Lauderdale and Europe. Two harbour tugs from Rivtow were also brought in to assist.

Titan Maritime Industries Inc of Fort Lauderdale, USA, sent its salvagemaster Capt. David Walshe to the site for the ‘Bovec’s’ disposal. The salvors had only a limited time to prepare for the salvage attempt because in its grounded condition the ‘Bovec’ was being subjected to excessive longitudinal stresses. If the vessel could not be re-floated at the spring tide from 6 - 8 April, there was a serious threat that she would break her back, resulting in a major wreck removal operation and the possibility of pollution in the harbour.

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While awaiting berthing in ballasted condition in severe storm conditions near Prince Rupert, Canada, the 35,000 dwt one carrier ‘Bovec’ was driven aground when its anchors gave way. Pieces of rock penetrated the ‘Bovec’ and there was a serious danger that the vessel could break in two. At low tide the ship’s engine room and accommodation area were completely out of the water.

Work began with all fuel being removed from the double bottom tanks to minimize the threat of pollution. The rocks which penetrated the hull were split before re-floating started. Holes in the no. 3 double bottom tank were patched and the tanks were emptied by pumping and compressed air while the forepeak was filled with water. A total of nine submersible pumps were available on the ‘Bovec’.

On 5 April, Brian Hennessy of the Canadian Coast Guard authorized the use of the non-Canadian salvage system.

A cheerful man who enjoys driving his tug as much as his Nissan Patrol motor car, Captain Abagatnan lives north of Manila with his wife Nenette and his son and daughter. Starting his next tour of duty onboard he states: “my colleagues are like family and therefore, hard to part with.” ITC hopes he continues to feel that way!
The market for platform installation work has slimmed down considerably causing Saipem to modify the giant crane-barge at the Verolme Botlek shipyard and make it optionally suitable for deepwater pipe laying in J-lay configuration. Thanks to the large cranes on the barge (each able to lift 7,000 tons at 40 meters) it is capable of removing the J-lay tower itself. Five heavy-duty hinges are installed in the stern of the ‘Saipem 7000’ fitting the tower.

The first planned use of her new capabilities was for the Exxon Diana project which involved the installation of a floating production system, comprising a deep draught caisson vessel along with topside structures, as well as a mooring system, in-field flowlines and risers. Installation was to take place in the Alaminos Canyon, some 145 nautical miles south of Galveston in a water depth of 4,800 feet. Designed by Gusto Engineering and built by Huisman-Free, it was considered fitting that the ocean transport to the US Gulf would be a Dutch operation. ITC was awarded the contract by Saipem and sent two of its 102 tons barge tugs to Rotterdam.

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flag ‘Kigoria’ under Pollution Control Regulations. ‘Kigoria’ Captain Gerrit Verweij connected up at the bow of the ‘Bovec’ and after ballasting the vessel started heaving up both its anchors and ‘Kigoria’ was put in gear. The almost 200 tons pull by the ‘Kigoria’ was sufficient to re-float the ‘Bovec’ which was then moved slowly ahead with the assistance of the two Rivtow tugs.

The same day the ‘Bovec’ was secured alongside and a fast and successful salvage operation was completed, thanks to the experienced and knowledgeable salvage team supported by an extensive range of equipment. The exercise, which took only a short space of time, was an example of Titan’s and ITC’s ability in prompt and effective salvage response.

In late October 1999, the ITC tug ‘Sirocco’ towing cargo barge ‘S-42’ and sister tug ‘Simoon’ in charge of barge ‘Castoro 9’ left simultaneously from Rotterdam bound for Freeport, Texas, USA. Both barges were loaded with large sections of the modular J-lay tower for the ‘Saipem 7000’. The 135 meters tower, with a total weight of 4,500 tons will enable the ‘Saipem 7000’ to lay ‘stiff’ pipes at a depth of 2,000 meters.

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Hurricane ‘Lenny’ decided to ignore its predicted path and continued on an almost easterly course forcing the tug ‘Simoon’ to spend five days steering various avoiding courses. Early in December the ‘Sirocco’-delivered barge ‘S-42’ loaded with the lower tower and the A-frame to Saipem (USA). A week later the ‘Simoon’ completed its voyage and the upper tower, sliding platform and trusses were also ready for the ‘Saipem 7000’.

Shortly after leaving the port of Ummuiden, mtug ‘Suhaili’ intercepted a May Day call from the cargo vessel ‘Fensfjord’ which was drifting off the Dutch coast with a complete blackout. The tug immediately changed course into the storm, which was blowing in the north. ‘Suhaili’ was contracted on LOF basis to assist the stricken vessel. The next day the convoy arrived at Ummuiden where local tugs took over the fully loaded Wagenborg-managed vessel.

In mid-January the jointly Titan/ITC operated tug ‘Irbis’ left its Bahamian salvage station to aid the 18,000 dwt container vessel ‘Thorm Brooklyn’. In a seven-day tow the vessel was taken safely into Bermuda. The assistance was organised through Offshore Shipbrokers Ltd of London.

This contract was fixed through Samuel Stewart. Late last year the Greek salvor Tsavliris contracted mtug ‘Sumatras’ through Marint Offshore Services to tow the 13,600 dwt ‘Alex’ into Rio de Janeiro. Captain Jan Nieuwhof and his crew onboard the ‘Sumatras’ professionally tackled the job and connected up to the Maltese flag vessel in the South Atlantic, where she was drifting with main engine damage.

From its Falmouth salvage station, Captain Arano went out to assist gcv ‘Lech’ drifting in the Bay of Biscay. The Austrian-managed vessel needed to be towed to Montoir. Contracted by Frachtkontor Junge through Samuel Stewart, mtug ‘Suhaili’ promptly responded and towed the 4,372 grt vessel into the River Loire.

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Hope was given a wide berth and the convoy proceeded towards Mauritius for bunkers. The ‘Sumatras’ made three runs to the port to take 600 tons of heavy fuel to the vessel.

Nearing Mauritius both vessels had to avoid tropical storm ‘Connie’ which was sitting some 500 miles north of Mauritius and heading south. The vessels managed to miss the cyclone. The owners of the ‘Weser Ore’ decided that they had a better chance of disposing of the vessel and its cargo in the Far East. Course was set for the Lombok Strait.

The stricken vessel with its cargo of 150,000 tons of iron ore still onboard was sold because the ships P&I Club, Steamship Mutual, was reluctant to take on the liability. It was considered too large for the membership. The new owners contracted the ITC/Titan DELIVERY OF ‘WESER ORE’ COMPLETES A CHALLENGING PROJECT On 4 October 1999, the fully loaded 278,734 dwt obo ‘Weser Ore’ ran aground in the channel leading to the ore terminal at Victoria, Brazil. After re-floating, the ‘Weser Ore’, which had sustained heavy bottom damage, was not allowed to enter Brazilian waters because hold no. 3 was considered tidal with damaged portside wing-tanks 1, 2 and 3 and starboard wing-tanks 5, 6 and 7 heavily damaged.

The convoy set sail for the Cape of Good Hope as the new millennium dawned and averaged 8 knots en route to the Indian subcontinent where the owners hoped to be in a position to sell both the 335 metre long vessel and its cargo.

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The water in hold no. 3 turns red from the ore. Discharge was taken care of by huge grabs and big shovels. Submersible pumps were brought into tidal hold no. 3. Delivery certificate signed, handshakes at the completion of a challenge. Salvage crew at work keeping the pumps and compressors operational. Another ship ‘Sumatras’ assisting alongside.

Alongside waiting for final destiny.
CRACKED 'LASSIA' TOWED TO TURKEY

The Italian port of Taranto’s bulk terminal was blocked when the 140,000 dwt o/e ‘Lassia’ had sagged severely when discharging and was actually aground at midships. A Greek sailor was awarded the contract for the removal of the vessel requiring discharge of the remaining 250 tons of bunkers and 41,000 tons of cargo.

It was decided to tow the ship to Istanbul in one piece with bowlines attached to both bow and stern in case it should break in two during the towage. Fore and aft sections being out of line by 20°.

The 100 tons pull of the 'Solace' was needed for the towage of the heavily shearing vessel which was safely delivered at Tuzla with Tuzla's tugs escorting. Former ITC captain Jan van der Laan acted as torremaster on board the casualty.

FRUITFUL TOW FOR ‘SIROCCO’

When Captain Jan van Driel boarded mtg 'Sirocco' at Curacao in early March he was bound for a fast return to Europe. The tug had been contracted by Atlantic United Marine Inc through MCS Rotterdam for towage of the fully loaded reeler 'Spring Dragon' from Cristobal to Rotterdam. Intermediate stops for cargo discharge were scheduled at Tenerife, Setubal and Sheerness.

The vessel lost part of its rudder and it appeared to be more economical to have the vessel with its cargo of fresh fruit towed directly to Europe. Assisted by the engines of the 'Spring Dragon' the Atlantic was crossed at a speed of 10 knots. In spite of a delay by bad weather at Setubal, the Seatrade reeler was redelivered to Rotterdam in time to prevent the cargo deteriorating into apple sauce!

The smooth co-operation between both Masters contributed to this fast voyage and 'Sirocco’ master Jan van Driel and his guitar to became a welcome member of the 'Spring Dragon’s’ band during the stopovers. Repairs to the ship were carried out by Rotterdam United Shipyards.

SEACAMEL TRANSPORTS 16,000 TONS OF NEWBUILDING HULLS

During the second half of February the ITC tug 'Siabella Cape' arrived off Shanghai with the barge 'Seacamel' in tow. The spread had been contracted by D.M.A. Rotterdam to transport a Nest of 28 newly built inland vessels and 11 superstructures to Rotterdam.

With the help of Marine Heavy Lift Partners, a loading plan and sea-fastening design was developed which would ensure safe passage of the four tier cargo around the Cape of Good Hope.

The first layer was loaded by submerging, the other hulls were lifted on board by two floating cranes. The total cargo weighed over 16,000 tons.

The loading operation was delayed by logistic problems. By the end of May, the attending surveyor at HMC Kleinebargt bv. was satisfied with the seafastening and towing arrangements and the transport was ready to leave the Shanghai River. At Singapore additional bunkers were to be loaded. During the whole operation at Shanghai, ITC’s Salvador Canelo stayed on site as bailast engineer.
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The 'Suhaili' crew had a much longer stay in Mombassa than they expected after arrival with the barge 'AMT Trader' loaded with four large LPG tanks. They had to anchor and wait for over two months until the land facilities were ready to take the tanks inland.

As mentioned in NewsWaves Issue 4 the barge was loaded in Rotterdam. The tanks had been transported from Karlsruhe to Rotterdam by using river barges. Barge-to-barge transfer was performed by Van Saumeren Engineering with AMT's John Evans in attendance.

Off Dakar the tug ‘Solano’, which left with the transport from Rotterdam, was replaced by ‘Suhaili’ commanded by Captain Aranador. After discharge Captain Novoro took over the ‘Suhaili’ and towed the barge back to Europe.

Captain Ray Abagatnan re-joined the ‘Sandy Cape’ and left Flushing with a double tow of the ‘AMT Carrier’ and ‘AMT Traveller’ bound for the US Gulf where both units were scheduled to be loaded with offshore jackets and modules for account of Global Offshore International to be delivered at Alba Field, offshore Equatorial Guinea.

The ‘Suhaili’ was also engaged moving two container cranes from Rotterdam to Tenerife. The former ECT cranes were loaded on barge ‘AMT Discoverer’ for the 1800 mile journey. The smooth and well executed voyage proved that the tug/barge combination is still a reliable solution for ocean crane transports as alternative for self-propelled tonnage.

The ‘Sandy Cape’ assisted the ‘AMT Traveller’ to offshore Tampa, where the tug ‘Fairplay XIV’ took over. The ITC tug took charge of the ‘AMT Carrier’ and had a smooth Atlantic crossing to West Africa. After discharge, the barge was towed back to its home port of Chatham, completing a 17,555 mile trip in 155 days.

The close co-operation between ITC and AMT has continued and has resulted in a number of highly successful completed transportation projects.

The first two modules were loaded aboard the barge ‘AMT Transporter’ early in January.

With ITC tug ‘Solano’ in charge the transport sailed from the Tees for a winter Atlantic crossing. With carefully monitored routing and weather services by the UK Meteorological Office, the most favourable route was followed and bad weather sailing reduced to a minimum.
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On arrival at Cantarell Field, Captain Arano had to wait for the crane barge ‘Ocean Builder’ which lifted off the modules for transfer to Pemex Exploration and Production Corporation. London Offshore Consultants acted as warranty surveyors for the project.

A second transport sailed in March from the Tees. This time the tug ‘Simoon’ and barge ‘AMT Discoverer’ were engaged to transport one module. En route bunkers were delivered to the transport by the tug ‘Solano’ from its Bahamas salvage station, allowing ‘Simoon’s’ master, Captain Leen van Dijk, to make a non-stop round trip. Three more modules are to be transported later this year for the same clients.

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Anchor Marine Transportation was contracted by Odebrecht Oil & Gas Services to transport six accommodation modules from its Middlesbrough construction site to Cantarell Field offshore Ciudad del Carmen in Mexico. The first two modules were loaded aboard the barge ‘AMT Transporter’ early in January.

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IRBIS

In November 1999 the Russian 82 tons bp salvage tug ‘Irbis’ was contracted by Titan Maritime Industries Inc and ITCSalvage on a joint venture basis for salvage station duties in the Caribbean and the south-western area of the North Atlantic ocean. The tug was engaged in various salvage operations and rescue tows. The ‘Irbis’ was fitted out at Titan’s Fort Lauderdale base with additional salvage equipment. Together with Titan’s fast salvage response teams and extensive salvage store, the ‘Irbis’ proved to be the ideal salvage instrument.

ELIZABETH

The multi purpose support vessel ‘Elisabeth’ continued its Far East employment for the dredging companies. The vessel was contracted by Van Oord ACZ for support duties in respect of the Shell Submarine Pipeline Bundle at Singapore. Over a distance of 4.5 km the Dutch dredging company installed eight pipelines and two glass fibre cables including trench digging and burying. Thereafter the ‘Elisabeth’ proceeded to the Philippines to contribute to the Malampaya Gasfield Production facility with tugging and anchor handling duties. This concrete structure is being built at Subic Bay, ACZ Van Oord dredged the navigational channel for the towed and has prepared the seabed for installation of the production facility.

STOLT PERSERVERENCE

When the newly-built, but incomplete, chemical tanker ‘Stolt Perserverence’ left Le Havre for the Croatian port of Pula, it marked the end of 480 years of shipbuilding at the French port.

The shipbuilding yard of Ateliers et Chantier du Havre, hit severe financial difficulties so it was decided to complete the construction of the 37,000 dwt ‘Stolt-Nielsen’ owned chemical tanker at the Croatian shipyard Uljanik.

Preparations for the voyage were supervised by ITC fleet manager Captain Jan Kikkers, in close co-operation with the hirer’s site manager Svein Riste, in accordance with the requirements of SA surveyor Mr Murray. The contract was obtained through Mr Bruno Salavuard of Paris-based Barry Rogliano Salles & Cie. The towage averaged 200 miles a day and was carried out without incident.

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London based DSB Offshore awarded the contract to ITC for the transportation of four tugs and five barges. The cargo was loaded at Batam by Marine Heavy Lift Partners who also designed the cribbing and sea-fastening arrangements. Due to non availability of the 40 m wide ‘Seacamel’, ITC chartered Semco’s tug ‘Salvigour’ and barge ‘Semco Giant 6’ to execute the transportation with destination Salala, Oman.

For the third successive year ITC and AMT jointly participated at the Europort exhibition held in Amsterdam. This two-year event is a meeting place for the international shipping industry. ITC were happy to welcome many friends, colleagues and customers to their booth at the well attended shipping fair.

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The Dutch National Towage Museum at Maassluis will be holding a new exhibition focusing on offshore from 10 June until 5 November. It will feature a wide range of pictures and scale models made available by Dutch towage companies, specialised Dutch yards and offshore construction companies. The rich Dutch history in offshore is put at display by Nico Ouwehand. You’ll find the museum at Hoogstraat 1-3, Maassluis. Worth a visit when you are in the Rotterdam area!
A MAN OF EXPERIENCE

In 1980, because promotion prospects at that time were limited as ITC sailed also with Dutch chief officers, Ray left ITC to gain additional experience as a chief officer with other tug and supply vessel operators. Early in 1987 Ray returned to ITC as chief officer on 'Simoon'. Shortly afterwards he was promoted to acting master. Experiencing a master as a chief officer quickly for he began with three Pacific crossings, towing scrap vessels from both US East and West coast ports to Far Eastern destinations.

While busy with the removal of the wreck of the 'Welsh Falcon' from the port of Djibouti, several rescue tows were undertaken culminating with the LOF assistance to the 'Southern Pearl'. Although in a bad condition its valuable cargo of palm oil made it into a rewarding operation.

DIPLOMACY SAVES CREW

A negative experience was the hijacking of the 'Simoon'. When on salvage station near Mait, Somalia, 20 heavily armed hijackers from the Somalia National Movement surprised the crew, took over the tug, and held them hostage for a scary 16 days. Tug and crew were released after payment of a huge ransom. Stripped of all valuables, the 'Simoon' was allowed to leave for Djibouti. Thanks to the diplomatic skills of Captain Abagatnan no-one was hurt.

The next tour of duty onboard 'Simoon' proved a happier experience. Near Hong Kong the 'Simoon' and its crew salvaged the 'Southern Pearl'. Although in a bad condition its valuable cargo of palm oil made it into a rewarding operation.

Since 1988 Captain Abagatnan has commanded the 'Sandy Cape' and 'Table Cape'. During his last command the 'Sandy Cape' added some 20,000 towing miles to his already impressive record.

A cheerful man who enjoys driving his tug as much as his Nissan Patrol motor car, Captain Abagatnan lives north of Manila with his wife Nenette and his son and daughter. Starting his next tour of duty onboard he states: "my colleagues are like family and therefore, hard to part with." ITC hopes he continues to feel that way!

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ORE CARRIER ‘BOVEC’ SAFELY REFLOATED

Titan Maritime Industries Inc of Fort Lauderdale, USA, sent its salvage master Capt. David Walshe to the site for inspection and to evaluate salvage possibilities. On 31 March his re-floating plans were accepted and the contract for the work awarded to Titan, a company which has a close association with ITC. In anticipation of the contract ITC had already sent the 138 tons barge ‘Nigros’ to the grounding site.

The salvors had only a limited time to prepare for the salvage attempt because in its grounded state the ‘Bovec’ was being subjected to excessive longitudinal stresses. If the vessel could not be re-floated at the spring tides from 6 - 8 April, there was a serious threat that she would break her back, resulting in a major wreck removal operation and the possibility of pollution in the harbour.

Additional staff and salvage equipment, such as high capacity pumps with hoses, welding machines and high volume air compressors, were flown in from Fort Lauderdale and Europe. Two harbour tugs from Rivtow were also brought in to assist.

Work began with all fuel being removed from the double bottom tanks to minimize the threat of pollution. The rocks which penetrated the hull were split before re-floating started. Holes in the no. 3 portside double bottom tank were patched and the tanks were emptied by pumping and compressed air while the forepeak was filled with water. A total of nine submersible pumps were available on the ‘Bovec’.

On 5 April, Brian Hennessy of the Canadian Coast Guard authorized the use of the non-Canadian contractors. Ongoing work by the salvors and assistance by the Canadian Coast Guard was considered advisable and work continued.

While awaiting berthing in ballasted condition in severe storm conditions near Prince Rupert, Canada, the 35,000 dwt ore carrier ‘Bovec’ was driven aground when its anchors gave way. Pieces of rock penetrated the bilge and there was a serious danger that the vessel could break in two. At low tide the aft section with the engine room and accommodation area were completely out of the water.

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