

Tug Newsletter

all about tugs

*Fire,
Sinking,
En Avant ...*



The above picture shows the burned car carrier **FREMANTLE HIGHWAY** being towed into the Eemshaven, near Delfzijl in the northern part of The Netherlands, on 3 August, 2023.

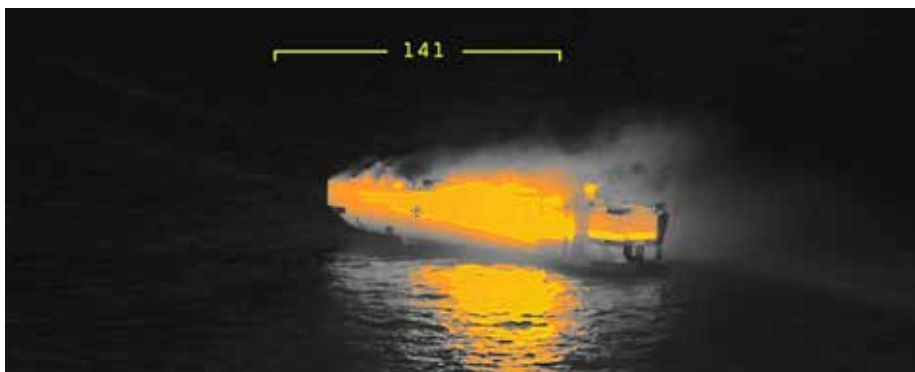
The **K-Line** operated vessel had departed Bremerhaven at around 14.30 UTC on 25 July bound for the Suez Canal destination the Far East carrying 3.783 cars of which 498 were electric vehicles (EV's). This incidentally only transpired later during the salvage operation. The initial report was approximately 1.000 cars less of which just 25 were EV's. The fire broke out around

21:30 UTC when the ship was in position 27 km north of the island of Ameland, one of the so-called Wadden Islands. Attempts by the crew to contain and extinguish the fire were unsuccessful and around 23.45 hr LT the Dutch Coastguard was alerted that crew evacuation was required.

Rescue helicopters were scrambled as was the Coastguard patrol plane. Other initial responders were **Rederij Noordgat** based at West Terschelling mobilising their fast 5,2 tpb 45 knots max (fifi 260 m³ hr) rescue / salvage vessel **HURRICANE** (sailed at approx. 01.10 hrs) and their

3.300 bhp – 14 knots salvage tug **HUNTER** - ex **POINT SPENCER** - sailing approx. 01.40 hrs. In addition the **Ameland lifeboat** **ANNA MARGARETHA** was alerted, sailing at 01.00 hrs, followed by the Schiermonnikoog lifeboat **KONING WILLEM** at 02.00 hrs. Other vessels mobilised were the Coastguard-controlled Dutch ETV **GUARDIAN** (2013 – 10.880 bhp – FiFi-1) which left Den Helder at approx. 00.30 hrs, the pollution control / survey vessel **ARCA**, the patrol vessel **BAREND BIESHEUVEL** and the buoy layer **FRANS NAEREBOUT** – all three Government vessels participating in Coastguard operations. The German ETV **NORDIC** (2010 – 23.065 hp – 201 tpb – 20 knots max – FiFi-1) was also mobilised to the scene. At the time she was on station off the German island of Helgoland.

Upon arrival **HURRICANE** and the lifeboat started the rescue later followed by helicopters. As the lower decks were blocked by the fire the crew had to jump in the sea from the top deck of the vessel, some 30 metres to the water line. One crewmember was rescued from the stern of the vessel where he was trapped



FREMANTLE HIGHWAY - showing spread of temperature in the vessel photo: Dutch Coastguard





FREMANTLE HIGHWAY seen on 26 July, 2023. *NORDIC* cooling port side, *GUARDIAN* starboard side. Noordgat's *HUNTER* keeping the stern into the wind photo: Dutch Coastguard



FREMANTLE HIGHWAY en route Eemshaven. Note damaged areas photo: Dutch Coastguard

by smoke. Seven crewmembers were rescued by *HURRICANE* and the lifeboat *ANNA MARGARETHA*. All needed medical attention and unfortunately one of the rescued crew died on board the lifeboat. The remainder were lifted from the casualty when the helicopters arrived.

Meanwhile *HUNTER* had also arrived and with assistance of *HURRICANE* succeeded in hooking up to the stern establishing an emergency towing connection. The tug succeeded in turning the car carrier into the wind and managed to hold it in place preventing it from drifting further into the shipping routes.

Upon arrival both *GUARDIAN* and *NORDIC* used their fire monitors to cool down the sides of the vessel. Extinguishing the fire was not attempted as this was most likely to destabilise the vessel resulting in capsizing or sinking. The owner of the vessel - *Shoei Kisen* - meanwhile contracted *Multraship / Smit Salvage (Boskalis)* for the salvage operation. The tug *FAIRPLAY-30* (2008 - 7.213 bhp – 91,6 tbp – 14 knots max

– *FiFi-1*) owned by *Multraship* associate *Fairplay Reederei* – was mobilised from *Wilhelmshaven*. After arrival of this tug in the afternoon of 26 July *NORDIC* was released and returned to her regular station. *FAIRPLAY-30* continued cooling. The salvage vessel *MULTRASALVOR 4* (1963 – 1.300 bhp – deck crane reach 18 m – 10 knots) departed *Vlissingen* en route to the salvage location.

On 27 July *FAIRPLAY-30* also established a towing connection. Cooling of the hull was ended as the intensity of the fire lessened but heat and smoke still not allowed boarding the vessel. The decision was to let the fire burn itself out thus avoiding spilled water from the cooling operation being trapped in the vessel and increasing the list. The casualty was held in position drifting west or east depending on the tide.

On 28 July measurements showed the temperature on board the casualty dropping. The fire was still ongoing but smoke also thinned. *MULTRASALVOR 4* went alongside to bring four salvors on board. They

relocated the towing connection to a better position then left the casualty. The plan was to move the burning vessel to a holding position some 16 km north of the island of *Schiermonnikoog* away from the traffic zone.

On 29 August the 5.280 bhp 61,1 tbp tug / workboat *BRUTUS* (*Herman Sr. company / van Dodewaard*) was mobilised from the *Eemshaven* to assist in the holding zone. The prevailing south-westerly wind, however, hindered these towing attempts but on 30 July the situation improved and the tow to the holding area was started with an average speed of about 3 knots. Upon arrival in the holding area the tugs remained connected to keep control over the movements of the casualty. This move also meant that eventual ports of refuge able to deal with shipboard fires were closer.

With the weather forecasted to deteriorate the salvors pressed for a decision on the port of refuge. On 2 August the Dutch Minister for Infrastructure & Water Management after consultation with various interested parties gave the OK for a tow to *Eemshaven*. A quay had been made available suitable for the unloading of the cargo.

On 3 August around 05.00 hrs the tow to *Eemshaven* was started. The tow was escorted by the Coastguard ETV *GUARDIAN* and the government survey / pollution control vessel *ARCA*. The lead tug upon entering *Eemshaven* was *MULTRATUG 20* (2010 – 5.712 bhp – 72 tbp – *FiFi-1* – 13 knots) with *FAIRPLAY-30* acting as a steering / braking tug. The 2.145 bhp 30 tbp tug / workboat *BARNEY (van Dodewaard)* was connected port side about midships alongside the casualty with the *Wagenborg* tug *WATERLINES* (6.390 bhp – 80 tbp max) further aft. A second *Wagenborg* tug – *WATERSTRAAT* (5.072 bhp – 60 tbp max) – was escorting to assist in the final berthing operation. Also part of the convoy was the salvage vessel *MULTRASALVOR 4*.

After berthing the salvors stabilised the casualty, pumped out the water left over from the firefighting and installed lighting. Inspection of the casualty revealed that the decks 1 to 4 were intact with the cars seemingly in good order. Deck 5 was empty and the decks 6 to 11 were heavily damaged / melted, as were the cars located on these decks.

Reportedly the 1.100 cars on the lower decks included 498 EV's. A 'car wash' was



erected to clean the cars being able to be driven ashore. Reportedly a crew was send over by the owner to assist the salvors with the undamaged engine room, the repair of certain electric systems and the offloading of bunkers.

The cause of the fire is as yet unknown. Suggestions that this may have originated from an EV are unconfirmed. The Panama and Dutch authorities will conduct the investigations to find the causes of the fire. Unloading has to be completed by 14 August when the quay will no longer be available.

photo: Cock Peterse

New for Muller Dordrecht

On 17 August Muller Dordrecht, The Netherlands, named two additions to their fleet. *En Avant 25* is a **Damen ASD Tug 3212** with a bollard pull of 85 tonnes. The tug was delivered from the builder's yard in Vietnam.

The second vessel was constructed by **Concordia Damen**. This is the push boat *Zodiac* with an output of 1.068 kW / 1.452 bhp.

After the naming ceremony Muller Dordrecht **ordered** a duplicate of the *25*, to be named *En Avant 26*. *En Avant 25* has been contracted for a minimum of three years supporting a Denmark / German tunnel construction project commencing in 2024.

Jenkins Marine

of Poole, United Kingdom in a 2 August press release announced it had taken delivery of the 37 tpb **Damen Multicat Wind Lass**. The triple-screw vessel is

powered by three Caterpillar C32-TTA engines and fitted with two Heila HLRM 230-3SL deck cranes a capacity of 12 tonnes at 15m reach. Furthermore a 50-tonne towing winch was fitted which allows for towing operations as well as anchor-handling to a depth of 100 m.

Wind Lass has three double cabins onboard suitable for a crew of six. Passenger capability is 15 persons. The vessel is certified **MCA cat 2** for 60 nm offshore range and **BV Class** and **MLC** compliant for international projects with substantial fuel and fresh water capacities for extended working range and with transfer capability.

Jenkins Marine operates a variety of vessels including multi-purpose workboats, dredgers, deck barges, launches and tugs. The three tugs are *DMS Condor*

(1.947 bhp – 24,0 tpb – 150 nm from safe haven), *Handfast* (1.050 bhp – 15,0 tpb – 60 nm from safe haven) and *Polmear* (880 bhp – 9,5 tpb – 60 nm from safe haven) in addition to three 'Beaver'-design 8, 6 m launch tugs (138 bhp -1,0 tpb)

Suez Canal

On 5 August it was announced by the Suez Canal Authority that the SCA tug *Fahd* had **sunk** after colliding with the 52.000 tons tanker *Chinagas Legend*. As a result the tug sustained damage to the hull flooding the tug. Of the seven crew one died in the accident.

The incident happened in the south-bound convoy at km 51.3 in the Al-Ballah area. The 500-tonne SCA floating crane *Inkaz* was brought in to raise the tug and free the canal.



WIND LASS - latest acquisition by Jenkins Marine

photo: Jenkins Marine



Salvage of tug FAHD in the Suez Canal

photo: Suez Canal Authority

Fahd is one of two Voith Tractor tugs purchased by the SCA from the Shipyard v/h H.H. Bodewes which had just delivered the tugs to the owners Nieuwe Rotterdamse Sleepdienst (New Rotterdam Tug Co) in 1976. *Fahd* (ex *Brielsebank*) and *Nimr* (ex *Breedbank*) were built by Shipyard v/h H.H. Bodewes at Millingen, The Netherlands. After delivery they served the owners for only a very short period of time (some 30 days) when they were re-delivered to the builders and sold to SCA. Bodewes built two replacements of the same type for the NRS.

Note: an extensive report on this class of tugs was published in *TugeZine* nr 7.





EN AVANT 25 - the latest acquisition of Muller Dordrecht - seen on 29 August at the start of her first towing assignment
photo: Nico Ouwehand

Marine People

is the name of a new group of maritime transport, heavy-lift and emergency-responders. Joining forces are two Rotterdam-based operators: **Bonn & Mees**, a marine heavy-lift company with a history of some 130 years and **Hebo Maritime** which is engaged in maritime emergency response, heavy lift, salvage, transportation, and decommissioning.

The combined fleet consists of, amongst others, *Hebo Lift 10* (ex *Taklift 4*) with 2.200 tonnes lift capacity, *Matador 3* (1.800 tonnes), *Hebo Lift 9* (800 tonnes), *Matador* and *Matador 2* (each 400 tonnes), *Hebo Lift 8* (300 tonnes), *Hebo Lift 7* (300 tonnes), *Hebo Lift 6* (200 tonnes), *Hebo Lift 4* (188 tonnes), *Hebo Lift 5* (160 tonnes) and *Hebo Lift 1* (50 tonnes). *Hebo-Cat 18* (a.k.a. *Hebo Lift 2*) can be fitted as required with a variety of cranes up to 600 tonnes lift capacity. Several of these lifting craft are seagoing.

Other vessels in the fleet are several tugs, pontoons / barges from 88 to 16.500 t load capacity and a number of workboats and pollution control vessels

Books

'**Bergen Slepen op Zee – Lotgevallen van een sleepbootkapitein**', a 210-page book detailing interesting tows and some tense salvage operations carried out by Captain Kees Pronk.

Price Euro 20,00 excluding postage for the softback edition; a limited hardback edition is also available at Euro 30,00 excluding postage. **Note: the book is available in the Dutch language only.**

This book is highly recommended so secure your copy before the shelves are empty - **JvE**

To order send an email to **voorloper@outlook.com** mentioning name, full postal address and softback or hardback.



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