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Innovative piling rig debuts

An innovative Italian piling rig is making its way to Australia. Drilltechniques general manager, Chris Logan, writes.

Up until 2015, Comacchio SRL was a very well-known Italian designer and manufacturer of micropiling, anchoring and geotechnical drilling rigs.

But all that changed when, in late 2015, Comacchio announced the latest addition to the Comacchio range – the CH 450 large diameter drilling rig used for bored piers, CFA, micro-piles, displacement piles and soil mixing.

Suddenly, there was a new player in the piling rig market and the world stood up and took notice.

The birth of the 45-tonne, self-erecting CH 450 was the beginning of a new era for Comacchio with the CH 650 (65 tonne) machine released to the market shortly after. The machines have proven popular and can now be found all over the world, including the USA, Japan and the UK.

The most exciting news though, for members of the local piling and foundation sector, is that the very first of these machines will be here in March 2018, as part of a consignment of new rigs for Brisbane-based Drilltechniques.

When it comes to designing and building piling rigs, there is a dominant school of thought that goes, “you can’t reinvent the wheel”. However, somebody forgot to tell the Comacchio brothers Patrizio, Renzo and Pasqualino, because they have produced a marvellous range of machines, bristling with innovative technology.

The range of machines is already impressive, with several new models in design phase as well. The CH 450 and CH 650 have either winch pull down or cylinder pull-down varieties and continuous flight auger kits.

There’s a multitude of CH 450 variants including a soil mixing configuration that will complete a pile depth of 20m, a low head room machine that has a minimum



mast height of 9.150 yet still delivers a 1.8m pile diameter to more than 23m.

As well, there is the impressive CH 450 LDTH designed to accommodate a large downhole hammer; there is footage online of a beastly CH 450 LDTH working in West Virginia with a 762mm hammer completing 10m piles. Equally impressive is the CH 450 DP, or displacement pile machine, that can complete up to 450mm displacement piles.

I was fortunate enough to be at the 2017 Dealer Conference and Open House in Italy where Comacchio’s Piero Guardigli made a presentation about the entire Comacchio CH range and provided the audience with an understanding of what the market was saying about these machines.

Features

Features include single load transport – Kelly bar included – and press button auto-erection of the mast to vertical.

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A newly designed “blow-out” fan drive improves engine cooling efficiency and lowers fuel consumption.

Sound proofing technology in the engine canopy delivers a much lower noise impact and makes the machine suitable for inner-city work where noise is an issue.

The powerful rotary head delivers a real 165 kNm @28.5 MPa at 51 rpm – spin-off speed 125 rpm – all with low noise, easy maintenance and interchangeable Kelly diameters.

The long wheelbase on the CH 450 improves stability, reduces ground pressure and offers a longer working radius.

The wide winch drum means low rope wearing and maximum pull at the first layer that grants a max depth of 35m.

The internally geared slew ring on the machine is steadier than other machines that have an externally geared ring.

And something that everybody is talking about – the operator’s cabin. The CH 450 boasts a very safe, comfortable cabin that is wider and higher, offering greater visibility of the working tool.

There are cameras strategically placed around the rig that give the operator a clear view of the important working aspects of the rig at all times.

The cabin is rated for both TOPS and FOBS.

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