Italian rig achieves Belgian geothermal success

Belgian geothermal drilling expert Smeyers made use of a Comacchio GEO700A drill rig to complete a challenging project

"Deploying the Comacchio GEO700A has improved our approach to complex drilling projects"

In the picturesque town of Lier, Belgium, geothermal drilling specialist Smeyers successfully tackled the ambitious geothermal drilling project at the 'KLM Normaalschool' utilising the innovative Comacchio GEO700A rig. The project involved performing over 80 geothermal drillings, each reaching depths of up to 145m.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

The project site presented significant challenges due to its clay-rich subsoil, characterised by dense aquitards that typically reduce drilling efficiency. Despite these conditions, Smeyers maintained high efficiency by leveraging the power and advanced features of the Comacchio GEO700A rig. The team achieved more efficient drilling sessions by using 5m rods instead of the standard 4m rods, effectively navigating through the challenging soil.

FIRST DEPLOYMENT

This project marked the first deployment of the Comacchio GEO700A rig, a decision driven by its robust design and powerful capabilities. Weighing approximately 15t, the machine features a 149kw engine, which is in line with the Stage-V emission standards and offers 9500daN retraction force. Despite initial caution, the GEO700A encountered very few problems during startup, showcasing its reliability.

This success led Smeyers to quickly purchase a brand-new GEO700A, customised in the exact blue of the Smeyers' visual identity, reflecting the company's commitment to innovation and brand consistency at the same time.

ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY

Smeyers is dedicated to enhancing productivity, efficiency, and safety while minimising environmental impact. The GEO700A's remote control feature, replacing the traditional fixed control table, provided greater operational flexibility and safety for the team.

The machine's ability to handle coarse gravel layers and ensure the smooth insertion of conductor casings proved invaluable. On this project, and despite the installation of conductor casings, Smeyers achieved about three flush drillings per day, thanks to the drill rig's advanced capabilities.

"Deploying the Comacchio GEO700A has improved our approach to complex drilling projects. Its power and reliability have allowed us to maintain high efficiency even in the most challenging soil conditions, ensuring we deliver consistent, high-quality results for our clients," Jeffrey Beens, geothermal discipline manager at Smeyers, said.

EXPANDING CAPABILITIES

The GEO700A aligns perfectly with Smeyers' vision to diversify its fleet and tackle more complex projects. The machine's power and robustness ensure that Smeyers can handle diverse geological conditions, positioning the company to take on larger and more demanding projects. The reliability of both the prototype and the newly purchased GEO700A has been crucial in improving and expanding customer relationships, allowing Smeyers to deliver consistent and high-quality service.

The KLM Normaalschool geothermal drilling project in Lier exemplified Smeyers' commitment to engineering excellence and innovation. The successful deployment of the Comacchio GEO700A has enhanced operational efficiency and positioned Smeyers to undertake even more challenging projects in the future. This project highlights the strength of Smeyers' partnership with Comacchio, showcasing a shared commitment to innovation and reliability in complex engineering endeavours.

The ability of the Comacchio GEO700A drill rig to handle coarse gravel layers proved invaluable on a geothermal installation job for Belgian specialist Smeyers.
Photo: Smeyers