

The «HHL Lagos» breaks an Adriatic record

Millimetre precision in Italy

Loading an ethylene fractionator column measuring an impressive 87 m in length onto a Hansa Heavy Lift P2 type vessel in the Italian port of Ortona presented quite a spectacle recently. The size of the ship and draught restrictions made the process more interesting.

It is not every day that you get the opportunity to admire a ship of this size in the Italian port of Ortona, let alone a P2 type unit operated by the German shipping line Hansa Heavy Lift (HHL). So it did not really come as much of a surprise that a call by the *HHL Lagos* at the end of March caused a bit of a commotion in the Adriatic gateway.

The vessel was not the only speciality on display that day. The loading of an ethylene fractionator column measuring 87 m in length and weighing 604 t represented a rather extraordinary event. The project was carried out for the engineering, procurement and construction enterprise CB&I. The piece of equipment was one of the largest ever made by the

company Walter Tosto, a manufacturer of reactors for use in petrochemical and chemical facilities as well as in refineries. The exceptional length of the unit meant it had to be loaded over the starboard side of the *HHL Lagos*. It was destined for the port of Ingleside TX (USA), and the voyage to Texas was expected to take approximately three weeks.

The *HHL Lagos* is equipped with cranes with a combined lifting capacity of 1,400 t. It is the largest vessel ever to have called at Ortona's Riva quay to date. Walter Prosetti, HHL's head of Southern European operations, explained: «The size of the vessel and the length of the equipment on board meant that there were quite some challenges that we had



Photo: HHL

The 87 m fractionator column being transported by the «HHL Lagos».

to overcome in transit. The draft restriction at the loading berth was 5.7 m, for example. So we used only minimum ballast and a stability pontoon.» Additionally, the operation had to take place during daylight hours, due to various other restrictions at the berth, and the entire lift could only be carried out in slow movements.

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