

Seven at one stroke

CASE fleet from Bierbrauer & Sohn demolishes bridge in record time

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On 6 November, at the bridge where the B256 road crosses over the four-lane B9 motorway in Andernach, a total of six heavy-line CASE CX crawler excavators and a large 921F wheel loader belonging to Bierbrauer & Sohn GmbH were in action, in cooperation with STRABAG AG and its client, to demolish the dilapidated bridge in record time.

The Bierbrauer team was given an extremely narrow time window – from 20.00 hrs on Friday evening to 05.00 hrs on Monday morning – to remove the 50-year-old bridge. During this time, the reinforced concrete construction had to be completely demolished, the debris removed, and the B9 undamaged and reopened to traffic.

Due to the importance of the B9 for transport in the whole region, it was made clear at the planning stage there could be no breakdowns or delays in the execution of the project. For this reason, Bierbrauer placed its reliance on a fleet of seven CASE machines which had already proved their dependability in many operations. The core team consisted of one CX250C, three CX300C, one CX350C and one CX370B. Three of the crawler excavators were equipped with concrete shears while the other three packed heavy hydraulic hammers. As the job progressed, some of the machines were later fitted with backhoes, as and when they were required to clear material out of the way or to load it.

To avoid any damage to the road surface of the B9, special precautions had to be taken before the work started. The CASE wheel loader played a key role here. Firstly a protective geo-textile membrane of some 1,400 m² was spread over the whole road surface and verge area to protect them from falling bridge debris. Over this membrane, the 921F then spread a thick layer of sand. A total of some 1,500 tonnes.

For the 921F it was a demanding but, as it proved, absolutely manageable task. With its modern 5-speed transmission with lock-up torque converter and its high-torque engine, the CASE wheel loader is perfectly designed for short loading cycles. Its high tipping load of well over 7 tonnes, achieved by its optimised construction with the engine block located far to the rear, permits optimal bucket filling and extremely high productivity even with very dense materials. A patented



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cooling cube system ensures that the 921F always keeps a cool head even when there is heavy dust formation, as in demolition jobs. A fan with automatic reversing function, which can also be triggered manually from the cab, prevents any blockage of the cooling ribs.

Once the road surface had been protected, the crawler excavators could start the demolition process. Now the heavyweight power-packs could show themselves to their best advantage. The combination of extremely sensitive, modern hydraulics and highly responsive engines with extensive power reserves makes the CX crawler excavator the first choice for tough jobs with heavy equipment such as pulverisers, shears or hydraulic hammers. Here, the intelligent C.I.H.S. hydraulic system automatically adjusts system pressure, pump performance and engine speed to the task in hand, so that the driver can concentrate entirely on his operations.

The extremely robust construction, with FEM-optimised heavy-duty booms and strengthened heavy-duty undercarriage, can resist even the greatest mechanical stresses with ease. Further features for heavy permanent mechanical stresses are hard chromium-plated, dust-proof bolts and bushes from the CASE EMS system, which also provide important fail-safe characteristics in addition to significantly extended lubrication intervals.

The spacious cab provides the driver with comfort and safety. Thanks to its elaborate 6-layer viscous damper mounts in an oil bath, the cab is perfectly protected from noise and vibrations. In the interior, the noise level of under 70 decibels is similar to that of a medium-sized saloon car.

The permanent 24-hour cutting and breaking operation in multiple shifts generated over 2,850 tonnes of rubble and metal. Trucks from the Bierbrauer vehicle fleet carried the material directly to its own recycling plant for processing. Where possible, rubble and steel reinforcements were separated on-site before being transported away. The main job of back-loading was again done by the 921F. Within a short time, the whole demolition spoil – cleanly broken up and sorted – was standing ready for collection.

After completion of the demolition work it was again the turn of the 921F, which now had the task of clearing the residues of rubble and the previously-installed protective sand layer from the road surfaces and verges of the B9. When the protective membrane was subsequently removed, the Bierbrauer team with its CASE fleet had performed the job in record time – a full six hours ahead of the deadline!

Managing Director Karl-Werner Bierbrauer and Site Manager Sebastian Schmidt praised the outstanding teamwork: "It is great, the way everybody has pulled together here. Of course this applies above all to the people on-site and the staff who dealt with the complicated logistics. Even though we naturally acted on the assumption that we could rely on both our drivers and our machines to stay the course, one must always have a Plan B for a project of this kind. For this we could depend on our partners from the CASE branch office in Andernach. During the whole operation we had a direct contact at CASE who was on stand-by for us in case we needed anything at short notice. As it turned out, no assistance was required, but it is a good feeling to know that one can call for help from the substitute's bench at any time."

Klaus Hackenbruch, fleet scheduler at Bierbrauer & Sohn, is thoroughly satisfied with the performance of the CASE fleet: "We have mainly been using crawler excavators and wheel loaders from CASE for some years, so we know what their capacity is and how reliable they are in our everyday work. The machines have proved themselves in all possible applications, and we have also used them successfully in the rental business. The controls are very easy to manage, even for drivers who normally operate other makes. Visibility from the spacious cab is excellent, and the CASE crawler excavators always have performance to spare. In the workshop, the ease of maintenance and good accessibility are also major plus points."

"It's clear to see that the machines are tough and extremely reliable in very demanding operations. And if anything should ever go wrong, Bernd Kump from the Andernach branch office is always ready to quickly help us out of a jam."

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For more information contact:

Lynn Campbell (TLC pr for ALARCON & HARRIS)

Tel: +44 (0) 1704 566354

Email: lynn@tlcpr.co.uk