



To French visitors, Pollutec 2004 was still very much a national event. But to manufacturers and visitors from other countries, the ideal timing and the scale of the event are making a trip to Lyon a more and more important part of doing business in the waste sector. And the event is becoming increasingly international.

Doing 'le business'

New products for 2005

The Lyon Eurexpo site used for Pollutec, the ease of travel and communications from the airport and the TGV station, and the excellence of everything from the catering (not expensive but certainly, as you might expect in France, of a high standard) to the attitude of the security staff (laid-back but ever-present) all suggest that the French have an excellent understanding of 'hospitality' – as they certainly have regarding value-for-money. If nothing else, it should underline how competitive the trade show business has become, in this era of cheap flights that can be booked at the click of a mouse.

The range of new products on view was impressive, a number of top executives dropped in, and once again, world-class suppliers used the French market to preview their new equipment. Pollutec has the potential to grow even larger and be more influential – but it would help if the organizers would encourage *all* exhibitors to describe their products in languages other than French!

Low-entry cabs

Starting with something that wasn't on show. The new TGA Low Entry range from MAN Nutzfahrzeuge AG wasn't at Lyon, even though the company was. That left rivals Mercedes Benz (now DaimlerChrysler) and Dennis Eagle to push the virtues of low-entry cabs, with much discussion as to whether the 'home grown' PVI Puncher low-entry cab on a chassis using a Renault Truck drive train can win a wider market share, now that it is marketed as a Renault-badged product. There was even a strong rumour that, given corporate approval, the Puncher might be badged as a Volvo product; the Swedish parent has consistently failed to produce a suitable low-cab design of its own despite several false starts. The fact remains, however, that the Puncher

lacks the accommodation, the headroom and the design integrity of its main rivals – even in the French home market.

Sweepers

Pollutec 2004 took place during a period of uncertainty for leading suction sweeper manufacturer Johnston Sweepers. It was therefore no real surprise that neither this UK-based company nor its main European rival, Bucher Schörfling, elected to have a major presence at Lyon. UK-based Scarab Sweepers did have a presence, however, in conjunction with French distributor '3D' – now itself part of the ever-expanding Fayat Group.

The sweeper market is poised for some major realignments once the future of Johnson is settled, but whatever happens, Fayat, with its own French-built Mathieu Yno range, the clever little articulated Danish-built Egholm multi-purpose sweeper/mower/collector (marketed by Fayat in France) – and indeed Scarab – look set for an interesting future. Underlining the wider value of Pollutec, Scarab's Managing Director, Rodger Hoadley, used the event to sign a formal agreement for a new distributor for Italy, Sicas Euroclean of Rozzano (Milan).

Chassis

Time to look at new trends, new products and the manufacturers that are on the way up. Among the chassis manufacturers, Scania (with the new PRT series) and Mercedes (with the new Axor) were naturally overshadowed in terms of stand space by home team Renault (a key exhibit being a Renault-chassised 'Mistral' sweeper from Scarab/3D). However, Mercedes also puts considerable emphasis behind the Econic range in France.

There is still considerable interest in natural gas-fuelled



TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT Mercedes Eonic ● PVI Puncher ● Renault Oblique Scarab Sweeper ● new Scania launched **BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT** Iveco on gas ● Nord gets lifted ● big Huffermann order ● satellite boost? **FACING PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT** Electric lifter ● Mecalac goes to waste ● raise cabs de riguer ● PackMat reduces bulk ● more crunching argument

chassis in France (and indeed some other European markets) but, while taking this as a major theme, Iveco surprisingly continued to show an 'old spec' Euro-Tech chassis without the upgrades afforded to the rest of the product range.

Body language

Moving from chassis to body equipment, the exhibits in the outdoor demonstration area suggested heightened interest in the concept of top-loading bulk waste vehicles. In most cases, these were allied to swap body systems of one sort or another, such as the Eco Di container handling system from SNN Eco of Les Reys de Saulce, France.

Biomass-fuelled power stations will require a constant flow of suitably shredded waste materials and the prize is a body system that can truck bulk waste out to a generation facility and maybe take away ash from incineration or compost from a green waste facility to various distributors.

Another development continuing to gain strength is the installation of underground waste containers as well as neighbourhood systems for recycled materials. We'll be looking more closely at developments in these areas in a future issue.

Italian compactor manufacturer Scalvenzi, together with French partner Nord Depoussierage, had a container-servicing unit on show based on a three-axle Scania and featuring a compact folding crane. Instead of a hook, however, the unit utilizes a 'twist lock' device, designed to locate with a pin mounted on the top of each container. The body of the unit is a hooklift-detachable compactor hopper and body combined.

German manufacturer Huffermann was celebrating a large order from French-based operator, Groupe Nicolin of Lens, for a new fleet of demount-bodied sideloaders based

on a Renault three-axle, rear-steer chassis.

Waste Management World has reported on increased interest in compact 'satellite' waste collection vehicles several times in the last few years. Although widespread large-scale orders have yet to happen, the number of manufacturers producing such equipment continues to expand. In France, Mazzochia Fratelli is in competition with Provence Bennes, TAM and several other manufacturers – all keen to promote the advantages of utilizing a compact chassis with a 3-tonne payload within a 7.5-tonne gross weight.

Not all interesting new products had to be large to be impressive. Seen for the first time in Europe, the Icelandic-designed, electrically activated Isbjorn binlifter system from Ecoprocess was, for me, the star of the show. This was because of the operational advantages such a unit could facilitate. A quiet binlifter sounds like a contradiction in terms, but without the need to power up a hydraulic system, the unit can work while the collection vehicle's power unit remains at tickover. Even the design is people-friendly, with each fully enclosed lifter protected by a 'soft' shaped shroud. The side wings give added protection and create a natural barrier to prevent passers-by getting too close. If they do, the machine has a built-in safety stop device that halts the lift instantly. Production has started at a new plant in Nantes, France.

New plant and equipment

Now to switch our interest to plant and equipment. French specialist manufacturer, Mecalac, is perhaps better known for designing machines suitable for undertaking arduous highway and infrastructure repairs within tight spaces. But all that could change with the news that 'waste industry specification' options such as guards, shielded and armoured hydraulics, and other modifications are to feature in its range. New at Pollutec 2004 was the '714 MW' 360 wheeled excavator in a waste picking specification. Special boom and dipper configurations to enable operators to load and pick within containers, or to load high-sided refuse bulkers look set to form an increasingly important part of this innovative manufacturer's range.



Not that any of the already well established players can be expected to give way to any newcomers. CAT, JCB and Liebherr (to name just three well known brands) all competed for attention, but while CAT and JCB have won business as a result of modifying existing production machines, Liebherr staff were at pains to stress the credentials of machines such as the hydraulically raised cab A316 Litronic, which have a specification more closely tailored to the scrap and waste sectors.

And finally, is 'waste reduction' to become part of a 'growth industry'? Two new products from French-based manufacturer, PackMat, suggest this could be the case. This specialist manufacturer has designed two innovative waste reduction systems, which should drastically increase the payload of containers used for green waste and general

'bring site' waste disposal. Like UK-based MHF, PackMat utilizes a rotating crusher wheel assembly mounted on a hydraulic boom, which can be lifted into laden waste containers. Although primarily designed for open-topped containers, such systems can if necessary be rolled into open-ended containers.

The first PackMat design is the CMU10T, which is self-propelled and capable of locating, or even positioning, hooklift containers within a waste transfer facility. A raised cab enables the operator to gain an excellent view inside the container. Also new from the company is a hooklift-mounted unit for a truck.

And finally, to close with a 'crushing argument', Italian manufacturer Guidelli is looking for distributors for its track-mounted MF 450 waste materials crusher. ■

