

# Japan-built Rotor tugs head for Europe

**RT Rob is the first in a series of four 85-tonne bollard pull type RT80-32 Rotor tugs ordered from the Japanese yard of Niigata Shipbuilding & Repair.**

Delivery of the remaining boats will take place this year but a further series of four, with a different propulsion machinery specification and slightly reduced power, will extend this yard's involvement with this version of the 'three-legged' tug at least until early 2011.

The Rotor tug, the brainchild of Kotug's Ton Kooren and developed and marketed by the company KST BV, which he formed in Rotterdam, is basically an azimuthing tractor, but with an additional thruster aft in place of the skeg. This is described as being an active skeg.

This latest, powerful version of the RT80-32 measures 32.00m overall with a beam of 12.00m and maximum draft of 5.95m and a total power of 5,295kW (7,201hp). This is derived from three Caterpillar 3,512C engines, each developing 1,765kW at 1,800 rev/min. Power is transmitted via Twin Disc MCDs to identical Schottel SRP1215 FP Rudderpropellers, two forward, one aft. With all three operating, a bollard pull of 85 tonnes was achieved over the stern and 83 tonnes over the bow.

Auxiliary power is supplied by Caterpillar generator sets – two main units of 189kW and a harbour set of 36.5kW. All diesels are cooled by boxcoolers by VDL Klima.

Forward of the engine room, ahead of the two thrusters, is a small accommodation space with a laundry and utility room to port and a smoking room with horseshoe seating, TV and desk. However this room has two Pullman berths to provide extra accommodation when needed.



A staircase leads up to the main deck quarters between the sizeable single en suite cabins of the captain and chief engineer. There are two further twin berth crew cabins, also with en suite facilities, and each of these is equipped with a fold-away Pullman berth for emergency accommodation. The mess and separate galley are further aft.

The wheelhouse, with exterior access on both sides, is raised above a spacious walk-round boat deck, having room for a MOB boat and launch davit. The control and instrument consoles are centrally located and split either side of a chair on tracks. Obviously there are three steering/throttle controls and two are to port whilst the third is opposite alongside the Schottel Masterpilot.

Almost all from JRC, the electronics fit-out includes two radars, autopilot, gyro, DGPS, Inmarsat C, echo sounder,

fixed VHF, Navtex, SSB radio and GMDSS system. The exceptions are the McMurdo supplied hand-held radios, EPIRB and SART.

MacGregor Plimsoll supplied the winches. Aft is a two-drum (side by side) 200-ton brake load fitted with 450m of 56mm wire. Forward is a similar specification single drum unit fitted with 250m of 75mm Dyneema rope. Other deck machinery items include a Hiab deck crane able to lift one ton at 10m.

Built to Lloyd's Register classification, **RT Rob**, owned by Malta-based Elizabeth Ltd and registered in Valletta, made the trip from Japan to Europe on its own bottom via the Panama Canal. It will be employed in the German port of Bremerhaven, and it is expected that its soon-to-follow, identical sister tugs, **RT Peter**, **RT Adriaan** and **RT Eduard** will be stationed at various European ports.

None of these first four

vessels are to be equipped with external fire-fighting systems but, according to Johan de Graaf, general manager at Rotortug (KST), the next two from the Niigata yard, due in 2010, will be FiFiI with systems supplied by FFS of Norway. These tugs will also differ by having a complete propulsion system supplied by Niigata Power Systems, the same specification as a series of eight very similar Rotor tugs being built at ASL in Singapore.

