

Gearmatic Partners with Hydra Works to Validate New GM Series Hoist

Gearmatic—a brand with a strong legacy built on proven performance in the marine and other markets—is back in the water with a new series of purpose engineered hoists.

For fishing, dredging and other marine applications, hoists are essential across U.S. and global fleets. The new GM Series of planetary hoists is designed to carry the Gearmatic legacy forward—providing superior continuous duty cycle performance in harsh environments and for the most demanding jobs.

Field validation for the first GM Series model was achieved after intense trials. Two initial GM12A builds installed for a swinging application supporting cutterhead dredge operations didn't just pull their weight. They proved their muscle after 16 to 18 hours of constant work, every day, for five months straight!

The Arrowhead Winch team started with a blank sheet of paper when designing the new GM Series, collaborating around customer needs and deep workboat industry knowledge, to build planetary hoists that live up to the Gearmatic name.

The GM12A is crafted with the utmost attention to detail, meeting all customer requirements for functionality and serviceability. High-quality castings and parts, such as stainless steel drum seal lands, offer superior resistance, while crowned planetary gears enable longer life and noise reduction.

A built-in sight glass makes it easy to check oil levels at a glance, simplifying service. Sintered bronze brake discs offer smooth operation and better heat dissipation even after long-term storage.

The hoist, available in two drum sizes and

with five options for wire rope diameters from 3/8" to 5/8" (10 mm to 16 mm), is engineered for fast, simple maintenance and repair.

Units install using a standard mounting pattern while an indexable breather vent allows for 360° mounting options. It features overwound (CCW) and underwound (CW) drum configurations and equal speed and high-speed reverse configurations.

Designed Around Performance

Partnering with industry veterans like Arrowhead Winch distributor Hydra Works, LLC was integral in rolling out Gearmatic's new product line.

Slidell, Louisiana-based Hydra Works specializes in providing winch, hoist, gear reducer, brake, and other tailored solutions to meet demanding applications. While serving sectors from marine and fishing to oil and

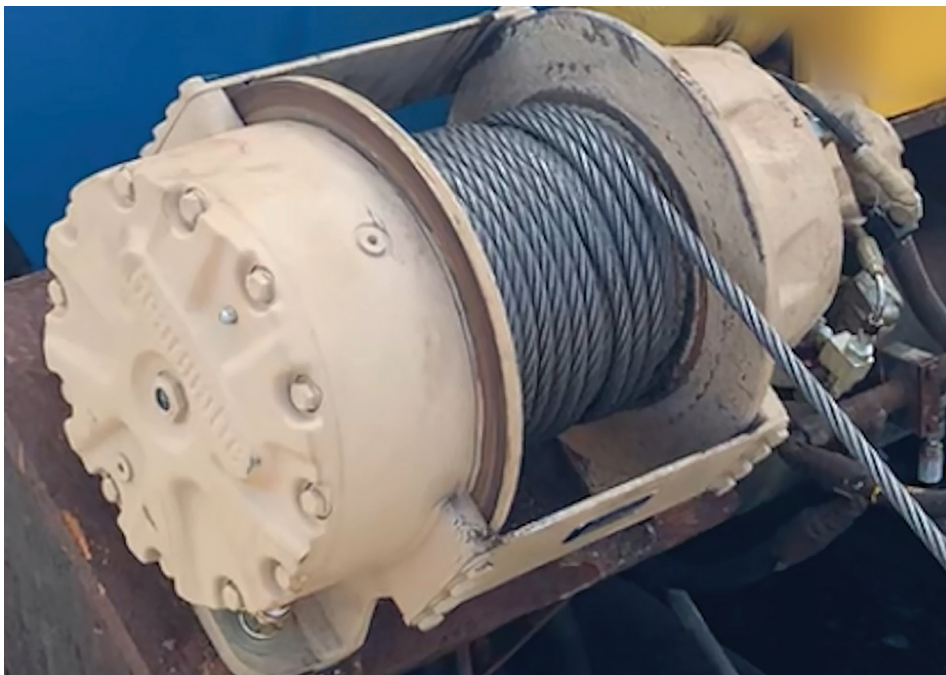
gas, mining, and construction, the company has developed an expertise in marine barge and dredging projects.

With more than four decades in the winch and fluid power industry, Gene Bourgeois founded Hydra Works in 2001. He says the focus has always been on premium products and complete winch (hoist) packages rather than individual components.

Tethered to Operators

The silting and erosion build up in rivers and lakes must be periodically removed. If barge and boat traffic get stuck, it has a huge economic effect. Dredges go in and remove material from the bottom of navigable waterways like lakes and the Missouri, Ohio and Mississippi rivers to make them passable.

Two GM12As, trialed by a Hydra Works dredging customer, are living up to the quality



and performance long associated with the Gearmatic nameplate.

The application involves side wires anchored to a spud, lowered into the seabed and firmly securing the vessel during operation. This enables the cutterhead to swing the dredge in a “Y” arc, covering a broad area.

The distributor assisted its customer with hoist installation and adjusting hydraulic supply to the brakes. “They drop a spud on the stern of the dredge—it pivots side to side,” says Bourgeois. “They’re rotating and cutting material on the bottom using a pump.”

He draws attention to the GM12A’s high speed reverse reel out line speed, which is 4.4 times faster than reel in speed. In reverse rotation (reel out) the maximum load can be fully controlled at a line speed equal to the reel in speed.

“One winch lowers the suction head down to the bed, and raises the suction, too. They draw material into the dredge, then relay it to a spoil area or pump it into a barge and dispose of it. We service their pumps, hydraulics and motors.”

Such hoist setups are most found in shallow water, smaller mining or sand and

gravel operations, or applications requiring short suction, Bourgeois notes. He says dredging vessels that deploy anchor booms may require up to seven winches, depending on application and load requirements.

Ready to Fill Gaps

Time is money on a workboat. If a part integral to operating a hoist in a body of water goes down, it is imperative to get that replaced as quickly as possible. For companies like Hydra Works, quality engineering and performance are just starters.

The owner’s expectations are wrapped tightly around product support, service after the sale, being able to take delivery of parts in a timely manner, and availability.

Bourgeois says, “My part in this is looking for product support and a product we can offer and stand behind. For me, it’s all about service and performance, keeping our clients happy and coming back to us.” That is exactly what Gearmatic has set out to do.

Proven in the Factory

Paul Hiltenbeitel, director of sales with Arrowhead Winch, confirms the level of scrutiny the GM12A underwent prior to it even departing their Broken Arrow, Oklahoma manufacturing facility.

“When it comes time for validation testing, we put it on our test stand, at a full rated load capacity, for 100,000 revolutions,” he says. “We don’t launch until we are confident.”

Arrowhead Winch remains focused on collaboration, developing solutions, and delivering the best products on the market. Hiltenbeitel explains, “How the hoist operates—how it performs under stress and repeated cycles—that is very unique to us. We also came out with a better braking design... Now we have a full line of Gearmatic we are getting ready to introduce.”

Validated in the Field

With the GM12A, Arrowhead Winch has introduced a new standard for mid-class planetary hoists—reliable braking, faster line speeds, and field-proven durability.

Leading the way for a full GM Series lineup now in development, it reflects a new chapter in the Gearmatic legacy of performance, uptime, serviceability, and factory support, providing a competitive advantage for planetary hoist operators on dredge boats as well as in fishing and drilling industries.

“We put it through field trial testing—pretty extensive,” Bourgeois says. “I was pleased with what I saw based on our internal inspection...it looks like the winch is going to be a performer.”

Of course, when you are carrying on a legacy, expectations can be high.

“My focus is the marketing of premium winch/hoist products, systems, and winch/hoist packaging,” he continues. “In addition, providing parts and service to support our sales for the products we represent.”

The new Gearmatic GM Series is poised to deliver.



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