

Market leader invests in British company and locomotives

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RailAdventure GmbH, the market leader for special transport and test runs with new trains in Europe, has announced its investment in the British company Hanson & Hall Rail Services. At the same time, a purchase contract for eight Class 43 power cars has been signed, which, when formed into double locomotives, will be the future backbone of the company's British domestic services.

In recent years, the Munich-based company has been significantly involved in the delivery of new vehicle fleets from manufacturers based in Europe to Great Britain. Now, having also gained a strong local presence, RailAdventure is reacting to the fact that most of the well-known vehicle suppliers have recently started to operate production plants in Great Britain, resulting in significant local demand.

Alex Dworaczek, Managing Director of RailAdventure GmbH, said: "We always want to accompany the development of our customers and are now proud to be able to offer the highest quality and most flexible solutions from our own source for the British domestic market. In addition, the local proximity to the production sites is important to us."

Since its foundation 3 years ago, the young company, Hanson & Hall, has been integral to the support

services for the railway industry and UK operators. As part of its expansion plans for the UK market, Hanson & Hall was therefore the preferred partner for “RailAdventure”. The company will henceforth operate under the name “Hanson & Hall Part of the RailAdventure Group”.

Jason Hall, Managing Director of Hanson & Hall, said: “This is a really exciting time for us as we increase the scale our service offerings. Through the combined experience of Rail Adventure and our company, the UK rail industry and its suppliers are about to receive a much-needed step change in service levels, and I am thrilled we have such fantastic partners backing us during the next stages of our growth.”

So far, Hanson & Hall has operated with two locomotives, a Class 31 and a Class 50, which will also bear RailAdventure’s colours in the future. For the necessary expansion of the local vehicle fleet, RailAdventure relies on its tried and tested strategy of absolute neutrality and is using locomotives that cannot be aligned with any current manufacturer or customer. Thus, the decision was made in favour of eight former HST power cars of the proven Class 43 series, purchased from a UK leasing company.

With regards to this, Alex Dworaczek states: “What we want to avoid is, for example, using a current product of a locomotive manufacturer to transport the prototype of another competing company, which can lead to conflicts of interest with our customers.”

Six of the power cars will be used to form three double locomotives. Two other Class 43s will serve as spare parts donors. For a long time, the Class 43s was the fastest diesel locomotives in the world, with a top speed of 148 mph, and were used in the UK’s “InterCity 125” system, running up to 1,500 miles a day.

In future, the double locomotives will be available for services primarily at a London location, from where direct access to the ECML, MML, WCML, Southern and GWR routes are all possible.

In the next few months, the Class 43s will be equipped with so-called translator technology, which allows the control of electro-pneumatic brakes of towed multiple units. Furthermore, Habfis coupling adapter cars will be transferred to the UK. The first two power cars with the numbers 43480 and 43484 have already been repainted and are now available for operations.

It is also planned to use these fast diesel locomotives as traction vehicles for new vehicles on test rings in Central Europe.

Photo credit: RailAdventure