

AW DEMOLITION REAP THE BENEFITS OF A QUICK, SAFE & EFFORTLESS CHANGEOVER OF ATTACHMENTS AND ADD THE LARGEST LEHNHOFF IN THE UK TO THEIR FLEET

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“The addition of the Lehnhoff Variolock system to the majority of our fleet has simply made our operations safer, cleaner and far more productive.” Austin believes “It’s hard to see why any demolition contractor decides to stay with a standard quick hitch these days.”

The demolition industry’s strive to increase safety and productivity has seen many companies switch to fully hydraulic coupling hitches on their excavators.

One man leading this charge is Austin Wilkinson, MD of AW Demolition based in Cadishead, Greater Manchester. Whilst still a relatively young company, AW Demolition has seen impressive year on year growth with the company undertaking a variety of projects from single dwellings through to the full demolition, land clearance and remediation of a former paper mill site.

“We will look at almost any project, especially for our regular clientele” explains Austin **“We have very experienced members of staff who are more than capable of winning, managing and delivering complex projects across the country to the full and complete satisfaction of the client.”**

From the company’s inception just 5 years ago Austin’s drive to deliver a cost effective and reliable demolition service has seen the company expand, picking up a raft of blue-chip clients, many of whom are still regular customers of the business.



Wanting to be able to give his customers the best service at all times led Austin to look at investing in the best demolition attachments available. Initial discussions with Sean Heron of Worsley Plant saw the company invest in a number of Rotar selector grabs for his machines. The quality of the product and the way in which the Worsley team dealt with him saw Austin return to the Middlewich based company with a request to try the Lehnhoff Variolock hydraulic quick coupler.

“We looked at the three main players on the market and liked them all but it was the Lehnhoff that had the edge.” Austin explains **“The service and back up from Sean and his team was also a major contributing factor.”**

Wanting to invest in the latest technology Austin placed an order for the Variolock version two which was launched into the market at the beginning of 2017 with the first examples entering the fleet to be mounted on his Komatsu and Volvo excavators ranging in weight from 30-40 tonnes. The VL250 proved to be such an instant benefit to the company. **“We saw from the outset that we were becoming more productive with the Lehnhoff fitted.”** Austin stated **“The lads on the machines were willing to swap attachments over on a regular basis meaning jobs were being undertaken quicker and always using the right tool meant there was less damage and repairs to be carried out to cutting edges or wear pieces.”** One of the major benefits of having the system is the reduction in damage to hoses. **“We noticed our bill for hose repairs almost disappear overnight on the machines with the Variolock fitted. This alone meant downtime was reduced which saved us money and made us more productive.”**



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One particular project where the addition of the Lehnhoff Variolock system really came to the fore was in Bristol where the company were removing a bridge over the main ring road. **“We only had room on a nightly road closure to position a single machine to remove the stair cores to the bridge.”** Austin explains

“To remove the structure and load out the materials would mean us having to change attachments at least once an hour. If we were able to do this without any issue we would still waste 10 minutes on each changeover and have to have the operator clambering over a pile of rubble. The addition of the Lehnhoff meant he could do it in under 15 seconds and stay in the safe environment of the cab.”

The use of the Lehnhoff equipped Volvo meant that just a single machine was able to undertake a job where two machines should have been. This added versatility and ability has resulted in a significant reduction of operating costs, which goes to cover the investment in the Lehnhoff system.

On the back of the productivity gains, Austin again returned to Worsley Plant to supply another Lehnhoff Variolock for the company’s latest purchase, a 72 tonne Volvo EC700C. Purchased specifically to undertake the demolition of a paper mill in Scotland, the big Volvo was fitted with the first VL700 coupler to be fitted in the UK. Suitable for excavators in the 40-70t weight range the VL700 is fitted with four DN12, one DN20 and two DN40 couplings and can be optionally equipped with tool recognition, electric power supply and tool data management applications. The size of the fittings is extremely important as they correspond with the pipework supplying the attachment with oil.



As with the smaller Variolock system, the VL700 has made the large Volvo such a versatile machine. They have put it to work in Scotland undertaking the primary demolition and secondary sizing of steel for recycling. Working with a variety of attachments the Volvo has really impressed regular operator Craig Hall.

“The Volvo is a great machine” states Craig **“The addition of the Lehnhoff has not only made is much better, but it is so much more versatile. It’s a simple one man job to change the attachment now and it just takes seconds. There’s no drop in pressure thanks to the equal sized couplings and this means we can run at the right pressures and speeds with no issues over the oil heating up too much.**

The only issue we have encountered with the couplers is the occasional O ring that needs changing. Thankfully this is a simple and cheap thing to do. The only daily maintenance we need to undertake is to ensure that the A block on the attachment is wiped clean at the start of a shift.”