



HEAVY HAUL

One step ahead

SMART PLANNING AND SPEC'ING ARE CRUCIAL TO MOVING THE HEAVIEST LOADS

What do you do when you need to move a 14-ft.-wide, 15-ft.-high, 140,000-lb. excavator? How about hauling a 130-ton rough terrain crane onto job sites in Minnesota and North Dakota? For a growing number of customers throughout the lower 48 and Canada, the answer is to call heavy-haul specialist Kivi Bros. Trucking.

“For the excavator move, we had to use a combination vehicle that was 127 ft. long from bumper to bumper,” says Derek Kivi, operations manager, who, along with his brothers Tyler and Dakota, runs the Duluth, MN-based, family-owned business. “The total gross weight of the combination was 220,000 lbs. We actually move that machine 150 to 200 mi. at a time for a local construction company, often into facilities with roads you wouldn’t think you would even get into with a pickup.”

Founded in 1995 with three trucks, Kivi Bros. Trucking has grown to a fleet of 40 tractors and 65 trailers. A portion of the company’s equipment, dedicated to heavy-haul operations, consists of Kenworth and Peterbilt tractors powered by Cummins ISX engines with 600 hp. and 2,050 lbs.-ft. of torque; Eaton 13- and 18-speed transmissions; 46,000-lb.-capacity Hendrickson rear axles and

Watson & Chalin 20,000-lb. tag axles; and Michelin wide base single steer tires.

Kivi Bros. Trucking utilizes equipment from Fontaine Heavy-Haul Trailer Co., including a variety of multiple axle lowboy trailers for its heavy haul operations. One of the more specialized units in the fleet is a 12-axle configuration that can haul a payload of 140,000 lbs. It also has all-aluminum flatbeds and step decks from Mac Trailer Manufacturing, along with 40-ft. frameless aluminum end dumps that haul commodities such as road salt, aggregate, fill material, and grain with an average weight of 25 tons.

PLANNING FOR SAFETY

“A lot of our heavy-haul loads require planning for equipment, routes and permits long in advance,” Kivi says. “With a broad range of applications and customer needs, it’s a daily challenge to make sure we have all of the proper vehicles and to keep everything coordinated and on schedule.”

Hauling heavy loads under special permits requires that safety is a top priority at Kivi Bros. Trucking. “There are a lot of regulations associated with heavy hauls and with standard loads as well,” Kivi states. “Today, especially, CSA scores are so important that we spend a lot of time making sure we’re doing

everything we can to operate safely. Even though the majority of our equipment is less than two years old, we do not want to be sitting on the side of the road with these kinds of loads.”

Earlier this year, Kivi relates, safety was part of the reason the company began spec’ing Eaton UltraShift Plus automated transmissions in its newest over-the-road and regional tractors. “We believe the automated transmissions make the vehicles safer,” he states. “It’s simple—if drivers don’t have to worry about shifting, they can focus on driving.

“It’s also been beneficial to have transmissions that always shift at the optimum point for maximizing fuel mileage,” Kivi adds. “Some drivers may not have the experience to always shift at the correct rpm. In fact, we’ve already noticed a fuel economy improvement. Compared to our trucks with similar engines and manual transmissions, the units with UltraShift Plus transmissions have been a step ahead.”

For Kivi Bros. Trucking, it’s all about staying one step ahead to meet the needs—and especially the challenging requirements—of its heavy-haul customers. “We learn with every experience so we can deliver on time, safely and without damage,” Derek Kivi says. “Our expectation is to be nothing less than the best.”