



Crude Tanker Comments

The VLCC market opened the week with a burst of activity. Monday saw fresh volume emerge and ships steadily disappear, giving owners a boost in confidence. Lists remained tight, and counts crept up as previously quiet fixtures came to light. Tuesday brought further momentum, with multiple AG quotes hitting the market and private opportunities adding to the buzz. TD3C quickly climbed through the WS 90s, with a favourable AG-Korea run printing at WS 100, making sentiment bullish. Owners began to press their advantage, and with dates were being worked later than usual. Midweek, however, saw a shift. The postponement of Chinese tariffs showed uncertainty, particularly around discharge options, which increased competition. Volume slowed, and some owners locked in strong returns before any potential correction. Ships continued to disappear quietly, suggesting that plenty was still being worked behind the scenes. As the week ended, the market settled into a steadier state. Sanctions talk out of China brought caution, and while visible activity dipped, sentiment remained steady. Lists are still thin, and cargo counts suggest more to come. The market now needs solid testing globally to maintain momentum, but with fundamentals still supportive, next week could bring renewed pace and opportunity.

On Halloween, everyone is entitled to one good scare – except charterers, who have already had plenty this week as Suezmax rates have firmed across the board. Atlantic tonnage has been very tight again for the current fixing window. In the USG, rates have moved up a spine-tingling 7.5 points to WS 130 for TA and now WS 150 on a Whiffen Head replacement. Down in WAFR, it was a graveyard for most of the week, but Thursday was reminiscent of Frankenstein's monster in terms of the size of the beast which resurrected. At least five cargoes were worked ex-WAFR, and WS 160 was paid basis UKCM from Sangomar. CPC rates have also climbed up to WS 157.5 and look poised to go even further. Turning attention to the East, the AG market has also been possessed by an other-worldly force this week, firming rates. AG-East has been paid at WS 150, but on a charterer which not many others can work, and a Basrah-West run paid WS 75. For owners, the week has been treat rather than trick!

It was a slow start to the week for Med Aframax, with rates stable for natural runs and more volatile for replacement jobs; charterers needed to make sure not to overpopulate the list. Things had not picked up by Wednesday, as prompt cargoes and replacements had been dealt with, and a plateau was brewing. On Thursday, activity continued gradually and rates kept fixing at last done. Dates are well-covered until 14 November. Chaos in the US improves sentiment, but there are few players on the front end to ballast. Activity slowed down at the end of the week, and the list does not look open going into next week, but the market is stable due to low enquiry. TD19 ends the week at WS 200.

In the North Sea, it was a typical Monday, with Aframax rates hovering at last-done levels and any fixtures done under the radar. Rates stayed at WS 150 as the week went on, but enquiry began to pick up, and sentiment was strong across global Aframax markets. 10 vessels ballasted between last Wednesday and this one, thinning the list until it rose due to higher enquiry fuelled by sentiment across US-Med markets; both provide strong ballast opportunities to North Sea owners. Sentiment remains with owners as rates edged up all week. Early positions are considering ballasting to the US; WS 157.5 was repeated to end the week, but very bad weather approaches...

Product Tanker Comments

The AG LR2 market had a successful week; several factors lowered enquiry at the beginning, but there was still outstanding demand in play, and the thin position list suggested firmer freight was ahead. Charterers tried to hold back as much as possible, but the inevitable happened. AG-Japan saw fixtures rise to 75 x WS 130, up 15 points from last week, finally reaching WS 140 at last done. There was also a stream of Australia demand ex-Sikka, and in a warming market, owners commanded a large premium to last week's levels to commit to a long voyage to an area with little backhaul potential.

75 x WS 150 followed, along with 90 x WS 135 for Singapore. There was then further firming with 90 x WS 140 for a Sikka-East Africa voyage. AG-West also improved with a deal of USD 3.7 Mn on subs for AG-UKC via Cape of Good Hope, though it failed. USD 3.95 Mn on subs was negotiated for AG-UKC as a replacement, as charterers then needed Suez-suitable ships, of which there is a shortage in the area. Red Sea exports have been calmer, and USD 2.85 Mn still holds decent value to owners, even with the buzzy X-Med Afra market running in parallel.

There is cautious optimism entering Monday as the supply of tankers is in the owners' favour, though demand has fallen since Wednesday. Refinery turnaround and report issues in a major loading country take some of the punch away from what was thought to be a week of firming more prolific than it was. AG LR1s saw low enquiry this week, but the market remains healthy. Off the back of a firm week prior, rates grew with each deal; TC5 rose 25 more points to WS 150 for the last few fixtures. Westbound business has been limited, so a fresh test would be useful, but a fair AG-UKC rate could be USD 2.9 Mn via Cape of Good Hope.

Short-haul enquiry has also been lacking, but when tested, rates have been healthy; USD 450,000 was the last agreed for Fujairah-Kazakhstan. All in all, it has been a positive week, but one must be mindful of incoming tonnage; the list is long looking ahead, and as these vessels start to build up on the prompt side, rates might edge off if enquiry does not improve. As the LR market in the Middle East picked up this week, owners in North Asia have also managed to leverage some higher freight levels in the North. LR2 rates into Australia have firmed to 75 x WS 140, and this trend could continue into next week. North Asia-Singapore backhaul rates have not been tested, but they will likely firm in line with long-haul cargoes.

The North Asia MR market maintained a steady tone throughout the week, with activity gradually picking up after a subdued start. Although midweek enquiry improved, rate levels held firm, with backhauls hovering around the USD 600,000 mark. The prompt tonnage list remained tight, while forward positions appeared more balanced, keeping sentiment stable but lacking clear upward momentum. With a few mid-November stems still under discussion, the market stays active, but it is directionally uncertain heading into the next fixing window.

In Southeast Asia, sentiment has held largely flat, with scattered short-haul tenders and TC7 fixtures showing limited rate movement. The tonnage list lengthened slightly toward the end of the week amid slower demand, reinforcing a steady-to-soft tone. Overall, the region concluded the week on a muted note, with little fresh enquiry to lift the market.

		BDTI	BCTI	
		1436	627	
Δ W-O-W		↑Firmer	↓Softer	
BDA				
(USD/LDT)		TKR/LRG	TKR/MED	TKR/SML
This week		410.6	417.7	422.5
Δ W-O-W		-6.9	-6.2	-7.5
BALTIC TCE DIRTY				
Route		Qty	\$ / Day	W-O-W
TD3C	ME Gulf / China	270,000	121,787	↑Firmer
TD7	UKC / UKC	80,000	65,342	↑Firmer
TD15	WAF / China	260,000	112,501	↑Firmer
TD19	Med / Med	80,000	64,412	↑Firmer
TD20	WAF / Cont	130,000	72,694	↑Firmer
TD22	USG / China	270,000	92,557	↑Firmer
TD25	USG / Cont	70,000	61,847	↑Firmer
TD26	EC Mex / USG	70,000	71,379	↑Firmer
TD27	Guyana / UKC	130,000	69,732	↑Firmer
BALTIC TCE CLEAN				
Route		Qty	\$ / Day	W-O-W
TC1	ME Gulf / Japan	75,000	32,286	↑Firmer
TC2	Cont / USAC	37,000	6,542	↑Firmer
TC5	ME Gulf / Japan	55,000	23,773	↑Firmer
TC6	Algeria / EU Med	30,000	9,333	↓Softer
TC7	Sing. / ECA	30,000	18,757	↓Softer
TC8	ME Gulf / UKC	65,000	26,406	↑Firmer
TC14	USG / UKC	38,000	23,417	↓Softer
TC17	ME Gulf / EAFR	35,000	20,978	↓Softer
TC20	ME Gulf / UKC	90,000	31,079	↑Firmer
TC21	USG / Caribs	38,000	24,672	↓Softer



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