



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 01 – 34

DROPPED PIPE SPINNER

WHAT HAPPENED:

A floorman was running the pipe spinner during a trip. As he finished backing out a joint of drill pipe, he pushed the pipe spinner back to its stand. At that point the top U-bolt on the piston backed out from the piston arm. The pipe spinner dropped approximately 4-ft to the rig floor and the force of the spinner dropping pushed the floorman to one side and he fell backwards on the rig floor sustaining a twisted ankle and bruised knee.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

Through an investigation, the team determined that several items contributed to this incident:

- The pipe spinners were not inspected prior to beginning the job.
- The safety cable was not properly attached to the tongs. A cable was attached, however, as it was installed, it would only give protection in the event that the shackle failed which connected the tongs to the hanging line, not if the piston arm came loose.
- There was no swivel installed in the hanging line to allow the tongs free movement without affecting the hanging mechanism.
- There were not enough threads on the eye that screws into the cylinder shaft to allow a jam nut to be installed.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company did the following:

- Instructed the personnel on rigs that Pipe Spinners, are go be included in their inspection program.
- Rerouted the safety cable to protect against any part of the hanging mechanism failing.
- After checking with the manufacture for the information on the correct swivel to use, they installed a swivel in the tong hanging line to allow free movement of the tong without affecting the hanging mechanism.
- An eyebolt with longer threads was installed to allow for a jam nut to be installed.
- To prevent accidental backing out, thread-locking compound was used on eyebolts installed into the hanging cylinder.
- A safety meeting was held with all crews emphasizing the importance of checking all equipment for irregularities prior to use.

The Corrective Actions stated in this alert are one company's attempts to address the incident, and do not necessarily reflect the position of IADC or the IADC HSE Committee.

This material is presented for information purposes only. Managers & Supervisors should evaluate this information to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices.
Copyright © 2001 International Association of Drilling Contractors. All Rights Reserved

Issued September 2001