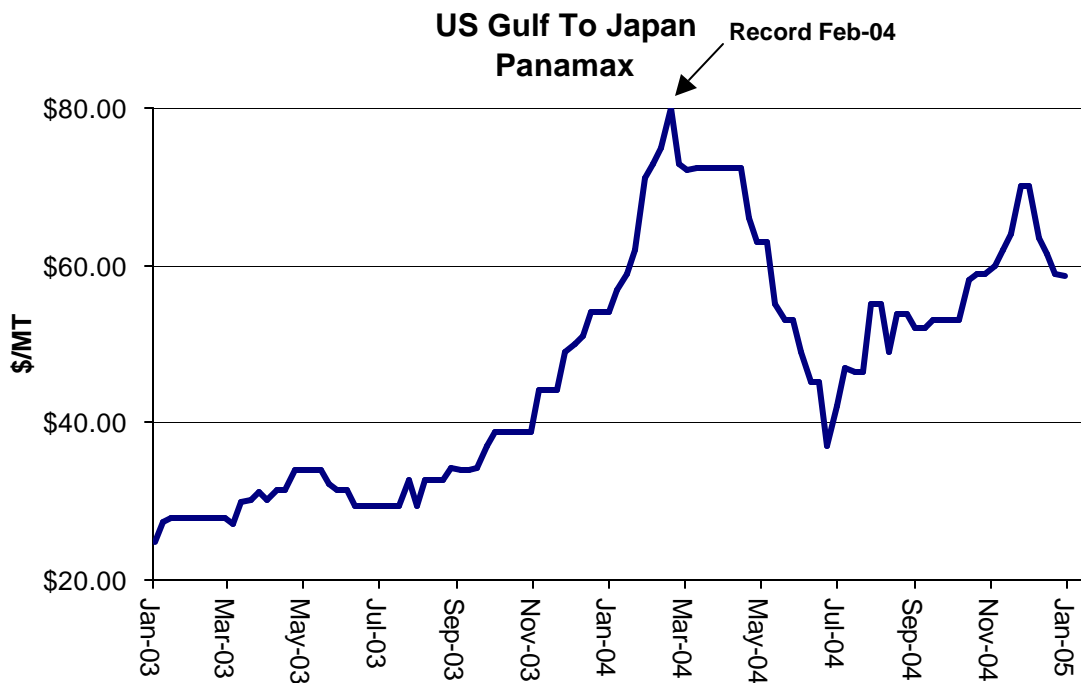




INTERNATIONAL MARKET ANALYSIS

Ocean Freight Rates Recede From Last Month

Rates for Panamax size ships on the U.S. Gulf to Japan benchmark route are down almost \$10 dollars a ton from the beginning of last month. In early December, the route was trading above \$70 a ton and very close to breaking the record \$80 per ton reached in February 2004. The recent decline in rates is attributed to normal seasonal holiday slowdown; rates are expected to rebound on continued strong demand for coal, iron ore, and grain by China and other Pacific Rim countries.



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