Q&A: THE TRACSTAR® SERIES 2

To learn more about the advances made in the recently-launched TracStar® Series 2 machine line, we take you straight to the source this month. Here's a one-on-one with Jason Lawrence, Director of Product Development at McElroy.

Jason Lawrence
Director of Product Development

COULD YOU PROVIDE A BRIEF, NONTECHNICAL OVERVIEW OF THE PRODUCT?

The TracStar® Series 2 pipe fusion machines are self-propelled vehicles equipped with a 4-jaw carriage that is used to butt fuse thermoplastic pipe by applying heat and pressure. A rugged, track system allows users to easily move the machine across rough terrain and inclines straight to the fusion site. These machines are also self-contained so that everything needed — including the power source — is on board and does not have to be hauled around separately. The carriage itself can be removed from the chassis for tricky fusions in tighter spaces.

HOW IS THIS PRODUCT DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS FUSION MACHINES, BOTH FROM YOUR OWN PRODUCTS AND ACROSS THE INDUSTRY?

McElroy's first fusion machines were manual fusion carriages and carriages mounted on wheeled vehicles that were pulled to the jobsite. Mounting the carriage on a self-propelled, tracked vehicle was a completely new concept when it was introduced in the late '90s. It was quickly embraced and revolutionized the way pipelines are built.

Prior to the Series 2, each carriage was paired with a corresponding vehicle. But the models for small- and medium-diameter pipe now share a common vehicle that is interchangeable with our full line of machines for 2" IPS to 18" OD pipe.

McElroy TracStars have a well-earned reputation for reliability and toughness that sets them apart from competitive equipment.

WHAT ARE THE KEY FEATURES?

The Series 2 machines are now powered by self-contained, liquid-cooled or turbo diesel engines with fuel capacity for a full day's work. This is an added convenience since gasoline is often not permitted on jobsites. These engines are also more robust and feature advanced emission control technology that meets EU Stage IIIB and EPA Tier 4 standards, without the need for diesel exhaust fluid (DEF).

We also redesigned the cowling to improve airflow and heat dissipation for demanding operating climates and provided better access to the engine for maintenance. We've updated the electrical system for better circuit protection and incorporated a standard battery disconnect for a maintenance lockout.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO DEVELOP THIS PRODUCT?

We continuously focus on ways we can improve our products and services. That's part of the McElroy blueprint. We work hard to incorporate the most modern advancements into our machines to make jobsites more productive. Ultimately, this results in quality infrastructure that meets the needs of the people it serves which is our mission and our passion.

WHAT WAS THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS LIKE?

Our inspiration comes from the best source possible — the users of the machines themselves. Their first-hand experience plays a significant role in the advancements made to all of our machines. We work closely with our channel partners and end users in an effort to understand the unique situations they are faced with every day so that we can offer them a true jobsite solution that will allow them to work better and smarter. It is very rewarding to know that we are truly making a difference.

WHAT INDUSTRIES OR SPECIFIC USES ARE YOU TARGETING? IS THIS A GENERAL-PURPOSE OR A NICHE PRODUCT?

Fusible thermoplastic pipe has come into its own as a primary solution in a growing number of industries including natural gas, water, sewer, industrial and mining liquids, and irrigation. It is the material of choice for natural gas distribution, and now, with the failing infrastructure of our water systems, it offers a leak-free and corrosion-free solution that prevents contamination and conserves water.

Our niche in the thermoplastic world is deeply entrenched all over the world. We play a unique role by engineering well-designed fusion equipment coupled with service and support and outreach efforts to promote trained operators and equipment maintenance through McElroy University.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE TRACSTAR SERIES 2

LIVE ON OUR WEBSITE — THE NEXT-GENERATION DATALOGGER® 6

The product page for the new DataLogger 6 is now available on the McElroy website. Download specs, pictures, a seven-language Quick Start Guide and more. The package includes the DataLogger ruggedized Android tablet with preinstalled software. Order part number DL18001.

The new DataLogger 6 makes joint reporting and data collection easier than ever before. The new design features a touchscreen interface with a larger screen and full keyboard for easy and straight-forward navigation through the steps of the fusion process. A wired connection ensures the reliable transfer of information from the fusion machine to the DataLogger — confirming that industry standards were followed before pipelines are put in the ground.

FEATURES

- Ruggedized, Android-powered, 7-inch tablet
- IP67 water & dust resistant tablet
- Meets ASTM 3124 & many other standards
- Real-time visual graph generation
- Support for butt fusion, sidewall fusion & dual-containment fusion
- Long battery life
- GPS tagging
- Dual cameras for pictures of fusion joints, jobsite, face-off & bead-up
- 2D barcode scanner inputs pipe & fitting information
- On-screen help, contextual resources
- Wirelessly syncs to Vault™ for storage and analysis
- Multilingual support

Learn More

GET SMART WITH THE SMARTFAB™ 125

The SmartFab 125 benchtop machine is the smartest way to socket fuse 20mm to 125mm (½” to 4”) polypropylene pipe. With a portable design, it can be positioned on any flat surface for precise prefabrication, providing versatility in the field as well as the shop.

Advanced features include innovative inserts that reduce ovaility in pipe and fittings, a pivoting heater to easily accommodate fittings situated on either side of the machine and individually-clamping jaws that adjust to any desired pipe and fitting size.

FEATURES

- Innovative inserts that reduce ovaility in pipe & fittings
- Heater pivots 180° to eliminate repositioning of the machine, pipe and fitting
- Jaws clamp individually and are size independent, allowing a greater combination of pipe & fittings
- Outer jaw spacing is adjustable, allowing greater flexibility, support & alignment while fusing fittings & assemblies
- Outer fixed jaw is removable for added clearance
- Positive stop at full stab depth to fabricate at exact dimensions
- Uses standard McElroy heater adapters
- Rack & pinion drive provides smooth, steady fusion force
- Drive handle is positioned so that unit can operate on any flat surface

Learn More

TAMED ANY LINES LATELY?

MAKE IT EASY WITH THE MCELROY LINETAMER®

Did you know you can install an entire coil of polyethylene pipe with just two fusions? With the LineTamer you can quickly install coiled polyethylene pipe, conduit and duct. The LineTamer straightens and re-rounds coiled pipe to meet or exceed ASTM D2513 ovality requirements. And it comes in two sizes — 3” to 6” IPS and 2” IPS.

Learn More

MCELROY AROUND THE WORLD

MCELROY AUSTRALIA PROVIDES TRAINING FOR HUNTER RIVER PROJECT

McElroy Australia provided training for GEM Industrial Services in preparation for a large-diameter HDPE job near Newcastle, NSW. The pipeline for the Hunter River Trenchless Crossing Project is being fused with a MegaMc® 1600. The jobsite photo comes from Coe Drilling and captures the fusion of a 1200mm pulling head.