

ESAB's mechanised cutting, gas-equipment and PPE offering



AF talks to Willie Burger, ESAB's new product manager for mechanised cutting, PPE and gas equipment, about ESAB's Swift Cut plasma cutting system; the integration of Thermal Dynamics plasma cutters with existing CNC tables; the globally renowned gas equipment brands, Victor, GCE, and ESAB; and the importance for fabricators to invest in employee health through best-possible PPE solutions.

With over 28 years of experience in application development in South Africa's welding and cutting industry, Willie Burger has now joined ESAB South Africa to take care of the mechanised cutting, PPE and gas equipment portfolio. "I am still learning about the specific products I represent, but ESAB has an amazing culture and I have been given some excellent brands to take care of," says ESAB SA's new product manager.

Burger first highlights the flagship new Swift-Cut Pro range of mechanised cutting tables that he will now be handling. "I am actually going to Dubai next week to be fully trained on this system, but I am already impressed.

These are cutting edge CNC plasma machines with precision guide system and a robust design. They offer a low investment cost and are easy to use, simple to learn and we offer exceptional aftercare and support," he assures, adding that Swift-Cut Pro machines are the answer to affordable in-house metal cutting. The system can be coupled with both Thermal Dynamics and ESAB plasma cutting power systems which can be tailored to plate thicknesses in general use, with the ESAB Cutmaster A120 offering.

"ESAB prides itself on the aftercare we can provide for these systems. We strive

to help users to get the absolute best from Swift-Cut Pro solutions, and ESAB offers both remote assistance and advice, or we can organise a visit. With years of combined experience in plasma cutting, we can support many different material grades and types and we can provide remote advice and services from a smartphone or tablet. In addition, we offer collaborative software tools to train, assist and diagnose problems," Burger adds.

He goes on to highlight the hand held ESAB Cutmaster 120 plasma cutter, which offers significant advan-



ESAB's Crossbow HD compact, an economical, portable, track-mounted 2D tractor and manipulator that is ideal for small fabrication, maintenance and repair shops and training schools.

tages over flame cutting options for thin to medium thickness plate and beam sections. "Both the quality of the cut and the cutting speed are often significantly better if using a plasma cutter instead of a gas torch," he tells AF.

Cutmaster plasma cutters are also ideal for use with ESAB's Crossbow HD compact, an economical, portable, track-mounted 2D tractor and manipulator that is ideal for small fabrication, maintenance and repair shops and training schools. "It can even be disassembled and transported to remote job sites. It has a user friendly CNC system that enables accurate shapes or contours to be cut, and it can be used for plasma and flame cutting," Burger says, adding that plasma is suitable for steel or aluminium of up to 20 mm thick, or stainless steel up to 15 mm, while oxy-fuel can be used to cut mild steel of up to 100 mm thick.

CNC control features include a comprehensive library of 24 common shapes to minimise programming and set-up time, with dimensions easily edited to create custom shapes without additional programming. Custom programs are supported through basic M-and G-Code programming, and off-line programmed NC files can be transferred to the machine via a standard USB port.

"Also, our Thermal Dynamics plasma cutting brand can be retrofitted to any standard cutting table to modernise and transform older cutting system and add flexibility, value and performance," he continues. ESAB's Thermal Dynamics brand of plasma cutting systems is known for offering high precision and for its long-lasting consumables. This makes them ideal for upgrading an older cutting table into something far more efficient and productive. "Where the CNC cutting bed is in good condition, this makes for a very cost effective way of upgrading a workshop's cutting capability," he adds.

Gas equipment: Victor, GCE and ESAB

When it comes to gas equipment, ESAB offers torches, pressure and flow control solutions and cutting and welding accessories from industry leading OEMs, including Victor, GCE and ESAB. "Safety is key, and we are associated with recognised industry leaders in that regard," notes Willie Burger.

"The starting point of achieving high safety standards is quality manufacture, where ESAB's production lines operate according to Total Quality Control principles, which includes the commitment of every member of our team," he points out.



Thermal Dynamics sets the standard for flexibility, value and performance in manual plasma cutting products and solutions.

As well as being safe, this results in gas equipment products that deliver performance, reliability and innovation. Also, ESAB handles the GCE Druva® speciality gas equipment range and the GCE Valves product lines. These brands are mostly for medical facilities and laboratories: more specialised high accuracy regulators for calibration purposes, for example.

Welder safety and PPE

On the PPE side, Burger says that welding helmets with auto darkening filters (ADF) are becoming more the norm as fabricators strive to better protect their welders. "We also now offer helmets with built-in ventilation, which filter welding fume while also keeping the welder cool.

Burger highlights the company's Sentinel A60 welding helmet as ESAB's state-of-the-art ADF. "This helmet takes welding to the next level with a wider, crisper view of the welding arc, helping welders to improve on the quality, speed and efficiency of their welds – and they are exceptionally comfortable and stylish.

We have several other ADF options, though, the ESAB SWARM A20; and the SAVAGE A40, for example and non-ADF welding helmets are also available."

Fresh air systems are available for use with Sentinel and all other AIR-ready versions of these helmets. The ESAB powered air purifying respirator (PAPR) systems, such as the EPR X1.1, connect seamlessly with any ESAB prepared-for-air welding helmets to provide advanced respiratory protection from harmful welding fume and particulates.

"This PAPR unit is designed for applications ranging from occasional use to full-time industrial applications. It has a robust, compact housing with a powerful blower to ensure maximum life and performance. And it is easy to check the battery status, fan settings and filter conditions at a glance



ESAB's Thermal Dynamics plasma cutting brand can be retrofitted to any standard cutting table to modernise and transform older cutting system and add flexibility.

with quick-access LED status lights.

"Also, the EPR X1.1 provides audible and vibratory alerts to notify the welder of low air flow, which indicates the need for a filter change, and low battery conditions.

"I think it is becoming increasingly important for fabricators to provide better PPE solutions for their welders, as they are having to do in Europe. Fortunately, this has already started to happen in some more forward thinking companies in South Africa.

"Welders are an expensive investment, and protecting those investments means taking good care of the health and safety issues that affect welders on a daily basis," says Willie Burger.

"It is very nice to be now working with ESAB, though, a company that's focused on all aspects of welding and welders," he concludes.

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