

2020



STEEL PROCESSING NEWS

NEW VALIANT
OFFERS CUSTOMERS

UNRIVALLED CAPABILITIES

The bold and daring Valiant and SN100 Saw from Ficep is a symbol of advanced engineering which pushes the boundaries of possibility in CNC multi-function drilling lines.



READ HOW THE VALIANT AND SN100 IS SHAPING
PRODUCTION AT SHIPLEY STRUCTURES

Check out our
new website at
ficep.co.uk



ABOVE THE FICEP VALIANT AND SN 1100 SAW

STAND OUT MACHINERY FROM FICEP

The acquisition of Ficep's newest machine – the Valiant – coupled with a 1100 wide saw for additional processing capabilities, continues a purchasing trend which has contributed to John Chorley's success.



THE INSTALLATION OF OUR NEW FICEP VALIANT complements our existing two Ficep Drill lines, Plasma line and shear and punch lines together with our on site shot blast and paint line. Our drilling capacity has increased significantly, and the additional processes offered by the Valiant are proving very popular with clients old and new. Every time I consider a capex purchase, I consider what impact this machine will have to our business and how we can, as a business embrace, new technology learn and grow as business people."

JOHN CHORLEY TAKE DELIVERY OF THE FIRST FICEP VALIANT IN THE UK

Terry Shanahan, MD of John Chorley recently took delivery of the first Ficep Valiant machine to be sold in the UK taking the total number of Ficep machines in his steel processing business to five, and continuing a path of continual investment which has helped the business weather the ups and downs of the steel industry.

THE BUSINESS PROCESSES 100 TONNES OF STEEL EVERY DAY THROUGH THEIR MODERN SERVICE CENTRE – A SUCCESS WHICH HAS BEEN SUPPORTED BY A FICEP GEMINI, FICEP TIPO, AND TWO FICEP CUT AND DRILL LINES. THE EXTENSIVE SUITE OF MACHINERY MEANS THE COMPANY NOW PROVIDES PLASMA CUTTING, DRILLING, SAWING AND SCRIBING FUNCTIONS AT THE WARRINGTON-BASED FACILITY.

Focusing on Progression During the Recession

In Terry's three decades with John Chorley, he has steered the company from a relatively small turnover to establishing it as one of the primary steel processing businesses in the UK and Terry believes it's down to one key decision he made regarding investment: "During the recession years I made the decision to invest, this meant the need to travel, to visit businesses who specialized in all aspects of steel processing, I needed to seek out the knowledge that would allow me to make the correct investment decisions for the business in the future."

It's a strategy which safeguarded the business and created profitability, through investment in equipment such as Ficep's steel processing machines Terry ensured John Chorley would retain and increase its processing capability at a time when stockholders faced serious challenges.

REINFORCING GREAT WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FICEP

The adoption of five Ficep machines over 15 years is in no small part due to the strength of the working relationship that Terry has built up with Ficep UK sales manager, Chris Berriman.

“Chris has given a lot of advice over the years, he’s always updated me on what’s available machinery-wise and what would be right for us based on our shop space and business size. He understands that whatever we purchase needs to have a direct link to improving our offering to clients.”

Chris added: “It is always a pleasure to work with companies with drive and ambition, when I first made contact with Terry we both showed the same passion for technology, it was important to show John Chorley where the machines are manufactured and some user sites so the trip to Ficep Spa in Italy was the start of the long partnership. Over the last 15 years we have had a very good relationship together not only on the machine investment but with after sales support and user visits.”

SHOWCASING BEST PRACTICE FROM AN INDUSTRY LEADER

In recognition of the company’s commitment to continual progression, John Chorley was selected for parliamentary review to showcase and demonstrate best practice in the steel industry. The report is due to be published this summer and Terry hopes it will shine a light on the value the steel processing sector brings to the UK.

Smart Investments for Forward-Thinking Fabricators

Ficep’s range of smaller drills and saws like the Excalibur and Jaespa enable fabricators to maintain production without build up or slow down loading beams on and off the machine.

EXCALIBUR’S SUSTAINED POSITION as a fabricator favourite is due to its productivity value compared to manual methods. Continuous loading and rotation of steel beams whilst in operation is equivalent to the work of 8-10 employees, something Steve Kennan of Morspan, a manufacturer of clear span steel framed poultry buildings, knows only too well: “Productivity has doubled because our welders are now welding not drilling.” Adding to Steve’s productivity gains is the wireless remote, which removes the need for a 120 ft round trip and offers a 30% gain on productivity.

WGM Engineering is one of Scotland’s leading engineering companies covering mechanical, electrical, specialised coatings and civil engineering under

one roof since 1986. WGM Engineering installed an Excalibur 12 in April 2019 as part of a full turn key installation. Ian Innes Fabrication Manager at WGM, chose the single spindle drill because of its drilling and milling capabilities as well as the compact design which would work within the footprint of the workshop.

Since installing the Excalibur 12, WGM has benefitted from a significant increase in productivity, as Ian explains: “The Excalibur has reduced our manual operations, removed the element of human error from setting out holes and reduced our carbon footprint for shaft drawings. These benefits have increased our profit margins and as we grow, we’d definitely invest in further Ficep machines.”





**BARRETT
STEEL LIMITED**

Barrett Steel Deliver with Ficep Machinery

UK's largest steel stockholder accelerates productivity and cuts lead times with Ficep. Barrett Steel Limited is the UK's leading steel stockholder operating from over 30 sites across the UK.

BARRETT STEEL CURRENTLY OPERATES 11 pieces of Ficep processing equipment across their network including four Ficep Endeavour Drill/Saw lines, a Tipo A31 Plasma Drill, and 2 additional state of the art Rapid 25 angle lines purchased this year. The sixth generation family-owned business has been a Ficep customer for many years however recent business growth – including the site acquisition of Barrett Steel Shoreham – generated a requirement for further investment in line automated steel processing equipment across three of Barrett Steel's sites.

John Childs, Operations Director of the Barrett Steel Group, explains: "We were

influenced by the automation capabilities of the Endeavour in particular. Line automation removes the need for operatives to touch steel between operations which results in reducing any risk for operators. This is a major factor in any decision making for us."

The Endeavors enable operators to bulk load steel at one end and unload finished pieces seamlessly at the other end. Not only does this improve safety by minimising the need to touch steel, it also frees up machine operatives to perform other business tasks during the processing time. This single change is contributing to a huge 40% increase in productivity at the Bradford site and has seen machine utilisation running at around 90% capacity.

Another key feature Barrett Steel values in the Endeavour equipment is the machines ability to handle complex processing quickly through a developed and powerful machining centre.

John explains the reason why the Endeavour was the right choice for Barrett Steel: "The Endeavour machines, at the time of purchase, were, in our opinion, the most sophisticated unit on the market. In the Endeavour, Ficep has a powerful machining centre with a close coupled saw, plus its speed in drilling and milling was much better than the competition. For us, Ficep's automation capability is ahead of the competition and it's enabled Barrett Steel to increase capacity through improved productivity and reduction in direct labour costs."

Over their 154-year history Barrett Steel has continuously strived to invest in the latest state of the art processing technology in order to serve customer needs more effectively. This commitment to investment is demonstrated by Barrett Steel's plan to soon add a new automated shotblast prime and paint line – including several automatic saws – and a Rapid 25T Angle line to its Bradford headquarters, with a second Angle line to be installed at its Shoreham facility.

Industry specific knowledge and experience are two key reasons John and the Barrett Steel team continue to work closely with Ficep as a key supplier. "Ficep is a good partner who works well within Barrett Steel, with good communication at various levels within both businesses. Throughout the Bradford installation we had regular update meetings and a constant site presence ensured that the project was a success. Add to this their many years of experience and excellent knowledge of our industry, it's no surprise they're the market leader in what they do."



The close working relationship between Ficep and Barrett Steel has helped both companies develop the best technology available in automated equipment and systems for steel processing. We're proud to have helped Barrett Steel grow in the past decade and we look forward to supporting their continuing expansion, which will no doubt secure Barrett Steels' strength for future decades.

Mark Jones
Managing Director

SOURCING THE IDEAL MACHINE

with Ficep and partners

Our agency partners are an integral part of the continuing ability of Ficep to offer our clients the widest range of steel processing machinery on the market today.



ZEMAN



Zeman's fully automated welding production line is capable of handling almost all steel beams and can assemble, tack and finish-weld structural beams for building fabrication, improving productivity and reducing the manual operation requirement – two benefits which feature heavily in Ficep's own range of machinery. We can supply Zeman's advanced automated plate component sorting storage system – the SPS – which automatically picks fittings produced from thermal plate processing machinery and allows each part to be accurately scanned by laser for size.

COSTA



Costa is well known for their specialist industry knowledge, quality products, and reliable technical backup. Through our partnership we offer the full range of deburring and metal finishing range to UK customers. Andy James of Gloucester based FLI Structures knows first hand the benefits Costa machines offer. He purchased an MD 4 plate grinding machine after being impressed with a demonstration and the sample quality of the machine. Almost immediately, the company gained the equivalent of 1.5 days and a person and a half labour time each week. They also benefited from improved health and safety because the automated system eliminates the risk of hand arm vibration common when using plate grinding machines.

CORIMPEX



Specialising in automated submerged arc welding Corimpex has developed its product range to include rotators and manipulators – offering a huge range of fabrication support. Corimpex stands out for the reliability of its solutions but also for its ability to fulfil highly customised projects with precise and prompt service, both in on-site interventions and for remote software updates.

JAESPA



An established leader in metal bandsaws for steel processing, Jaespa has an extensive range of vertical and horizontal bandsaws manufactured at their factory in Germany. There are now 60 serial models including vertical bandsaws for cut-off widths up to 2000 mm and horizontal machines with capacity up to 1300 mm. For Ficep customers the Jaespa range also includes mitre cutting bandsaws for horizontal, vertical and shifter cuts.

GASPARINI



As our longest standing partnerships, Gasparini's leading roll-forming machinery is used in the construction, energy, automotive and logistics sectors. Since 2000, we have successfully supplied Gasparini machines to the UK for businesses in shelving, construction, subcontractors, OEMs, tank manufacture, flooring and walling.

WHEELABRATOR



Specialist surface preparation company Wheelabrator offers Ficep customers an extensive range of airblast and wheelblast equipment for a wide range of industries including aerospace, automotive, foundry, shipping, construction and medical.

FAST ROTATOR



Safe, fast and effective, the Fast Rotator helps welders move steel beams into position. They take up limited space, increase productivity, enable welders to manage their own workspaces, reduce energy consumption due to the design and operation and reduce the use of high tonnage means of cargo.

 SOUTH WEST
STEEL SUPPLIES LTD.

OUR COMPACT MACHINES IN ACTION

South West Steel Supplies has installed two Jaespa machines at their Portishead site which have increased processing and production threefold.

Both machines bring their own specialist capabilities, the Jaespa 500 / 800 as its name suggests has an 800 mm wide and 500 mm high cutting capacity, and can mitre 60 degrees in both directions. The fast sawing ability comes from a 54 mm blade which SWSS report is three times quicker than their old saw. The addition of a laser light provides accurate measurements of the pieces to be cut. The second machine is a Jaespa 424 DGA with a 6m infeed and an automatic grab and pull feeding system. The machine can mitre to 60 degrees in both directions automatically and has a CNC control to program 100s of different jobs. Like the first machine, SWSS is reporting that the new Jaespa is three times quicker than the existing line.



REAL-TIME MANAGEMENT

Comes to Ficep Service Department

A new cloud-based mobile resource management system has transformed our service centre and offers real-time information to both customers and field service engineers.

SUPPLIED BY LEEDS-BASED BIGCHANGE the system takes us to a paperless service process. Richard Clark, UK Service Manager at Ficep explains: "Our steel fabricating machinery plays a key part in preparing steel for construction and keeping the equipment in optimum working condition with minimal downtime is crucial. We have been improving our engineering support services to support an increasing number of installations and BigChange enables us to get quotes to clients within 24 hours. Previously it could take 2 or 3 weeks to get a quote out to a customer. It's the same for invoices and with electronic sign offs from customers on site we can invoice almost immediately. As a result there has been a much better and quicker conversion rate of quote to order and queries on invoices have virtually disappeared since the introduction of the system. BigChange has completely transformed our customer service."

Prior to the visit Ficep's engineers receive their jobs on their tablets which provide navigation to site and allow access to all documentation, with workflows ensuring proper procedures are followed and

information reported from site. The devices are also used to take photographs which are, together with time and GPS location, matched to service sheets for the job. This provides an accurate and indisputable record of work done.

Customers who have benefitted from the new system so far have been impressed with the information it provides and the speed at which the service process now takes place. Richard adds: "We now have service sheets customised for each machine that identifies the correct parts and even gives the engineer a complete history of previous service work and parts used. It really helps them do a good job every time and helps ensure machine downtime is minimised. By eliminating paperwork we are saving about 20 hours a week in administration time and as managers we spend much less time sorting out customer and service issues as we have all the information we need at our fingertips 24/7; no longer do we need to track back into paper records or call an engineer to ask about a job."

SHIPLEY SETS COURSE FOR AUTOMATION WITH VALIANT PURCHASE

Established in 1982, Shipley Structures works across several market sectors from warehouse and distribution to agricultural buildings.

With such a breadth of industries to service, they needed to invest in automated steel processing machinery which could meet the demand for reduced lead times and support their continuing expansion. The Valiant was the machine which met all those requirements and Shipley Structures will be taking ownership of our Valiant, plus a fully automated handling system and shot blaster to drive up productivity and meet growing customer demands.

Wendy Coney, owner of Shipley Structures and Ex-BCSA president explains why the Valiant was the right choice for the business: "We have been long term Ficep users, installing our first machines almost 20 years ago. Our original Ficep saw/drill has been incredibly reliable and is still running without fault today but we felt the need to invest in the latest generation of machines, as technology has moved on so much in recent years.

"In our industry, manufacturing times come under ever greater pressure and the ability to meet tighter lead in times is more important now than it has ever been. With this in mind, and following the managed growth of our company, the need to have a fully automated line with high speed carbide drilling and machining capacity, become increasingly important and the new saw/drill line will more than double our throughput and enable us to better support our clients. With an investment of this size, it is important that we use a company that can offer the very latest technology and provide ongoing service support. Having explored the market in detail, we are pleased to move forward with Ficep as a key partner in our expansion."

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