

products & services

First-of-its kind equipment cuts time and costs

The first three-stage rotary press machine – manufactured by leading British Machine Supplier, Wil-EI-Mil Engineering – has made its first appearance in South Africa at Pretoria-based MVA Precast, a division of MVA Brick.

Pan Mixers is the local distributor for Wil-EI-Mil Engineering, and Director Walter Ebeling announced the commissioning of a Wil-EI-Mil curbstone press machine for MVA Precast, saying that the press went through its first wet testing phase in early March, and five pallets of curbs were successfully manufactured.

"The process was switched over to automatic the following day, with great results," he says. MVA Precast Director Sarel Maree concurs: "There were some minor teething problems initially that one can expect, but the plant is now running smoothly and efficiently, and we are already looking into ordering another press from Pan Mixers."

Pan Mixers ensured that the plant had been prewired, and that all the hydraulic systems were connected prior to the arrival of the Wil-EI-Mil installation and commissioning engineers. The company also supplied the mixing and weigh batching plant with four aggregate bins, and a weigh belt that feeds into a PMSA P1000 rapid counter current pan mixer for the operation at MVA Precast.

"Two cement silos were installed, as well as a P1000 rapid counter current pan mixer with a Spiraltech concrete screw conveyor from the mixer to the feeding hopper of the Wil-EI-Mil press," explains Walter. "The plant is capable of between 15 and 20 second press cycles, which means that it is able to manufacture up to two kilometres of curbing in a nine hour shift."

Having run the rotary press for just on a month, Sarel adds that MVA Precast currently has an output of 1000 metres of curbstone per shift, which is limited by the number of curing pallets that they presently have.

Says Sarel: "The rotary press machine – supplied by Pan Mixers – is a first in South Africa. MVA was given a choice of two machine manufacturers, but we chose the Wil-EI-Mil curbstone press as it's technically more advanced."

Compared to a traditional wet casting process – where a company would need some 1800 moulds over a period of days in a highly labour-intensive operation – Wil-EI-Mil's equipment allows rapid output of high quality product, and less risk of human error.

The Wil-EI-Mil press is a modern adaptation of older technology, offering far easier maintenance and more modern technologies in hydraulic and electronic control systems.

"Pan Mixers aims to save clients time and improve their productivity," Walter says. "The rotary table indexes from one stage to the next quickly and smoothly, the hydraulic valves and power pack are separate to the system. This means that personnel don't have to climb on top of the press to make adjustments or carry out maintenance; plus it reduces the risk of oil leaking into the mix."

What's more, the hydraulics ensure fast pressing, with an automatic product take-off that uses a vacuum plate to suck the pressed curb out of its mould before placing it on a transfer carrier. "The carrier has a variable speed drive and variable tilting action, which tips the curb onto its side and places it onto the curing pallet," says Walter. "Once the pallet is full, it's taken to the curing area, making the whole process extremely quick. The only manual part of the operation is the placing and removing of filter paper, meaning human error and safety risks are further minimised."

Walter adds: "Having worked with MVA brick for this many years, we are delighted to see the company's expansion into curbs with MVA Precast, and we are confident that the new equipment will assist them on their path to success."

With over 30 years experience in the wet press design and manufacture arena, Wil-EI-Mil equipment has a reputation for secure engineering solutions for worldwide concrete pre-cast customers, particularly in the area of slabs and curbs.

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