

## Car bodies gently stripped bare by Mac'Ants system

One of the UK's most successful motor sport manufacturing companies is gaining benefits from the use of blasting technology from specialist manufacturer the Mac'Ants Group.

Harry Hockly Motor Sport is reporting benefits from the use of plastic blast media from Sheffield-based Mac'Ants – in terms of vehicle preparation, refurbishment and, importantly, longevity, when compared with alternative methods.

"Every vehicle that we prepare is treated in a dedicated blast room which makes extensive use of Avia Lite T 5 plastic media from Mac'Ants," he says, explaining: "This is used primarily to take the body shell back to the base material ahead of subsequent treating and processing and is undertaken via a hand held system.

"Because of the Mac'Ants blast

media that we use, this can be conducted without risk of damage to the substrate – leaving the exposed metal in the optimum condition for further processing," he continues. "Spent media is then gathered via a



hopper and filtration systems for re-use – contributing not only to its cost effectiveness but also enhancing the environmental benefits that it offers."

He points out that before using the Mac'Ants product, the common method of preparing vehicle shells was to dip them into an appropriate solution.

"This not only presented environmental and application issues, but there was also always a need to conduct a lengthy procedure to minimise the risk of solvent remaining in body seams and ultimately posing a corrosion risk," he adds.

### Coating facility open day

To mark the establishment of its state-of-the-art dedicated motorsport coating facility at its UK headquarters in Milton Keynes, Balzers is opening its doors to existing and potential customers involved with the motorsport industry. The schedule for the open day, which takes place on Wednesday, 15 March, includes factory tours, a programme of talks that explain the benefits of coating products and their application in the motor sport sector and numerous other activities. "The new centre at Milton Keynes has been developed in response to increasing motorsport business from the UK and European markets," says Dr Andy Bloyce, Balzers' product manager – component coatings. "Our belief is that this dedicated facility will lead to an even better service for our motorsport customers. "As a company, we continue to widen our product range and now include complementary technologies to the BALINIT® PVD and PACVD coatings. In the near future we are going to develop this further through important strategic alliances. An example of this is the work we are currently doing with Eltro (GB) Ltd, which is a leader in pulsed plasma nitriding technology. And, following the award of a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) grant to Cranfield University, the University will be able to work with Balzers with the objective of delivering an improved service to customers. In return, Balzers will gain access to the surface engineering expertise and equipment at Cranfield University, which in turn will lead to better evaluation of coating performance and development of improved solutions for customers."

## EOS rapid manufacturing technology for fast cars

WilliamsF1 has ordered two EOSINT P 385 systems from German manufacturer EOS for laser-sintering components from plastic powder. WilliamsF1 has also expressed interest in buying further machines over the next three years.

The order was placed following a technical assessment over a six-month period. WilliamsF1, Grove, near Wantage, decided to keep the evaluation machine and has since ordered another EOSINT P 385 system.

WilliamsF1 will use the EOS laser-sintering technology mainly for building prototypes for wind tunnel testing and mock-ups, as well as for making components used in the FW 28 racecar. "This investment gives us a significant increase in our ability to produce parts in very short timescales," said Alex Burns, chief operating officer, WilliamsF1.

EOS and WilliamsF1 have also entered into a sponsorship agreement, under which EOS has been designated 'Promotional Partner of the WilliamsF1 Team'.

## Polished performance

Wheelabrator Group launched a revolutionary wheel polishing machine, the Walter Trowal MV21 compact vibratory finishing machine.

Taking a team of designers more than six months to perfect, the MV21 is intended for the processing of complex geometric shapes, such as wheels, gearboxes and cylinder head covers.

The 1 m<sup>2</sup> unit includes a new function developed and patented by Wheelabrator Group. Using four electric motors, media flow direction around the work bowl can be changed to suit the components being polished.

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