

Well we're passed the starting post for 2009 and if nothing else the weather has brought many roads to the usual gridlock when we have a few inches of snow. Speaking about gridlock, we note we still haven't heard any upbeat news about the economy, nor I fear will we for some time to come. The media do seem to prefer to sell a downbeat story don't they? The welding industry certainly isn't immune from the economic situation, but we remain upbeat about the outlook for our sector, with orders and enquiries at last years levels for all our products and services.

We would like to take this opportunity of asking our customers to provide us with as much news (especially photographs) as possible, we are always happy to



include details of the various projects you are involved with. Remember our newsletter is only as interesting as your stories. We were delighted our existing customer, **Red 7 Marine** invited us to undertake their diver-welder training requirements. The training was conducted at their Norfolk facilities, using our Barracuda Gold electrodes and we are happy to report all divers successfully passed their weld tests (conducted at Zurich labs) for a welding project at Felixstowe. Divers were tested on fillet welds to **ISO 15618-1**. David Walker, operations manager says "one of the great benefits of using Speciality Welds is that they offer a one stop shop,



as not only do they have a wealth of expertise in welding and training, but as David Keats is an accredited **Zurich** surveyor, recognised by industry, he can also certify at the end of any training period". Our **Piranha** safety switch remains one of the most popular products we manufacture, with over 70 units being despatched to all four corners of the globe in the last 3 months. The units are available in three distinct styles (see photo) from the small steel enclosure we call the **Junior**, to the portable utility case model. Whichever model you choose you can be assured that there is no better isolating/disconnecting switch available for welding, available in the market. All units are CE approved and manufactured to the highest possible standards, that's our guarantee.

Attending Underwater Intervention this year?

Following our successful **IDSA** presentation, held in Philadelphia USA last years our intrepid welding expert David Keats is presenting a paper on our accredited **'self-teach' WeldCraft-Pro®** underwater welding course. UI2009 is being held in New Orleans at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Centre between 3-5 March. We very much hope to see you there, but if you can't make it to New Orleans check out David's blog on our website www.specialwelds.com Follow the link in the scrolling bar on the home page. The **IDSA** presentation was the first to offer greater clarity to the accreditations available by the programme, as well as the features relating to the delivery and the importance this qualification has to the subsea welding industries.



The **WeldCraft-Pro®** training programme is available to diver training schools, under license, as a self-teach course where the school delivers the training, under our QA control under our **EAL test centre and ISO accreditations**. The programme is presently available here in the UK, through **The Professional Diving Academy** and in the USA through **The Commercial Diving Academy**. The programme will also be available through schools in Belgium, Sweden, Finland, Spain, Italy and hopefully Greece later this year. The course follows **The International Institute of Welding (IIW)** and **The European Welding Federation (EWF)** training syllabus, with diver-welder qualifications being issued in accordance with **ISO 15618-1** standards, through our **Zurich Insurance** and **EAL** approvals. The next UK course is scheduled for **the 30th March** with **The Professional Diving Academy**. To book please register directly with PDA; their website is as follows; www.professionaldivingacademy.co.uk If you are interested to learn more about this programme and how it works, please contact/email us. **Morrison's (VMU)** based at Wakefield have again asked us to certify their HGV vehicle maintenance teams for all positional MIG/MAG welding. Morrison's run



their own fleet of HGV's and offer a full maintenance and repair facility at their Wakefield depot, which is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and gets through hundreds of reels of welding wire for all the damage done to the vehicles. We are pleased to have continued to offer examination services to **Terberg DTS** for the de-icing

machines they supply to the MoD.



The vehicles, which are actually manufactured in Canada are designed to carry two men and have been very busy de-icing military aircraft this year, which we can believe. We've had a very busy time so far this year with sales of our **Barracuda Gold** underwater welding electrodes



reaching over 1500kg shipped out to mid February with plenty more



orders coming in all the time. We are particularly encouraged with orders to France, a big thank you to **Soudécoup**. We also wish to thank our regular client **DiveWise** for their continued efforts and support in promoting this electrode. We hope to bring you news shortly about our **WeldCraft-Pro** training programme, as it will be available in Belgium/Holland, later this year, through **DiveWise**. The **Barracuda Gold** electrode is a C/Mn (mild steel) electrode suitable for welding typical structural steels. **Dive Technologies** are presently using the electrode for welding repairs to the rudder on **HMS Cumberland**, as shown (courtesy of Royal Navy website). The electrode has added nickel for improved mechanical and metallurgical properties and is the first choice electrode in the market place today. More information on this product is available on our website.

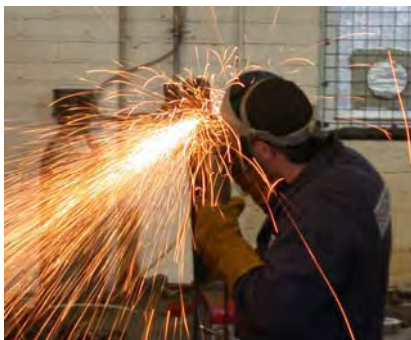


The number of individual welders attending our training centre and paying their own way is clearly on the increase. We have always attracted the self-employed and other self-funding individuals to our centre, but we have seen a large increase in this sector, with welders coming from all parts of the country to our West Yorkshire centre. Must have something to do with great value for money and the best instructors in the country; well we are **Yorkshire-**

Men! We offer training in TIG, MIG/MAG, MMA and gas welding for mild steel, stainless and aluminium alloys. But so far this year the most popular training is for TIG and MIG welding of aluminium. There is no doubt that here in the UK we have a real shortfall of skills in the welding industry and the problem is getting worse, not better. As members of the **AWFTE** Speciality Welds works closely with industry to ensure standards of welding in the UK keep pace with the rest of Europe, although



it is clear the average age of a welder in the UK is in his late 40's. Our customer **Holstan** specialise in pressure pipework systems for the heating industry have again asked us to conduct welding inspections for various **Transco** projects they are undertaking. Another customer very much involved with similar welding projects; **Ellison Energy Services** has also undertaken testing of their welders recently to BSEN 287-1.



We have seen a small increase in sales of our exothermic cutting lance, **Scorpion blue**, this year although, as reported in our last

news letter, we have ceased production of the sleeved option, but we know this hasn't inconvenienced anybody, as reports are all positive, just as we promised. We welcome **TMS** as a new customer for our **Scorpion blue** cutting lances and they too have reported the product works extremely well and is every bit as good as the industries accepted market leader, Broco. Their project involved cutting sheet piles, which were part of dam at Rutland water. One of the items of welding equipment which often concerns us, when we see how some customers are welding, is the earth clamp. It's only a low cost item but very often isn't given much thought at all, but in actual fact plays an important role in welding. We provide two options a brass **parallel** closing clamp and a magnetic clamp; both offer advantages over the standard 'cheap' earth clamps we typically see. These cheap clamps only open and close on a rear



hinge, which means the jaws do not open/close parallel. **What's the problem?** Well there are two issues with this type of clamp. One is that even if care is taken when tightening, it can often be very difficult to open again, due to the force needed to open the jaws and the other; as only a very small surface area of the jaws are in actual contact with the work, the resistance to current can be significant, resulting in more severe voltage drop, which can all lead to strike up and extinguishing issues as well as final weld quality problems. As you can see from the photos, the brass parallel closing clamp grips the work piece in such a way as

to ensure the maximum CSA is in contact with the material and no



matter how tight it may have been fitted, it can easily be undone. Of course this type of clamp requires a fixture for the clamp to grip. When this is difficult or just not possible then use of a magnetic clamp can be used. We supply the **DINSE** magnetic clamps and they provide a robust and practical solution to this problem, although care does need to be exercised to ensure the clamp doesn't get too close to the point of welding, as magnetic interference may occur. Finally, we would like to thank the following customers for their business over the last few weeks; **National Hyperbaric centre, CDA, PDA, Dutch Diving, Tuskar Rock, Terosystem, Shearwater, Kliff, Pommec, Lastek Italy, RBG, Norfolk Marine, OCN, Fish Dive, Moorpark Engineering.** Remember, if you have any welding issues, whether they are training, certification, technical, products, etc we offer a cost effective, timely professional solution and remember we are



ISO9001 and Zurich accredited, so make sure we're on your radar. We look forward to being of service and remember to visit our website from time to time for the latest news, products and services we offer. Or if you prefer email us, remember, we're here for you. Happy welding to you all..... It's always a beautiful day for welding.....