

New viscometers enhance precision

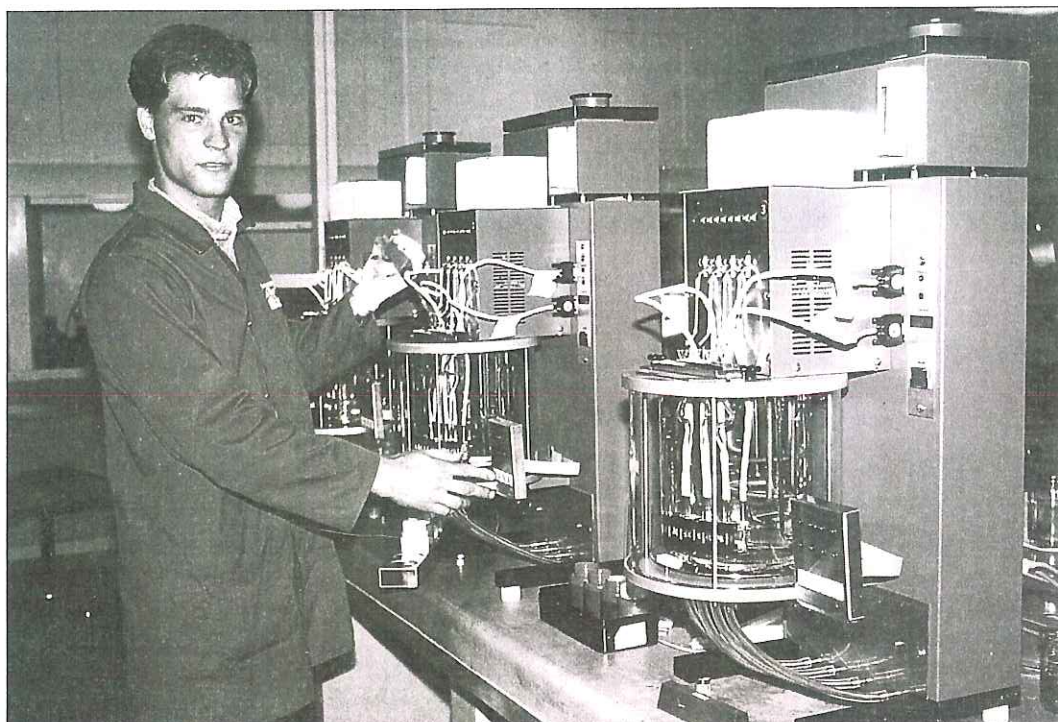
WEARCHECK will soon be able to produce higher precision viscosity measurements with the commissioning of three new Houillon viscometers imported from France in February.

According to laboratory manager, Alistair Geach, the new viscometers are capable of conducting tests in accordance with ASTM test methods D341-D445 and D2270. The accuracy and reliability of the instruments will also facilitate accreditation of Wearcheck's viscosity test methods by the SABS.

"The reproducibility on duplicate tests is quite incredible," said Alistair. "Duplicate results often agree to the second decimal place."

The new instruments are automatic tube viscometers which essentially eliminate variations in experimental conditions and operator technique. After samples have been introduced manually to the viscometer tubes, testing and cleaning operations are controlled by a microprocessor.

Highly recommended by Wearcheck companies in Belgium and the UK, the new Houillon viscometers replace two Viscoliners which will be used for samples that are unsuitable for the new equipment.



Trainee chemist Greg Morse tests Wearcheck's new French-manufactured Houillon viscometers which will significantly enhance the precision of viscosity measurements.

IWCG conference comes to SA

REPRESENTATIVES from Wearcheck's seven sister companies in the United Kingdom, Canada, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Australia and the USA will gather in Pinetown in May for the fourth annual International Wearcheck Group (IWCG) conference.

The purpose of the conference is to give delegates the opportuni-

ty to report on new developments within their companies, to exchange information on technology and marketing, and to discuss the future strategy of the group. This will be the first time the meeting has been held in South Africa.

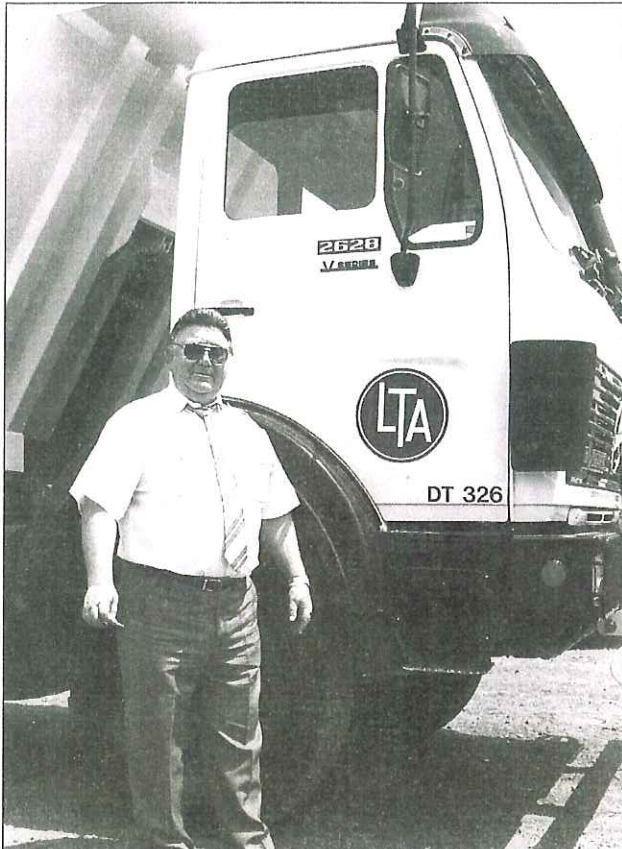
Workshops

A series of workshops will be part of the programme, including a demonstration on Wearcheck

Africa's new rotary particle depositor (RDP) by Brian Roylance of Swansea University in Wales who designed the instrument.

The conference won't be all work and no play, however. When the official proceedings are over, the visitors are scheduled to enjoy a true African experience at Shakaland and Phinda Game Reserve.

Wearcheck helps LTA Plant meet its production targets



Bonnie Minnie, LTA Plant's technical manager, keeps a close watch on his fleet of vehicles and earthmoving equipment with the help of Wearcheck's oil analysis programme.

WEARCHECK'S oil analysis system has been a critical element of LTA Plant's maintenance and quality management programme for the past ten years.

Technical manager Bonnie Minnie is a firm believer in oil analysis and virtually all his equipment - including LDVs - is on the system, generating over 300 samples per month.

"Because we are linked directly to the Wearcheck laboratory through Infocheck, I have all the information I need at my fingertips," he says.

Planned downtime

"This means we don't automatically replace parts at the set times recommended by manufacturers if wear is normal; we can schedule repairs at our convenience. Planned downtime helps us to achieve our production targets and allows for more accurate financial predictions."

All LTA Plant technical reports

are derived from the Wearcheck system and every vehicle that enters and leaves the workshop is accompanied by a print-out of its history.

In November last year LTA Plant held a ceremony for the drivers of two lowbeds that had reached the one million kilometre mark and were still going strong.

Driver technique

"Although driver technique played a significant role in these achievements, there is no doubt that oil analysis was also an important factor," Mr Minnie said.

Wearcheck reports on a new earthmoving unit revealed engine problems from the day LTA bought it. Despite being sent in for repairs under warranty on several occasions, the problems continued. The agent then undertook a full investigation with the result that

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Modern new mini-lab meets demand for filter analysis

WEARCHECK has set up a new specialist mini-lab for analysing aircraft, industrial and automotive filters to cope with the increased demand for filter analysis.

"Since USA-based Allied-Signal Aerospace appointed Wearcheck as the accredited oil analysis laboratory for Garrett jet turbines in Africa a year ago, the number of aircraft filters coming into the lab has more



Diagnostician Nick Thomas in Wearcheck's new mini-lab.

than doubled," said technical director, Gary Brown.

"Although the bulk of

the filters come from Johannesburg, some are sent from as far afield as

Mozambique and Malawi.

"We are in the process of running a pilot programme for industrial filters and hope to develop the automotive filter side this year," said Gary.

The modern mini-lab, which has a built-in fume hood to extract gases, will also be used for preparing and microscopically examining rotary particle depositor (RDP) slides.

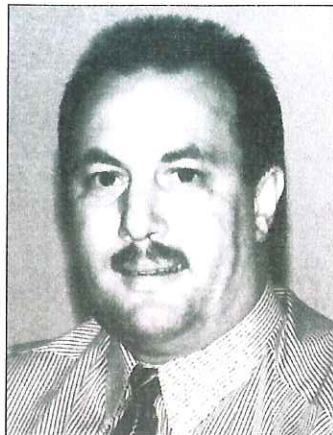
New Transvaal regional manager

ANDREW MANSON, Wearcheck's new regional manager for the Transvaal, is a well-known figure in construction and mining circles, having worked in the industry for 20 years.

Starting out as a diesel fitter with Barlows in 1975, Andrew gained valuable experience in the analytical inspection of earthmoving equipment, before moving into product support in Namaqualand.

He joined ADE's industrial division in Cape Town in 1982 - now known as ADE Powerhouse - responsible for sales and marketing for the mining and construction sectors.

He has spent the last four years based in Johannesburg, servicing ADE's



Andrew Manson

corporate industrial customers nationally.

Andrew is a firm believer in the value of oil analysis and maintains it has a great future in this country, particularly as the market opens up to overseas manufacturers.

Technology

"South Africa will be seeing a great deal more overseas technology which will impact on the demand for oil analysis," he says.

He views his new appointment as a solid career move and is looking forward to strengthening Wearcheck's base in the Transvaal.

Cape Town training courses extended to meet demand

THE RESPONSE by Capetonians to Wearcheck's recent technical training course was so enthusiastic that the course was extended by two days to a full week. Even with the additional days, the lecture room was filled to capacity. A total of 48 delegates attended Course 2 while 18 attended the advanced course.

A schedule of courses to be held at Wearcheck's offices in Pinetown and Johannesburg over the next few months is shown here. For further information, phone Lin Patterson on (011) 455-3342 or Melanie Hynd on (031) 700-5460.

COURSE 2

The applications of oil analysis and an introduction to trouble-shooting. This full-day course, aimed at workshop foremen/mechanical technicians/artisans, covers the functions and classifications of lubricants, the value of oil analysis, sampling procedures, tests and their significance, and trouble-shooting methods.

Dates	Venue	Cost
March 22	Pinetown	R300 incl. VAT
April 26	Johannesburg	(Wearcheck customers)
May 22	Pinetown	R414 incl. VAT
June 5	Johannesburg	(others)

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a brand new engine was fitted under warranty with new-technology pistons - the pistons being the cause of the problem. If the oil analysis reports had not highlighted the problems at an early stage ensuring the machine was fixed before the warranty expired, it would have cost the company a large sum of money.

"The cost of oil analysis is small when compared with the cost of engine failure," Mr Minnie believes. "The programme pays for

itself when just one engine failure is avoided every year."

"We always follow up on Wearcheck's recommendations even if they contradict verbal reports because it has proved to be worth our while," says Mr Minnie. "We expect a high level of commitment to the programme from all employees to ensure that it works effectively and all staff, including those on site, are trained in Wearcheck procedures with regular refresher courses."

COURSE 3

The technical management of oil analysis and lubrication. This one-and-a-half day course combines theory and practice and is designed for engineers and technical managers. The basics are covered as well as trouble-shooting methods, contamination control, particle counting, and the monthly management report.

Dates	Venue	Cost
March 23 & 24	Pinetown	R575 incl. VAT
April 24 & 25	Johannesburg	(Wearcheck customers)
May 23 & 24	Pinetown	R745 incl. VAT
June 6 & 7	Johannesburg	(others)

Infocheck training updates customers

JILL BROWN, Wearcheck's information systems administrator, has been busy over the past few months running training courses to familiarise customers with the upgraded Infocheck system.

"A total of 26 Infocheck users are now on the new system and fully conversant with its features and benefits," says Jill who enjoys running the courses because it gives her the chance to meet the people she speaks to regularly on the telephone.

Hands-on

The three-day courses, which are held at Wearcheck's Pinetown and Johannesburg offices, are limited to eight people. They include hands-on exercises and end with a practical and theoretical evaluation test.

"This enables staff to get to grips with the new system and sort out any problems while I am there to help," explains Jill. "Of course, if they have any difficulties when they get back

to the office, I'm only a phone call away."

Wearcheck plans to run three Infocheck training courses this year.

"The better equipped our customers are to use the Infocheck system, the better results they will obtain from the Wearcheck programme," says Jill. "We have had most encouraging feedback from the courses and some customers are sending several employees for training."

The new updated Infocheck system is more user-friendly since the software was rewritten recently. It is completely menu-driven and affords greater accessibility to the system through DBase IV, as well as providing quicker response times, greater efficiency and more detailed reports.

Two new contracts for Wearcheck



Jill Brown, information systems administrator, has been busy running Infocheck training courses to familiarise users with the upgraded system.

Wearcheck qualifies for Technology Top 100

WEARCHECK has qualified for the Technology Top 100 awards for the second year running.



Technology Top 100 is an independent yardstick for measuring the technological competitiveness of South African companies. It is organised annually by Engineering Week and the SA Engineering Association.

Last year Wearcheck was one of 65 companies from throughout South Africa named as qualifiers in the competition.

WEARCHECK has been awarded a further three-year tender by the Pretoria City Council's Logistical Services Department which runs the city's bus service, cementing a thirteen-year association between the two organisations.

As a result of the new

working arrangement between Barlows and Wearcheck, the OFS Roads Department recently awarded Wearcheck a one-year contract for the department's oil analysis requirements. This work was previously handled by Barlows.

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