

New Johannesburg lab comes on stream

THE new SOS oil analysis laboratory opened its doors for business in Isando in October as a joint venture between Barlows Equipment Company and Set Point Technology, with Set Point's Wearcheck division as operational partner.

Capable of handling up to 2 500 samples per month, the lab has already begun to process the roughly 800 Caterpillar warranty samples taken by Barlows in Southern Africa every month.

Highest quality

The lab has been equipped with instruments of the highest quality. These include the latest Nicolet Avatar FTIR supplied by Set Point's SMM instrument division, a new Pamas particle counter and a new ISL Houillon viscometer. They supplement a range of equipment acquired in the purchase of CMS International

earlier this year.

Although manual at this stage, the lab will produce results which match the quality of Wearcheck's computerised Pinetown laboratory, with analysis performed by Wearcheck chemist Greg Morse and his assistant, Cowboy Manana.

Operating smoothly

Interpretation of the analytical results will be carried out by Lutz Meyer of Barlows in line with Caterpillar procedure internationally.

Says Set Point divisional director of Wearcheck, Gary Brown, 'The lab has come on stream a little later than expected due to delays in the delivery of some equipment, but it is now operating smoothly and we hope to bring it to full capacity soon. It is a valuable new facility which will boost our continued endeavours to enhance the service offered to our customers.' ✓



Wearcheck chemist Greg Morse at work in the impressive new Johannesburg laboratory.



BEST WISHES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

THIS Christmas season, heralding the start of a new millennium, is an historic one. It is a fitting time to thank you, our valued customers, for your support over the years which has been an integral part of our development.

It also gives us great pleasure to wish you and your families everything of the best over the festive season. We trust that the new millennium will bring you renewed happiness and prosperity.

Our annual donation to the READ Educational Trust, in lieu of sending out Christmas cards, is greatly appreciated by the many disadvantaged people in the region whose lives have been changed by the gift of literacy. We would like to think it is one of numerous small initiatives which collectively will add impetus to the African renaissance envisioned by President Thabo Mbeki. ✓



Oil analysis is key in measuring performance at KZN Department of Transport

Errol Cooper (centre) receives the Wearcheck trophy for the best oil analysis results in the KZNPA Department of Transport from director of mechanical engineering Steve Crutchley, while chief engineer Mark Pistorius displays the winner's certificate.

THE Mechanical Directorate of KwaZulu-Natal's Department of Transport in Pietermaritzburg, which builds and maintains roads throughout the province, has over 1600 units of earthmoving equipment on the Wearcheck programme.

Chief engineer Mark Pistorius has developed a results-oriented system to measure the effectiveness of their oil analysis programme and motivate the 450 staff members working in the 26 depots throughout the province, by recognising outstanding performance.

Trophy

Wearcheck sponsors a trophy and prizes for the winning depot which is presented at the directorate's annual conference in September every year.

'There are two measures of how well a depot workshop is

performing; the one is the Wearcheck reports and the other is plant availability,' Mr Pistorius explained. 'These two indicators show a clear pattern. If Wearcheck statistics look good, there is high machine availability.'

He focuses on three aspects of Wearcheck's management report, namely the percentage of problem samples, the number of repeat problems and the percentage of feedback cards submitted by staff.

'Repeats are the key to the whole process,' he said. 'If you control repeats, you are solving problems.'

To achieve meaningful statistics, he has devised a formula based on set targets which achieves the right balance between the three. Current targets are:

- ◆ Problem samples : 18%. Although in the past 12%



used to be achievable, this is no longer possible due to under-funding and older machines which experience more problems. (The overall national average is 20%.)

- ◆ Number of repeats: 5%
- ◆ Feedback cards: 100%

The winner this year, for the second time running, was the six-man team at the Pietermaritzburg North depot headed by mechanic in charge, Errol Cooper.

'This depot consistently follows up every single problem which arises,' Mr Pistorius said. 'They do not just change the oil and send off another sample, they solve the problem, with the result that they have the lowest incidence of repeats and the highest machine availability.'

Asked about the secret of their success, Mr Cooper replied, 'It is simple. We follow Wearcheck's instructions methodically and go through everything that could be the cause of a problem until we find it. Then we correct the problem as soon as possible. It is real team effort and I am proud of my guys.'

Two other depots received

certificates of commendation - the runners-up, Bill van Zyl's Underberg depot, and the most improved, the construction unit at Winterton under John du Preez and Harold Schirge.

The competition, now in its third year, is achieving its objectives.

'It is motivating staff to perform better and has engendered a sense of competitiveness between the depots,' Mr Pistorius said. 'Nobody likes being bottom of the list.'

Innovative

Set Point divisional director of Wearcheck, Gary Brown praised, Mr Pistorius' innovative use of the Wearcheck management report. 'He is using it not as a whip, but as an incentive which has proved highly effective.'

The directorate first started using Wearcheck in 1992. They operate the Netcheck client software system and occasionally commission RPD ferrogram analysis. Wearcheck has developed customised technical training courses with a practical focus which are run for journeymen in the department on a regular basis. ✓

Quality audit successful

WEARCHECK came through its twice yearly ISO 9002 quality audit by the SABS in September with flying colours once again - with only two minor findings.

Gerhard Crafford, a section head for SABS KZN Assessment Services said that the impressive commitment to quality shown by Wearcheck management played a major role in the success of their system which was developed and improved every year.

'A quality system is intended to be a management system which con-

tributes to the bottom line and Wearcheck is one of the most advanced companies we have come across in this respect,' he said.

Lesley Crawford, Set Point divisional director of Wearcheck, expands on this, 'All of our managers sit on the quality committee and, as a result, many management issues are discussed at these meetings. We know that this makes an enormous difference to the fine-tuning of the quality system which, in turn, ensures that staff and customers can have faith in our quality standards.' ✓

A customer writes ...

IT IS always a pleasure to hear from a satisfied customer. Wearcheck received the following letter recently.

'On Thursday, 16 September 1999 I sent an oil sample off by Speed



Rowan Maartens,
technical consultant

Services Couriers.

On Friday, 17 September 1999 I telephoned your Mr Rowan Maartens and explained the urgent need to receive feedback on the sample, pointing out that it was at the Westmead Post Office.

Rowan immediately went to work and a short while later he phoned me to report that he had received the sample and was monitoring it through the process. By early Friday afternoon I had a verbal report and a faxed test result.

I wish to thank and commend Mr Maartens for the friendly, efficient and speedy service which was of great assistance to me in warding off a transport crisis.'

G. J. Greef
Barberton

TRAINING IN MAURITIUS

Technical consultant Ashley Mayer thoroughly enjoyed conducting Wearcheck technical training courses in Mauritius during October.



WEARCHECK's technical training courses are now being run as far afield as Mauritius.

Technical consultant Ashley Mayer spent four days in Mauritius in October conducting two advanced oil analysis courses for 38 maintenance managers representing 25 companies in the textile, sugar, and trans-

port industries.

The programme was set up by Wearcheck client Bruno Couve of Miralube International in Curepipe.

Says Ashley, 'Feedback from the delegates was extremely positive and it was a fascinating experience interacting with the Mauritian businessmen.' ✓

Womenpower - the Johannesburg customer services and admin team



Meet the faces behind the voices. Making up the Johannesburg customer services and admin team are (left to right) Chantelle Wilding, Josephine Rakolota, Cathy Bolton, Anita McPherson and Adele Steyn.

IN THE last issue we featured the ladies working in customers services and admin at the Pinetown office. This time, the focus is on the Johannesburg team.

Gauteng branch co-ordinator Cathy Bolton heads the team, drawing on her many years of experience in the oil analysis industry and her sales and marketing expertise.

Helping Cathy with any overflow from her workload is branch admin assistant Adele Steyn, who started as customer services assistant with Wearcheck in September 1997. She was promoted to her new position in June this year.

Familiar voice

Many customers will know the voice of customer services assistant Anita McPherson who has been with Wearcheck

for eleven years, starting off in data processing for six years before moving into her current position.

Josephine Rakolota, who joined the company at the beginning of the year, has moved from reception and switchboard to the position of data processing clerk. She holds a diploma in information technology and is studying marketing.

Frontline

Reception, switchboard and typing are the responsibility of Chantelle Wilding who also acts as frontline person for Wearcheck's sub-tenant, Hecny Premier Freight. She spent one of the three years she has been with Wearcheck as customer services assistant but is now happy to be back on reception. ✓

STAFF ARE IN DEMAND AS SPEAKERS

TECHNICAL consultants Gary Blevins and Daan Burger, and John Evans, diagnostic manager: mobile equipment, are in demand as speakers at events organised by a number of different organisations.

At Rotate 2000, South Africa's first Valve & Rotational Equipment Conference which takes place in Johannesburg in January, John will talk on 'Enhancing your oil monitoring processes by implementing ferrography to ensure that all levels of valuable analytical information are made available to you'.

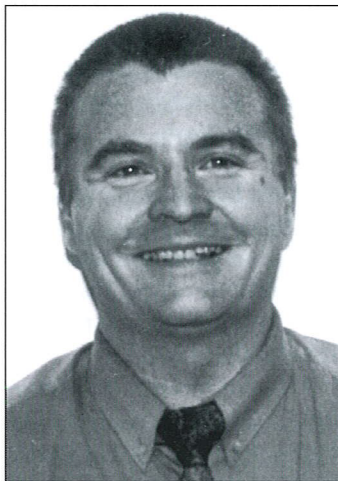
Published

Earlier this year, he spoke for the second time at a monthly meeting of the Institute of Road Transport Engineers in Durban, covering the topic of sludge. A précis of this talk was published in their international newsletter. He has also been guest speaker at Durban meetings of the SA Institute of Mechanical

Engineers and the SA Institute of Tribology (SAIT).

In May this year Daan delivered a talk at a regular meeting of the Experimental Aircraft Association at Grand Central Airport in Johannesburg.

Gary was one of the speakers at a five-day lubrication training course organised by the SAIT in Johannesburg during August, and recently gave a talk at a Komatsu convention on new developments in oil analysis with emphasis on ferrography and FTIR analysis. ✓



Gary Blevins



Daan Burger (left), John Evans and Gary Blevins (top) are in demand as speakers at technical conferences and meetings.

Wearcheck Technical Training Courses FEBRUARY - JUNE 2000

Date	Course	Venue
7 February	2	Johannesburg
8 February	3	Johannesburg
10/11 February	4	Johannesburg
7 March	2	Pinetown
8 March	3	Pinetown
9/10 March	4	Pinetown
10 April	2	Johannesburg
11 April	3	Johannesburg
13/14 April	4	Johannesburg
17 May	2	Pinetown
18/19 May	4	Pinetown
5 June	2	Johannesburg
6 June	3	Johannesburg
8/9 June	4	Johannesburg

Course 1 : A practical introduction to oil analysis

By arrangement. Cost: R2954,90 per day on site.

Course 2 : The application of analysis and an introduction to troubleshooting

(08h30 - 16h30). Cost: R517,10 (Wearcheck customers), R718 (others).

Course 3 : Troubleshooting series

(08h30 - 16h30). Cost: R517,10 (Wearcheck customers), R718 (others).

Course 4 : The technical management of oil analysis and lubrication

Day 1: 08h30 - 16h30, Day 2: 08h30 - 12h30.

Cost: R985 (Wearcheck customers), R1292,80 (others).

All prices include VAT

For bookings phone Melanie Hynd on (031) 700-5460

PUBLICATIONS are welcome to reproduce articles providing that Wearcheck is acknowledged.

Where to find us

GAUTENG

25 San Croy Office Park,
Die Agora Road (off
Brabazon Rd), Croydon.
P.O.Box 284,
Isando, 1600.
Tel: (011) 392-6322
Fax: (011) 392-6340

KWAZULU-NATAL

9 Le Mans Place,
Westmead.
P.O. Box 15108,
Westmead 3608.
Tel: (031) 700-5460
Fax: (031) 700-5471
E-mail:
support@wearcheck.co.za

INTERNET SITE

<http://www.wearcheck.co.za>