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3G Control Package Widens Market for CGI

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SinterCast develops a new modular control package for compacted graphite iron production.

Changes in automotive manufacturing and design have had an obvious impact on ferrous foundries, but the continuing rise in volumes for compacted graphite iron production shows that every problem presents a new opportunity. CGI delivers higher tensile strengths, fatigue strength, and stiffness than gray iron or aluminum. It allows automotive designers to achieve engine performance and fuel economy with low component weight, lower noise factors, and low emissions.



CGI is produced according to several processes, but the most widely used is the one offered by SinterCast AB. Late last year SinterCast reported its annualized series production total grew by 10% during October to a new all-time high of 60,000 metric tons/year. Also in 2010 SinterCast introduced "the third generation" of its process control: System 3000 includes updated internal hardware components, a new operating system, new process control software, and extended measurement capability of core thermal analysis sampling technology.

Following what it called "extensive field-testing," SinterCast AB introduced a new version of its sampling cup. The SP-05 is based on an updated reactive coating that improves the resolution of SinterCast's patented Wall Reaction™ and at the same time counteracts the influence of tramp elements.

SinterCast president and CEO Dr. Steve Dawson said the global economic recession led the group to "a comprehensive review" of its technology. System 3000 is modular, so it can be installed for any foundry or process flow. It can be configured to produce CGI from pressurized pouring furnaces or by ladle pouring. Notably, SinterCast also launched a research-scale version of its control hardware. The Mini-System 3000 uses the same updated sampling technology and software as System 3000 in a condensed package for CGI product development, prototyping, and niche-volume production.

The new hardware is based on an industrial computer with a solidstate hard drives, and includes power filtration to protect against surges or brownouts. System 3000's process control component is the 61st update to SinterCast's software, and operates on an embedded XP platform. "The PCS 6.0 software provides improved operator friendliness and expanded access for customer engineers to independently configure the metallurgical software parameters and to perform maintenance," according to the developer. "The results from each thermal analysis measurement are stored by the System 3000 and are available for automatic transfer to the foundry quality control IT system for realtime logging of series production data and traceability."

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