

BFS Betonfertigteilesysteme GmbH, 89143 Blaubeuren, Germany

Galvin Concrete & Sheetmetal invest in a new concrete pipe machine

The town of Wangara, where Galvin Concrete & Sheetmetal is based, lies in the far west of Australia. The company has invested in the modular Atlantic 2020 production plant for manhole rings and soakwells from BFS machine and concrete mould engineers in Blaubeuren.



Overall view of Atlantic at Galvin



The company still fabricates the steel cages manually.

Galvin Concrete & Sheetmetal can look back on over 50 years of history: The founder, Roy Galvin, began production of drainage tanks and kerbs in 1952. Today, the company specializes in precast concrete products that it sells to energy suppliers, railway companies and the building industry. "From manhole ring to concrete gutter, we design and manufacture the most diverse concrete elements", explains Mark Galvin, second generation manager of the 20-employee company. In addition, Galvin sells steel and cast elements for sewerage systems and canal construction.

Until 2013, the company used a 40-year-old machine that produced, among other objects, the soakwells required in Western Australia. It goes without saying that this meant a great deal of manual work and involved long changeover times. Soakwells are used to protect building foundations and gardens from damage caused by intense rainfall. They are among the most costly concrete shapes to manufacture, because they have four or five openings per level and openings for inlets and outflows. In addition, transport anchors are directly embedded, so the soakwells can be lifted safely at defined points and transported.

Getting down to brass tacks

Galvin became aware of the BFS Atlantic concrete pipe machine at a competitor in Western Australia. "The precise, efficiently operating plant awoke my interest. And, since I had wanted to invest in a new machine for some time, I got in touch with BFS in April 2011",

Galvin reports. Then it was time to get down to brass tacks: In September 2011, Jason Laehy, manager of the technical area at Galvin Concrete & Sheetmetal, travelled to Europe for a week to take a close look at the Atlantic plant. He found it and BFS's professional consultation equally impressive. "It is widely known that German engineering is among the best in the world. The BFS machines are no exception. Their quality is outstanding", says Laehy enthusiastically.

Galvin placed the order in February 2012. After several months of design and construction, BFS delivered at the end of 2012 an Atlantic 2020 (production range of nominal sizes from DN 400 to DN 2,020 mm diameter) with base ring pallet cleaning machine and release agent spraying unit to Western Australia. "We adapted the plant precisely to our customer's needs. We were as fast with the design and construction as he was to make the decision to place the order", Volker Nusser reports. He is the sales manager at BFS and Galvin's first point of contact. "My friend Volker made it easy for us to get excited about BFS and to decide. Their attentiveness and the professionalism with which they took care of us and our concerns tipped the balance", enthuses Leahy.

It didn't go quite so quickly after that. Construction of the metal building, which was being built especially for the new production plant, was delayed. So the commissioning only took place in 2014. Galvin took this calmly: "As a contractor I know that things do not always go the way they really should. As they say: respond flexibly."



The concrete element is demoulded by the ejection carriage with built-in press equipment and brought out of the machine pit to floor level.

Automatic instead of manual

The Atlantic is a versatile, individually adaptable machine that can produce the most diverse concrete elements: large, small, round, angular. With the Atlantic 2020, Galvin works with a plant that offers even more benefits: better product quality, greater daily production and easier handling. Specifically, this means that the soakwells are better compacted and no longer have cracks. Approximately 100 soakwells with a nominal diameter of 1,800 mm can be produced per shift. Since the dimension adjustments are now partly automated, the conversion is possible within 30 to 60 minutes. Previously, the manual changeover was more laborious and significantly more time-consuming. "With the Atlantic, our customer is in a position to produce with two different moulds per day. So he can respond more flexibly to the market's requirements", says Nusser, putting it in a nutshell.

Smooth process

The base ring pallets are automatically fed for an optimal production process: From the base ring pallet stack in the base ring pallet magazine, every base ring pallet first passes through the base ring pallet cleaning and release agent spray station. Then it goes into the production machine.

The concrete element is demoulded by the ejection carriage with built-in press equipment and brought out of the machine pit to floor

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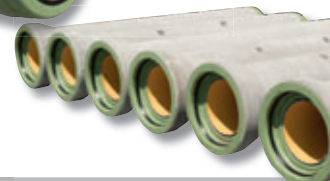
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With the soakwells, the recess blockouts are withdrawn hydraulically before the demoulding process.



After ejection of the concrete product from the machine, employees drive it to the drying area on an electric extraction cart.

level. The heart of the Atlantic 2020 – a powerful three-head central vibrator with hydraulic clamping and program-controlled compaction force setting – ensures well-regulated, forceful and fast concrete compaction. Insulated against vibration, the exterior mould is hung on the mould carriage, achieving high product quality.

After ejection of the concrete product from the machine, employees drive it to the drying area on an electric extraction cart. With the soakwells, the recess blockouts are withdrawn hydraulically before the demoulding process. A program-controlled two-carriage demoulding system ensures shorter cycles.



Soakwells in the outdoor storage area



Galvin also produces conventional manhole rings with the Atlantic

The BFS Atlantic at a glance

- Production range of nominal sizes from DN 400 to DN 2,000 mm
- Manhole ring or manhole neck production with integrated manhole steps
- Compaction by central vibrator with frequency control and hydraulic clamping
- Short changeover times, efficient production
- Program-controlled two carriage system for various demoulding procedures
- Safe, user-friendly working height at floor level
- Limited foundation depth
- Low-noise production (under floor technology)

Less noise, more safety

From the beginning, employees were excited about working with the machine. Today, they say that their expectations were exceeded. Because they now benefit from a lower noise level, which is less than 85 dB(A), thanks to the under floor concept, the system's ease of operation and the safe working height. "There is no comparison with the old machine, which was considerably less convenient to operate", declares Galvin contentedly. According to Galvin, the greatest benefit is that production could be increased and manual work significantly reduced, making the company more competitive. A further plus is that, thanks to the Atlantic, Galvin was in a position to expand the product range and meet the growing requirements of customers. "Furthermore, we are very proud that we could drastically decrease the rejection rate, particularly in view of our current environment. Every little helps", Galvin adds.

Even though a great deal takes place automatically with the Atlantic: The company still fabricates the steel cages manually. They therefore had the challenge of adapting the cages so the machine could handle them. The solution consisted of modifying the reinforcement mesh to meet the machine's requirements. The employees at Galvin and BFS have always found a way to solve problems. "Even though Galvin and BFS have only known each other for a short time, I think we have built up a good relationship that we will certainly develop further. BFS was always helpful and has given us excellent support", is Galvin's conclusion after three years of collaboration – a solid foundation for further projects. ■

FURTHER INFORMATION



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