



Hewland choose HK for double investment

Transmission specialist gears up for further motorsport success

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Racing transmissions manufacturer Hewland Engineering Ltd has recently installed two high specification CNC machine tools supplied by HK Technologies. The Mitsubishi FA10-S Advanced V-Package and Kapp VUS 55P represent the first wire EDM and gear grinding machines on site at the company's headquarters near Maidenhead in Berkshire.

“The new machines have been acquired as part of programme of investment at Hewland,” states the company's business co-ordination director Stephen Deane. “We are growing our capacity and flexibility and the new machines from HK will provide the opportunity to diversify the business and win new orders.”

Hewland Engineering was formed in 1957 by Michael Hewland, who became recognised as the inventor of the bespoke racing car gearbox. Today the company claims to be the only one in the world specialising solely in the design and manufacture of transmissions for competition cars. To date, Hewland has designed more than 200 bespoke transmissions for its clients and is the only company to supply a complete semi-automatic gearbox. However, Hewland also manufactures a range of 13 gearboxes designed to suit most modern motorsport applications for front and rear wheel drive, plus a range of classic gearboxes.

Both the Mitsubishi EDM and Kapp gear grinder are being used to manufacture highly intricate, specialised racing transmission parts. Both processes were previously subcontracted, a situation that had its drawbacks, as Mr Deane explains.

“Bringing EDM and gear grinding processes in-house is not only about saving costs and achieving better control over factors such as design and delivery, it's about respecting customer confidentiality, something that is critical in the motorsport arena,” he says. “We selected HK as our partner for this project based not only on price, but on the whole package. They had to win our business. Sure enough, everything they promised has been delivered.”

In the best sense of the word, the FA-S Advance is a universal wire EDM machine that can increase competitive edge through low operating costs and short processing times. Cutting speeds up to 500 mm²/min, surface finishes of less than 0.15 µm Ra, wire diameters from 0.1-0.36 mm, best parallelism, and simple processing of even the most different materials leaves nothing to be desired. The numerous automatic functions, coupled with the solid, durable construction and the linear measuring system, ensure lasting results that are fully reproducible.

The Kapp VUS 55P universal gear grinding machine allows the form finishing of external and internal spur and helical gears and other profiles using single indexing and Kapp CBN profile grinding wheels or dressable tools. An integral CNC dressing device allows the generation of CNC controlled arbitrary wheel profiles.

Each year Hewland make significant investments in the latest machinery to ensure its customers benefit from the most advanced motorsport transmission production facilities in the world. Having its own state of the art manufacturing facilities, which include a heat treatment plant, also means that the 130-employee company can turn prototype units around quickly for evaluation, and control the cost and quality of production units.

“While there is no doubt we will enjoy savings resulting from our investment in the HK-supplied machines, for us it’s more about retaining the technology and generating the ability to react quickly to the needs of our customers,” says Mr Deane. “Despite the current economic climate this level of commitment and investment ensures that Hewland Engineering will continue to be at the leading edge of transmission technology, exceeding customer expectations with innovative design and cost sensitive manufacturing solutions across all levels of motorsport.”

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