

Realising a passion for perfection in mouldmaking

One of the world's leading mould manufacturers, the pan-European UniMould Group produces cavities, plungers, coolers, associated equipment and accessories for the international glass packaging community. As Henrik Bonne, Managing Director of German subsidiary UniMould GmbH explained to Glass Worldwide, the group's motto 'Passion for perfection in glass' illustrates the company's ongoing commitment to the industry and to its customers.

The UniMould Group comprises plants in Germany, Poland and the UK, each of which has very different origins. The Polish operation was established in 1900 at Piensk, historically an important centre of glassmaking, supplying forming parts for local glass factories. The Obernkirchen plant in Germany was formerly part of Heye, producing plungers and cavities. In recent times, both companies were operated by Heye International but since 2009, 100% of shares have been owned by Ardagh Engineering Group. For many years, the UniMould facility at Barnsley – the group's third element - had been supplying glassmakers in the UK with high quality cavities as part of the Ardagh Group.

All three plants are located at the heart of important European glass manufacturing regions. Collectively, they employ more than 300 highly skilled professionals, delivering a level of quality and service that often exceeds the expectations of



Production at the UniMould facility in Piensk, Poland.

customers, in a market where quality standards are constantly raised and surpassed. An important USP is that the group operates its own cast iron foundry located at Piensk, Poland and produces its own castings. This allows castings quality to be

controlled and reduces time to market. All castings are annealed to produce the highest quality lamina/nodular graphite cast iron moulds for intense glass production.

Over the years, an important group of people has been responsible for realising the company's success, including the Heye management team, which was responsible for developing the Obernkirchen and Piensk operations. Since 2009, the company has also been supported by the LSS Ardagh Team, including Gary Rainford (Operations Director, UniMould Group), who played a vital role in developing the plants in Poland and Germany.

Gary Rainford joined in 2009, having previously gained several years of mould manufacturing experience at Johnson Radley in the UK. Several team members bring more than 30 years of experience in mould manufacture, all of which contributes positively to the value of the business.

GLOBAL COVERAGE/RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Over the years, every aspect of the company has grown from being a relatively small manufacturer of forming parts working for local markets into a larger group that successfully serves customers throughout the world. Today, a full range of forming parts is offered, including cavities, neck rings, guide plates, accessories and flame spray and HVOF plungers and coolers. Furthermore, to satisfy growing in-house and external needs, manufacturing capacity at the UniMould foundry for cast



The cast iron foundry at Piensk, Poland.



The Obernkirchen plant is producing the highest quality plungers and coolers.

iron has also been increased by more than 50%.

The German plant played an important role in the development of plungers for NNPB technology and today, NNPB plungers are made using both flame spray and HVOF technology.

According to Henrik Bonne, the organisation's growth strategy was based on expanding market demand for forming parts in local European market, while also increasing the volume of customers served globally. "To meet the expectations of our customers and changing market requirements, we had to become more flexible, more technologically advanced, customer-oriented and price competitive. We restructured both plants in Germany, as well as the UK. Currently, our Obernkirchen plant is producing the highest quality plungers and coolers, while the production of cavities was transferred to our plant in Piensk. The mould shop in Barnsley started to serve our group as an NPD centre, as well as a trial production unit, offering very competitive lead times and quality."

Plungers and cavities represent the most successful products from UniMould's extensive portfolio, which are sold to glassmakers throughout Europe, North America and Australia. UniMould's 'Passion for perfection in glass' has seen the client base expand throughout the world. ■



NNPB plungers are made at Obernkirchen using both flame spray and HVOF technology.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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