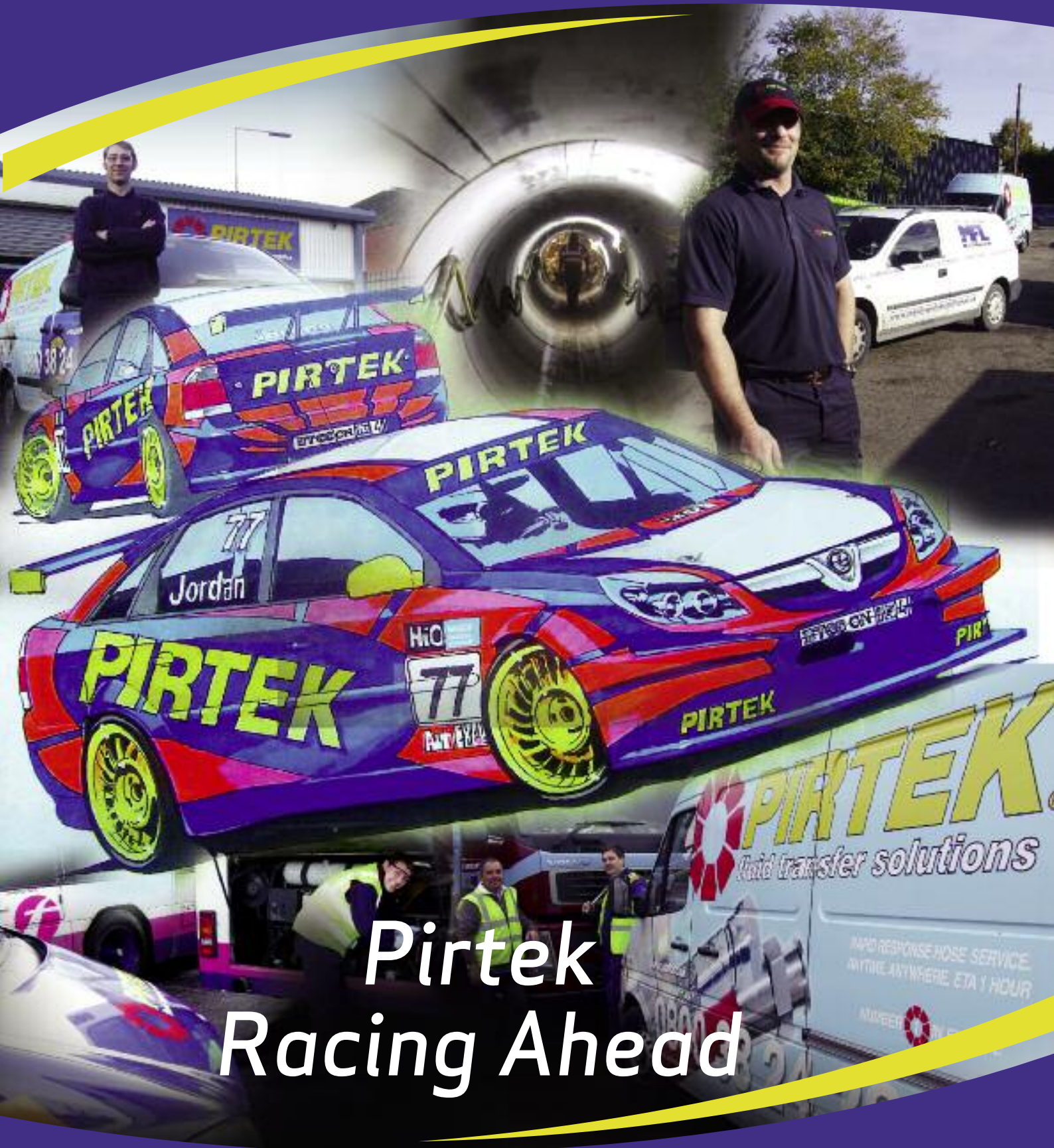


In the pipeline



Pirtek Racing Ahead

The **fastest** emergency hose replacement service there is

Looking Ahead to a New Year

Thanks in no small part to the meltdown in the global banking sector, 2009 will ironically be remembered by most business people as the year they'd most like to forget. A downturn in workloads, lack of available finance and a widespread dearth of work has marked the past 12 months as one of the worst in recent memory.

But as it draws to a close and we turn our attention to 2010, there is much to look forward to. President Obama's Stimulus Package investment is now beginning to filter through in the US, bringing renewed consumer confidence. And, as the saying goes, when America sneezes, the UK is bound to go down with the sniffles. Closer to home, Chancellor Alistair Darling's pre-Budget Report set ambitious targets for UK infrastructure investment giving a much-needed boost to the UK's beleaguered construction industry and its allied trades.

Here at Pirtek, we are certainly looking ahead with confidence, with plans for more Centre openings in the pipeline set to extend our national coverage still further and to bring even greater levels of service to our customers across the UK and Ireland. And, as you can see below, 2010 will mark the dawning of a new era for Pirtek Racing as we once again partner with father and son team Mike and Andrew Jordan to battle for British Touring Car Championship success.

So, as 2009 closes and 2010 begins, we would like to wish all our partners, customers, staff and suppliers a prosperous New Year.

Best regards



Kelvin Roberts
Chairman, Pirtek Europe

New Team on the BTCC Grid

The Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship will see a new addition to the grid for the 2010 season as Pirtek Racing launches its campaign on Britain's premier motor racing series. This marks a continuation of the relationship between Pirtek and former BTCC ace, Mike Jordan, who will lead the team. It also sees Pirtek backing Mike's son Andrew – the fastest-rising star in the BTCC – for another season as he looks to build on the podium finishes he achieved in the 2009 season.

The team will run the proven Vauxhall Vectra car for their 2010 campaign, giving continuity to Andrew after a competitive season in the 2009 VXRacing Vectra. The Pirtek Racing team is also the first to announce the use of the new two litre turbo powered TOCA engine that will power their Vectra for the forthcoming season.

"It is a good feeling to be back involved with a car and our own team in the BTCC with Pirtek's support," says Mike Jordan. "The package of the Vectra and the TOCA engine should be very strong and I'm sure Andrew can use his knowledge of the car to great advantage." Andrew Jordan, who already has six BTCC podiums to his name, commented, "I'm really looking forward to the challenge of next season. It's good for me to be continuing with the Vectra, I always felt it was a strong, great handling car and I had some good outings in it last season."

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Published by Pirtek (UK) Limited
35 Acton Park Estate,
The Vale, Acton,
London W3 7QE
Tel 020 8749 8444 Fax 020 8749 8333
E-mail info@pirtek.co.uk





A throwaway remark during a routine emergency call-out has landed Pirtek Penrith MSST Steve Clark with an interesting sideline as an occasional designer for local engineering company, Mallinson Fabrications Limited (MFL).

"I was called in by MFL managing director Billy Mallinson to sort out some new hydraulic hoses during refurbishment work on a salt spreader. I made a comment on the way the hoses had been routed," Clark explains. "The company took my comments to heart, and the next thing I knew I was helping design the hose layouts on their machine prototypes."

Based at Dalston near Carlisle, MFL was formed in 1967 as a precision engineering and steel fabrication company. During the past 20 years, MFL has diversified to become authorised manufacturers of specialist Transpread machines used to spread agricultural lime onto fields. Not content with simply producing standard designs, MFL has also adapted the Transpread concept, creating unusual derivatives such as a new 4 tonne capacity, low ground pressure spreader designed specifically to refill golf course bunkers with sand. Engineer Ian Millar explains how Pirtek fits into MFL's manufacturing process "We design the unit and give Pirtek the outline of the design approximately six weeks before we



build the prototype. This gives them a pretty good idea of the pressure expectations, type, quality and size of hoses required," he says. "Before the unit goes to the paint shop, Steve Clark arrives on site armed with a huge array of hoses and connectors and sets about designing, manufacturing and fitting the hydraulics to the unit. Often he will make suggestions that will save wear and, on occasions, completely redesigns things because his experience allows him to come up with a better solution to a specific problem or application." And Steve Clark's input doesn't end with the manufacture of the prototype. "Steve ensures that the unit works to maximum efficiency prior to final assembly and painting," Millar continues. "He then records every part, specification, connector and hose, so that if we do take the machine into full production, we have

Spreading the word



(Top left) MFL Engineer Ian Millar with Steve Clark, MSST at Penrith, and the new A4 Bunker filler

(Above left) Steve and MFL MD Billy Mallinson

(Above) part of the A4's hydraulic system designed by Steve Clark

a comprehensive working specification to work from." According to Billy Mallinson, this is a system that has reaped rewards. "Because every unit Steve has helped design has been meticulously recorded, we simply phone through the model and he brings out a complete manufacturing component kit," Mallinson asserts. "It has proved a considerably cheaper, and more efficient way of working." Steve Clark concluded, "One of the things that attracted me to the job as a Pirtek MSST is the fact that the job's so varied. No two days are ever the same and you just never know what the next phone call will bring, But I never expected to become part of a design and manufacturing process."



Expanding Waste Line



Pirtek Luton is playing a key role in ensuring that waste management and recycling specialist Cawleys draws ever closer to its “zero waste” ambitions.

Cawleys is a third-generation, family-run company that has been operating for over 60 years in the London, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire & Northants regions, and nationally through their sister company WasteSolve. The company's Luton headquarters is also home to their vehicle and engineering workshops, where they service their own fleet of vehicles, and maintain and remanufacture baling equipment. The Luton depot also has to rectify a wide range of hydraulic problems as senior workshop foreman Graham Alcock explains.

"Dustcarts always have a hard life, as there is a lot of movement on the hoses and hydraulic parts which leads inevitably to premature wear," he explains. "And when that happens, there is only one place to go for our hydraulic needs and that's Pirtek Alcock reports that, in addition to the dustcarts, his company runs a diverse fleet of both mobile and static waste and recycling



Luton MSST David Wheatcroft has to deal with everything from the dustcarts to baler hydraulics and maintaining the wheelloaders

equipment including Materials Recycling Facilities at both Luton and Wellingborough together with a range of vans, curtain-siders, Rear End Loaders, Ro-Ro units, wheel loaders, sewerage pumps, and articulated haulers. Regardless of the equipment type or geographic location, Alcock says that Pirtek is always up to the task. "Pirtek Luton is as good as gold on response. At least 90 percent of the time they are well within the allocated call-out time. If they have been delayed, usually through a problem on a previous call-out, they keep us informed," he concludes. "As a result we have built up a very good relationship with them and I know I can trust them to do a good job."



Wigan's MSST Stuart Clare is accustomed to helping customers out of a hole. But one recent job found him in one of his own. Typically his morning recently started with the collection of two special very high pressure (600bar) power pack hoses for identification and replacement from Liebherr at Ashton. On route he received a call from BAM Nuttall for some adaptors, and a request to look at some fittings on a banded fuel tank whilst he was on site. On an hour round trip Stuart had delivered the hoses back to Wigan, made and supplied the adaptors and identified the stepped adaptors needed for the fuel lines.

However, his next call was actually to help a customer dig himself into a hole rather than get out of one. After a trek across a field just off the A580 near Haydock Park, Stuart arrived at Tunnel Engineering's site, part of a three-year project to install an 88 kilometre United Utility water pipeline stretching between Liverpool and Bury. Since the project's start in April, Stuart had already helped maintain main contractor Murphy's fleet of excavators, cranes and assorted vehicles on over 50 callouts. However, he soon discovered his talents would be required underground as well as above. The site in question was nine metres down and 320 metres inside the 1.8 metre diameter pipeline where an open face digger shield was operated by a four-man crew. As they excavated the clay, laser-guided 2.5 metre long concrete pipe sections, each weighing around six tonnes, were hydraulically pushed into place. To maintain the hydraulic pressure along the route, five "interjack" stations had already been installed in the pipeline between the surface pump and the excavator deep inside the hill. Stuart Clare has the unenviable task of maintaining these hoses, fittings and ancillary equipment. Senior fitter Paul Harrison who was in charge of the site said "Pirtek Wigan in general, and Stuart Clare in particular, have done a sterling job in the above ground maintenance for Murphy; and they have applied the same dedication and expertise in the tunnelling work," he concluded. "It's also worth noting that every piece of hydraulic hose on site is a Pirtek product. In this environment, we can't afford to take chances, so we only fit the best."





First Choice for First Bus



MSST Andy Collins standing in for Paul Johnston at First Bus Birkenhead

Keeping a fleet of 60+ Wright-bodied Scania buses and 10 Volvo D10 double-deckers operational is no mean feat. But as Birkenhead First Bus depot fitter Paul Oldham explains.

"There is a contingency of just five buses available at any one time to stand in for vehicles undergoing regular maintenance or repair. So mechanical failures and unplanned downtime is something we strive to avoid at any cost. However, to be able to plan for every contingency is close to impossible, as it would mean holding a massive range of stock and specialist equipment on site."

This is a view echoed by fellow fitter Chris Cureton. "Service buses have a fairly hard life and it is not unusual to find a vehicle with a history of 900,000 miles of almost non-stop use. Some of the components, such as the hydraulic cooling system, come under enormous pressure and we carry out regular preventative maintenance to make sure we don't have a hose failure," Cureton says. "This is where Pirtek come into its own. They check the hoses and replace anything that's showing signs of failure. They can also replace other common wear parts, such as power steering and compressor hoses."

Cureton reports that replacing hoses on a modern bus is a challenge in itself. "Modern bus bodies are designed to be

part of the chassis and incorporate many mechanical components as integral items. So replacing a hose that stretches from one end of the bus to the other, but inside the bodywork, is not a problem I would like to solve," he says. "That's one task that we'd prefer to leave to the hose experts. We have been working with Pirtek Ellesmere Port's MSST Paul Johnston for the past three years and I cannot fault his work. Pirtek has given us fantastic service, they have solved all our hose problems, and completed them well inside the scheduled time," Paul Oldham concluded. "Best of all, it frees up our staff to carry out other essential maintenance and cuts down our stock overheads."

MSST Paul Johnston



Bigger and Better

When Robin Davie took over the ownership of Pirtek Northampton five years ago, he also inherited the 10-year lease of the building, that luckily included a review at the end of the first five years.

"It was obvious that with the growth of the company, the original building would not be suitable to maintain an adequate or acceptable level of customer service," Robin says. "We were bursting at the seams and the lack of parking was always an issue. So when the new premises became available at exactly the right time, we couldn't believe our luck."

The new Centre is literally across the road from the old Centre, and is considerably larger and better equipped. "We now have close to 465 m² of floor space, and plenty of room for all the specialised Pirtek equipment together with a workshop for our engineering work," Robin explains. "There is a separate and very impressive new trade counter with a product display area, a production office and a large reception area on the ground floor. Upstairs there is a huge suite of offices and further storage on a mezzanine floor. Best of all, customers will find plenty of parking space at last."

Pirtek Northampton can now be found at:

Pirtek Northampton
25 Hatton Close,
Moulton Park Industrial Estate,
Northampton NN3 6SU
T: 01604 499644
F: 01604 499133

Unseen Danger of a Leaking Hose



A leaking hydraulic hose is an everyday occurrence for Pirtek engineers, but some customers may not be aware of the dangers of hydraulic oil being released under pressure.

Leaks from high-pressure hydraulic hoses are not just messy, they are dangerous. Leaks create slip and fall hazards, fire danger, and they can also contaminate the environment.

There are also three very different kinds of hazards to be aware of. Burns from the hot, high pressure spray of fluid; bruises, cuts or abrasions from flailing hydraulic hoses or fittings; and injection of fluid into the skin.

When a hydraulic hose fails under pressure it can release fluid at more than 2,400 km/hour. That's approaching the muzzle velocity of a gun. A fine jet of pressurized

fluid acts like a hypodermic needle and, at short distances, it can penetrate protective clothing, gloves and skin.

One of the most common injuries associated with hydraulic systems is the result of a pinhole leak in the hose. These leaks can be difficult to locate and you may not even notice the fine spray exiting the hydraulic hose.

Often machine operators and maintenance staff are tempted to run a hand or finger along the hose to find the leak, or in some instances even gripping the hose in an attempt to stop the leak. If you are unlucky enough to encounter a fluid injection it is vital to act immediately after the injection. At the time you may only experience a slight stinging sensation and may not think much about it.

Injection injuries are often misdiagnosed because the injury appears benign on the surface of the skin, and people often brush them off as minor. However, the real damage is happening under the surface of the skin.

Within an hour or two after an injection, the swelling may begin. Conservative therapy such as warm soaks or antibiotics following the injury - rather than prompt surgical consultation - can be catastrophic and eventually lead to tissue loss. After four to six hours, intense throbbing pain that is unresponsive to pain medication may set in.



Failure to pursue proper medical care may lead to amputation of affected parts. In fact, amputation is most likely required if the contaminated tissue is not surgically removed within 10 hours of the injection.

Unfortunately, many people who work with hydraulic systems - including maintenance personnel and machine operators - never receive the proper hydraulic safety training. It is of paramount importance to understand safe procedures for working on an operating hydraulic system equipment to prevent injuries.

Pirtek insist on all their personnel attending safety training at their training centre in Birmingham. This training is also available to customers who would like their employees to attend.





Better By Design



IPU's Project Manager Karl Browne contemplating the vast amount of paper work and specifications both he and Phil Pace from Pirtek Oldbury will have to work to for the next project

The starter motor powered by the IPU starting system is completely dwarfed by the air receivers - but this small unit might well be attached to a huge 16 cylinder MAN marine engine, that might power anything from an oil platform fire pump to an emergency power generator on board a ship.



Midlands-based IPU Group is acknowledged as the world leader in engine starting equipment. Founded in 1959 by Roy Beebee (father of current MD Robert), the company is split into four divisions: Engine Controls; Groundcare; BSC (fuel filters and engine heaters); and the Starting division.

Helping maintain the Starting Division's worldwide success are the team at Pirtek Oldbury who not only supply components to IPU but who also aid in the design process of these unusual machines. IPU's Design and Project Engineer Karl Browne picks up the story. "Sales Manager Phil Pace will often spend all day at IPU looking at the specification and design of a starting solution and it is not unusual for us to have him on site at least one day a week," Karl says. "We will build the package to a customer's specification. Pirtek will then step in as consultants, specifying all the hoses, gauges and connectors as they know all the dimensions and operating pressures."

In fact, Karl says that Phil Pace even influences the way that IPU products look. "Not only does he ensure that the package works properly, it even has to look right before he is satisfied." Such is the strength of the relationship between Pirtek Oldbury and IPU that the manufacturer has actually adopted Pirtek part numbers to help avoid confusion among its global customer base.

"Pirtek now provides us with complete parts kits that may contain up to 90 parts, to make assembly quicker and easier," Karl Browne concludes. "We have a great working relationship with Pirtek Oldbury. We regard them as a partner rather than a supplier. They are the only company we have come across who will not just work within our specifications but also help us improve on them. They're the sort of company you want to do business with."



(Above) One of IPU's Hydraulic Starting units featuring Pirtek hoses and some of the many gauges supplied by Oldbury.



(Right, both photos) part of the hose work on the first Pirtek/IPU joint project for a mobile power station solution for Empower, that eventually ended up in Africa.





Demolishing Hose Costs



Centre Manager Justin Rogers (left) with a happy site supervisor, Nigel Monk from AR Demolition



Above, the original OEM hoses and the new cost effective Pirtek option



option was a third of the cost of the original hose assembly and Pirtek offered the most cost-effective source of supply and installation."

Nigel says that he was equally impressed by the personal involvement of local Centre Manager Justin Rogers. "We didn't expect Justin to be directly involved but he personally visited our site to discuss the project. He then undertook the design, manufacture and even fitted the new parts," Nigel Monk concludes. "Now we have a stock of universal couplings and straight hoses on site, which means we can undertake an economic hose replacement in a matter of minutes."

Pirtek Leicester's new satellite Centre at Loughborough has recently completed an innovative money-saving programme with Hinckley-based demolition specialist, AR Demolition.

The hydraulic hoses used to power the attachments on AR Demolition's largely Volvo excavator fleet were prone to damage because of their hostile working environment. This problem was made more acute because the hose connectors were designed to incorporate a 90 degree coupling, making them more expensive to replace. AR Demolition sounded out several local companies on the feasibility of replacing the entire assembly with a standard length of hose connected to a separate 90 degree coupling joint, which would enable any damaged hoses or couplings to be changed quickly and more cost-effectively.

"At the end of the tender process, what seemed like an expensive exercise at first, soon proved its worth when we looked at the cost comparison of replacing hoses, like for like, against our much simpler option," says site supervisor Nigel Monk. "In fact, our



All at Sea

When Pirtek Ipswich General Manager Steve Green, took down a parts list over the phone at 5pm from an anxious marine customer recently, he had no idea that he was about to cast off one of his staff for the next three days. Having spent the evening trying and failing to identify the part numbers, Steve arranged to have the customer met as early as possible the next morning to identify the parts and rectify the problem. The early morning 'volunteer' was Technical Sales Manager Gavin Nason who duly arrived at Brightlingsea expecting to find a moored ship with a problematic pump. He was, therefore, somewhat surprised to be led to a rigid inflatable boat that would take him to the site of the real problem that was anchored some eight kilometres out in the Thames Estuary.

"The customer turned out to be an immobilised windfarm workboat, with a problem pump and a damaged spool valve. Working alongside the ship's engineer, I removed these for identification and phoned the replacement parts order in," Gavin says. "These were guaranteed to be delivered by courier direct to the dockside for 8 am the next morning. Sure enough the parts arrived, and I was duly shown aboard the inflatable again."

After a couple of hours, the parts were fitted, but because of bad weather, an operating test was postponed until the following day, requiring yet another visit. And the fun was far from over, as Gavin recalls. "To say the crossing back was bad is an understatement," he adds. "Waves were breaking over the bows."

Much to Gavin's relief, the weather proved so bad the following day that the owners decided to bring the boat back to Harwich where a full operating test was run and the boat was returned to service.

"It's funny. On the first journey out into the Estuary, I kept thinking of the Pirtek catchphrase, Anytime. Anywhere. ETA 1 Hour," Gavin Nason concludes. "Astonishingly, we managed to keep that promise even out at sea because, amazingly, we arrived on board in just 40 minutes."





Right on track

The newly opened Ram Repair Centre at Pirtek Manchester was put to the test recently when MSST Mark Brown arrived late one morning with a non-operational ram and hose set he had collected from the Quattro Rail depot at Eccles.

He had previously responded to an emergency call from foreman Cedric Daley saying that a rail fimball attachment used for lifting rail track on a wheeled excavator had failed and it was urgently required for the evening shift at 5 pm. The usual service times quoted to customers are 24 hours for a reseal and 48 hours for a rebuild, but Quattro had turned to Pirtek in the hope they would be able to come to their rescue. Extracting the piston proved the first challenge as it had been hugely over-tightened. After 10 minutes of all-in wrestling by ram engineer Steve Musgrove, the end cap was removed and the piston rod extracted. It was soon obvious this was not a simple reseal but a complete remanufacture of the unit, as the rod was pitted and heavily damaged.

The old unit was carefully measured and the thread identified before a length of 40 mm stock chrome rod was selected

and sawn to length. This was fitted to the lathe and one end chamfered ready to be threaded. The other end of the rod was then reduced to the exact length and again chamfered. The rod was again reversed and reduced in diameter ready for threading. The original thread was checked and the lathe was fitted with the correct tooling to reproduce the same thread on the new rod. Within the hour, a new rod was finished. The end of the old rod was sawn off and welded onto the new rod. The seals and bushes were then dismantled, the unit inspected and cleaned before the new seals were fitted and the entire piston re-assembled before it was reunited with the cylinder jacket. The unit was then connected to the test rig for a three-phase testing at different pressures, at each step the unit brought to the set pressure and then held whilst it is checked for leaks. The final check at 210bar is the longest and the unit is held at operating pressure for several minutes while an intensive check is carried out. At 5 pm, just seven hours after the initial emergency call, the unit was refitted to the fimball and the unit was operational again.



Competition

Pirtek is delighted to have retained its relationship with fast-rising British Touring Car Championship driver Andrew Jordan for the 2010 season (see page 2). And to celebrate, In the Pipeline is offering one lucky reader the chance to win a pair of tickets to see Andrew in action at Oulton Park on 6 June 2010 as a VIP guest of Pirtek Racing. To enter, just answer the following question: Pirtek Centres are helping mobile equipment owners protect their plant from theft by offering the CESAR system in conjunction with Datatag. But, according to the Pirtek website, how many steps are involved in the plant protection process? To enter, please email your answer to info@pirtek.co.uk. The winner will be drawn from the correct entries on 08.03.10. For further information, go to www.Pirtek.co.uk or www.pirtek.ie.

Phil Pace (left) Sales Manager for Pirtek Oldbury presents Lyndon Davis, Engineering Manager of JBR with his prize, with Andrew Kennett in the background



Lyndon Gets the Silver

Congratulations to In the Pipeline reader Lyndon Davis of silver recovery and precious metal recyclers JBR Recovery Ltd, winner of our previous competition. Lyndon correctly said that Kieron Sullivan - who is pictured on the www.pirtek.co.uk website - runs the Pirtek Southampton Centre. Lyndon wins a framed racing shirt autographed by Fabrizio Giovanardi, Matt

Neal and Andrew Jordan, the three members of 2009 BTCC team champions, the Pirtek sponsored VXRacing. Five runners up each win a VXRacing cap carrying Andrew Jordan's signature.



Wiggins Takes the Chair

Alistair Wiggins, Business Development Director of Pirtek UK, has been named as the new Chairman of the British Franchise Association's London Region. Pirtek UK was founded on a franchise business model and the company has worked with the British Franchise Association for more than 20 years, netting the BFA's Franchisor of the Year award in 1997 followed by the Franchise and International Franchise of the Year award in 2000. More recently, Pirtek became one of the first franchise companies to back the BFA's "Proud to Franchise" campaign to encourage the promotion of franchise businesses. "The British Franchise Association is a fantastic organisation and Pirtek has enjoyed an excellent relationship with them over the years," Alistair Wiggins concludes. "So it's a great honour to have been named as the Chairman of one of their busiest regions."

Bradford in safe hands



Kevin Turner, former Regional Manager for Pirtek UK, has put his money where his mouth is by taking over the management of Pirtek Bradford in December. Kevin, who spent the last 4 and half years providing franchisee support from Acton HQ, realised at Bradford, he could now put his wealth of experience and practical knowhow into practise. He said, "Having spent my time sorting out other Centres, this was a great opportunity to run one for myself. It was obvious that Pirtek Bradford needed to be completely restructured, mainly to adjust to

the changing economic conditions. Many of the manufacturing industries have gone, but there is a lot of Government money being poured in to the city in the 'Big Idea' scheme, which will regenerate the city centre. I hope this will provide opportunities for local companies and eventually Pirtek. Even the canal is being rebuilt! This Centre covers a big area, including Halifax and the Yorkshire Dales and we will be expanding the existing customer base to cater for businesses in some of the more remote areas. I am currently busy visiting customers to introduce myself and I've been met with a lot of positive responses, obviously customers like the personal touch. On a positive note, we are already seeing an upturn in business, and during 2010, it is hoped that a new service van and MSST will be out on the road."

Only Port of Call



With the 40th birthday of the 240 ton MV Carrigaloe vessel just a few short months away, Cork-based Cross River Ferries has given the car ferry a well-earned refit, with hoses from Pirtek Cork at the heart of the overhaul.

Built in Newport in Wales in 1970, the 45 metre long Class 5 open car ferry - together with sister ship the Glenbrook - provides Cork with a vital cross harbour ferry service. These two vessels make the cross river journey up to 180 times per day, clocking up 5500 hours every year. With almost 40 years uninterrupted service under its belt, the MV Carrigaloe was brought into Cork's drydock recently to be fitted with a pair of new 223 kW Volvo Penta marine diesel engines; a job that would also involve the replacement of all the vessel's hydraulic, diesel and water hoses and which was charged to Pirtek Cork sales director and resident marine engineer Greg Cummins and MSST Tony Sheehy. Liam Cotter, marine superintendent for Cross River Ferries and sister company Marine Transport, has been a Pirtek customer for some 11 years and was happy to entrust this important refit work to the team at Pirtek Cork. "Pirtek Cork provide us with a superb 24 hour a day, seven days a week service backed with excellent product quality," Liam concludes. "Whether it's a hose problem on one of our own vessels or a ship from another shipping company, if it's in Cork, Pirtek Cork is our only port of call."





Wow factor

To say that the Oldham Centre is a bit of an eye opener is something of an understatement. From the outside it looks fairly traditional, but as soon as customers open the trade counter door, their usual reaction is 'Wow.' Soon after purchasing the adjoining unit, and effectively doubling the size of the Centre, staff set about completely revamping the interior by installing some very stylish hand-built, glass fronted offices, built by a local furniture company. Nealey Swadkins who runs the Centre, said 'We can now invite customers to discuss their requirements in comfortable and confidential surroundings. This has been much appreciated, as people like to be treated as professionals and they feel much more at ease in nice surroundings. As an added bonus, the offices are far less cramped, and there is a



huge sales floor, where we can display a much larger range of peripheral material such as tools, wash down plant, fuel handing equipment and metallic hoses. You find customers now take the time to browse simply because they like the surroundings. We also offer scheduled maintenance plans for hydraulic equipment at our customer sites - from a single power unit to a full plant production system."



Martin Clinton, general manager of Sandy-based Hi-Pro Scaffolding, featured in ITP 3, enjoying the Pirtek hospitality at Rockingham, with son Michael

Below, Perry Tubb (right) owner of Pirtek Harlow and Luton, with John Townsend of Barhale Construction at the last Formula Vee championship race of the season at Snetterton in September



But is it art...?

In the Pipeline isn't normally known for its coverage of the arts. But when we heard that Pirtek Liverpool had been involved in an art installation project at Garston Hospital, we sent along one of our intrepid cultural reporters to find out more.

The installation in question is known as "The Fountain" and is part of an exchange programme backed by the Liverpool Arts Centre in which artists from Liverpool and Gdansk in Poland work on projects in each other's countries. The Fountain is the brainchild of renowned Polish-born artist Dorota Buczkowska and is described by art critics as "a delightful idea as the last drops of water are extracted from the soon-to-be-demolished Sir Alfred Jones Memorial Hospital in Woolton Road." The piece originally featured a 50 mm diameter clear water pipe but it was impossible to get the flow of water to work properly on site. Pirtek Liverpool MSST-turned-artist Steve Cook came to the rescue, fitting and installing the artwork, before inserting a 12 mm hose inside the existing pipe. Cook's idea worked perfectly, and the constant flow of water completed the installation. Artist Dorata Buczkowska was full of praise for Pirtek, particularly after several other hose suppliers had proved less than helpful. "Pirtek Liverpool took the project seriously and put in an enormous amount of time and effort into making The Fountain work as I had envisaged it," Buczkowska concludes. "It was an unusual request but the finished artwork was much admired and gained a lot of media coverage. And it was great to see a company apply their engineering skills to the art world."



Liverpool MSST-turned-artist Steve Cook



Pirtek BTCC; end of year review

By any measure, the 2009 HiQ MSA British Touring Car Championship was a runaway success. Fabulous racing, over 320,000 spectators across 10 race days, a live TV audience of 13.8 million and 116 hours of screen time made the BTCC the biggest motor sport event outside Formula 1.

Once again, Pirtek was at the heart of the action with key support for Andrew Jordan as well as backing for Fabrizio Giovanardi and Matt Neal and the entire VXRacing team. For Andrew, the season brought some great highs as well as some lows, but his tally was three second places, one third and a place in BTCC history as the youngest driver ever to take pole position for a BTCC race. Meanwhile, Giovanardi and Neal challenged for the title and Giovanardi finally took third in the points' table with Neal fourth. Importantly, Vauxhall won the manufacturers' title and VXRacing won the team title to wrap up a great season. While Giovanardi won five races, Neal won once during the opening weekend of the year. It all started at Brands Hatch in early April and Andrew was immediately on the pace of the leading cars, even though mechanical dramas cost him a shot at the podium. Then came Thruxton, and a fabulous one-two-three finish for the Pirtek-backed cars at the high-speed Hampshire track. Next time out at Donington in mid-May, a week ahead of his 20th birthday, Andrew made history by becoming the youngest driver ever



to take pole position for a BTCC race. "I'd had a tough opening few rounds so I needed something like that to give me a boost," said Andrew.

That confidence showed at Oulton Park at the end of May on one of the most challenging tracks on the schedule. Andrew was right on the pace and bagged a second place to the super-experienced James Thompson. "I thought I might be on for a win at Oulton," said Andrew. "I was really pleased with the weekend."

However, after a run of podiums for Andrew, the middle of the season was a tough time for the team and all three drivers. The pace of the BMWs and Chevrolets got stronger and stronger and the VXRacing team was up against it in a bid to match the pace of drivers like Colin Turkington in the lead BMW and Jason Plato and Mat Jackson in Chevrolets. But it was Fabrizio Giovanardi who snatched a win in the rain soaked third race with Andrew in fourth at Croft as the season reached the halfway point. Snetterton in early August was another tough weekend for Andrew, while Fabrizio dominated the podium with two firsts and a second.. At both

Knockhill and Silverstone the Vauxhalls had a difficult time, even though Giovanardi scored a tremendous win at the Scottish track.

"Knockhill and Silverstone were hard but I learnt a lot," said Andrew. "The car was quite hard on its front tyres and it was all about tyre management in the races."

But at Rockingham in September, Andrew was right back at the heart of the BTCC action and led the third race of the day before finishing a strong second to Stephen Jelley's BMW. "I was actually a bit disappointed with second place at Rockingham, because I could have won it. But it was a good race and it was great to be back on the overall podium."

Then came the season finale at Brands Hatch and it was a frustrating weekend for Andrew, who suffered a range of car problems and came away with only a fifth place from three races. Although Giovanardi battled onto the podium it was not enough to earn him another BTCC crown.

"I'd hoped to have had a couple of wins," said Andrew as he reflected on the 2009 season. "But I proved that I can match the pace of Fabrizio and Matt and I gained a lot of confidence from knowing that I can run on their pace."

Now, planning is underway for the 2010 BTCC season, which starts at Thruxton on 4 April.

For the latest news on plans for the 2010 season, please check out page two of this issue

