



SPEC MIX® slings mud to support SkillsUSA National Championships in Kansas City



Following the awards ceremony, the happy competitors and sponsors gathered backstage. (Back l to r) Bryan Light of Brick SouthEast and chair of the Masonry Technical Committee which organized contest; Heath Drye, Mount Pleasant High School, Mount Pleasant, NC; Austin Rising, North Central Technology Center, Beloit, Kans.; Brandon Campanaro, The Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades, Media, Penn.; and Harry Junk, National Concrete Masonry Association. (Front l to r) Kimberly Kahl, Arizona Masonry Contractors Association; Jared Braveboy, Lake City High School, Lake City, SC; Joshua L. Kimrey, Mount Pleasant High School, Mount Pleasant, NC; Travis Smith, Northeast Technology Center, Beloit, Kans.; Al Herndon, Florida Masonry Apprentice and Education Foundation.

KANSAS CITY, MO — Once a year SkillsUSA student state champions gather from around the country to compete in 84 hands-on skill and leadership contests and SPEC MIX® was there.

As a part of its continuing support of SPEC MIX's sponsorship of SkillsUSA, SPEC MIX, its licensees, and business associate EZ Grout volunteered materials, equipment, experience, and hard work to support the mission of the SkillsUSA National Championships held

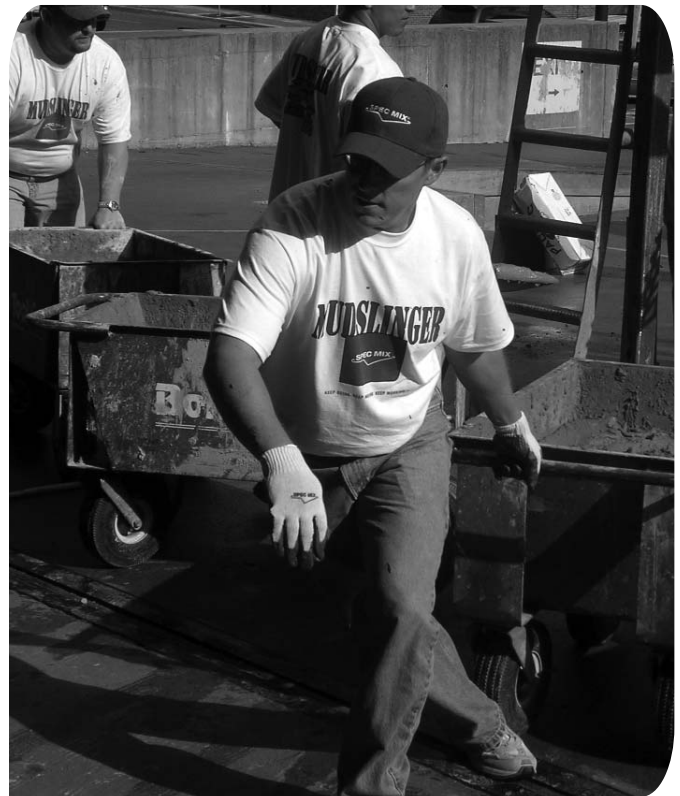
June 21-22, at H. Roe Battle Hall, Conference Center, Municipal Auditorium in downtown Kansas City, Missouri.



In what is considered the single greatest day of industry volunteerism in America, at an estimated cost of \$30 million, 4,700 SkillsUSA champions competed against other gold-level medalist from states and territories throughout the United States.

The Masonry competition had 50 competitors from 35 states. The competition consisted of a written test and 139 brick, perfectly placed according to plans, on a concrete block base in 6 hour time frame.

The 2006 winner of the **(continued on page 2)**



SPEC MIX Mudslingers supported the SkillsUSA competitors throughout the day with mortar. Upper left; Nick Blohowiak/ SPEC MIX Central Regional Sales Manager, foreground; Tom Peterson/ SPEC MIX West Cost Regional Sales Manager, along with the rest of the SPEC MIX Team kept the 35 masonry competitors supplied with all the mortar they needed.

SkillsUSA (continued from front page)

post secondary / college competition was Austin Rising, 23, from North Central Kansas Tech Center in Beloit, KS.

The 2006 winner of the secondary / high school competition was Joshua L. Kimrey, 18, from Mount Pleasant High School in Mount Pleasant, NC. SPEC MIX donated \$1,500 to each gold medal winner's school program in support of masonry trade education.

A SPEC MIX G7000 Silo was provided by the local SPEC MIX licensee Midwest Block & Brick, mortar and equipment was also donated to support the competitors in

constructing their walls. A big thanks to our SPEC MIX Mudslingers who mixed and slung mud for the 6 hours of competition. They were Brad Hawkins/ Gibraltar National, Rolly Cox/ EZ Grout, Patrick Cline/ Precision Packaging, Scott Ellingson/ Twin Cities Concrete Products, Brian Carney/ SPEC MIX, Nick Blohowiak/ SPEC MIX, Tom Peterson/ SPEC MIX, and Stan Harwell/ SPEC MIX.

We would like to give a special thanks to Mike Hulen and the team at SPEC MIX Licensee Midwest Block & Brick for their support and hard work in making the competition another success **(continued on page 4)**

New SPEC MIX® Polymer Modified Stone Veneer Mortar is demonstrated to architects, specifiers, and masons



Scott Ellingson/ Twin Cities Concrete Products - Iowa shows the incredible adhesion of the new polymer Modified Stone Veneer Mortar on a test wall for the crowd.

KANSAS CITY, MO — SPEC MIX® Polymer Modified Stone Veneer Mortar was a big hit with the architects, specifiers, and masons at the SPEC MIX new product demonstration held at SPEC MIX licensee Midwest Block & Brick on June 21st, in Kansas City. This product contains a specific blend of workability and bond enhancing admixtures to increase adhesion and workability characteristics. The Polymer Modified Stone Veneer Mortar was demonstrated in a worst case environment with dry, high IRA stone veneer units, installed on a dry CMU wall. The product turned in an impressive performance, showing incredible adhesion, workability and board life, which really made a positive impression on the crowd.

SPEC MIX is really excited about the truly superior performance of this new stone veneer mortar product.

Our thanks to our hosts Midwest Block & Brick and to Rolly Cox for making the long haul delivery and providing the services of a new EZ Grout Mug Hog used in the successful demonstration.



Left to right; Mike Hulen/ Midwest Block & Brick, Tom Peterson/ SPEC MIX West Cost Sales Manager, and Patrick O'Brien/ Midwest Block & Brick Architectural Sales Representative, going over the potential for the new Polymer Modified Stone Veneer Mortar.



Left to right; Rolly Cox/ EZ Grout, Nick Blohowiak/ SPEC MIX Central Regional Sales Manager, Justin Meyer/ Midwest Block & Brick Sales Manager, mix the Ploymer Modified Stone Veneer in a new EZ Grout Mud Hog on-site for the crowd.

SPEC MIX,[®] Inc., joins the Building Stone Institute



MENDOTA HEIGHTS, MN — SPEC MIX,[®] Inc., is pleased to announce it has become a member of the Building Stone Institute. Founded in 1919, Building Stone Institute is a not-for-profit trade association dedicated to serving its

member firms while at the same time educating the consumers on the uses and benefits of natural stone.

For 85 years, BSI has worked on behalf of the quarries, fabricators, dealers, importers, exporters, carvers, restorers, designers, and installers that comprise its membership. Their work takes on a multi-faceted approach. First, they continually strive to provide programs and resources that enable their member companies to offer the highest level of quality products and services. Second, they work with the architectural and design communities ensuring that they are

well-versed on the applications, both structural and aesthetic, of natural stone. Finally, they create materials designed to communicate to the end user the various benefits of designing their projects with stone.

Nick Blohowiak, SPEC MIX Central Regional Sales Manager, and Tom Peterson, SPEC MIX West Coast Sales Manager, are currently working with BSI to set up educational seminars for mortar use with natural stone and natural stone veneer that we think will be very helpful to BSI members.

Everyone at SPEC MIX is excited about the positive education and communication opportunities this membership offers us to this segment of the masonry industry.

If you would like to get more information on BSI go to: www.buildingstoneinstitute.org

SPEC MIX,[®] Inc., has licensee mid-year sales and production meeting.

KANSAS CITY, MO — SPEC MIX,[®] Inc., had a licensee mid-year sales and production meeting June 20-21, at the Marriot Country Club Plaza, Kansas City, Missouri, to review developments for the first half of 2006.

“We had outstanding sales growth in 2005 and we want to keep the momentum going into 2006 which looks to be another record year for SPEC MIX,” said Brian Carney, SPEC MIX VP, General Manager. The meeting was a chance for the SPEC MIX staff to present new ideas, products, and bring our licensees up-to-date on our marketing direction, product introductions, SPEC MIX BRICKLAYER 500[®] developments, and industry trends and opportunities for SPEC MIX going into the second half of the year.

Among the specific items covered; current regional 2006 sales, the introduction of the new SPEC MIX Masonry and Stucco CD marketing tools, new product introductions for Self Consolidated Grout (SCG) and Polymer Modified Stone Veneer Mortar. Speaker presentations were made on the latest developments in Color Spectrometers by Pat Bischof/ Hunter Lab, Pigment Batching Systems by Terry Fenelon/ Prism Pigments, and Batching Control Systems by



Several media presentations were presented to SPEC MIX Licensees to bring them up-to-date on new developments in the industry, new product introductions, and opportunities for SPEC MIX coming into the second-half of the year.

Phil Kramlinger/ K&F Batching Systems.

Later in the afternoon a field demonstration for the new Self Consolidating Grout (SCG) and Polymer Modified Stone Veneer Mortar was conducted at SPEC MIX licensee Midwest Block & Brick, Kansas City, Missouri. The SPEC MIX licensees joined a crowd of a 100 plus architects, specifiers, contractors, and masons, for a terrific demonstration of the new SPEC MIX products to this select target audience.

SkillsUSA (continued from page 2)

for the masonry industry.

The competition was an enormous undertaking requiring 56,000 volunteer hours during the competition week. SPEC MIX is proud to support SkillsUSA and its important work in helping to provide our industry with future masons.



Fifty masonry students from 35 states competed in the SkillsUSA National Competition. For up to six hours, each had to build the best composite project out of 139 brick, perfectly placed according to plans, on a concrete block base.

The Masonry Technical Committee's other sustaining members and sponsors of the contest included Arizona Masonry Contractors Association, Bon Tool Co., Brick Industry Association, Hanley-Wood LLC, Marshalltown Co., Mason

Contractors Association of America, Masonry Institute of Tennessee, National Concrete Masonry Association, Portland Cement Association, and Spec Mix.

Note: To learn more about the Masonry Technical Committee, contact Bryan Light at (770) 760-0728. To learn more about SkillsUSA go to www.SkillsUSA.org.

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For information on advertising in Trowel Tales, contact Jeff Farmakes, editor, at (651) 905-8109 or via e-mail at jfarmakes@specmix.com.

industry highlights

Self Consolidating Grout (SCG) has a big day at Midwest Block & Brick

KANSAS CITY, MO — SPEC MIX® had a very successful demonstration of its new Self Consolidating Grout (SCG), to a audience of 100 plus architects, specifiers, contractors, and masons, on June 21st, at SPEC MIX Licensee Midwest Block & Brick, located in Kansas City, Missouri.

The demo displayed the unique features of both products to a captive audience. SCG is generally defined as a grout mixture that has a fluidity that allows for self-consolidation without external energy, remains homogenous during and after placement and easily flows through and around steel reinforcement. These properties are achieved through the use of polycarboxylate high-range water-reducing admixture in conjunction with a viscosity modifying admixture. The flowable nature of the mix allows for placement through congested reinforcement or grout spaces that are partially blocked without segregation. SCG would require little or no consolidation even in high-lift grouting. The benefit to the contractor is a reduction in labor due to the lack of mechanical vibration and the specifier/owner is assured of a solid grouted wall with a proper aggregate distribution that lacks any voids.

A block wall was constructed prior to the demo with a see-through Plexiglas plate at the bottom to expose a horizontal



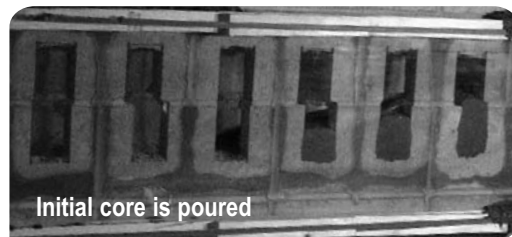
Left to right foreground; Mark Lukkarila/ SPEC MIX, and Stan Harwell/ SPEC MIX East Coast Sales Manager, observe Scott Ellingson/ TCCP-Iowa, pour the SCG into the test wall's core.

bond beam cavity. First up Mark Lukkarila/ SPEC MIX Technical Services Manager, demonstrated to the audience how to spread test SCG to ensure proper water content and homogeneous mix. When the SCG was poured into the core, the see-through view showed the outstanding performance of SCG — excellent flow, no segregation/separation and no mechanical vibration required for reconsolidation. The material filled every void in the cells.

Our thanks again to Rolly Cox of EZ Grout for providing the services of a new EZ Grout Mud Hog used in mixing the SCG. Our special thanks to Midwest Block & Brick for hosting and promoting this successful demo event. This was a graphic demonstration of the innovation of the new SPEC MIX Self Consolidating Grout product .

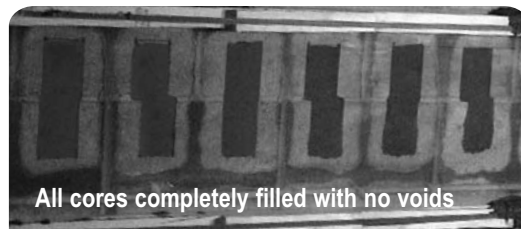


Mark Lukkarila, SPEC MIX's Technical Services Manager, demonstrated to the audience how to spread test SCG to ensure proper water content and homogeneous mix.



Initial core is poured

Photographs above and below; At a spread of 26", the SCG flowed down one core on the right, through the horizontal beam and climbed up the next core on the left.



All cores completely filled with no voids



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UPCOMING EVENTS

NCMA Mid-Year Meetings
July 23-28
Chicago, IL

BSI Designer Education Series - Stone Restoration
July 28
Washington, D.C.

SPEC MIX BRICKLAYER 500®
Regional Competition
Packaged Concrete
July 29
Chicago, IL

SPEC MIX BRICKLAYER 500®
Regional Competition
Quikrete Cincinnati
August 12
Cincinnati, OH

SPEC MIX BRICKLAYER 500®
Regional Competition
Quikrete Wisconsin
August 26
Milwaukee, WI

SPEC MIX BRICKLAYER 500®
Regional Competition
Quikrete Denver
September 9
Denver, CO

IPCMA Fall Meeting
September 15-18
Williamsburg, VA



SPEC MIX BRICKLAYER 500®
Regional Competition
Gibraltar National
September 16
Detroit, MI

SPEC MIX BRICKLAYER 500®
Regional Competition
TCC
September 16
Omaha, NE

SPEC MIX 2006
Licensee Meeting
September 20-22
Colorado Springs, CO

MCAA Mid-Year Meeting
November 8-11
Maui, HI



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