



Masons compete for Fastest Trowel on the Block

In a show of skill and speed, 13 masons from across the nation competed for the title of Fastest Trowel on the Block.

The event was part of the MCAA's Masonry Showcase in Tampa, Fla. On Saturday, March 15, 2003, hundreds of spectators gathered to witness the showdown. In only 20 minutes, each mason constructed a 24-foot long masonry wall, laying as many block as he could and as accurately as he could. Errors in void, plumb and level could take down the speediest mason.

The final results were as follows:

First place: **Rex Allen**, Cunningham Masonry, Green Grove Springs, Fla. He won \$5,000 in cash, a Crick level and an American flag hard hat.

Second place: **Pascal Robertson**, Pascal Robertson Masonry, Aopke, Fla. He received \$2,500 in cash and a Crick level.

Third place: **Glenn Houghton Sr.**, Houghton Masonry, Blue Grass, Iowa. He received \$1,000 in cash and a Crick level.

Also competed:

Raymond Burough of MBI, Seffner, Fla.

Mike Canez III of Mabante Masonry, Glendale, Ariz.

Johnny Castillo of J.B. McGalliard and Sons, Inc., North Hollywood, Calif.

Tim Conneally, Newport Richie, Fla.

Melvin Dawson of Surver Brothers, Youngstown, Fla.

Dana Eson of Byron Matlock Masonry, Elfers, Fla.

Benjamin Houghton of Better Built Masonry, Durant, Iowa

Jeff Lammers Jr. of Schroeder Masonry Inc., Leipsic, Ohio

Galen Overholt of Galen Overholt Masonry, Columbus, NC

Larry Schroeder of Schroeder Masonry, Leipsic, Ohio



Ben Houghton of Better Built Masonry, Durant, Iowa, vies for a top spot in the Fastest Trowel contest. Houghton is a past participant of the Fastest Trowel on the Block.

The SPEC MIX team was right in the action mixing up mortar and getting it to the mason's stations. A special thanks to honorary Mudslingers Steven Fecchino, WASCO, Inc., and Harry McGraw, Lucia Masonry, for stepping in and helping out. And of course, many thanks to our regular hard-working Mudslingers who gave their all: Mary Jane Mueller and Jeff Turley, Pre Mix Industries; John Feyerabend, Onondaga Dry Mix; Scott Berlowski, Quikrete Wisconsin; Tony Weinand and Lyle Thompson, Twin City Concrete Products; Jason Stutts, Quikrete Peachland; Sam Prater, Quikrete Atlanta; and Marty Schiraldi, Package Pavement.

Also, thank you to Fastest Trowel co-sponsor, the MCAA, and to the following companies that make this the premier event that it is:

Crick Level: competitors' and winners' levels

RMC Ewell Inc.: blocks

Pre-Mix Industries: SPEC MIX® mortar

MultiQuip: mortar mixers

OmniQuip: forklift use

Red Brookshire of Florida: competition materials

Fastest Trowel on the Block winners

1st Place Team



Rex Allen of Cunningham Masonry, Green Grove Springs, Fla., and tenders Charles Harris and Kenneth Eiland.

2nd Place Team



Pascal Roberston of Pascal Robertson Masonry, Aopke, Fla., and tenders Ed Fullen and Mike Fullen.

3rd Place Team



Glenn Houghton Sr. of Houghton Masonry, Blue Grass, Iowa, and tenders Timothy Whitehouse and William Farnsworth.

SPEC MIX committed to promoting masonry industry at MCAA's Masonry Showcase

SPEC MIX's and the MCAA's partnership in promoting the masonry industry began 11 years ago at the Masonry Expo (now known as the Masonry Showcase) in San Diego, Calif. During those 11 years, our two organizations and the NCMA have created the Fastest Trowel on the Block, one of the highlights of the Masonry Showcase; promoted the industry to a new generation of masons with the Skills Challenge; and educated engineers and architects about the importance of good quality masonry in their building projects.



At this year's Masonry Showcase in Tampa, Fla., SPEC MIX participated in the MCAA's three-day Architects' Masonry Symposium. The symposium covers various masonry topics and offers Learning Credits for AIA members. Regional sales managers Nick Blohowiak and Stan Harwell presented "Selecting and Specifying Preblended Masonry Mortar." The presentation reviewed the importance of correct mortar specification, demonstrated how preblended mortar prevents the problems of field mixed mortar, and discussed the future of masonry mortar.

SPEC MIX also offers an AIA/CES presentation to any organization interested in learning more about the advantages to factory preblended mortar. (See "SPEC MIX presents at MIW Lunchbox Lessons" on the next page.)

SPEC MIX is proud to be a resource in the masonry industry and to be an active contributor to the MCAA and to the Masonry Showcase. We'll see you in Las Vegas in 2004.

SPEC MIX presents at MIW Lunchbox Lessons



Nick Blohowiak demonstrates how moisture content in masonry sand can change the quality and consistency of mortar.

The Masonry Institute of Washington (MIW) constantly looks for ways to promote the many benefits of masonry construction. They created “Masonry, It Makes a Village” in which architects and masonry contractors team up to design and build a unique project featuring masonry. The

program has been successful in bringing the contractors and designers together, but the MIW wanted to take their efforts further. They recently created a special seminar series called “Lunchbox Lessons.” On a monthly basis, the MIW provides lunch and schedules a guest speaker to educate both architects and masonry contractors about various aspects of the masonry industry. When it comes to educating the industry, the MIW knew SPEC MIX® was a must to kick off this new, exciting program.

Barbara Hedrick, director of the MIW, contacted Fred Zissel with Central Pre-Mix Kent to ask if SPEC MIX was interested in presenting to their group, and Fred jumped at the opportunity. On Feb. 27, SPEC MIX, Inc., gave the AIA/CES accredited presentation “Factory Preblended Mortar for Masonry Construction,” which qualified architects for highly valued Learning Units for Health, Safety and Welfare credit.

Twenty-three architects and masonry contractors learned the fundamentals of masonry mortar and most importantly the multiple benefits of factory preblended SPEC MIX mortar. Multiple hands-on demonstrations show the audience the pitfalls and inconsistencies associated with conventional field mixed mortars. At the end of the presentation, the audience arrives at one conclusion: The only way to achieve total quality control with masonry mortars on a project is to specify and use factory preblended products, and none is better than the only national network of preblended mortar specialists, SPEC MIX.

Superlite Block® expands business with SPEC MIX® products



Superlite's Lone Butte facility

Superlite® Block, an Oldcastle® company, is the largest block manufacturer in Arizona with five plants in Phoenix, Ariz.; a retail office in Yuma, Ariz.; their newest acquisition in Needles, Calif.; and a new sales office in Las Vegas, Nev. Along with the gray block market, Superlite produces architectural block, Belgard® pavers and Keystone® retaining walls, and is a dealer for Pittsburgh Corning glass block.

Superlite built their Lone Butte, Ariz., facility not only to increase block capacity in the east valley of Phoenix, but to expand their bagging capabilities, specifically to offer SPEC MIX® to their customers. In 2002, the Lone Butte facility produced approximately 17,000 tons of SPEC MIX products. Superlite started out with 34 silos three years ago and currently has 92 G7000 series and ten LOAD N GOs.

Dave Endres, manager, and Gilbert Valenzuela, sales representative, are Superlite's master Mudslingers for SPEC MIX operations. They do not hesitate to call on contractors and installers to instruct them in the SPEC MIX way. After proper instruction by Dave and Gilbert, most block layers are converted to SPEC MIX. “We get a sense of pride as we drive along a road where construction is underway and see a SPEC MIX silo on the property,” says Ted Kozikowski, Superlite Block president. “We now find it challenging to get enough silos to keep up with the growth.”

Meet the new LOAD N GO silo: Ideal for all masons and job sites

Whether you're a mason tackling a project designed with 5,000 blocks or 500,000 bricks, indoors or in-between floors, gray mortar, colored mortar or grout, the new SPEC MIX® LOAD N GO silo is the perfect solution to help you out!

There are three things that hold true in the masonry construction industry. One, no two contractors approach a project the same way. Two, masons can't waste time waiting for materials, especially mortar. Third, laborers need to be as efficient as possible to maximize their crew's productivity. For these reasons, SPEC MIX designed the low-profile, light-weight LOAD N GO (LNG) silo for all types of mason contractors, large or small, to increase production on the most diverse job site conditions.

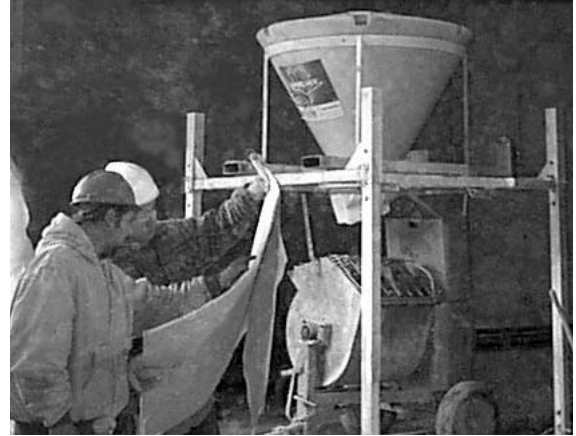
Unlike the standard silo system, which holds as many as five 3,000-pound bulk bags of material, the LNG's tough poly cone holds just one bulk bag. Moreover, it can be dispensed from a low-lift, single or double stage forklift. For masons demanding the quality and efficiency of the SPEC MIX system and products, the only requirement is a lift able to raise the full, top cone (4,000 lbs.) approximately six feet high or ten feet high to dispense a bulk bag into the cone (see LNG spec sheet). Many contractors use their skid-steer loaders to employ the LNG system. And, when erected on site at its low-



est setting, the LNG is only 9 feet, 5 inches tall, making it ideal for various interior jobs (see upper right photo). The LNG also comes with a ladder and loading platform for contractors who choose to use their high-reach forklifts commonly used with the larger silos.

Both new and veteran SPEC MIX users have found new applications for the LNG, such as CMU sound wall and perimeter fencing projects, tract and multi-family housing projects as well as high-rise buildings or small commercial jobs. Its mobility allows the LNG to be used in tandem with the standard silos for buildings incorporating bands of colored masonry or special product mixes.

With 45 units scattered about the map, we are pleased with contractor feedback on the LNG. The LOAD N GO gives the



contractor all the benefits of the traditional silos AND the convenience of preblended mortar in small, paper bags. Here are some of the comments we have received about the LNG.

"We're working on a 15-story building in downtown Chicago. One day we are inside, then we're outside the next. The LOAD N GO makes it easy for us to move from one location to the next. And when it's inside, it's still easy to load even with a ceiling height of 15 feet. We only have 3 or 4 masons, and the LOAD N GO is appealing for the slower daily volume."



Tom Staszal, Build One Ltd., Chicago, Ill.

"I like the LOAD N GO because it allows me the benefits of bulk bag mortar on any size job with whatever crew is available."

Dennis Shearer, D&R Masonry, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

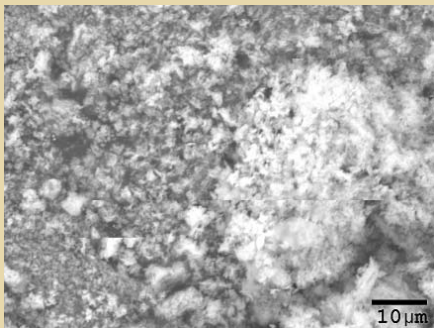
"We actually used a standard silo *and* a LOAD N GO at the new Hyatt complex in Sedona. We started with the five-bag silo, but it took 15 minutes to get a batch of mortar transferred to the masons since the silo had to stay in a central location. But when we put the LOAD N GO on site, it only took four to five minutes to get mortar to the masons because the LOAD N GO moved everywhere they were laying block. With 100,000 perimeter blocks to lay over 25 acres, the LOAD N GO was a huge help!"

Roger Larson, Sutter Masonry, Phoenix, Ariz.

Case study: Efflorescence

The materials used in the building of masonry walls contain soluble salts of various compositions. The soluble salts go into solution when water is available and are subsequently transported to the mortar, brick or block surfaces where evaporation causes the salts to form a deposit called efflorescence. In new building construction, some efflorescence due to lime or calcium hydroxide is common. Other soluble salts are present in clay brick. Soluble salts in brick can include vanadium, manganese, sulfate, barium and chromium compounds. Soluble salts potentially contributed from mortar and block can include calcium hydroxide, carbonates, sulfates and chlorides.

For example, a new car dealership was constructed recently in Las Vegas, Nev. The masonry wall system was composed of colored concrete masonry units and colored mortar (both dark gray). Shortly after the masonry walls were constructed, efflorescence began appearing on the mortar joints and concrete masonry units. A majority of the mortar and concrete masonry units exhibited white efflorescence. The contractor assumed that the efflorescence was caused by the lime from the mortar. Samples of efflorescence material were collected and analyzed at the SPEC MIX®, Inc., laboratory.



SEM image of the white efflorescence material.

The samples were viewed using a low vacuum scanning electron microscope with energy dispersive spectral (EDS) analysis of X-rays capability. The analysis revealed that the efflorescence was not caused by the lime used in the mortar. The crystal morphology and chemical composition of the efflorescence material and chemical composition were consistent with sodium sulfate (i.e., Thenardite).

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Building design enhances shoreline



Photo by Tim Sahnou.

Project: Westminster-Canterbury True LifeCare Senior Living Facility
 Licensee: Pre-Mix Industries, Chesapeake, Va.
 Mason contractor: Snow Jr. & King, Inc.
 Architect: SFCS, Inc.

Expanding their amenity offerings and resident capacity, Westminster-Canterbury, a True LifeCare retirement community located on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, added a 14-story West Tower. Featuring a parking garage, theater, clinic and 164 new residences, the new West Tower complements the original East Tower while maximizing the residents' beautiful views of the bay. The contemporary brick-and-glass structure, the extensive landscaping along Shore Drive, and the expansive lawn around the East Tower and down to the beachfront serve to enhance the architectural appearance of the shoreline.

When originally built in 1983, Snow Jr. & King was the mason contractor, and they were chosen again by W.M. Jordan Construction, Inc., for the addition of the block and brick tower. Pre-Mix Industries provided SPEC MIX® mortar for the job. Snow Jr. & King foreman Eddie Wells said that considering the job pace and physical requirements of the project, the job wouldn't have run as smoothly without the SPEC MIX system. "The space it saved us and the manpower it saved us helped make this job possible."

The masonry portion of the high rise was erected in less than 12 months and required six silos, 236 bulk bags of gray mortar, 618 bulk bags of colored mortar and 150 bulk bags of grout.

Designed by the architectural firm SFCS, Inc., this \$80 million expansion project received *Masonry Construction's* "2003 Best High Rise," which was awarded at the World of Concrete/World of Masonry show in Las Vegas, Nev.

Joey Doak: Athlete, academician and mason, too



Joey Doak (right) and his instructor Glenn Edwards (left) are rightfully proud of Joey's completed composite project at the National Masonry Competition in Kansas City, Mo.

High school senior Joey Doak of Sandston, Va., is our Masonry Apprentice of the Month. Doak was nominated by his tech school instructor.

"Joey is an excellent student and athlete," says Glenn J. Edwards, Doak's instructor at Highland Springs Tech Center, Mechanicsville, Va. "He's a solid honor roll student and has perfect attendance. He's also going to be an excellent mason. Joey picked up the trade very quickly. Just three weeks after handling a trowel for the first time, he finished seventh at the Virginia State Fair."

Last summer, following his junior year of high school and his first year in his tech school's masonry program, Doak participated in the national masonry contest held in conjunction with the SkillsUSA – VICA National Leadership and Skills Conference in Kansas City, Mo. Not only was Doak the first student in the masonry program at Highland Springs Tech Center to advance to the national level, he finished a very respectable 14th place in the secondary division.

In school, Doak has maintained a 3.7 GPA while participating for three years on his Varina High School Two-time state championship volleyball team. He plays catcher on the school's baseball team, too. And, if that wasn't enough, Doak was recently tapped into Beta.

Through his school, Doak has been placed in an apprenticeship position with French Brothers Construction Co. Doak spends a half day on a job site that he would normally spend in the classroom. His supervisor evaluates and records his work according to school guidelines. These evaluations are the basis of his grade for the final semester of the masonry program.

"Joey's a standout," Edwards continued. "The quality of his work is exceptional. He seems to care about everything he does, and I see him helping others all the time. He has aspirations of starting his own business in a few years. I will be truly surprised if it doesn't happen."

Efflorescence continued

Sodium sulfate is a soluble salt typically associated with sulfate-bearing soils or ground water and is common in the southwestern region of the United States. Potential sources for the alkali sulfate efflorescence in new construction can include, but are not limited to:

- Storing of concrete masonry units on the ground;
- Water used in the making of mortar, masonry units or grout;
- Unwashed sands used in the masonry units, grout or mortar.

Different compositions require different removal proce-

dures. While specific proprietary cleaners are effective for calcium hydroxide-related efflorescence, they may not be effective on alkali sulfates. An effective method of removing sodium sulfate efflorescence is to scrub with a dry, stiff brush. If necessary, water can be used with the brush to remove the efflorescence. Since the alkali sulfate is water-soluble, prolonged exposure to precipitation may also mitigate the efflorescence. Efflorescence may reoccur as long as there is availability of the alkali sulfate and moisture.

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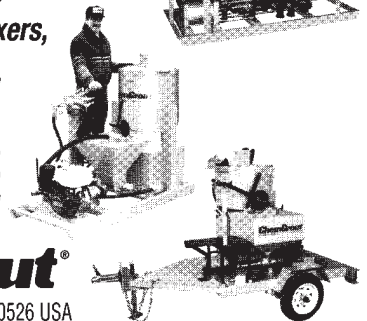
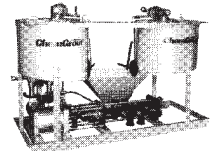
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April 9-11
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2002 Masonry Building Code Seminar

April 9
Washington, DC

Masonry Standards Joint Committee Meeting

April 10-12
Orlando, FL

The Masonry Society Executive Committee

April 12-13
Orlando, FL

2002 Masonry Building Code Seminar

April 16
Minneapolis, MN

AIA Show 2003

May 8-10
San Diego, CA

Southern Brick Institute Manpower Forum Apprentice Contest

May 30-31
Gainesville, FL

VICA SkillsUSA

June 26, 2003
Kansas City, MO

CSI University Annual Conference

June 26-28
Philadelphia, PA



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