

## Department Feature - The Georg Core Cutting Department



By Debra McCown

After two weeks in Germany learning how to use the new core-cutting machine, Jeremy Stanley and Lee Galliher (shown left to right in the inset above) say it's brought a huge efficiency improvement at Federal Pacific.

"The old machine took around an hour and a half to cut one [transformer core], and the new machine does it in about 30 minutes," said Jeremy, group leader for Large Line Stacking. "We get more done in less time. It's much more efficient, much more user-friendly, and a lot more maintenance-friendly."

From a maintenance standpoint, Lee said, the diagnostic software within the GEORG Ecoline TBA440 machine is a huge improvement over the 1983 model it replaced.

"The other machine, when something happened, you might get an error message, but it wouldn't necessarily tell you exactly what it was," said Lee, maintenance area manager for Federal Pacific. "This thing will give you a message, it will show you a picture of what's wrong, and you can even pull up schematic diagrams for troubleshooting." If the problem is still unclear, he said, someone at GEORG - the German company that built the machine - can log in remotely from Germany to help with troubleshooting and repair.

Lee and Jeremy spent two weeks in Germany learning the machine before installing it at Federal Pacific. Because Jeremy already knew how to operate the old machine, he said, it only took three or four days to learn what was new - and after a few days of programming, they were able to move on to troubleshooting. "He'd say, 'Jeremy, I'll make you a problem. You fix it,'" he recalls of his trainer at GEORG, whose hands-on lessons were extremely valuable. "We learned a lot."

During their two weeks of training, Jeremy said, they also had a chance to see the sights in Kreutzal, a Bristol-sized city in the mountains about an hour east of Cologne. Jeremy said they had a great time - and brought home a few souvenirs in addition to the knowledge they gained. Lee said he was glad for the opportunity to see machines in various states of assembly, which gave him a good sense of how the one for Federal Pacific functions.

"The main thing I was focused on was the installation since once it got here we were the ones responsible for setting it and getting it running," Lee said. "It turned out to be not as difficult as I thought. The setup installation went very smoothly because we had plenty of time to pick the guy's brain and really understand how the thing goes together." As the all-electric machine clatters away in a soft, salsa-like rhythm, Lee said the machine is everything they expected: "It's cool."

It now operates alongside an older, 1987 model that operates with compressed air - a system more efficient than the hydraulic machine that was just replaced, but not nearly as fast as the new one.

Operations Manager John Robbins said the company's investment in this state-of-the-art machine is important for the future. Not only is it more reliable and efficient, he said, but it's also equipped to meet new U.S. Department of Energy efficiency standards for transformers, which take effect in 2016. "GEORG did a great job designing it, and all of the safety features that are in this machine that weren't in our older machine are really impressive," John said. "Sending those two over to Germany was a definite advantage to us. We got an extra week of technical troubleshooting."