



Shop gets unexpected hard-milling surprise

by AMERICAN MACHINIST (AMWEBMASTER@PENTON.COM)

While looking for a machine to speed EDM-electrode making, Reny & Company Inc. was exposed to the concept of high-speed hard milling. As a result, the El Monte, Calif., moldmaking shop now cuts its electrodes and machines hard molds and dies with the same machining center.

"A couple of years ago, we were looking for CNC EDM capability and were close to making a machine purchase when I realized that EDM wasn't where my backlog existed. It was in fabricating electrodes," says Steve Raiken, company president. The surprise came when Reto Fehr, regional sales manager for Mikron Bostomatic, made a sales call at Reny.

"He touted the Mikron VCP 600 high-speed machining center, saying that it would not only cut our electrodes but also machine hard steel as well," recalls Raiken. With these capabilities, he thought why even make the electrode if you can mill the cavity?

The VCP 600's hard-milling capabilities have opened more doors for increasing business at Reny, says Raiken. "This machine gives us greater speed and better reliability for meeting the demands of high-pressure, high-profile jobs and has raised the bar for time-to-market expectations," he adds.

To handle hard milling, the Mikron VCP 600 features a polymer-concrete base that provides thermal stability and vibration dampening qualities up to 63 better than cast iron, says the machine's manufacturer. The result is good cutting performance, high accuracy, and quality surface finishes, in addition to long tool life.

Available spindles for the VCP 600 range in speed from 12,000 to 42,000 rpm, and they are vector controlled with hybrid ceramic bearings. The spindles are well suited for cutting hardened steel, graphite, and other materials.

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