



Metso Keeps Wheels Turning

- *CUSTOMER CHALLENGE: Replace a pillow block assembly with limited downtime*
- *METSO'S SOLUTION: Effectively coordinate all available resources*
- *RESULT: Customer back online with minimal time loss*

During a routine inspection of a stacker-reclaimer at AK Steel in Middletown, Ohio, USA a sharp-eyed Metso field service engineer spotted deterioration in the pillow block assembly on a bucket-wheel drive shaft. A stacker-reclaimer is used to manage material within a storage area. In this instance, it was transporting coal to the coking process within the steel mill via rotating buckets and a conveyor system.

A simple failure in the grease line to the wheel's drive shaft, which is driven by a motor and reducer assembly and is held in place by two pillow block assemblies, had rendered the bearings inoperable.

According to Carl Morrell, project manager at E.L. Epperson machine shop, a failure in this assembly is costly and time-consuming. "There would be a shut-down of at least two weeks," he said. "The one-man operation of the stacker-reclaimer would have to be replaced by a fleet of trucks and front-end loaders in order to move the coal."

Removing and replacing the damaged assembly

was a physically and technically daunting job, but it was the way Metso overcame the time constraints that really made the completion of the project so impressive. Ultimately, all components were consolidated, assembly was completed, shipped, and on site at the customer's shop within two days.

Grant Kennedy (Manager Wear/Spare Parts Department) emphasized the speed of the project turnaround. "We were presented with the task of manufacturing an assembly that would normally take weeks to procure the necessary material alone," he said. "I can't impress enough the magnitude of the efforts put forth with all involved, including the intuitiveness of our field service engineer, the internal parts team, and our valued shops."

Morrell confirmed the excellence of the service, "All the parts became available with no problem," he said. "The response time was extremely impressive. I can honestly say that Metso's product support was superior to anybody else I've ever dealt with."