
A Canadian mine's managers, frustrated by the lack of consistency in drilling costs, discovered that their drill bits were being over-used and not correctly sharpened. The answer wasn't far away.

Jacques Morasse, Purchasing Director of Inmet Mining's Troilus operations in north-western Quebec, decided to seek expert advice. He contacted Secoroc Canada and offered to pay for its advice, training and recommendations on the best bit sharpening equipment.

"We decided to do it for free to show how performance improves when drill bits are properly sharpened," says Bernie Rouleau, Secoroc's Regional Manager.

"We always try to help the customer to achieve maximum performance. In this case, because of the technical support we provided, we helped the mine to establish a new standard – and now it will not accept less."

Cost per metre

At most of its customers' mines, Secoroc owns the drilling consumables and maintains them on a daily basis with the operator paying on a cost per metre basis. At





Helping the client to do a bit better: Secoroc's GrindMatic B-DTH grinding unit, in the right hands, keeps the bits in first rate condition for the Troilus mine.

for a month, sharpening with the mine's existing Secoroc GrindMatic B-DTH unit at the same time as he trained the Troilus staff. "Shawn did a great job," says Jacques Morasse.

The before-and-after results were impressive. Bit life previously averaged around 520 metres, but increased to more than 625 metres – a 20% improvement – after the sharpening and bit shop re-organisation.

Concludes Bernie Rouleau: "I think our technical support and recommendations have been very useful and have delivered good results for the Troilus operation."

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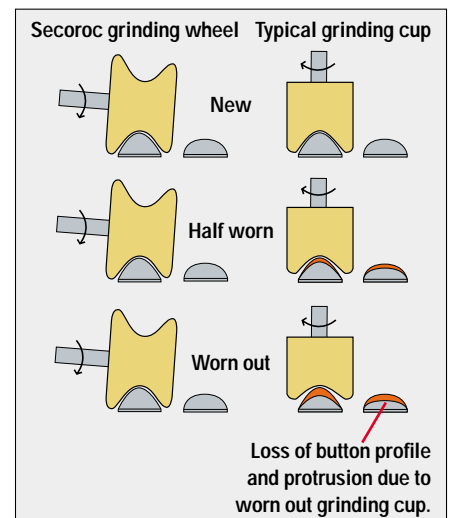
Looking sharp at Troilus

isolated Troilus, the mine bought its drill bits from various suppliers and sharpened them itself.

Now Troilus has purchased a new circuit of bits – there are some 72 in circulation at any one time – and Secoroc helped to set up a properly ventilated and

laid out workshop for grinding. A method of measuring improved performance with properly sharpened drill bits was established and each miner was given a set of 15 bits to track progress.

Shawn Hynes, Secoroc technical service representative, was at the mine



The GrindMatic machine's secret of success is that both the grinding table and the diamond grinding wheel rotate. The result is perfectly ground button surfaces, regardless of whether the buttons are spherical or ballistic.

In addition, the machine's unique diamond grinding wheel is designed to ensure even wear on its grinding surface while still retaining its profile. This, in turn, guarantees the button shape throughout the life of the wheel.

According to Secoroc, it is the only solution able to consistently deliver perfectly shaped buttons.

Shawn Hynes, technical service representative for Secoroc, proudly displays two of his well-sharpened drill bits.



Jean-Claude Simard, Mine Superintendent at the Troilus project (left) with Jacques Morasse, Plant Manager at the Troilus mine.