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Verdict of the Jury:

The winner has taken development work a major step ahead in a very determined and methodical way. The winning design puts to use in an advantageous way the properties of advanced high strength steels, which has resulted in improved performance of the machine and environmental benefits.

French mower wins this year's Swedish Steel Prize



The Swedish Steel Prize 2008 was awarded to the French company Kuhn. The Prize was awarded for a new grass mower unit made of advanced high strength steel and designed for tractor mounting. The use of high strength steel has enabled the mower to be made lighter and stronger than its predecessor. The result is a mower unit with improved operating economy, and better ergonomics and environmental properties. The Prize was presented in the Blue Hall of the Stockholm City Hall in conjunction with an anniversary dinner on 20 November.

The Swedish Steel Prize design accolade has been awarded for the tenth year in succession. The Prize is international and is open to anyone who uses high strength steel in production or in products. The tenth anniversary of the Prize was celebrated during a three-day Swedish Steel Prize event that was concluded with a gala dinner in the Blue Hall of the Stockholm City Hall, which is widely associated with the Nobel Prize banquet.

Worthy winner

"As we look back over the ten years that the Swedish Steel Prize is now celebrating, we are struck by the very robust development of these steels during this period," says Martin Lindqvist, head of the SSAB Tunnpått Division and also Chairman of the Swedish Steel Prize jury. "This applies both to the development of new steels and the ability of users to put the materials to use. Kuhn, this year's winner of the Swedish Steel Prize, represents this new way of thinking in many ways. The designers have put to use the new, strong steel and have succeeded in developing an economically sustainable design that meets the demands for one of the most wearing and recurrent tasks in road maintenance. Numerous variables have also been weighed in during the design work, including the user's situation, improved ergonomics, and also the need for better environmental properties. The design approach is exceptionally proficient, and Kuhn is a worthy winner of the Swedish Steel Prize 2008.

Successful work

The new Kuhn Pro-Longer mower unit is mounted at the extremity of a rotatable arm extending from the mounting on a tractor. The arm is rotatable in different directions, which enables the driver to gain access virtually anywhere. Since the tractor usually runs on uneven ground during the mowing operation, the torsional forces are very high. The weight of the mower unit is decisive to the wear – the lower the weight, the lesser the wear.

”Low weight was a priority objective, but we soon realized that a stronger design was equally important,” explains Pascal Gauthron, Project Engineer at Kuhn, who bore the main responsibility for the design of the Pro-Longer. ”The use of advanced high strength steels, enabled us to meet both objectives, while also improving the usability of the mower unit and the safety of the driver.

Stimulates new thinking

Kuhn has also ensured that the design is suitable for an automated production process.

”The winning company has been successful in its work, and the Swedish Steel Prize is our way of stimulating others to take similar steps in their operations,” explains Martin Lindqvist. ”High strength steels offer clear competitive benefits and open the door to supplying the market with products that can achieve more, are simpler and more economical to use, and that also contributes to reduced impact on the environment.”

Three other companies have also been nominated for the Swedish Steel Prize 2008. These companies, which were awarded runner-up prizes, were the following:

- LKAB of Sweden has developed a new railway wagon.
- Modec of England has developed an electrically powered transport vehicle.
- Silos Cordoba of Spain has developed silos of new design.

Caption:

The winner of the Swedish Steel Prize 2008 is the French company Kuhn whose representative was presented with the Prize in conjunction with a gala dinner in the Stockholm City Hall on 20 November.

Text and digital picture can be downloaded from www.swedishsteel.co.uk.

For further information, visit:
www.steelprize.com
www.ssabtunnplat.com.

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