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The SAS Aluminium Times

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www.specialistaluminium.co.za

Letter From Editor

Welcome to our Newsletter

Our newsletter - the SAS Aluminium Times - spotlights what is happening in the aluminium world - here in South Africa and around the world. We tap into our international contacts to bring you the very latest.



Colin Little and Kent Bell - SAS founders. On standby 24/7 to help you with your sourcing needs

Why aren't you selling more aluminium?

Maybe it's because you haven't read the SAS Aluminium Times from cover to cover..... 3 pages - you CAN do it!

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BREAKING NEWS

The three-year Metal Industry Wage Agreement signed by unions and SEIFSA have been postponed to mid 2021.

MARKET UPDATE

By: Kent Bell & Colin Little

Our aluminium pricing trend article shows how this has affected the base price of aluminium where South Africa is a price taker in a US Dollar priced commodity.

The world is nearly 8 months into the Coronavirus pandemic and the economic impact of government policies around the world has plunged the globe into recessionary conditions. South Africa's hard lockdown in March may have helped the health systems cope - and so far so good on that front - but the economy has been plunged into a massive contraction.

All aluminium rolled and extrusion consuming sectors have taken a big hit - beverage cans, screw caps, automotive components, construction, road, rail and marine transport ... and on the list goes. If there are winners, we'd love to hear about them (but you will probably want to keep this a secret!) - it's down for the rest.

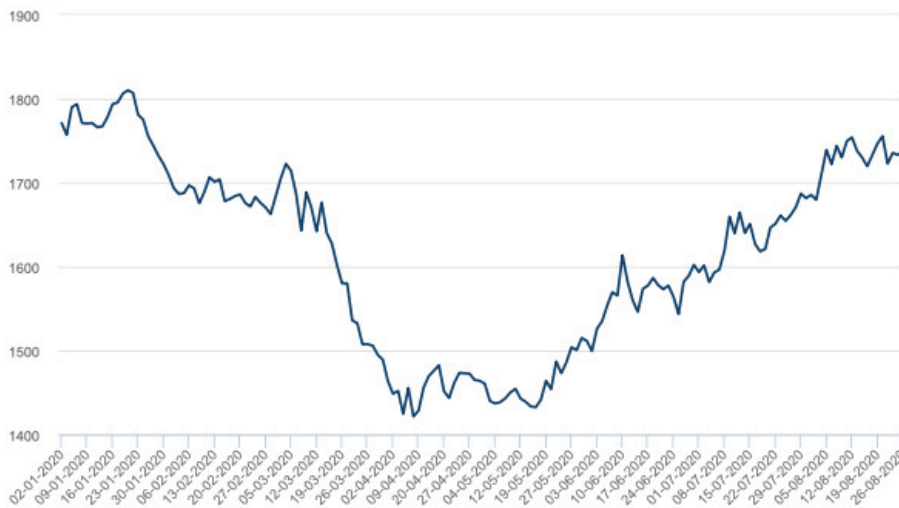
Our aluminium pricing trend article shows how this has affected the base price of aluminium where South Africa is a price taker in a US Dollar priced commodity.

The good news on the horizon is that the need for a country's increased self-reliance in a pandemic prone world could boost local manufacturing. But before we can even think of growth, we have to prioritise the survival of our factories and of the aluminium supply chain.

Buy well sell well
Keep your best people.
Keep safe.
It will pass.

If you have any questions or comments, we'd love to hear from you - email us on info@specialistaluminium.co.za and we'll get back to you

LME ALUMINIUM HISTORICAL PRICE GRAPH



Aluminium Pricing Trends

By: Colin Little

It's been a wild ride for aluminium and other base metals on the London Metal Exchange. Oversupply fears gripped the market in March and prices tumbled. But they have moved up again – a move helped by US Dollar weakness. Of course, if we factor the weaker Rand in, then the Rand LME price in August at R30/kg is well above its 1 January level of R25/kg.

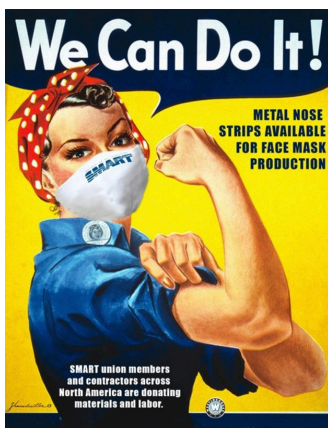
A factor that has kept conversion prices on rolled aluminium over the LME lower has been a reduction in aluminium premiums.

The higher Rand price is good news if your stocks of aluminium are high but to keep stocks healthy, customers will need to put more cash into their inventories and that will put pressure on cashflow.

USA – Union Sheet Metal Workers

Team Up to Produce Free Aluminium Nose Pieces for Face Masks

By: Light Metal Age



While Covid-19 has knocked aluminium demand back there was one good news story out of the USA. As the USA joined the frenzy to become self-sufficient in face masks, and in particular the N95 mask which is used by medical personnel in Covid wards and ICU's, Union Sheet Metal Workers coordinated an effort across their industry to get machine shops to produce the strips. Without the nose clip to seal off the mask at the bridge of the nose the masks are ineffective. Now that's Ubuntu – we need some here.

Full article: www.lightmetallage.com/news



“We are living on this planet as if we had another one to go to.”
– Terry Swearingen, Winner of Goldman Environmental Prize in 1997

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FAQ'S Frequently Asked Aluminium Questions

1

What is a bend radius?

It's the radius of the circle that would fit into the inside of the bend

2

What do you look for on a test certificate?

First make sure it's a real test certificate and not a forgery – this is all too common in our metals game. If something goes wrong you must be able to trace the material back to the mill and the cast (lot). All the information is important, but you should check the alloy elements and the mechanical properties to AFSA's Guide to Aluminium.

3

Shiny side out or shiny side in when I put potatoes in foil at a braai?

Long answer short – it makes a negligible difference. The theory is that the shiny side reflects more heat. But it's a great topic when standing around a braai with a beer in your hand.

4

MIG and TIG welding. How do you remember the difference?

MIG (Metal inert gas) uses a feed wire which moves through the gun and is the weld filler; TIG (Tungsten inert gas) uses an electrode. You remember this by associating the word MIG with the Russian MiG fighter plane which had guns!! The original MiG had a 30mm canon in its port wing (no need to remember this).

FABRICATION CORNER

By: Westway Machinery



Bottom bending is a delicate art requiring precise calculations and careful handling. Adding aluminum to the mix – a material prone to fracturing – makes it even more challenging. But bottom bending can bring rewards. When done correctly, it helps operators increase production.

We came across an excellent article from Canada's Westway Machinery on bending tips for aluminium. Many fabricators do most of their work in steel and have problems when bending aluminium. Here is a summary of these tips and the link to Westway is at the end.

Be Aware of the Aluminum's Grade

The harder the temper, the more spring-back you should expect. If you're working with softer aluminium, you might not have to deal with any spring-back at all.

Watch Creasing Along Bend Lines

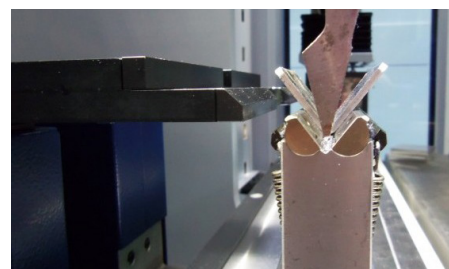
Aluminium will lose its integrity when creased. Depending on the types of parts you're producing, this can have a major impact.

Don't use a Punch Tip that's too Narrow

Choose a punch tip as close to the material's thickness as possible. Be careful you don't coin the aluminium. This happens if the punch's nose punctures the material thickness' neutral axis.

Watch out for Cracking or Spreading

Especially with sharp bends, bottom bending can make the aluminium's grain even more prone to fracturing. The nearer you can get to a bend radius of 1, the less likely you'll see cracking on the outside of the bend.



Work with Caution when Bottom Bending Aluminium

There are risks associated with bottom bending. These include ram upset being more likely and even small mistakes being exaggerated. When bottom bending is done correctly, it can help increase productivity.

Bottom bending can be challenging, especially when working with delicate materials like aluminum. When done correctly, however, it can help operators increase their productivity and create quality parts

Full article: www.westwaymachinery.com/blog/7-tips-for-bottom-bending-aluminum-with-your-press-brake/

..... “
“You gotta look beyond the mainstream... the mainstream'll drown you, you know? There's always a pulse in the underground that I love. And the pulse in the underground is what keeps heavy metal alive.”

Ozzy Osbourne