The Mining Equipment Prospector

Fastening Holds Up Yamaha Down Under

Protan's Ventiflex is recognized as one of the world's most cost-effective and efficient underground ventilation delivery systems.

Made of a UV resistant, robust, durable impermeable fabric, Ventiflex ensures optimum air delivery, project after project, and, unlike rigid ducting systems, can be stored flat and palletted between jobs and transported from site to site at minimal cost.

When it comes to installation and maintenance, Ventiflex has inbuilt advantages. From integral welded suspension eyelets and easy to use connecting rings, the Ventiflex design anticipates the problems of remote sites and the limitations of locally-recruited, semi-skilled labour.

Recently, in advancing this philosophy, as an alternative to the rigid galvanized steel ring connectors, Ventiflex has offered a soft Velcro connector which can be simply pressed together to provide a strong air-tight seal and, when required, can be prised apart using simple tools.

Welded to the lengths of Ventiflex, the Velcro fastening by eliminating the need for bolt-on connecting rings, considerably reduces weight and installation time.

The annual Kalgoorlie Mining Expo gave Australian Ventiflex agents, Downunder Mining PL, an opportunity to demonstrate the strength, durability and efficiency of Ventiflex fabric and the Velcro fastening in an unusual and truly eye-catching way.

Along with various examples of Ventiflex ducting, **Downunder suspended a 115kg Yamaha WR250F off-road motor-bike from a bar with nothing more than two strips of Ventiflex Velcro to keep it from crashing to the ground.**

Using Protan's patented welding system, 500mm wide lengths of Ventiflex Velcro were welded to the edges of two rectangular samples of Yellow Ventiflex Ducting fabric and eyelets inserted in the opposing corners of the samples. Cords were secured to each eyelet. The top two cords were then tied to a suspending bar and the motor-bike was suspended from the bottom pair.

Once the bike had been lifted into position, it hung, motionless, one metre off the ground for the entire three day event.

As well as providing a solid testament to the quality of Ventiflex fabric, the demonstration was visual proof of the strength of the Velcro fastening which was the only thing holding the Yamaha in the air.

The demonstration was so effective that Downunder have not only taken orders from new customers who visited the Expo but also from Ventilation Engineers who were so impressed by the strength of the joint that they are choosing to replace their traditional steel end-ring connections with Ventiflex Velcro soft coupling.

As well as supplying drilling equipment and a large range of mining tools and services, Downunder manufactures, installs and maintains primary and secondary ventilation equipment for the mining and tunneling industries throughout Australasian. Downunder has supplied several 100 kilometers of Ventiflex Ducting with the Velcro connections to Australian mines. One of the most recent contracts being Newcrest's world-class Telfer gold and copper mine in Western Australia.

Howard Hindley, Downunder Mining PL, POB 1166, Bibra Lake, Australia, WA 6965, (Physical Address: 54 Peel Rd O'Connor, Australia, WA 6163), T: +61 (0)8 931 417 77, F: +61 (0)8 931 418 88, M: +61 (0)4 172 722 26, W: www.downundermining.com.au, E: howard@downundermining.com.au

Goran Hansson, Protan AS, POB 420, Drammen, Norway, N-3002, T: +47 (0) 3 222 160 0, F: +47 (0) 3 222 170 0, M: +46 (0) 7 062 649 60, W: www.protan.com, E: goran.hansson@protan.no