

Award winning W H Rowe Ltd. Produce 3 part cast for specialist downhill racing bike using Dugard machine tool technology

Established in 1932, W.H.Rowe has acquired a reputation for being one of the most reliable volume producers of high quality aluminium castings in the UK today and will be celebrating their 80th year in 2012.

Winners of the 2011 Component of the year award in the UK Cast Metals Industry Awards they were recently approached by Empire Cycles to produce a three part cast aluminium bicycle frame.

Having been disappointed with castings in the past, Empire Cycles had initially dismissed the casting process as unsuitable, stating, "These are highly stressed components due to the high dynamic loading of the frame," (Constantine Theoharis - Director).

However, W H Rowe went on to successfully produce the necessary three part cast aluminium frame to be used in a specialist downhill racing bike.

Alongside their prestigious reputation, W H Rowe machine and have a foundry and so they are a complete process solution. Unlike a lot of UK companies, they use a five-stage process after receiving a design



from a supplier, this is one of the keys to their success. Firstly they make a pattern and then cast the part in their foundry. In the material hardening process the part is then heat treated and anodised before being machined to final tolerance using their in house machine shop which comprises of 5 CNC lathes, 2 horizontal machining centres and 19 vertical machining centres, most of which are machine tools purchased from Dugard Machine Tools.

Constantine Theoharis, WH Rowe Director advised the main reasons they buy from Dugard, "We only machine aluminium, grades such as L169 Alloys, therefore we need

machine tools that are high speed and efficient. As an example, some of the parts we machine are over 1 metre in length, therefore we need large capacity machining centres. Dugard's VMC 1300 is an ideal solution as its size is perfect and the machine is great value."

W H Rowe manufacture both small and large volume parts ranging from one offs to a thousand off. Serviced industries include Automotive, Boat and Yacht, Pneumatic and Hydraulic sectors. Based on the Quayside road site Southampton they employ 70 and specialise in quick turnaround.

Constantine further endorses Dugard, declaring, ***"We've bought two machines in the last twelve months and have always found Dugard's service impeccable. The machines are very accurate and we can always rely on the parts being machined to tolerance."***

It gives us a warm feeling to know that our supplier can support us whatever our requirement, they supply quality lathes, machining centres and fabrication equipment at great prices with an unrivalled support network."