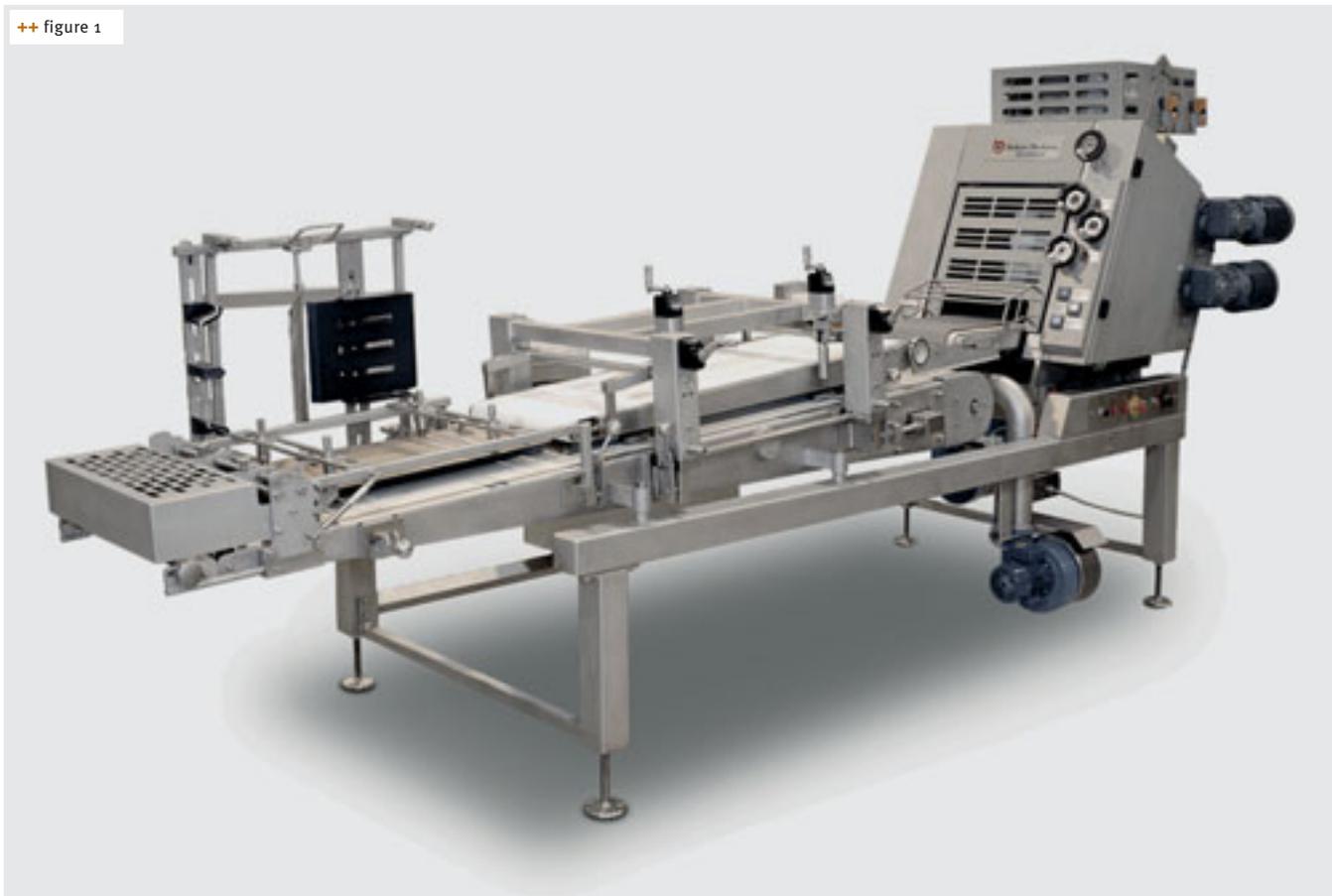


Back to its roots

AFTER ITS SEPARATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL INVENSYS GROUP FOUR YEARS AGO, THE TRADITIONAL BRITISH COMPANY, BAKER PERKINS HAS SUCCESSFULLY FOCUSED ON IMPROVING ITS IMAGE

++ figure 1

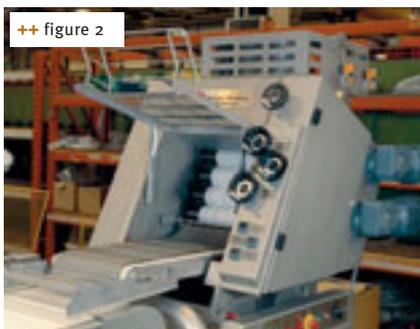


++ figures 1-4
The new Multitex4 moulder

+ Baker Perkins's history is long and full of changes. The origins of Baker Perkins date back to the 19th century when two North Americans emigrated to England. Jacob Perkins was a prolific inventor who moved to England from Massachusetts in 1819. He spent the largest part of his working life experimenting with high-pressure steam, including machine guns and fire fighting equipment. The Perkins family developed a steam oven for baking bread. Meanwhile, a Canadian called

Joseph Baker invented a simple, combined flour scoop and sifter that lightened the burden of a Victorian housewife's day. The sifter proved a hit in England, and the business developed rapidly as a supplier of machinery to the bakery, biscuit, chocolate and confectionery industries. By the end of the 19th century, the Baker Company was a serious exporter, and the most important manufacturer of food machinery in the UK. The Perkins Company concentrated on a widening range of bakery ▶

++ figure 2



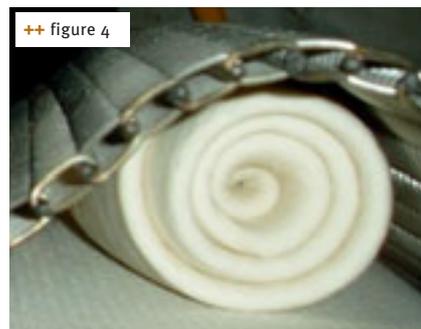
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++ figure 3



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++ figure 4



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Sweet Snacks to go



Passion for Pastry



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++ figures 5-8
The new Accurist2 divider results in enhanced baking quality

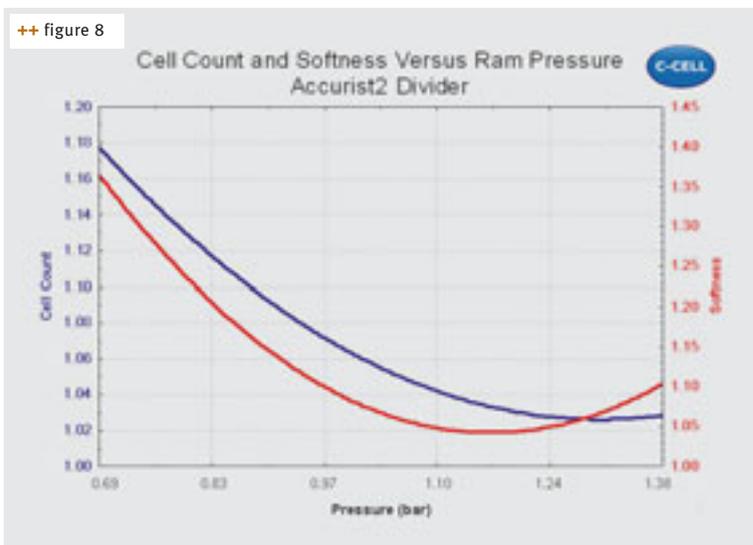
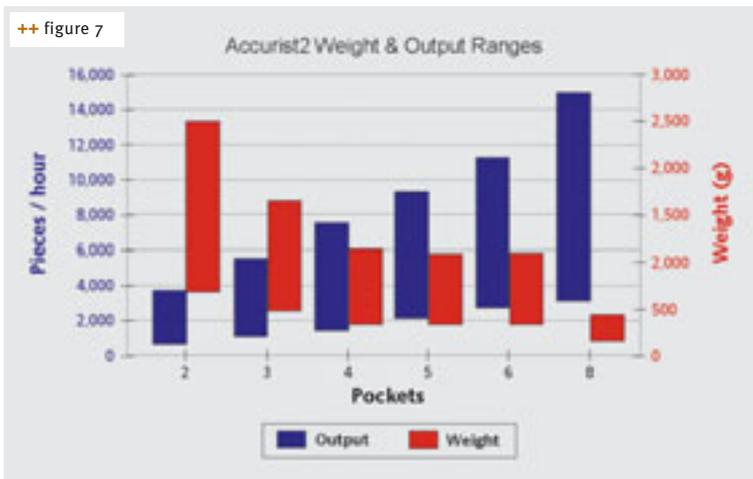
equipment for the home market. The two companies, fierce rivals, did however collaborate on automatic baking equipment for armies in the field during World War One and finally, in 1920, they merged to become Baker Perkins.

In 1978, the company took a share in the American company Werner Lehara, a manufacturer of plants for dry baked goods from Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1989, Baker Perkins acquired the famous mixer manufacturer Tweedy of Burnley whose mixers are at the heart of the well-known Chorleywood process for toast bread. APV came into the picture in 1987 when it acquired Baker Perkins and was then itself acquired ten years later by Invensys, a global technology player from London.

In 2006, Baker Perkins regained its independence when private investors, Brian Taylor and John Cowx, acquired the loss-making company, reorganized the management crew and brought the company back into the black.

Today, Baker Perkins is divided into three divisions – baking and biscuit industries; confectionery, cereal and snack industries; and industrial equipment and services. Project management and all after sales services are organized cross-divisionally. Currently the company employs about 300 people in Peterborough, UK and 50 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The key markets for bakery equipment are not only the UK and the USA but also South Africa, Australia and Asia. Sales to South European markets, where the industrialization of the bakery trade is advancing, are also on the increase, said Dan Bassett, Business Director, Bakery & Biscuit. Apart from the Tweedy mixers that are closely connected with the Chorleywood process, there are two other machines that stand out from the company's product range: the Multitex4 moulder and the Accurist2 divider; both are recent new or adapted developments.

Both have been designed for industrial use. Originally the Multitex4 was developed for toast bread applications but has since also found its way into other product lines. In France, for example, it is used in the processing of brioche dough. The moulder operates dust-free. The dough fed from a hopper is sheeted by four pairs of rollers



that are arranged one pair underneath the other. Prior to these, a pair of longitudinally mounted rolls ensures that the dough pieces are centralized in the machine which guarantees that they will eventually be centralized in the tin. Each pair of sheeting rolls has a tighter gap than the upstream one thus bringing the dough sheet gently to the required thickness. Added to that, each downstream pair of rollers is slightly faster than its predecessor so that the dough is gently stretched. The roll pairs are spring loaded to let doubles pass without smearing or sticking in the machine, which means that the moulder does not have to be stopped for cleaning each time a double occurs. This maintains its high output (6,000 pieces/hour) and high efficiency. With four pairs of rollers the individual roller diameters can be smaller and the dough contact area less than with larger diameter rolls. This eliminates the risk of shear damaging the dough. The dough is not only subjected to less stress but also stretched out with uniform tension so that the dough sheet can be coiled immediately after sheeting and rises evenly during proving. The pairs of rollers are individually driven for separate control of speed and the resulting dough structure. After the dough sheet has been sheeted and coiled, a moulding table with an overhead running belt finishes the moulding process. The dough piece is then either placed directly into the pan or is cut into four or six pieces which are turned before panning. The material of the top belt is polyurethane and the conveying belt is made from polyester with an em-

bossed surface that conveys the dough as if it were floating on tiny air pockets. The entire moulding board arrangement can be lifted up (see picture). The space underneath the table is clear and easy to clean. For hygiene reasons, there are no hydraulic parts used in the machine. Everything is lifted by springs which are fail-safe, unlike gas struts. This protects the dough from contamination with hydraulic oil and simplifies the exchange of machine parts, said Steve Philpott, Sales Account Manager, Bakery. An extension at the moulding table makes sure that the filling of the pans can be quickly and easily set to single piece, double piece or four and six pieces.

The Accurist2 is, as the numeral 2 indicates, a further development of an existing 5-pocket divider. The key difference was the addition of servo control to the ram with the aim of minimizing the forces acting upon the dough during the dividing process. Another requirement was to reduce the oil consumption by improving the dosing and distribution of the oil. The ram pressure is controlled by measuring the position and resistance to movement of the ram. In this way the divider handling a dough piece weight of 900g achieves a very high level of precision with a standard deviation of between 2.5 and 3.5 g. In-house tests have revealed that the number of cells in the bread could be improved by 13% compared to the previous model. At the same time the bread turns out to be much softer when there is less pressure applied in the division pocket. +++



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