

# RT&S

RAILWAY TRACK AND STRUCTURES

June 2006

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**Not the same  
old grind**

**Fastener  
fast track**

# Crossings

making  
the grade

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## Features

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### CPR battling deep-seated shells

NRC Canada and CPR are working together on new grinding techniques to prevent deep-seated shells, especially in lubricated territory.

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### Fasteners keep it all together under adverse conditions

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Grade crossings are the greatest single source of friction between railroads and the general public, especially those in motor vehicles, but suppliers are working to smooth the way.

fastener with a tie plate that has a large bearing area ideally suited to take on heavy axle loads in rugged service conditions.”

Wilcox continued: “The Pandrol FASTCLIP FE system is in final development. This new fully-captive FASTCLIP system was designed with cost savings in mind and is ideally suited for use on industrial track and transit systems. It features a fastener made from a smaller diameter bar and a shoulder that has been redesigned to reduce its weight and cost.”

L.B. Foster Co. and Pandrol USA have reached a licensing agreement to use FASTCLIP with their bonded DF fasteners. Dallas Area Rapid Transit recently awarded L.B. Foster a contract to provide direct-fixation fasteners for the agency’s Northwest and Southeast light rail extensions. The recently-developed bonded direct-fixation fasteners, which feature a captive Pandrol FASTCLIP system, are designed to reduce installation and maintenance costs.

## Stage 8

New products from Stage 8 include Thermal Detector locking bolts, Fail-Safe Locking track nuts, Switch Rod locking fastener kits, and Brake Retarder locking shoe pivot bolts.

Stage 8 points out it is offering new, more-precise laser-cut retainers that are manufactured to tighter tolerances. Expanded production capacity means shorter lead times. The company created a short-run department for production of one-to-100 pieces and prototypes.

## Anchor update

“For 2006, the rail anchor and track spike market is showing some growth,” said Gerry Clark, vice president and general manager of Portec Rail’s Canadian Division, located in Montreal. “North American railroads continue to grow their business, the economy is still generally strong and short-term outlook is encouraging. The growth of our customers’ businesses puts increasing rates of wear and tear on their infrastructure. Railroads must continue to invest in maintenance in order to meet the demands of their customers’ growth in a safe manner. Our internal efforts are in the area of continuing to manage costs and minimize the uncertainties associated with increases in steel and energy.”

“Portec Rail offers the XL-1 Fair® for standard applications and Improved Fair® for use on the high-volume lines,” Clark said. “Both designs, with their full rail-base contact and largest tie-bearing area, are best suited to meet this increased traffic and tonnages.”

Dick Carlson, president of UNIT Rail Anchor Co., Inc., said: “Rail anchor shipments through the first seven months of our fiscal year are up 15 percent over year-ago levels. We attribute the increase in business to a pick-up in market share in Canada and the rebuilding of rail lines throughout the Gulf region following the hurricane damage. The main market driver for our business continues to be rail laid by our major customers. Our Class 1 railroad customers continue to invest in track infrastructure by not only upgrading main lines, but also adding additional sidings to improve train velocity and service levels to their customers. We are also encouraged by the number and size of RRIF loan projects being approved, which are serving to increase our business activity with the regional and shortline market segments.

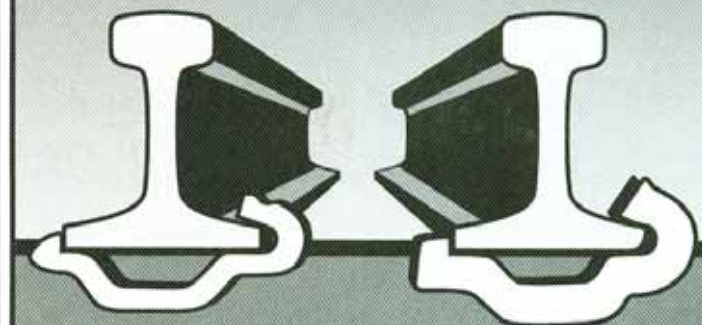
“We continue to manufacture our bar-shaped UNIT 5

and Channel-style drive-on anchors, along with our Spring anchor design, on three production lines,” Carlson noted. “Our UNIT 5 drive-on anchor is manufactured in a standard weight and heavy-duty steel section. With its growing popularity, it now represents 85 percent of our shipments. The continued acceptance of our UNIT 5 anchor has directly resulted in the declining demand for our Channel-style anchor, which now represents less than three percent of our shipments. Spring anchor production remains steady and represents 12 percent of our shipments.

“Our most-recent development has been the rail-anchor isolator, which allows rail anchors to be used with concrete ties,” he said. “The plastic isolator covers the contact area between rail anchor and concrete tie to eliminate damage to the tie. One of our major customers is currently using the isolator in applications where additional longitudinal restraint of the rail is required. We are further encouraged by the interest shown by other railroads and expect the popularity of this product to increase.

“For 2006, our capital plan includes an expenditure of \$500,000 to purchase and install two new AIDA 220-ton presses to replace existing 125-ton Niagaras,” he said. “The Niagara presses have been in place for more than 30 years and together have produced more than 500 million anchors. While the new presses are not expected to improve production capacity, they will serve to lower our annual repair and maintenance costs. We expect to have both presses installed by late summer.” □

## The Best Thing Next To A Tie



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