November 2010

PROFESSIONAL

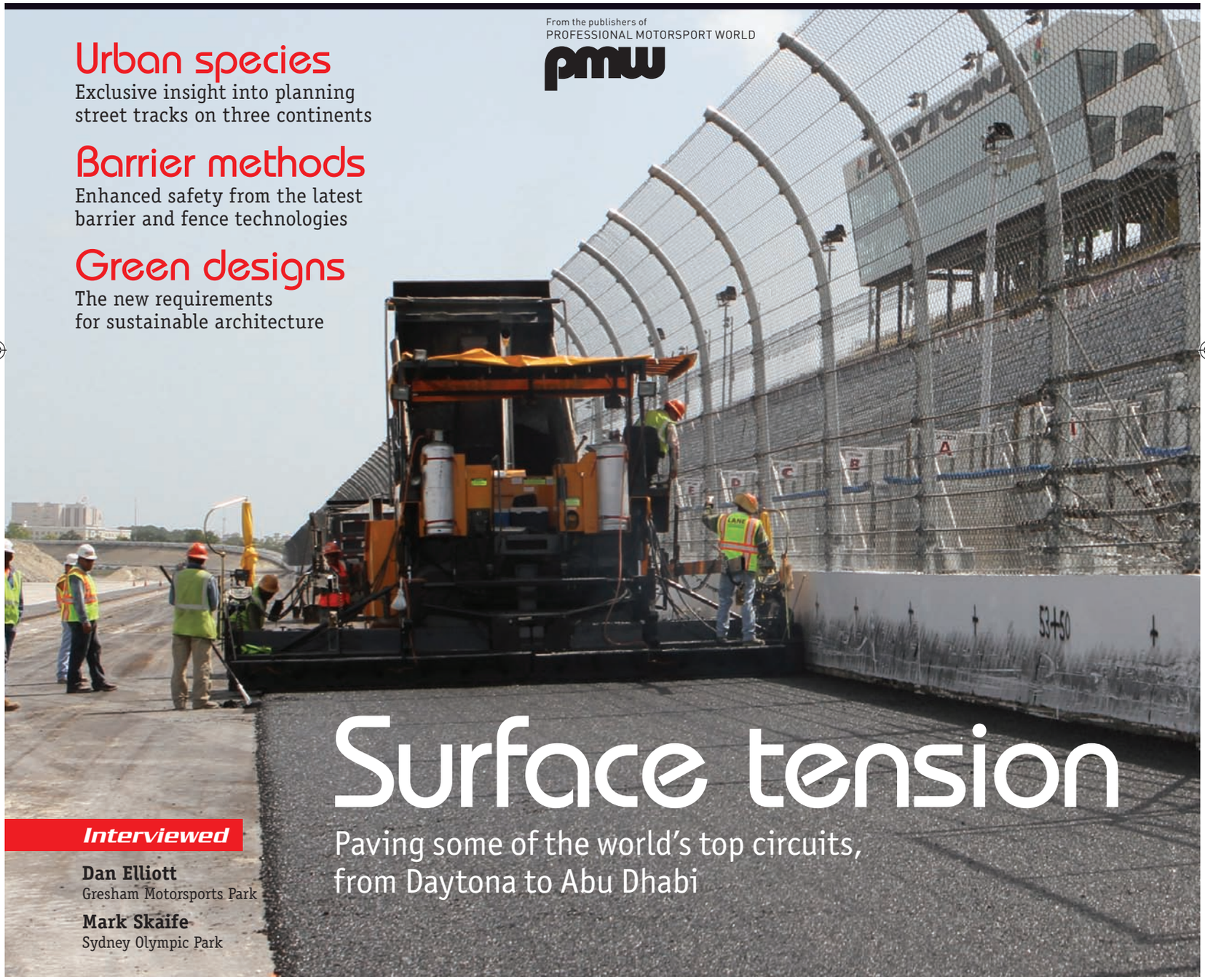
Motorsport Circuit

From the publishers of
PROFESSIONAL MOTORSPORT WORLD
pmw

Urban species
Exclusive insight into planning street tracks on three continents

Barrier methods
Enhanced safety from the latest barrier and fence technologies

Green designs
The new requirements for sustainable architecture



Surface tension
Paving some of the world's top circuits, from Daytona to Abu Dhabi

Interviewed

Dan Elliott
Gresham Motorsports Park

Mark Skaife
Sydney Olympic Park

CASE STUDIES Algarve; Jaypee; Korea International Circuit; Navarra; NRING; Richmond; Snetterton

THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF MOTORSPORT CIRCUIT DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Safety first

Geobrugg's state-of-the-art debris fence is to be installed at the new Atlanta Motorsports Park facility in the USA

WORDS BY STEVE MUMMA

There are inherent dangers in the motorsport industry, but the risks involved in motorsport are not confined to drivers alone. Spectators and track workers also face significant exposure to risk, and the debris fences that protect these people have not seen the same technological advancement as other areas of the motorsports environment. Most debris fences currently in use are not integrated systems that have been subjected to rigorous testing. The meshes typically used in these fences (chainlink and welded wire) were not developed to absorb high-energy impacts, but rather for perimeter protection or to reinforce concrete.

The Geobrugg debris fence has been developed using innovations such as HELIX spring technology and high-strength ROMBO mesh to create a complete system. Existing debris fences have an adequate ability to deal with oblique (angled) impacts of race cars, but the Geobrugg debris fence is the first to have a proven ability to also safely absorb the energy of head-on impacts. Rigorous testing was performed at the recommendation of the FIA Institute, and resulted in the Geobrugg materials earning FIA's stamp of approval. This testing also conclusively proved the ability of the high-strength ROMBO mesh to prevent penetration of smaller, high-energy debris that easily passes through conventional meshes.

Atlanta Motorsports Park (AMP) has chosen to install the Geobrugg debris fence at its new Hermann Tilke-designed track in Dawsonville, Georgia, USA. AMP claims to be the first green, sustainable motorsport park in the world and has seen an eager response from the public as evidenced by the sale of US$1.4 million in memberships and US$925,000 in sponsorships. Racing at AMP is expected to begin in December of 2010.

How AMP's kart track will look (above)***; earth moving at the site is already well under way*** (below)

IMAGES COURTESY OF AMP

Jeremy Porter, CEO of AMP, takes track safety very seriously and has gone to great lengths to provide a safe racing environment, including a track built to FIA safety standards and the use of in-car caution-lighting systems. Porter first learned about the Geobrugg debris fence at the Professional Motorsport Circuit Forum in New York City this spring, and was immediately interested after having already considered many of the current debris fence designs.

"We chose Geobrugg because the design is far more advanced than any other debris fence in existence today. All other fencing is from 10 or more years ago in design," he says.

Atlanta Motorsports Park will be the first to experience the peace of mind that comes from using the Geobrugg debris fence to provide an enhanced safety environment for spectators and track workers. The risks and liability involved in operating a motorsport venue make the safety of all participants an issue of paramount importance. <