



PRESS INFORMATION

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TUFF TORQ EMPLOYEES ACHIEVE MAJOR MILESTONE: 5 Millionth Hydrostatic Transmission Rolls Off Production Line

MORRISTOWN, TN— As the first Japanese company to locate in Morristown's Airport Industrial District, Tuff Torq Corporation has made major accomplishments since opening in 1989. The company manufactures world-class hydrostatic or automatic transmissions for the lawn and garden, off-highway and marine industries. From state-of-the-art 225,000 square-foot manufacturing, service and distributing facilities located in Morristown, Tennessee, the company maintains a local workforce of approximately 310 employees.

According to Tuff Torq president Koji Irikura, the company just completed production of its five millionth hydrostatic transmission, and all employees shared in the celebration. The actual transmission, a model K46 manufactured for John Deere, was escorted down the assembly line by TTC's eight original production associates: Shirley Lawson, Chris McCamey, Donnie Anderson, Tammy Stanifer, Mark Cureton, Bob Self, Bobby Turley and Ruth Ann Little. These employees presented the transmission to the president along with a large poster containing hundreds of signatures of TTC employees. Both the transmission and the poster will be displayed in the company lobby to remind visitors of this great accomplishment.

"This is a major milestone for our company," says Irikura. "Due to our increased share of hydrostatic market, we have produced these units much faster than ever before. We thank every Tuff Torq associate for their hard work, determination and commitment to reaching this goal."

Tuff Torq produced its first one millionth transmission on May 12, 1999, ten years after the company opened in Morristown. The company reached its second millionth transmission on March 18, 2003. It took only four more years to double its production volume to five million units.

The Tuff Torq brand has greatest exposure in the outdoor power equipment industry where consumer brands such as John Deere, Husqvarna, Craftsman, Simplicity and Snapper – just to name a few – use our drive systems to power their lawn and garden equipment.

“It is hard to believe that around the world, five million consumers own lawn tractors or mowers that contain hydrostatic transmissions that were made right here in Morristown,” says Vice President, Lyons Hamblen.

The TTC brand continues to expand as mowers containing TTC drive systems are sold at major big-box retailers like Lowe’s Home Improvement Stores, Sears and Home Depot. Other locations include Tractor Supply stores and independent lawn and garden distributors.

“In addition to accomplishing production volume, the company has achieved many other significant milestones,” explains Frank Freeman, TTC sales and marketing manager. “Tuff Torq was the first manufacturer to introduce a fully integrated hydrostatic transmission to lawn and garden markets around the world. Today eight out of the top ten lawn and garden tractors or mowers are powered by Tuff Torq drive systems.

When Tuff Torq was first created, the founding fathers had a vision of combining superior engineering and design expertise with a state-of-the-art production facility. The company is staffed with a diverse workforce who is dedicated to producing the best hydrostatic transmission in the world.

“One reason that has helped Tuff Torq achieve our production goal is the excellent manufacturing and design of automated production equipment that was produced by our parent company Kanzaki Kokyukoki Manufacturing Company of Japan,” explains Hamblen.

Because of this engineering precision, the company is able to deliver on-demand production, which enables Tuff Torq’s OEM customers to be more cost effective. Plus, Tuff Torq utilizes a very unique inventory management system that allows maximum production efficiency. “All of these factors contribute to Tuff Torq’s success,” concludes Hamblen.

Tuff Torq is an industry leader in the design and manufacturing of world-class drive systems for the lawn and garden, off-highway and marine industries. Tuff Torq is located at 5943 Commerce Boulevard in the Morristown Airport Industrial District. For more information, visit the company’s website at www.tufftorq.com.

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