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LASER METALWORKING
TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FINAL REPORT

Contract N00014-82-C-2373

prepared for

THE NAVAL RESEARCH LABORATORY
Washington, DC 20375

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Ole A. Sanden

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Washington, DC 20375

by

Ole A. Sandven

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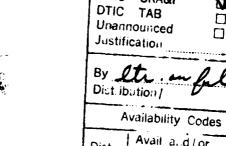
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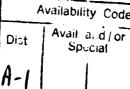
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INTRODUCTION

The object of the Technology Transfer Program is to assist in the utilization and integration of the laser facility at FMC/NOD into the manufacturing processes of naval ordnance components and systems.

This assistance consists of targeting workpieces and production steps suitable for laser processing in terms of cost effectiveness and quality enhancement, the development of techniques and procedures for such processing and the establishment of processing parameters and other pertinent data.

The work performed under this program has mainly been related to laser surface transformation hardening of steels. The response of a number of frequently used steels to such laser processing has been determined over a wide range of processing parameters, models, and calculator programs for the prediction of laser hardening have been developed and tested, and the necessary thermophysical constants of the various materials determined by statistical and empirical means.

In addition to the transformation hardening survey, process development work relating to the laser hardfacing of aircraft carrier catapult rails have been performed, and preliminary techniques and processing data established for different combinations of hardfacing alloys/substrate materials.

All the laser processing performed in this program was carried out at Avco Everett Metalworking Laser facilities in Somerville, MA. An Avco ${\rm HPL}^{\odot}$ -10 ${\rm CO}_2$ laser with constant wave output was used throughout. Analysis of processing results was also done at AEML with the exception of some metallography and microhardness survey performed at FMC/NOD.

2. LASER SURFACE TRANSFORMATION HARDENING

2.1 General Considerations

2.1.1. The Process

Laser surface transformation hardening is a relatively new process, made possible by the development of high powered industrial lasers. As in other surface transformation hardening processes, the object of laser surface hardening is to generate a relatively thin surface layer in which the material has undergone martensitic transformation. The process is, therefore, limited to materials that are capable of undergoing such a transformation; or in other words, to hardenable cast irons and steels.

In order for such materials to harden by martensitic transformation, they must be heated to a temperature at which the austenitic phase is stable, followed by very rapid cooling, or quenching, to room temperature.

In surface hardening only the surface region of the workpiece needs to be heated to austenitizing temperatures. It is desirable that this surface heating takes place as rapidly as possible, in order to minimize the effect of heating on the bulk of the material. This requires a very high heat flux to be applied to the workpiece surface. In essence, heat must be applied to the surface at a higher rate than it can be conducted away from the surface towards the cold interior. This makes the laser an ideal heat source for surface hardening of cast irons and steels. In fact, the laser is capable of heating the surface so rapidly that the required subsequent quenching occurs by heat conduction to the still cold interior of the workpiece.

This process, known as self-quenching, is one of the great advantages of laser surface hardening.

When the laser is used for surface transformation hardening, the required power density (flux) is lower and the exposure time longer than in processes such as welding or cutting.

A convenient way of achieving this is to reshape the laser output beam to a broad area beam with uniform power density rather than to the focused beam used for welding and cutting. A typical broad area laser beam, suitable for surface transformation hardening, may have the shape of a square with dimensions of the order 1 cm x 1 cm in the focal plane, and have a power density of 5×10^2 to 5×10^3 w/cm². Hardening is performed by moving such a spot over the workpiece surface at controlled speed. If the processing parameters (power and speed) are appropriate, a strip of surface hardened material is generated by the moving laser spot, and the depth of this hardened case can be controlled through the control of these parameters.

The laser output beam can also be shaped into other suitable broad area beams by means of various optical devices, depending on the specific applications. However, in this program, a square spot with dimensions $1.27 \text{ cm} \times 1.27 \text{ cm} (0.5^{\circ} \times 0.5^{\circ})$ was used throughout.

The absorption of laser radiation from a CO_2 laser (10.6µm) in metals is very low at room temperature. With the relatively low power densities used in surface hardening, it is, therefore, necessary to use energy absorption coatings on the workpiece surface. Many different substances have been used for this purpose, such as manganese phosphate and paints containing graphite,

silicon and carbon black. Since many of the coatings that have been used are quite effective, the choice of a particular coating is dictated not so much by its relative absorption efficiency, as by other considerations such as ease of application and post-processing removal of coating residue. In the work reported here, flat black Krylon \$1602 spray paint was used. This coating appears to be 80-90% effective in overall absorption of the 10.6 µm laser radiation. It is easy to apply and is not very sensitive to variation in coating thickness, as long as care is taken to ensure complete coverage. The residue left by this coating after laser processing is also easy to remove.

2.1.2 Metallurgy

In conventional hardening of steel, the workpiece is brought up to austenitizing temperatures at a relatively slow rate, and then allowed to soak at this temperature before quenching. This allows sufficient time for homogenous austenite to form throughout the workpiece, which upon quenching will be transformed to martensite.

In laser surface transformation hardening, the situation is somewhat different because the heating time is very short and no isothermal soak takes place in this process. The very rapid heating and the short time that the workpiece material is kept at elevated temperatures result in several metallurgical effects which must be taken into consideration in analyzing the process.

First of all, rapid heating leads to an increase in the observed transformation temperature 1), which can result in a thinner hardened case than otherwise would

be expected. This effect will, of course, become more pronounced as the laser processing speed increases and the exposure time decreases.

Secondly, if the structure of the workpiece is such that the carbon is unevenly distributed in the micro-structure, the short time the material is at temperatures above the transformation temperature is not sufficient to allow the carbon to redistribute itself uniformly in the austenitic phase. The resulting austenite will, therefore, be of variable carbon content and the structure obtained after self-quenching will not be uniform²⁾. This is not a problem with reasonably fine-grained, medium and high carbon steels, but if the material contains appreciable amounts of free ferrite, such as low carbon steel or some nodular cast irons, laser surface hardening may not be possible in practice. This is particularly so if the material is relatively coarse-grained. Such materials can, however, be laser hardened if they are given a pre-processing quench and temper heat treatment. If the tempering temperature is not too high such a material will have its carbon in a finely dispersed form, and can be laser surface hardened.

Because the laser hardening process takes place under conditions of unsteady heat flow, it is necessary to heat the workpiece surface to temperatures considerably above the normal austenitizing range, in order to obtain useful heat penetration and case depth. The surface will, therefore, experience much higher temperatures than in conventional hardening practices. Care must be taken to prevent the surface temperature from reaching the melting point, particularly in cases where a very deep case is to be generated.

In some cases, localized grain growth may occur if the surface temperature approaches the melting point. Because the maximum temperatures will often occur in the neighborhood of corners and fillets, such grain growth may be very detrimental.

There is also some indication that areas that have been brought to a very high temperature may show excessive amounts of retained austenite after quenching.

The depth of hardened case that can be obtained in laser surface transformation hardening also depends on the hardenability of the material and on the size of the workpiece. A large workpiece, made from a material with good hardenability, can be processed at low speed because a high rate of self-quenching is not required. Hence, there is sufficient time available for deep heat penetration and a deep case can be generated. In SAE 4340 steel, for example, case depths in excess of 0.1" are easy to obtain.

In materials with low hardenability, such as low carbon steel, the laser processing speed must be higher in order to obtain high self-quenching rates. This is particularly true if the workpiece is small and thus is a limited heatsink. A steep temperature gradient must be generated in the workpiece, but because the maximum surface temperature is limited by the melting point of the material, only limited hardened case can be obtained in such materials.

2.1.3 Heat Flow in Laser Surface Transformation Hardening

In order to predict the results of laser surface transformation hardening with a broad area beam, it is necessary to evaluate the time dependent temperature distribution in the workpiece in the vicinity of of the moving laser spot. Because the boundary conditions are favorable, it is possible to obtain closed solutions to the generalized heat flow equation

that are useful for such prediction. If we consider the semi-infinite body, Equation 1) reduces to

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{R}}{\partial z} = \propto \frac{\partial^2 \mathcal{R}}{\partial z^2}$$
 2)

where α is the thermal diffusivity; Z, the depth below the surface; $Q = -K^{\partial T}/\partial z$ is the flux and K is the thermal conductivity. If the flux at the surface is constant, the boundary conditions are:

The solution to Equation 2) is then³⁾

$$\nabla T = \frac{20iE}{K} \sqrt{\alpha t} \ ierfc \frac{z}{z\sqrt{\alpha t}} - 3$$

where ΔT at the temperature rise; Qi is the applied flux, ierfc stands for the integrated error function compliment and ξ is the emmissivity of the material, specific to temperature and wavelength of the laser radiation.

This solution is only valid for a semi-infinite body with uniform flux at the surface; i.e., when there is no lateral heat flow so that the heat flow is unidirectional.

This condition is, however, approximately true for the centerline of a broad area laser spot with uniform power distribution, provided the spot is large compared to the characteristic heat diffusion distance

$$d = \left(\alpha \, t\right)^{1/2} \tag{4}$$

where t_D is the dwelltime (exposure time). For a square spot with dimensions bxb, this time is:

$$t_{D} = b/v 5)$$

where ν is the velocity of the laser spot. Hence, if

$$\frac{b}{z}$$
 $\langle \alpha t_0 \rangle^{1/2}$

Equation 3) will correctly give the temperature at the centerline of the laser spot. In practice, it is found that if $b\bar{>}16d/v$, good agreement with experimental data can be obtained. We can then rewrite Equation 3) in the form

$$T_{\tau} = T_{o} + \frac{zaie}{k} \sqrt{at_{o}} ierfc \frac{SH}{z\sqrt{at_{o}}}$$
 7)

where $T_{\overline{1}}$ is the transformation temperature, $T_{\overline{0}}$ is the room temperature, and δH is the depth of case.

This equation can also be used to estimate the cooling rate resulting from the self-quenching effect behind the moving laser spot. By the superposition principle, the temperature on the centerline behind the laser spot is approximately:

$$T = T_0 + \frac{2QLE}{K} \left[\sqrt{\alpha t} \ Lerfc \frac{Z}{2\sqrt{\alpha t}} - \sqrt{\alpha (t-t_0)} Lerfc \frac{Z}{2\sqrt{\alpha (t-t_0)}} \right]$$

where t is the total elapsed time from the start of heating and $(t-t_D)$ is the cooling time. Because of the requirements for minimal lateral heat flow discussed above, this equation can only be used for high speed processing and small values of the cooling time $(t-t_D)$.

If the processing speed is so low that Equation 7) cannot be used; that is, if the heat flow is three-dimensional in the vicinity of the centerline of the laser spot, a more involved analysis is required. An expression, valid for the semi-infinite body with three-dimensional flow around a rectangular spot, is given by Carslaw and Jaeger 4). A modification, derived on slightly different principles and valid for a plate with finite thickness was developed in conjunction with this program. The temperature distribution around the moving laser spot under these conditions, was found to be

laser spot under these conditions, was found to be 5)
$$T = T_0 + \frac{Q \times E \times Q}{Z \times N \times N} \int_0^\infty \frac{e \times Q}{mz \cdot \omega} - \frac{\left(\frac{Z \times Q}{I - Q}\right) \cdot \left[erf \frac{(Y + L)Q}{I - Q} - 9\right]}{I - Q} \cdot \left[erf \frac{(Y - L)Q}{I - Q}\right] \cdot \left[erf \frac{Z(X + B)Q^2(I - Q)^2}{ZQ(I - Q)} - erf \frac{Z(X - B)Q^2(I - Q)^2}{ZQ(I - Q)}\right] \frac{dQ}{Q^2}$$

where erf stands for the error function and:

$$X = \frac{vx}{2\alpha} \qquad B = \frac{vb}{4\alpha}$$

$$Y = \frac{vy}{2\alpha}$$
 $L = \frac{vt}{4\alpha}$ $t = \text{width of laser spot.}$

$$z = \frac{vz}{2\alpha}$$
 $D = \frac{vd}{2\alpha}$

In using these models for the prediction of hard-ened case, it is necessary to know the intensity of the actually absorbed flux, the average value of the thermophysical constants K and α (thermal conductivity and thermal diffusivity) in the temperature range experienced by the workpiece during processing, and the temperature at which the material will transform to austenite.

The fraction of the applied power that is absorbed into the workpiece (the emissivity ξ), depends among other things on the condition of the workpiece surface. For clean metal surfaces, the emissivity at the wavelength of the CO₂-laser (10.6 µm) is very low. However, by using various absorbing coatings, the emissivity can be increased to the 0.8-0.9 range, even at the relatively low power densities used in surface hardening. In this work, flat black Krylon \$1602 spray paint was used as an energy absorber. This increased the absorption to an estimated value of 85%.

The values of the thermal conductivity, K, and the thermal diffusivity, α , for hardenable ferrous materials, changes fairly rapidly with the temperature. Hence, the room temperature values of these variables cannot be used for case depth prediction.

However, in cases where the variation of K and a with the temperature are known, the integral average value can be calculated as:

$$\overline{K} = \frac{1}{\overline{I_2} \cdot \overline{I_1}} \int_{\overline{I_1}} V(T) dT$$
 10)

$$\overline{\alpha} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2-7}} \int_{T_{\ell}} \alpha(r) dr$$
 11)

by means of numerical integration.

In this work, case prediction was performed partially by the aid of Equation 9) and 10), partially by experimental determination of K and α from preliminary runs, as described in Section 2.2.5.

The final datum needed for case prediction is the transformation temperature. This is, of course, not a fixed temperature unless the steel has eutectoid composition. Furthermore, the temperature range over which the transformation occurs is sensitive to the processing speed. In this work, we have used the A_f temperatures from the pertinent IT diagrams as the transition temperature T_T .

2.2 Experimental Work

2.2.1 Equipment and Procedures

The experimental surface transformation hardening was performed with an Avco $HPL^{\oplus}-10$ CO_2 laser. This laser was capable of up to 15 kW output (CW).

The collimated output beam from the laser was directed through ducts to the workstation. In the workstation, the beam - approximately 2.6" in diameter - was shaped to a convergent, square beam by means of an optical integrator, as shown in Figure 1. The square beam had dimensions 1/2" x 1/2" in the focal plane.

Surface transformation hardening was performed on plane specimens by moving the specimens under the beam at controlled speed. The specimens were mounted on a milling machine table in such a way that the focal plane of the optical integrator was located on the specimen surface. The translation speed of the table could be varied steplessly, and speed calibration curves were established prior to start of processing. The correct location of the specimen relative to the beam could be determined by means of a low powered He-Ne laser locator beam built into the laser system to give a visual representation of the location of the actual power beam prior to processing.

The laser power could also be varied steplessly, from approximately 1 kW up to full power. The actual power delivered to the workpiece was determined by calibration curves, established in advance by means of calorimetric measurements. In addition, the beam quality (sharp edges and even power density) was assessed by making test burns in lucite blocks. Speed and power calibration, as well as beam quality, was checked periodically during processing of the samples. Figure 2 shows schema-

BEAM INTEGRATOR

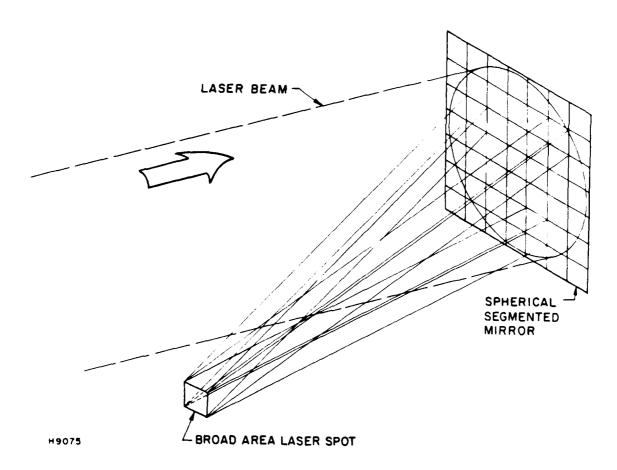
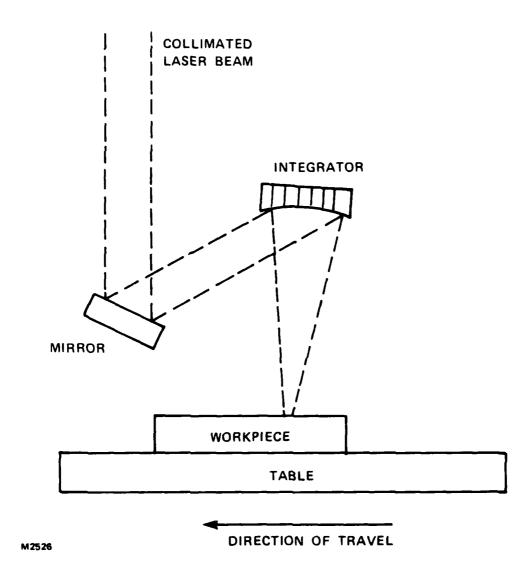


FIGURE 1 FORMING A BROAD AREA LASER SPOT BY MEANS OF AN OPTICAL INTEGRATOR



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FIGURE 2 SETUP FOR LASER TRANSFORMATION HARDENING OF FLAT PLATES

tically the experimental setup used for this program.

Prior to processing, the workpiece surfaces were prepared by coating with flat black Krylon #1602 spray paint. This was done in order to enhance the absorption of the laser radiation (10.6 µm) into the workpiece surface. Previous experience has shown that this treatment results in approximately 85% absorption of the CO₂ laser radiation, even at relatively low power densities. Furthermore, this type of coating is easy to put on, leaves little residue for post-processing cleanup, and is not very sensitive to small variation in application technique. No protective atmosphere was used during processing, but a fan blowing crosswise over the beam/workpiece interaction zone was used to dissipate the smoke resulting from pypolysis of the coating.

The results of the laser processing were evaluated by metallography and micro-hardness testing, using a Knoop Indenter with 500g load.

2.2.2. Case Prediction by One-Dimensional Heat Flow Model

Prior to the experimental laser processing, the processing parameters were estimated, using a calculator code built on one-dimensional heat flow considerations, as discussed in Section 2.1.2.

The program was written for use on a Texas Instrument TI 59 programmable calculator/printer. This program predicted maximum surface temperature and depth of case based on processing parameters (speed and power density), thermophysical constants and transition temperature of the material.

Originally, this program did not contain any cutoff for processing parameters that fell outside the range where the one-dimensional heat flow model was valid. The predicted case depth did not, therefore, show reasonable agreement with experimentally obtained data for low processing speed. The program was, subsequently, rewritten to reject input data of this kind. The program could also be used to predict cooling rates during self-quench, based on Equation 8), Section 2.1.3.

The flow sheet of the program is shown in Figure 3, and the complete program with user information is listed in Appendix I.

The thermophysical constants used in the preliminary phase were calculated from published data ⁶⁾, as described in Section 2.1.3. The constants for the materials surveyed in the preliminary phase are given in Table I.

2.2.3. Preliminary Evaluation of Laser Hardening Parameters

In this preliminary evaluation phase, the response of six different materials to laser surface hardening was surveyed. The materials were SAE 1045 in the quenched and tempered condition (Q/T), SAE 1045 in the hot-rolled condition (H.R.), SAE 4140 in the Q/T and H.R. condition, SAE 1020 in the H.R. condition and SAE 4340 in the cold-rolled condition (C.R.). Samples of these materials were supplied by FMC/NOD in the form of plates with minimum dimensions 1/2" thick by 2" wide by 8" long.

These specimens were laser processed as described earlier, making single, well separated straight laser runs on the surfaces of the specimens. The processing parameters (power and speed) were varied within limits, calculated to give case depths in the range 10 to 120 mil (0.025 to 0.305 cm). The predicted case was calculated in advance in each case, using the calculator program described in Section 2.2.2.

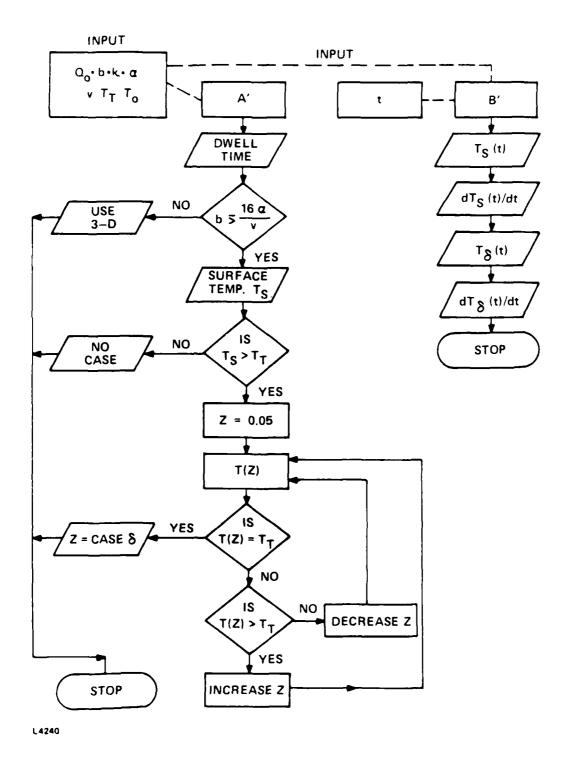


FIGURE 3 PROGRAM FOR PREDICTION OF CASE DEPTH AND COOLING RATE

TABLE I

THERMOPHYSICAL CONSTANTS (Estimated) FOR VARIOUS STEELS

Material	Thermal Cond. K (w/cm-C°)	Thermal Diff. a (cm ² /sec)	Transition Temp. T _T C*
SAE 1020	0.38	0.087	850
SAE 1045	0.36	0.085	790
SAE 4140	0.33	0.072	780
SAE 4340	0.30	0.063	750

The processed specimens were analyzed at FMC/NOD for case depth and surface hardness. The results are given in a preliminary report from FMC/NOD, and are summarized in Tables II, III, IV and V. Due to the limits set by the total available laser power, large areas cannot be laser hardened without some form of multiple-pass technique. It is, however, of interest to look at the best way of achieving this. Several straight abutting and overlapping laser runs were made on samples of SAE 4140 (Q/T), and the discontinuity of hardened case in the zones between the runs assessed by surface hardness measurements. The results are shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6.

2.2.4 Discussion of Preliminary Results

The results of the preliminary processing, as given in Tables II through V, show good agreement between predicted and measured case for medium processing speed. The correlation is, however, poor for very high speed (60 in/min, 2.54 cm/sec) and for very low speed (5-10 in/min, 0.21-0.42 cm/sec). For the high speed runs the casedepth is much higher than predicted; while for low speed, the reverse is the case. The latter observation can be attributed to the fact that the one-dimensional heat flow model used is not valid at these low speeds. Hence, the actual temperatures reached by the workpiece surface are much less than those predicted, due to lateral heat flow in the workpiece.

The underestimation of case depth for the high speed runs is unexpected and difficult to explain. If anything, a shallower depth than predicted would not be surprising in this case because the heating rate is so rapid that the kinetics of the process could be expected to influence the results. Lacking any rational explanation for this phenomenon, it is, therefore, assumed that some

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0.072 cm ² /sec 780° C	SURFACE HARDNESS (RC)	57	56.5	57.5	55.5	56.5	55.5	56.5	43.5	45.0	27.0	37.0	31.5	31.5	37.5
$\alpha = 0.07$ $T_T = 780$	CALCULATED SURFACE TEMP. (C°)	1203	1045	856	1369	1174	1045	1275	1203	1045	856	1369	1174	1045	1275
	\$ OF THEORETICAL	96	128	225	88	95	94	59	86	138	275	81	82	† 6	5.7
SAE 4140	MEASURED CASE (mil)	47	37	18	7.1	63	45	95	8 \$	01	22	11	₽9	5†	53
	CALCULATED CASE (mil)	49	29	8	88	99	48	95	49	29	8	88	99	48	95
	SPEED (in/min)	30	40	09	15	15	15	10	30	40	09	15	15	15	10
ORETICAL VIATION	POWER (KW)	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.4
115% OF THEORETICAL STANDARD DEVIATION 59.6%	CONDITION	T/0	D/T	D/T	T/0	Q/T	Q/T	Q/T	H.R.	н. R.	H.R.	H.R.	H.R.	H.R.	H.R.

SAE 1045

= 0.085 cm²/sec

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144% OF THEORETICAL	ORETICAL			SAE 1045		ti-	
STANDARD DEVIATION 90.18	VIATION					$T_T = 790^\circ$	
CONDITION	POWER (KW)	SPEED (in/min)	CALCULATED CASE (mil)	MEASURED CASE (mil)	% OF THEORETICAL	CALCULATED SURFACE TEMP. (C*)	SURFACE HARDNESS (RC)
1/0	2.5	30	51	50	98	1198	5.5
D/T	2.5	40	30	38	127	1040	57
Q/T	2.5	09	7	24	342	853	55.5
Q/T	2.5	28	57	<i>L</i> 9	118	1239	55.5
D/T	2.3	09	NIL	16	•	692	55.5
T/Q	2.1	40	13	20	154	882	55.5
Q/T	3.0	40	51	5.1	100	1278	54
H.R.	2.5	30	51	94	90	1198	47.5
H.R.	2.5	40	30	34	113	1040	20
H.R.	2.5	09	7	24	342	853	44
H.R.	3.0	40	5.1	51	100	1278	20

SAE 1020

0.087 cm²/sec

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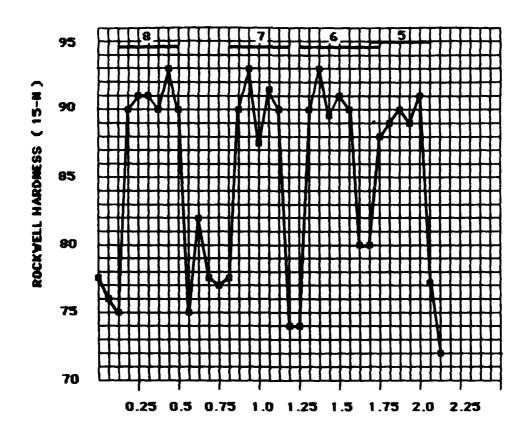
838 OF THEORETICAL	RETICAL			SAE 1020		7 m m 0.04/ C	0.04/ Cm / Sec 850* C
STANDARD DEVIALLON 8.3%	NOTIVIA					I	
CONDITION	POWER (KW)	SPEED (in/min)	CALCULATED CASE (mil)	MEASURED CASE (mil)	\$ OF THEORETICAL	CALCULATED SURFACE TEMP. (C*)	SURFACE HARDNESS (RC)
. B.	1.9	30	9	NIL		887	31
. B.	2.1	30	18	17	94	975	40
. B.	2.3	30	29	25	98	1062	43
C.R.	2.45	30	38	7.2	71	1150	46
C.R.	2.6	30	47	38	81	1273	46.5

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- 0.063	- 750
8	H H
SAE 4340	
86.7% OF THEORETICAL	STANDARD DEVIATION

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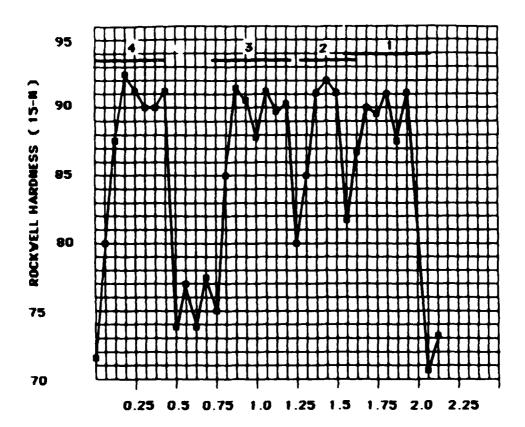
HARDNESS (Rc)	49.5	51	48.5	53	53	48.5	55	48	5.2.5
HARDNESS (RC)									
SURFACE TEMP.	1190	266	814	1393	1711	1001	1341	1148	1175
\$ OF THEORETICAL	9.2	96	143	89	98	68	98	71	61
MEASURED CASE (mil)	45	26	10	75	54	0\$	73	22	57
CASE (mil)	49	27	7	110	63	45	8.5	78	116
SPEED (in/min)	30	40	09	10	15	51	15	10	2
POWER (KW)	2.4	2.3	2.3	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.9	1.3	1.0
CONDITION	C.R.								



DISTANCE (IN)

FIGURE 4.

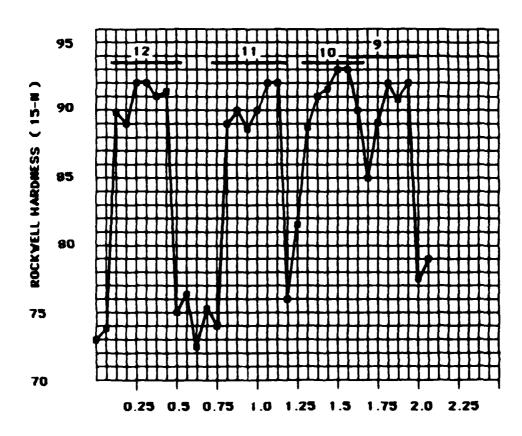
SURFACE HARDNESS OF OYERLAPPING RUNS ON SAE 4140 STEEL (H.T.)
POWER DENSITY 1290 W/cm²
PROCESSING SPEED 40 IN/MIN
RUNS 5-8



DISTANCE (IN)

FIGURE 5

SURFACE HARDNESS OF OVERLAPPING RUNS ON SAE 4140 STEEL.
POWER DENSITY 1290 V/cm²
PROCESSING SPEED 30 IN/MIN.
RUNS 1-4.



DISTANCE (IN)

FIGURE 6.

SURFACE HARDNESS OF OVERLAPPING RUNS ON SAE 4140 STEEL.(H.T.)
POWER DENSITY 790 W/cm²
PROCESSING SPEED 15 IN/MIN.
RUNS 9-12

error was made in the power setting, or more possible in the speed calibration curve, in such a way that the actual translation speed was lower than the assumed speed.

For most of the materials, the limit of effective case was taken to be the depth at which the hardness had decreased to Rockwell C 45. In SAE 1020, this criterion could not be used, since the maximal hardness at 100% martensite is about equal to this. Hence, in this case, Rockwell C 35 was used as limit of effective case.

Several of the materials, in particular SAE 4140 (H.R.) and SAE 1045 (H.R.), showed very low surface hardness. This was due to some surface decarburization in these materials. Both materials showed full hardness at greater depth below the surface.

These preliminary studies show the need for the following improvements in the procedures used for the materials response survey:

- elimination of decarburized surface layers in the test specimens,
- improved model for case prediction, including better data for the thermophysical constants,
- closer control of processing parameters, particularly processing speed.

The results of the overlap runs, given in Figures 4,5 and 6, show that uniform hardened case across the specimen surface cannot be obtained with parallel, multiple laser runs. If the runs are overlapping, some backtempering will occur in the overlap zone. The minimum hardness in this zone is, however, well above the

bulk hardness. Hence from the criterion of surface hardness alone, overlapping runs appear to be more effective than abutting or adjacent runs.

2.2.5 Improved Model for Prediction of Case Depth

As explained in Section 2.1.2., it is possible to obtain a closed solution to the heat flow equation, even if the conditions for one-dimensional heat flow are not met. The solution to the three-dimensional heat flow around a rectangular laser spot on the surface of a finite plate, Equation 9), is, however, very complex and time-consuming to use for practical purposes. It can be simplified somewhat by assuming the workpiece to be infinitely thick. (This is a valid assumption for the range of processing parameters used in this work, provided the actual plate thickness is not less than 1/4"). Furthermore, since a square spot is used in this work and we can limit our calculations to points on or below the centerline of the laser spot, we can rewrite Equation 9) in the form:

$$r = \tau_0 + \frac{2Q \angle \mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{2K, N\sqrt{n\tau}} \int_0^1 e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E} \otimes \mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[e^{-\frac{\pi}{2}} \frac{\mathcal{E}}{\mathcal{E}} \right] \cdot \left[$$

This is still a formidable expression to evaluate because the numerical integration requires some 50 to 100 ordinate evaluations in order to give sufficient accuracy. Furthermore, we are interested in finding the maximum value of the temperature relative to the laser spot, and

we have no a priori knowledge where this maximum occurs. To make the model more readily useful, the following procedure was adopted. First, the temperature maximum on or directly below the centerline was evaluated for various paired values of the parameters B and Z in the speed region where three-dimensional heat flow dominates.

Secondly, by comparing these results to those obtained through the use of the one-dimensional heat flow equation (Equation 2), it was found that the ratio f between these two values

$$\int = \frac{T(3-0)}{T(1-0)}$$
13)

could be expressed with good accuracy as a polynomial in the form:

$$\int = (a, B^{2} + b, B + C_{1}) (\frac{2}{8})^{2} + (a_{2}B^{2} + b_{2}B + C_{2}) \cdot (\frac{2}{8}) + (a_{3}B^{-2} + b_{3}B^{-1} + C_{3})$$

$$+ (a_{3}B^{-2} + b_{3}B^{-1} + C_{3})$$

provided the range of B values in each case was not too large. By dividing the range of B values between 0.5 and 4 into three intervals, the constants in Equation 14) could be found by regression analysis.

For values of B54, f is unity; i.e., the one-dimensional heat flow model is valid. A calculator program, incorporating Equation 14), could then be written in such a way that case depth values could be predicted for the entire range of processing parameters used in this work. The flow sheet of the program is shown in Figure 7, and the complete program with used instructions is listed in Appendix II.

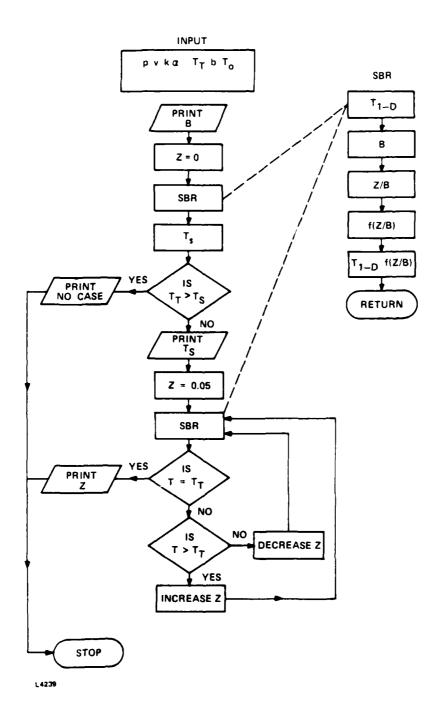


FIGURE 7 IMPROVED PROGRAM FOR CASE DEPTH PREDICTION

2.2.6. Experimental Evaluation of the Thermophysical Constants

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As discussed in Section 2.1.2., the thermophysical constants K and α can be estimated for the purpose of case depth prediction, by calculating the integral average of these constants over the approximate temperature range of processing. Unfortunately, however, adequate data for the variation of K and α with the temperature is only available for a few steels. This is particularly true for the diffusivity α . To obtain more general and realistic values for K and α , the following procedure was adopted for the final phase of this work.

- 1) The thermal conductivity K was determined as before by calculating the integral average over the temperature range of processing, using published data and Equation 10). For materials where only the room temperature conductivity was available, the average value of K was estimated from this datum, relative to materials for which complete data was known.
- 2) A number of trial laser runs were made, using processing speeds sufficiently high to ensure predominantly one-dimensional heat flow. The resulting case depths were measured by means of micro-hardness testing, and the value of the diffusivity α for each material was then found by least mean square analysis, using the experimentally determined case depths and the value of conductivity K, (found from step 1) in Equation 7). Due to the transcendental nature of this equation, the analysis had to be done by numerical methods. This method of determining the average thermal

diffusivity is phenomenological and is not intended to represent anything else but an empirical parameter for practical work. The method has the advantage of expressing the value of $\boldsymbol{\alpha}$ based on actual processing, and an error in the estimation of K will, at least in part, be compensated for due to the fact that the results obtained through Equation 7) are more dependent on the ratio of K and α then on their individual values. The values of K and α used in the final part of this work are given in Table VI. of the values for K, given in Table I, have been recalculated over a larger temperature interval and are, therefore, somewhat smaller. Here, it is noticeable that the new values of α , found by experimental methods, are significantly lower than the earlier values found by integral averaging.

2.2.7. Final Evaluation of Processing Parameters

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In this final phase, steels in various heat treated conditions were laser processed over a wide range of processing parameters. The sample materials consisted of SAE 1045 in the annealed (ANN.) condition, the quenched and tempered (Q/T) condition and in the hot-rolled (H.R.) condition, SAE 4140 in the ANN., Q/T and H.R. condition, SAE 8620 in the ANN. and Q/T condition, and Hyten B 3X in the ANN. and Q/T condition. Samples of SAE 1020 and SAE 4130 were also supplied by FMC/NOD, but these materials were not suited for parameter development work, as explained in Section 2.2.8 below. The samples consisted of plates and bars, none with thickness less than 1/2". All samples were processed in the same manner described in Section 2.2.1. In each case, the expected case depth was

TABLE VI

THERMOPHYSICAL CONSTANTS

MATERIAL	THERMAL COND. K (W/cm - c°)	THERMAL DIFF. a (cm ² /sec)	TRANSITION TEMP.
SAE 1045	0.36	0.068	790
SAE 4140	0.31	0.049	780
SAE 4340	0.28	0.047	750
SAE 8620	0.28	0.050	840
IIYTEN B3X	0.30 (cst.)	0.049	760 (cst.)

predicted in advance, using the improved calculator program discussed in Section 2.2.5 above. The results of the processing are given in Tables VII through XI.

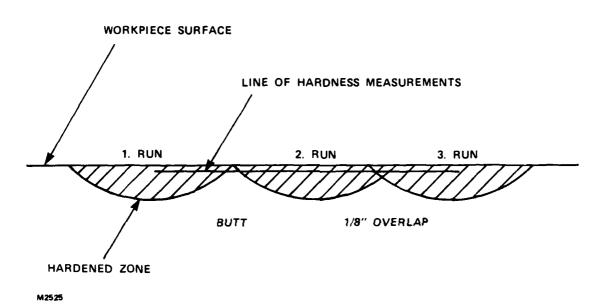
In addition, adjacent and overlapping runs in the pattern shown in Figure 8, were made on samples of SAE 8620 and Hyten B 3X. The results of these runs are shown in Figures 9 through 16. The hardness profiles shown in these figures were not obtained by surface hardness measurements, but by micro-hardness measurements taken 10 mils below the surface on samples cut normal to the processing direction.

2.2.8. Discussion of Results

The overall correlation between calculated and measured case is in the range of ±20-30% average over the entire range of processing speed and power used. The results for low speed processing of SAE 4140 and SAE 4340 are generally in even better agreement with the calculated values. This is clearly an improvement upon the results obtained in the preliminary survey.

- The values of the thermophysical constants used appear to be about right, with the exception of SAE 4340, where the value $\alpha \approx 0.047$ appears to be a little high.
- The surface hardness is somewhat low for most of the specimens, although full hardness is mostly achieved at ~10 mils below the surface.

This is not uncommon in laser hardening, and it has been suggested that this is due to a lower cooling rate at the surface. However, it is easy to demonstrate that this cannot in fact be the case, as the time for cooling from A_f to M_g is shorter at the surface than in the



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FIGURE 8 PROFILE OF OVERLAPPING RUNS

SAE 1045

0.068 cm²/sec

95.7% OF THEORETICAL STANDARD DEVIATION 20%

SURFACE HARDNESS (RC)	54.5	56	9	50	52.5	56	57	95	59.5	95	99	58	99	54.5	55	56.5	57
CALCULATED SURFACE TEMP. (C°)	952	952	952	877	877	877	1139	1139	1139	1096	1096	1096	933	933	933	1325	1325
* OF THEORETICAL	108	113	102	74	120	111	95	103	91	67	78	85	93	96	152	75	7.1
MEASURED CASE (mil)	20	21	19	8	13	12	33.5	36	32	24.5	28.5	31	12.5	13	20.5	36.5	37.5
CALCULATED CASE (mil)	18.6	18.6	18.6	10.8	10.8	10.8	35.2	35.2	35.2	36.6	36.6	36.6	13.5	13.5	13.5	48.6	48.6
SPEED (in/min)	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	30	30	30	09	09	09	40	40
POWER (KW)	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.5.	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.5
CONDITION	ANN	D/T	H.R.	ANN	Q/T	H.R.	ANN	Q/T	H.R.	ANħ	1/0	H.R.	ANN	1/0	н. к.	ANN	Q/T

SAE 4140

100% OF THEORETICAL STANDARD DEVIATION 28.6%

 $\alpha = 0.049 \text{ cm}^2/\text{sec}$ $T_T = 780^{\circ} \text{ C}$

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SS			<u></u>		<u>ا</u> ا		<u>ا</u> د		<u></u>]	5]	15			2	S	2	2			\ \ \ S	10	_
SURFACE HARDNESS (RC)	5.2	52	48.5	57	51.5	52	53.5	53.0	51.5	52	52.5	52	55.5	52	54	53.	51.	51.	53.	52	54	56.5	52.5	
CALCULATED SURFACE TEMP. (C*)	865	598	865	966	966	966	860	860	860	086	980	980	1040	1040	1040	950	950	950	1306	1306	1306 ·	1371	1371	1531
1 OF THEORETICAL	140	185	19	70	122	70	127	123	91	72	110	72	82	111	88	111	137	67	93	111	73	66	81	. 0.
MEASURED CASE (mil)	12.5	16.5	6.0	16.5	29.0	16.5	17.5	17.0	12.5	22.5	34.5	22.5	32	43.5	34.5	51	18.5	6	7.1	84.5	55.5	102.5	83.5	101
CALCULATED CASE (mil)	8.9	8.9	8.9	23.7	23.7	23.7	13.8	13.8	13.8	31.4	31.4	31.4	39.1	39.1	39.1	13.5	13.5	13.5	76.2	76.2	76.2	103.7	103.7	100
SPEED (in/min)	40	40	40	30	30	30	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	09	09	09	10	10	10	5	5	
POWER (KW)	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.7	-
CONDITION	ANN	D/T	H.R.	ANN	D/T	н. к.	ANN	Q/T	H.R.	ANN	Q/T	H.R.	ANN	D/T	H.R.	ANN	Q/T	H.R.	ANN	Q/T	H.R.	ANN	0/T	

SAE 4340

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New Man

0.047 cm²/sec 750° C 90.2% OF THEORETICAL STANDARD DEVIATION 23.3%

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SURFACE HARDNESS (RC)	54	53.5	47.5	55	54.5	52	53	57	53.5	55	53	51.5	54	54	51	54.5	51.5	52.5	53.5	50.5	5.1	53	51.5	49.5
CALCULATED SURFACE TEMP. (C°)	897	L68	168	1176	1176	1176	1078	1078	1078	966	966	966	1126	1126	1126	931	931	931	1353	1353	1353	1238	1238	1238
% OF THEORETICAL	145	88	47	124	93	87	7.6	78	69	77	67	75	100	64	79	151	68	98	16	85	84	114	79	9.0
MEASURED CASE (mil)	21.5	13	L	75	33	31	32.5	26	23	29	25.5	28.5	53	34	42	22	13	12.5	83.5	73	72	104	71.5	81.5
CALCULATED CAȘE (mil)	14.8	14.8	14.8	35.5	35.5	35.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	37.8	37.8	37.8	52.9	52.9	52.9	14.6	14.6	14.6	86.1	1.98	1.98	91.0	91.0	91.0
SPEED (in/min)	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	15	15	15	15	15	15	09	09	09	10	10	10	5	5	5
POWER (KW)	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.4
CONDITION	ANN	D/T	H.R.	ANN	D/T	H.R.	ANN	Q/T	H.R.	ANN	Q/T	н. R.	ANN	T/0	н. к.	ANN	Q/T	н. к.	ANN	Q/T	н. R.	ANN	Q/T	н. к.

95.5% OF THEORETICAL STANDARD DEVIATION 29.0%

SAE 8620

 $\alpha = 0.05 \, \text{cm}^2/\text{sec}$ $T_T = 840^{\circ} \, \text{C}$

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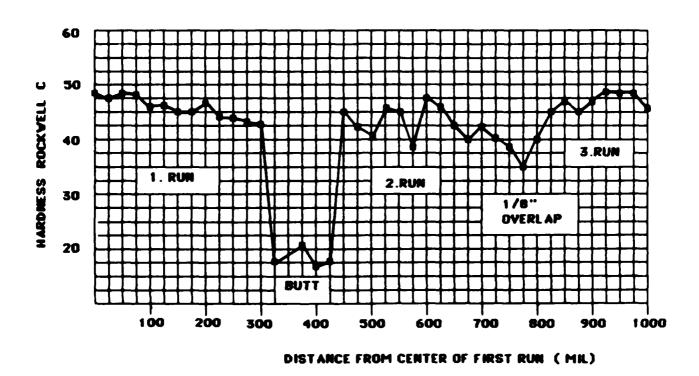
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CONDITION	POWER (kw)	SPEED (in/min)	CALCULATED CASE (mil)	MEASURED CASE (mil)	\$ OF THEORETICAL	CALCULATED SURFACE TEMP. (C*)	SURFACE HARDNESS (RC)
1/0	2.3	40	12	15	125	965	41
ANN	2.3	40	12	7	28	965	35
D/T	2.0	30	14.2	21	148	696	4.1
ANN	2.0	30	14.2	12.5	88	696	38
D/T	2.4	30	30.9	33	107	1159	40
ANN	2.4	30	30.9	31	100	1159	46.5
D/T	1.6	15	36.3	34	94	1094	39
ANN	1.6	15	36.3	23	63	1094	44.5
D/T	1.4	5	1.11	67.5	90	1258	41.5
ANN	1.4.	2	7.4.7	63.5	85	1258	43.5
Q/T	2.9	09	11.7	16	137	866	40.5
ANN	2.9	09	11.7	9	51	993	37.5

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102.5% OF THEORETICAL STANDARD DEVIATION 25.9%	HEORETICA /IATION	I.		HYTEN B 3X		a = 0.049	= 0.049 cm ² /scc = 760° C
CONDITION	POWER (KW)	SPEED (in/min)	CALCULATED CASE (mil)	MEASURED CASE (mil)	• OF THEORETICAL	CALCULATED SURFACE TEMP. (C.)	SURFACE HARDNESS (RC)
Q/T	2.8	09	10.8	13	120	888	56.5
ANN	2.8	09	10.8	9	56	888	55.5
Q/T	2.2	40	10.2	15	147	855	57
ANN	2.2	40	10.2	11	108	558	55
Q/T	2.8	40	29.1	32	110	1083	57
ANN	2.8	40	29.1	33	113	1083	57.5
Q/T	3.5	40	45.4	44.5	98	1349	57.5
ANN	3.5	40	45.4	43.5	96	1349	85
1/0	2.9	30	48.8	77	90	1242	95
ANN	2.9	30	48.8	43	88	1242	9.95

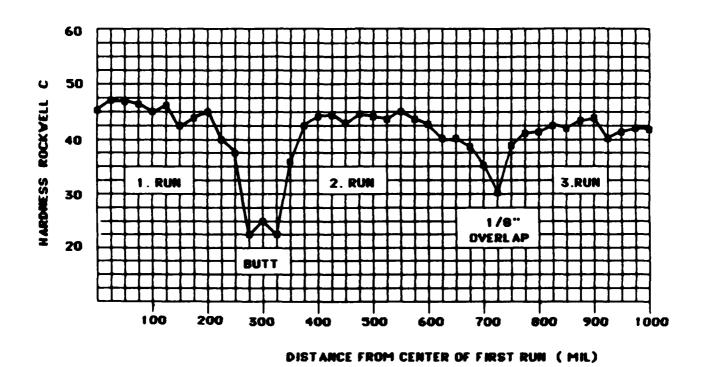


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FIGURE 9.

SAE 8620 (HOT ROLLED). LASER HARDENED AT 1.4 KV AND 5 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.

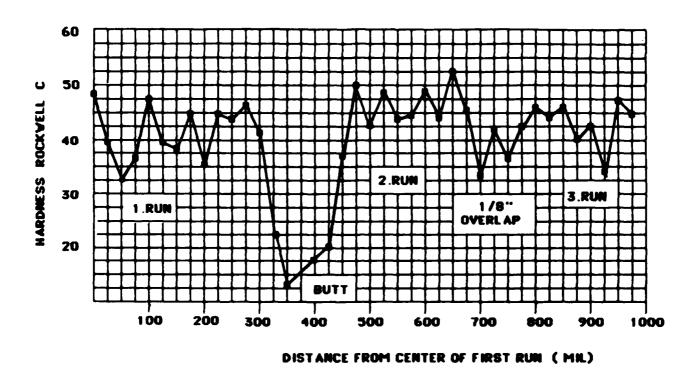


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FIGURE 10.

SAE 8620 (QUENCHED AND TEMPERED). LASER HARDENED AT 1.4 KV AND 5 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.



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FIGURE 11.

SAE 8620 (HOT ROLLED). LASER HARDENED AT 2.4 KY AND 30 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.

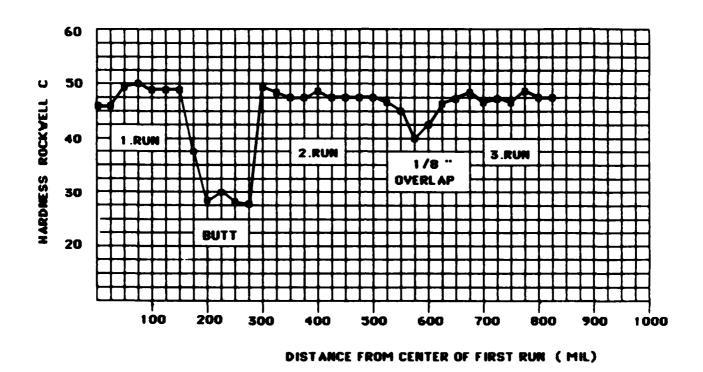


FIGURE 12.

SAE 8620 (QUENCHED AND TEMPERED). LASER HARDENED AT 2.4 Ky AND 30 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.

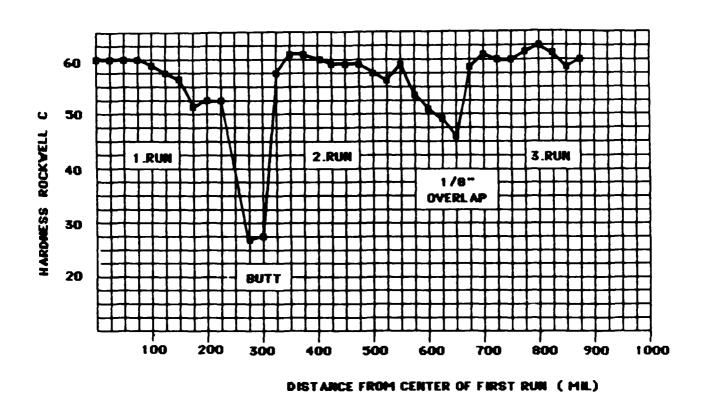
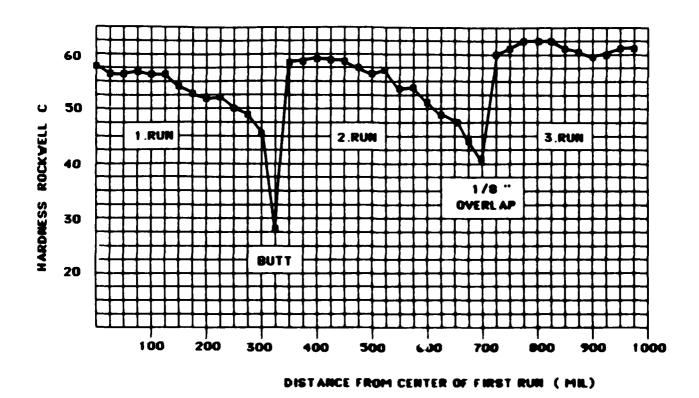


FIGURE 13.

HYTEN B 3X (QUENCHED AND TEMPERED). LASER HARDENED AT 1.2 Ky AND 5 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.

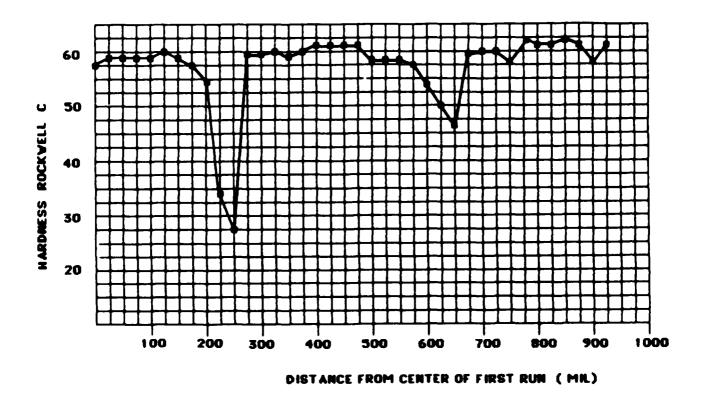


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FIGURE 14

HYTEN B 3X (QUENCHED AND TEMPERED). LASER HARDENED AT 1.6 Ky AND 5 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.



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FIGURE 15.

HYTEN 8 3X (QUENCHED AND TEMPERED).LASER HARDENED AT 2.9 KV AT 30 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.

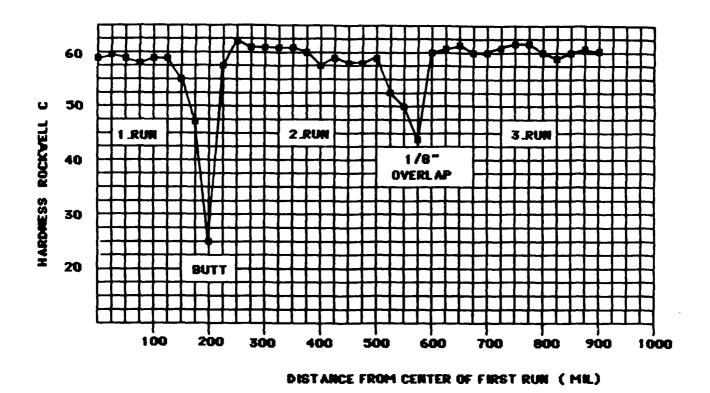


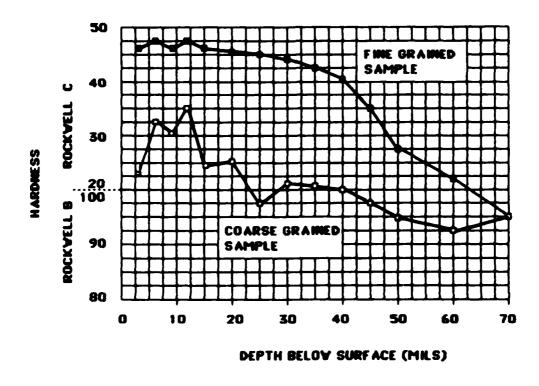
FIGURE 16.

HYTEN B 3X (QUENCHED AND TEMPERED). LASER HARDENED AT 2.9 Ky AND 40 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.

interior. It is, however, possible that the surface will tend to contain a higher percentage of retained austenite than the interior, due to the very high temperature reached here during the laser processing. If this is the case, one should perhaps expect a more pronounced softening at low speed/high surface temperature, but this effect may be counteracted by the lower cooling rate occurrence in such cases. An answer to this question could, however, easily be obtained by X ray analysis.

overlap results show that positive overlap results in backtempering, but not to the bulk hardness of the material. From the point of view of hardness only, it is clearly more efficient to run overlap rather than butt to butt.

The 1020 samples provided by FMC did not develop an adequate hardened case under any combination of speed and power. From metallographic examination, it appeared that a slight decarburization had occurred at the surface, but removal of 50 mil of material by milling did not improve the hardenability of the material. A 1020 sample from Avco stock was processed for comparison purposes, and this material did harden, as expected. Figure 17 shows the hardness tracks obtained on these two materials at 2.9 kW power and 30 in/min speed. Figures 18 and 19 show the microstructure of the two materials. It is apparent that the grain size of the two materials is different, the FMC sample having the larger grain size; while there appears to be little difference in carbon content between the two. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the interaction time available in laser processing (~1 sec) is not sufficiently long to allow



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FIGURE 17.

HARDNESS PROFILES IN SAE 1020 STEELS, LASER HARDENED AT 2.9 KY AND 30 IN/MIN PROCESSING SPEED.



FIGURE 18 STRUCTURE OF SAE 1020 (FMC) 500X



FIGURE 19 STRUCTURE OF SAE 1020 (AVCO) 500X

solution and redistribution of the carbon in the γ phase to form a hardenable austenite in the coarse-grained
material. Increased interaction time would give the
longer carbon diffusion distances required for the coarse
grained sample, but due to the low hardenability of 1020,
the resulting self-quenching rates would not be sufficiently high to form 100% martensite. A profiled laser
beam with "hot" leading edge would yield better results,
but such a device was not available for this work.

The 4130 samples could not be laser processed with any benefit, since these samples already were in the fully hardened, untempered condition. (Bulk Hardness Rc 51). The only results of the laser processing are some softening at the surface, and tempering of the material at the bottom of the heat-affected zone.

3. CLADDING OF CATAPULT RAIL BARS

3.1 Objective

The objective of this phase of the program was to determine the feasibility of laser cladding carrier catapult rails with wear-resistant alloys, and to develop preliminary processing parameters and procedures for such cladding. Specifically, it was desired to develop methods for cladding the rail material with hardfacing alloys having approximately the same hardness as the substrate (approximately Rockwell C 32). Furthermore, the cladding process should be such that sharp edges could be maintained on the finished product. The final objective was to produce representative samples of cladded rail sections.

3.2 Experimental Work

3.2.1. Materials

Sample rails of two different types were provided by FMC/NOD. These consisted of bars made from SAE 4140 and Hy-90 steel, having cross-sectional dimensions 1 1/2" x 2". Two of the rail samples had been flame-sprayed with Stellite #6 E on one face. The other rails were uncoated.

For the laser cladding of the rails, three different types of hardfacing powder were provided. These consisted of Deloro 22, Deloro 35 and Stellite #6 E. In addition, 304 stainless steel powder for dilution of the hardfacing alloys was provided, in order to allow control of the cladding hardness and to lower cracking susceptibility where needed.

3.2.2. Equipment and Procedures

The laser processing was performed with an Avco ${\rm HPL}^{\oplus}\text{--}10~{\rm CO}_2$ laser with CW output. The laser output beam

was shaped with a square beam by means of an optical integrator, as shown in Figure 1. This beam had dimensions $1/2^n \times 1/2^n$ in the focal plane. The entire experimental arrangement was essentially identical to the setup used for the heat treatment work discussed in Chapter 2 in this report and shown in Figure 2, with the addition of an argon gas blanket nozzle aimed at the laser spot from the trailing edge side of the spot.

The object of this gas blanket was to protect the molten material in the interaction zone from reaction with the ambient atmosphere. The gas flow through the nozzle was $15 \text{ fe}^3/\text{hr}$.

The alloy powder was preplaced onto the substrate surface, using 1/16" thick templates to obtain even coverage. Originally, it was the intention to use an automatic powder feeder for delivery of the alloy powder to the substrate, but the alloy powder used in this work did not flow well through this feeder. In particular, the stainless steel powder created problems due to its small grain size (+ 10 μ m).

3.2.3. Development of Processing Parameters

Trial runs were made with all three powders at various power levels and processing speeds, ranging from 3 kW/cm² to 6 kW/cm² and 0.211 cm/sec to 0.847 cm/sec (5 in/min to 20 in/min). Both straight alloy powders and alloy powders with various amounts of 304 stainless steel powder added were clad onto 1/2" SAE 4140 steel plates.

It quickly became clear that the Stellite powder needed about 40% stainless steel addition, both to prevent cracking and to lower the hardness to an acceptable level. At this stage, no cracking problem was experienced

with Deloro 22 and Deloro 35. However, stainless steel addition to these two alloys resulted in a clad layer with variable hardness.

Because of this, it was decided to process the two Deloro alloys without stainless steel addition, even though the resulting clad layer had a hardness somewhat in excess of Rockwell C 32.

The following processing parameters gave the best combination of smooth flow, minimal dilution with the substrate, and absence of porosity.

STELLITE #6 E + 40%	STAINLESS STEEL
4.65 kW/cm ²	10 in/min
DELORO 22	
4.65 kW/cm ²	8 in/min
DELORO 35	
4.65 kW/cm ²	10 in/min

Following the determination of the optimal processessing parameters, overlapping runs were made (1/8" overlap). No problems with cracking or flow were encountered at this stage, but a tendency for pore formation in the Deloro 35 specimens in the overlap zone was noticed. These pores were predominantly in the surface region and did not appear to be of critical importance.

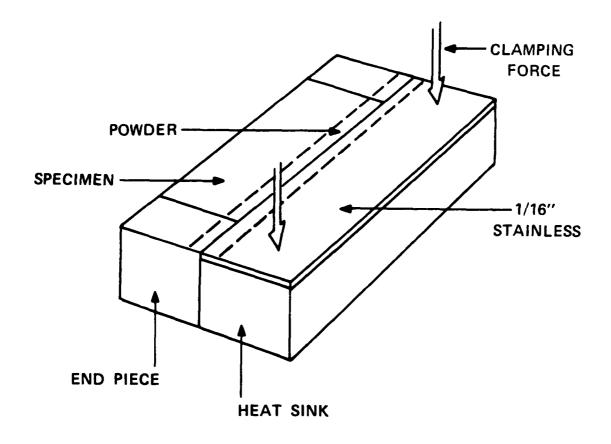
Finally, processing of the flame-sprayed test bars was attempted. This was not a success because the only effect of the laser processing, over a wide range of power and speed, was erosion of the sprayed layer. At power input rates sufficiently high to cause any reaction what-soever, a veritable shower of sparks was generated. This gave the impression that the sprayed layer was under intense residual stresses.

3.2.4. Edge Control

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In order to obtain sharp edges on the clad bars, both at the ends and along the edges, a series of runs were made to find a way to obtain this. The following techniques were found to give satisfactory results.

- To obtain sharp edges at the ends of the bars, two short pieces were cut from the barstock and used as run-on and run-off pieces. The fitup of these pieces must be good enough to allow cladding across the gap without any loss of powder through the gap. If necessary, the gap could be sealed off with a slurry of the alloy powder. (Alcohol or Nicobraze can be used as a carrier). By starting the cladding at least an inch past the end-gap, a continuous clad deposit could be made. After laser processing, the end-pieces could be knocked off cleanly, or cut by sawing or abrasive wheel.
- To obtain sharp edges along the bar, stainless steel extension surfaces were used. These consisted of 1/16" stainless (304) plates fitting tightly along the edges. These plates were clamped down on another steel bar to provide heat-sinking. It is important that the extension surface is as long as the bar plus the two end pieces, otherwise through-melting will result at the corners. The edge cladding was performed with about half the width of the final run on the bar and the other half on the extension surface. After processing, the stainless steel plate could be cut from the underside, providing a sharp edge. Figure 20 shows the technique of edge control.



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FIGURE 20 EDGE CONTROL IN LASER CLADDING

3.2.5. Preparation of Specimens

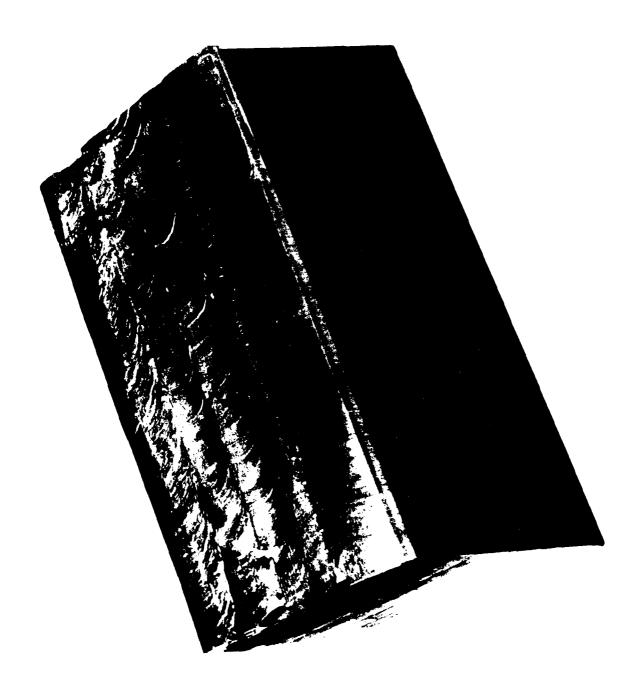
Six specimens, each about 2.5" long, were cut from the 1 1/2" x 2" bars, three from SAE 4140 bars and three from Hy-90 bars. These were clad on one of the 1 1/2" faces, using overlapping runs and edge control techniques (as described above) to obtain uniform cladding of about 0.05" thickness over the entire surface. Each of the three alloys were clad onto both SAE 4140 and Hy-90 substrates. Figure 21 shows the shape of the final specimens. (Deloro 22 on SAE 4140).

3.3 Results and Discussion

Both the Stellite #6E + 40% stainless steel specimens developed cracks at the third overlay pass. These cracks were of the "herring bone" type. The Deloro 35 specimens also showed cracks in the third overlay, but these were normal to the processing direction. In order to prevent cracking, new specimens were made as before, but with stress relief between each cladding run (1200°F for 1 hour). No improvement was observed in the Stellite #6E specimens, but one of the Deloro 35 (on SAE 4140) was apparently crack-free. Deloro 35 on Hy-90, however, showed the cracks.

The two Deloro 22 specimens showed no cracks, and these were not stress-relieved between runs.

Figures 22 through 24 show the hardness profiles of the six different cladded specimens. In all cases, the clad layer is 45 to 50 mil deep, with a hardness ranging from 32 to 42 Rockwell C. The substrates of the specimens cladded with Deloro 22 show transformation hardening in the vicinity of the clad/substrate interface. This is absent in the other specimens, due to the stress-relief heat treatment.



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FIGURE 21 SAE 4140 STEEL BAR CLADDED WITH DELORO 22

Cladding of catapult rails with Deloro 22 can be performed easily. The hardness of the overlay is Rockwell C 35 to 40. The 4140 substrate shows transformation hardening to a peak hardness of Rc 51-52. The Hy-90 substrate does not harden to more than Rc 40.

The Deloro 35 and Stellite #6E alloys can probably not be clad onto these steels in a continuous manner without preheating and slow post-processing cooling to prevent cracking.

Remelting of flame-sprayed layers was not successful in this case, but this should be possible if closer control of the spraying process is exercised.

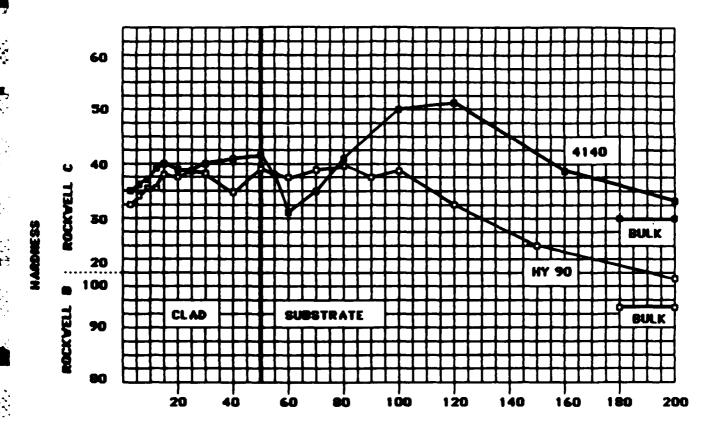


FIGURE 22.

DELORO 22. LASER CLADDED AT 4.65 Kv/cm²

AND 0.339 cm/sec PROCESSING SPEED.

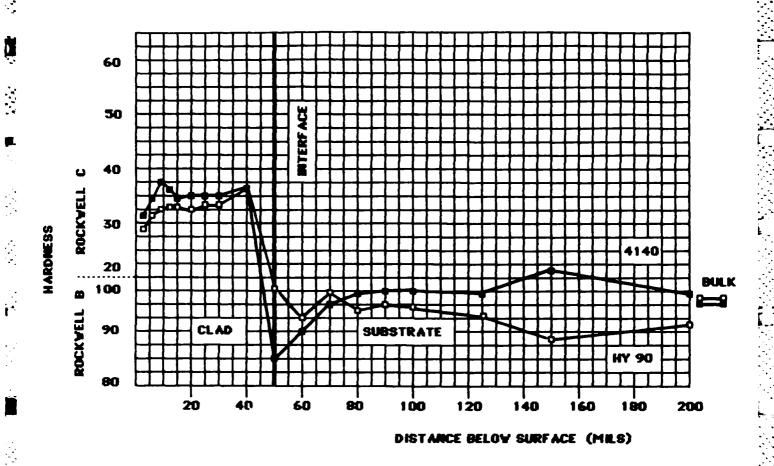


FIGURE 23

STELLITE 6 E + 40% STAINLESS STEEL, LASER CLADDED AT 4.65 Ky/cm² AND 0.423 cm/sec PROCESSING SPEED.

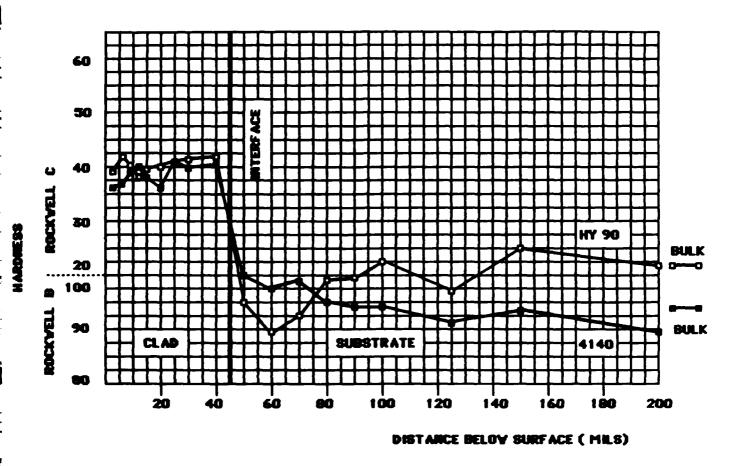


FIGURE 24.

DELORO 35. LASER CLADDED AT 4.65 Ky/cm²

AND 0.423 cm/sec PROCESSING SPEED.

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LIST OF REFERENCES

- Rose, A., and Strassburg, V. (1956). Stahl and Eisen, 76, No. 15. 976-983.
- 2) Sandven, O.A. (1981). Laser Surface Heat Treatment With Profiled Beams. Proc. International Laser Conf., Anaheim,
- 3) Carslaw, H.S. and Jaeger, J.C. (1959). Conduction of Heat in Solids. Oxford Press, 2nd ed. 75.
- 4) ibid. 270.

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- 5) Sandven, O.A. (1983). <u>Three-Dimensional Heat Flow Model</u> for Prediction of Case <u>Depth in Laser Surface Transformation Hardening</u>. ICALEO Conf., Los Angeles, CA.
- 6) ASM METALS HANDBOOK, 9th Ed. (1978). Vol. 1: 145-151.

APPENDIX I

The program listed on the following pages is based on the one-dimensional heat flow model and should not be used for low processing speed.

The program is written for use on a Texas Instrument TI 59 programmable calculator with a PC-100C printer.

User Instructions

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- 1. Partition the calculator to mode 714:29 by entering 3 and push 2th op. 17.
- 2. Enter power density in A (w/cm^2) .
- Enter speed in B (cm/sec).
- 4. Enter spot length in C (cm).
- 5. Enter thermal conductivity and press R/S (w/cmC°).
- 6. Enter thermal diffusivity and press R/S (cm²/sec).
- 7. Enter room temperature in D (C°).
- 8. Enter transition temperature and press R/S (c°).
- 9. Execute program by pressing A¹.

The calculator will print dwelltime, surface temperature and case depth. If the heat input is insufficient to form any case, "NO CASE" is printed. If the processing speed is too low for this model, "USE 3-D" will be printed.

If cooling rates behind the laser spot are desired, enter the total time (dwelltime + cooling time combined) and press B^1 . This must be done after the case depth has been calculated. The calculator will print surface temperature at the entered time, the rate of cooling (in c $^{\circ}$ /sec), the temperature at the bottom of the case and the rate of cooling at this point. The procedure can be repeated for any desired total time.

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APPENDIX II

The program listed on the following pages utilizes a onedimensional heat flow model for the high speed range, and a three-dimensional model for the low speed ranges.

The program is written for use on a Texas Instrument TI 59. programmable calculator with a PC-100 printer.

User Instructions

- 1. Partition the calculator to mode 799:19 by entering 2 and push 2th op. 17.
- 2. Enter laser power (watts) in A.
- 3. Enter speed (cm/sec) in B.
- 4. Enter thermal conductivity (w/cmC*) in C.
- 5. Enter thermal diffusivity (cm²/sec) in D.
- 6. Enter transformation temperature (C*) in E.
- 7. Enter size of laser spot (cm) in A¹.
- 8. Enter room temperature (c°) in B¹.
- 9. Press C^1 . The value of the parameter $B = \nu b/2\alpha$ will be displayed. Now press R/S. The calculator will print surface temperature, depth of case (in cm and mils), the value of the parameter B and the ratio of the parameters Z and B ($Z = \nu z/2\alpha$). The results are valid if:

B > 0.5

Z/B < 0.5 for 1 > B > 0.5

Z/B < 0.4 for 4 > B > 1

for all values of B > 4

PROGRAM FOR PREDICTION OF CASE (Three-Dimensional)

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PROGRAM FOR PREDICTION OF CASE (Three-Dimensional)

PROGRAM FOR PREDICTION OF CASE

(Three-Dimensional)

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PROGRAM FOR PREDICTION OF CASE

(Three-Dimensional)

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PROGRAM FOR PREDICTION OF CASE (Three-Dimensional)

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PROGRAM FOR PREDICTION OF CASE

(Three-Dimensional)

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