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PRESS RELEASE

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Increase in the production of high-quality automotive sheets and tinsplates

Slab caster No. 1 at ArcelorMittal Asturias (Avilés) successfully started up by SMS group

Five weeks after the start-up of the revamped slab caster No. 1, the caster is already producing at the same level as before the revamp. The quality of the rolled coils is rated as very good by the customer.

ArcelorMittal Asturias (Avilés), Spain, had placed an order with SMS group (www.sms-group.com) for a comprehensive revamp of the two-strand slab caster No.1 with the aim to rebuild the bow-type caster into a caster of vertical bending design.

The revamped caster produces slabs with a thickness of 235 millimeters and widths between 800 and 1,600 millimeters; the maximum casting speed is rated at 1.9 meters per minute.

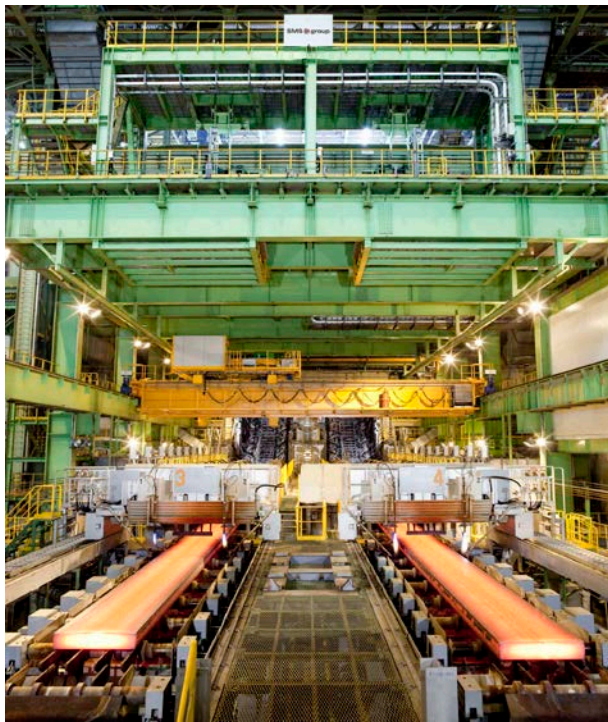
From the mold to the run-out area, the caster was completely rebuilt as a vertical bending caster. It is equipped with a remote adjustable mold, hydraulic oscillation and a width-dependent spray cooling system (water cooling) in the machine head.

ArcelorMittal Asturias also modernized the existing maintenance workshop which now features the state-of-the-art HD LASr alignment system designed by SMS group.

Furthermore, SMS group has implemented various X-Pact[®] level 2 process models and automation packages. A mold monitoring system checks the temperature distribution. In this way, any strand shell stickers can be detected and breakouts prevented at a very early stage. The DSC[®] (Dynamic Solidification Control) metallurgical process model calculates the solidification process of the strand and controls the various secondary cooling zones.

The integrated steel plant of ArcelorMittal Asturias (Avilés) produces high-quality steel grades for the automotive industry as well as for tinplate and heavy plate production.

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Continuous casting plant from SMS group for high-quality steel.

The SMS group is a group of companies internationally active in plant construction and mechanical engineering for the steel and nonferrous metals industry. Its 14,000 employees generate sales of over EUR 3.3 bn.