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PRESS RELEASE

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Rapid and successful implementation for highly flexible production **Saarstahl issues final acceptance to SMS group for upgraded** **high-capacity wire rod mill in Burbach**

Saarstahl AG has granted acceptance to SMS group (www.sms-group.com) for the expansion of the high-capacity wire rod mill at the Burbach location.

To employ larger initial pass sections (180 x 180 millimeters), improve the rolling conditions and secure competitiveness in the long term, Saarstahl commissioned SMS group to expand the single-strand roughing mill of its four-strand wire rod mill at the Burbach plant. Besides the expansion of the four-stand roughing mill by two additional stands, this modernization measure included a shear, a four-strand switch and a four-strand pinch roll unit. After the expanded wire rod mill was handed over to the customer on time and ready for production the production tests took place. Hence, the modernization project could be successfully completed about two months before the deadline.

With the expansion of the single-strand roughing mill initial pass sections can now be employed without any reconstruction measures. The final cross section of the roughing train is equal for all initial pass sections and will now be distributed onto the four strands of the wire rod mill by means of the new switch.

Saarstahl AG is one of the world's leading producers of quality steel for rolled and forged finished products with German locations in Völklingen, Burbach and Neunkirchen. One of the most important production facilities is the four-strand high-performance wire rod mill in Burbach which had been taken into operation by SMS group in 1973 for the first time and now has repeatedly been expanded by SMS group.

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The upgraded wire rod mill could be handed over to Saarstahl already two months earlier.

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.