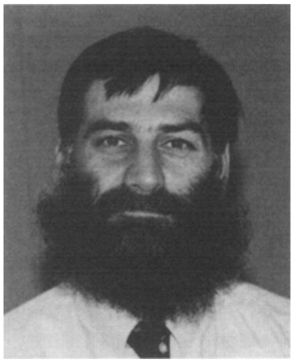
Editorial



This editorial coincides with the closure of the 13th International Thermal Spray Conference; thus, it is appropriate to open some discussion concerning this important meeting. In terms of absolute numbers: ITSC'92 attracted more exhibitors (70) and provided the largest Conference Proceedings (161 papers and 1070 pages) of any prior conference and exhibition that has addressed solely the area of thermal spray technology. There was also a very successful educational and workshop series of four different activities that commenced four days before the main conference. The delegates were certainly kept busy running between three concurrent sessions as well as participating in a quite active "standing room only" exhibition and many social events!

There seems to be no doubt that the Conference was a financial success as well as extremely well-organized, but possibly the more appropriate question to ask is, "Was ITSC'92 technically and professionally rewarding for the majority of delegates?" This question should be answered by ITSC'92 attendees since it is only by offering constructive and frank criticism that true development of thermal spray activity can advance throughout the world. Of course the answer to this question will vary from person-to-person, but the important point is to pass on your comments and ideas, whether they be those aspects of the meeting that need improvement or those that were accomplished, to the appropriate person. The Editor suggests that you call or write the Chairman of the Thermal Spray Division at ASM International, Materials Park, Ohio 44073 USA.

Expectations may have been realized or there may have been some disappointment. For instance, another less impressive statistic (depending on your viewpoint!) is that there were probably more committee meetings during the Conference than at any previous ITSC. The result is that those who may have had much to contribute to the discussion of thermal spray were by necessity removed from the general body of the Conference at times. This conflict may be insolvable, since, realistically, it is only at these conferences that the committee members assemble.

Another question is—"Are the young thermal sprayers being nurtured within the industry?"—since it is only by attracting and retaining *new* viewpoints and ideas that the future of the industry can be secured. There is clearly room for broading the horizons, in this area and the Editor would be happy to use *JTST* as a forum to explore this question. One example of stimulating undergraduates to enter the thermal spray community has been the establishment of substantial scholarships by the International Thermal Spraying Association to graduate students who have embarked on a career in thermal spray. No doubt other creative ideas abound, and your input is welcome.

The theme of this commentary has been to open a discussion about several issues that affect the thermal spray community. Thus, with this thought in mind, a final point concerns this *Journal.* The first issue of Volume 1 has been circulated for several months and has been internally critiqued by its Editorial Committee during ITSC'92. The general feeling is quite positive. However, the Committee is very aggressively soliciting feedback from all subscribers and extends to you a sincere invitation to let us know your thoughts and ideas, so that the *Journal* can best suit your needs and concerns and those of your industry!

Chris Berndt

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Editor