

# RUSSIAN FITTINGS OF ENGLISH ORIGIN: NEW PRODUCTION IN KLIMOVSK

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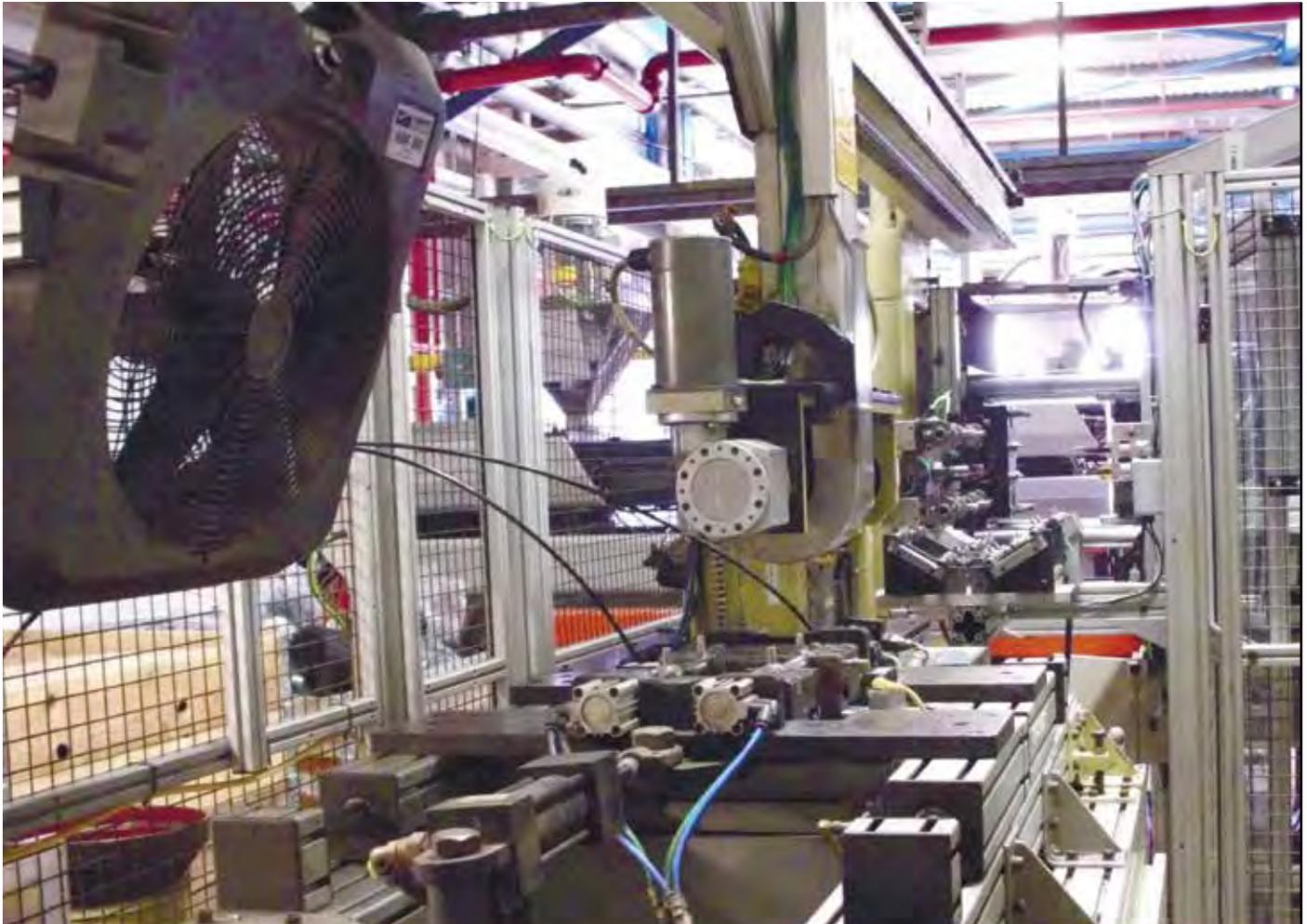
**R**adius electrofusion fittings entered the Russian market in autumn 2013. The product range included fittings up to 315 mm, tees and elbows up to 180 mm and reducers up to 250 mm. From 2014 the range was increased with the addition of 355 mm and 400 mm fittings. Radius Systems also began producing 40V fittings specifically for Russian consumers, in addition to the traditional 80V rating.

These products are marketed as 'economy class fittings' alongside the premium Georg Fischer fittings offered by POLYPLASTIC Group. The crisis revealed the timeliness of this offering as sales of Radius fittings on the Russian market today are now over 300,000 units.

The fittings packing system was set up specifically for the Russian market. In Britain, the finished products are packed in an individual

plastic bag and stored in boxes on pallets. They are only placed in cardboard boxes in the ordered quality just before shipping to the customer. The average distance from the Radius Systems warehouse to the British consumer is no greater than 300 km, however for customer deliveries to Russia, the distance covered is at least 3200 km. If the additional logistics required to reach POLYPLASTIC's regional warehouses in Omsk and Irkutsk (approximately 2700 km and 5300 km from Moscow accordingly) are also taken into account, then the total distance from the warehouse in Derbyshire to the consumer can be up to 8400 km. The pilot supply of Radius electrofusion fittings to Russia showed that packaging failed at such long distances, therefore the decision was taken to significantly increase the cardboard thickness of the boxes.





Soon after the pilot, POLYPLASTIC announced its intention to deploy production of the high-demand Radius fittings to Russia. Import substitution, that the company was involved in for the last twenty years, had suddenly become a trendy idea. However, it is mainly prevailed in agricultural sector. The deployment of high-tech products such as electrofusion fittings made by injection moulding requires long-term and vast investment along and highly skilled and qualified personnel.

Nevertheless, the management of POLYPLASTIC Group took the decision to immediately deploy production of Radius fittings in Russia. POLYPLASTIC is the only Russian enterprise to implement production of electrofusion fittings despite the crisis.

In October 2015, Klimovsk Pipe Plant implemented production of smaller diameter fittings (from 20 to 40 mm). These are in high demand.

Relocating the fully automated line from Britain to Russia secured ongoing domestic production of the traditional high quality products that have become so popular amongst consumers over the last two years.

Moulding at Klimovsk Pipe Plant has a long history. Moulding equipment has been upgraded over the last few years to cope with increased injection volume and product weight. Currently

moulding department of Klimovsk Pipe Plant can produce PE items weighing up to 33 kg.

The use of robots to automate some stages of moulding process is not a new feature at the Klimovsk Pipe Plant, however a fully automated cell able to produce a new fitting every 20 seconds was a new experience. Two-weeks summer training for the leading moulding specialist from Klimovsk Pipe Plant proved very useful.

Radius fittings made in Russia are also financially attractive to the local consumer as import substitution also goes hand-in-hand with a product price reduction.

