

**COMBINED  
CYCLE** Journal

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The first three issues of the quarterly COMBINED CYCLE Journal are well-defined by the special features they carry each year: 1Q, Best Practices Awards entries; 2Q, Directory of Products and Services for Gas-Turbine-Based Powerplants; 3Q, Outage Handbook. We have been looking for a “hook” to carry the last issue of the year but until recently couldn’t identify one that would excite us—more importantly, interest you. Experience tells that most good ideas come when you’re not looking so we figured one would pop into view walking across one of Nevada’s picturesque deserts or following a trail through a stand of bristlecone pine at 10,000 ft. Didn’t happen.

It was Thanksgiving week and we were looking over the articles planned for 4Q—good “stuff” but nothing particularly special. After some wine, we thought the problem might be that we were looking for new ideas in old places—that we should take a different path.

It’s no secret that most of the information we publish comes from material presented at user group meetings or is based on discussions with individuals at those conferences. There’s no better place on the planet to learn how to operate and maintain gas turbines and their auxiliaries, as well as heat-recovery steam generators, steam turbines, and generators. In fact, we would be hard pressed to identify an article in the annual Outage Handbook that wasn’t rooted in a user-group meeting.

Since fine wine (Senior Editor Scott Schwieger believes that life’s too short to drink cheap wine) always brings clarity to outlandish ideas, we decided a series of plant visits were in order. We convinced ourselves that we’d find both interesting and different things to write about while touring simple-cycle, cogeneration, and combined-cycle plants with knowledgeable guides. So we made some calls to managers at plants that had started up in calendar 2006 and hit the road the second week of December. We were overwhelmed by the expressions of interest in our visits, by the warm receptions we received, by the depth of information shared.

To the best of our knowledge, we called every US plant that started up in 2006, visited a bunch, and interviewed most of the others by phone. We spoke with over 100 people to compile the reports in this issue and made hundreds more calls to identify them and connect.

**This issue is a tribute** to the hard work and dedication of all the men and women involved in the design, construction, commissioning, and day-to-day operation of the Class of 2006 and the plants that preceded them. Their efforts have enabled gas-turbine-based powerplants to become the generation alternative of choice in the US. Today, there are only two countries that have more total generating capacity than America has GT-based capacity—the US, of course, and China.

The editors appreciate that O&M personnel are time-constrained and so focused on individual plant performance they often do not have the opportunity to see the panorama of their industry and the challenges others are having beyond the basic engine. We hope this compendium is of value to you; please let us know.

Our apologies to all for being so late with this issue and to the user groups for the reports promised but not published. All articles originally planned for the fourth quarter have been moved to 1Q/2007. Also appearing in 1Q is the best batch of Best Practices we have ever published.

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