First-of-its-Kind Helical Pile Educational Event a Success

All the stars aligned to foster the success of the Helical Pile World-DFI Helical Piles-Tiebacks-anchors Tradeshow and Educational Seminar, June 4-5, 2019, at the Hamilton County Fairgrounds in Cincinnati, Ohio. The idea was a great one, the weather cooperated, the fairgrounds staff was excellent, and the spirit of cooperation and camaraderie was infectious. Congratulations to the outstanding program and organizing team that brought this first-of-its-kind helical pile educational event to the industry.

In 2017, the “Idea Man”, Bill Bonekemper of Helical Pile World, invited DFI to organize this unique event that would include outdoor demonstrations highlighting innovations and applications of helical piles and tiebacks. The program expanded to include indoor educational presentations and coordinated live exhibitions to present to the attendees all aspects of design, quality assurance and control, load testing and innovations for helical piles, tiebacks and anchors. More than 250 attendees joined in for the indoor presentations and 6 outdoor live exhibitions and 18 product and equipment displays.

This type of event was new for DFI, which required effective communication, conscientious planning, patience and trust. Angie Gibble, DFI meetings and event specialist, capably transformed the fairground’s “Rabbit Hut” (barn) into a
The event featured 18 product and equipment displays (load test frames and construction), Ron Lech of Terracon (site investigation), Ben Steinhauer of SSRG (equipment for materials handling and call-before-you-dig) and the Kleingers Group (surveying). Special thanks for the contributions of the outdoor exhibitors – American Piledriving Equipment, Hubbell Power Systems, MacLean Civil Products, Magnum Piering, Pileworks and SSRG.

More than 30 attendees participated in the pile prediction competition to predict the axial load on a helical pile installed at the fairgrounds at a specified deflection prior to a static load test based on provided geotechnical data. Winners of the pile prediction competition were David Roggy of American Ground Screw, Dale Plett of Versapile and Mohamed Abdelaziz of Almita Piling. Congratulations to these winners, who can claim bragging rights until the next event!

Attendee feedback was positive, and we hope that this first-of-its-kind event will start a new chapter for DFI’s educational offerings. Thanks again to the idea man, program and organizing teams, attendees, exhibitors, sponsors and organizers.

See all photos at www.dfi.org/Helical19.

Photos by Herb Engler and Mary Ellen Large