BY RICK ZAND, NEW TECH MACHINERY

Blending Tradition and Innovation

Colorado Event Center Features Tru>Steel HD Processed With New Tech B&B Profile

THE LEGACY PROJECT STANDS TALL in the heart of Greeley, Colorado, exhibiting a seamless blend of tradition and innovation. This 2,300 square-foot building, nestled within Island Grove Regional Park, brings together two cutting-edge innovations in the metal industry: New Tech Machinery's (NTM) board and batten profile and Steel Dynamics' (SDI) digitally designed Tru>Steel HD metal.

NTM launched its board and batten profile this past spring for its SSQ II™ MultiPro Roof and Wall Panel Machine, and SSQ machines dating back to 2014. This game-changing new profile replicates the old rural farmhouse panels that gained popularity in the mid-1800s. The metal board and batten siding is showing up in the countryside, suburbs, and cities, proving perfect for residential and commercial buildings. The boards are installed vertically with the battens covering the fasteners, in parity with the traditional wood style.

SDI introduced its Tru>Steel HD printed steel in the fall of 2022. The digital print applies an inkjet printer, roll coater, and electron-beam curing system, producing a resolution of up to 400 dpi. The system used 3-D scanners on real wood to develop an authentic wood-grain design that can fool the eye when viewed even up close. This convincing pattern caught the attention of rollforming contractors like Lee Smith, owner of Flatiron Steel, who eventually proposed it for the Legacy Project.

The Legacy Project required 18,450 sq. ft. of board & batten siding. The building, owned by the city of Greeley, hosts several events, most notably, the annual Greeley Stampede. The Legacy Project will display rodeo memorabilia, photos, and event archives, serving as a Western heritage museum. It will also house offices and host meetings and conferences.

The town originally planned for a stucco building for the Legacy Project to represent the authentic Western look, a prominent part of Greeley's Colorado character. Smith had gone to meet with them about contracting for the roofing, as they had in mind a green metal roof to top the stucco. During the course of the meeting, however, he discovered they had the flexibility to choose the materials for the whole structure.

"Instead of stucco, I suggested they choose metal, given its durability," Smith said. "I told them about the metal wood look and assured them they would get the Western heritage appearance they wanted using the metal board and batten combined with Tru>Steel wood grain."

After pricing it out through United Steel Supply, Smith came back with a number that added up to $20,000 more than the stucco quote. Deciding it was worth his company's

investment for the exposure this new design combination would receive, Smith donated the difference so that the project could move forward.

Smith has two New Tech Machinery SSQ II machines at his Greeley location that he's been using for around ten years. His crew ran the board and batten panels onsite. "Using the B&B with the Tru>Steel HD on the SSQ II was just like throwing in another profile and running," he said. "Everything was exactly the same."

As for the installation, Kaleb Kramer of Independent Roofing, the company contracted to install the panels, said that working with board and batten wasn't much different from other panel installations. "It's pretty quick and easy," he said, but added, "When cutting for windows, you may end up with a 1.5" gap from the open end of a batten."

However, he bent metal caps over the gaps and riveted them on as covers. Leaking wasn't a problem—it was more about the aesthetic of having a closed end.

The other issue Kramer mentioned with the Tru>Steel HD was repetition in the wood grain, so that if panels are set together, you may see a repeat of the wood knot pattern. On long panels, they would eventually repeat upward as well. He worked to separate panels that were alike to avoid this repetition. "It probably wouldn't be an issue with short panels," he added. "But some of these panels are 32 feet long. I realize most people don't even notice it, though."

THE FINISHED PRODUCT

The Legacy Project now stands as a frontier-style building that fits the Western motif the town had originally envisioned. Initially designed for garage doors but soon adopted for metal siding, the Tru>Steel HD paired with the board and batten created an old wood grain barn or farmhouse look. Although on the thin side, Kramer said that even the longest 32' panels handled easily and snapped together well.

As far as the future of board and batten and steel designs, Smith sees it as a look people want, and the fact that it's customizable makes it more attractive and a good investment for the community. "It still takes a skill set to install it," he said. "We need a labor market that will support it as well. But as it becomes more in demand, prices will go up, and this may attract more workers looking to make money."

Another benefit Smith mentioned is that the siding comes from mostly recycled metal and can be recycled again. It's not just creating more landfill, like wood or other non-recyclable materials.

Smith's future projects include building custom homes, and he recently shipped some of the Tru>Steel HD gray cedar to Juno, Alaska. He noted another home under construction in northern Idaho, again using the NTM SSQ II MultiPro board and batten profile to run Tru>Steel HD panels.

While brown and gray wood grain panels have gained popularity, Tru>Steel HD offers other patterns, and the options seem to be growing. "Tru>Steel HD options are really only limited by your imagination whether designing on 3-D software or choosing from stock," Smith said. "The great thing is you can design into the panels something three-dimensional that looks very realistic, and you can really tweak it so that it has very different textures."

The Legacy Project has set a new standard for architectural expression, showcasing the perfect combination of pastoral charm and futuristic technology. Greeley's new building presents the potential for metal siding's future and holds limitless possibilities for innovative residential and commercial design with the blend of these two newest advances in metal siding. **RB**