

Allan Block

Always Better Wall of Fame

November 2017



allanblock.com



Marty Tootsov
Clayton Block
Lakewood, NJ

We welcome Marty Tootsov to the Allan Block Wall of Fame Class of 2017. Now we cannot forget the east coast and Marty can help chronicle the story of success Allan Block has experienced. Marty has provided a wealth of expertise and commitment with a career that dates to 1975. In the beginning, Marty was working for his family's block company, Super Block. Marty reflects on the old days and how much the industry has changed. "We had a group of masons that we took care of and they were loyal to us. We ran one shift and seldom went further than fifteen miles from our plant." Marty continues on with how it was a simpler business then, more straightforward with what you need to do to have success. "We did not deal with 100s of customers, hundreds of products and colors, we knew what we had to do to meet the needs of our customers."

In 1992, Clayton Block purchased Marty's family business and began a new phase of his career. By this time, Clayton was in the Allan Block business, but just beginning. When production moved from the Lakewood plant to the Edison plant things began to happen. Marty was instrumental in getting the production bugs worked out in Edison as sales began to skyrocket in 1995 and for the next twenty plus years he wanted to make sure sales could never say he did not have the block they needed in the yard.

At 42 years in the business, to say that Marty has hit his stride and knows what he is doing is an understatement. From his start on Columbia 3 at a time machines at his family's business, to his work with Dan Clayton, one of the owners of Clayton Block, with bringing in a bigger and more efficient Columbia machine for CMUs, to stepping up to a big Tiger machine for their next generation of productivity in our business. On their Tiger machine in Lakewood, NJ, in addition to running pavers and CMUs, his plant is the home for AB production where he runs eight AB Classic per cycle, Marty has been a pioneer in the evolution of making great Allan Block products to stay ahead of a constant demand from ever present pressure from the Clayton Sales team.

Marty's focus has been on production, where he says bigger is better. In a typical day, Marty is proud to see 24,000 AB Classic run through the machine. His cull rate is well below industry standards and his colors are as good as they get. Now if that is not good enough, he consistently can hold height tolerances to within one mm across each cycle of eight AB Classics. Well with all of that how could the sales team every have a worry. They really don't but Marty loves to stir up the sales team and make them think he is out of product, Marty's famous motto to the sales department is "you sales guys will never run me out of block-sell more". No one is sure if he learned this from his father, from working with Danny Clayton, or he just loves to torture sales. Regardless, he takes care of business and is always looking at ways to make things *Always Better*.

During an early production run on the Tiger machine to run a new cap, he went against the typical production practice of making the caps upside down to create a bigger notch for more overhang of the cap over the block below it. Marty wanted to run the caps top up so he could get a tighter more consistent finish, but he knew what challenges we would face. Over a three-hour period, we worked to make several adjustments to finally get the product to run well, and be ready for market. Marty concluded that everything had to be perfect to get good product and he did not want to make junk, so he was ready to make a change to the mold to give himself a bit of a cushion. When he explained his plan to Dan, he quickly learned how much confidence Dan had in knowing that he was sure if we could get it to run in three hours, every time Marty would run it after that he would just get better. And so the story goes, when Marty is challenged he rises to the occasion and gets the job done.