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GingerMan Raceway paving project 'a great experience' for Superior Asphalt, Inc. father-son duo

By Bradley MacDonald

Rick Browley Jr. worked as a laborer at Superior Asphalt, Inc. throughout high school as a summer job. Now with 17 years of experience, Browley Jr. serves as paving superintendent for the company, alongside his father Rick Browley Sr. who's worked in asphalt for 40 years. He and his father recently completed their first racetrack project together as paving crew chiefs on the GingerMan Raceway project in South Haven, Michigan. "Everything I've learned about paving comes from my dad," Browley Jr. said. "It became something he loved, and now I love it even more because of how happy it makes him. It was one of the greatest experiences ever paving GingerMan Raceway with him." The project came to fruition after Dave VanPutten, an estimator with Superior Asphalt, Inc., met with the owner of the Raceway during the winter of 2014.

"We talked about building from the ground up or a resurfacing," he said. "We decided the method that would best fit their needs was to resurface the existing track by milling as necessary and furnishing a new wearing course." Superior Asphalt, Inc. decided the echelon paving technique best applies the smoothness GingerMan Raceway sought. This method features two staggered pavers with multiple rollers following behind to smooth seams while they are still hot. Browley Jr. described the project as a learning experience. When paving roads, typically one paver is used. Procuring optimal smoothness on the track was critical so the track runs faster for the racers. The crew generated the desired smoothness by running skis on both sides of the pavers while continuously laying the same amount of material depth. It was also imperative the elevation of the track remained unchanged. This



all required assiduous preparation. "The organization and preparation of the job was the hardest thing about it," Browley Jr. said. "We performed crack repair, filled voids and laid down a GlasGrid prior to paving." Composed of fiberglass strands coated with an elastomeric polymer, GlasGrid is sandwiched in between the leveling and surface courses in an asphalt overlay. It buttresses the pavement and resists the migration of reflective cracks. "It was the first raceway we've done," said Browley Jr. "Everyone seems happy from everything I've heard recently. They've had cars on the track, and everything was positive. It turned out really good." Browley Jr. credits his father's

expertise for such a strong result on their first raceway project. "To work next to him on this kind of project is one of the best accomplishments I've ever had," he said. "It's a job full of pride and joy." It took three days to complete the 1.7-mile racetrack, using 4C with polymer and limestone asphalt. VanPutten said with the new pavement, race-goers should expect a faster track since the grip is now enhanced. "The track has 11 turns, so the grip is important," he said. "It will make the races more exciting. It should also attract a broader range of race teams." Visit superiorasphalt.com or lansingasphalt.com for more information on paving services, techniques and more.

