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## FRICION SURFACING FROM RADIAL SURFACE OF A6063 ALUMINUM ALLOY CONSUMABLE TOOL ONTO A36 CARBON STEEL

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### ABSTRACT

*Friction surfacing is an advanced technique to create solid-state deposition of wide range of materials onto a similar or dissimilar material substrate. This paper describes the study of a novel method to deposit material onto a substrate by friction surfacing. In the friction surfacing technique, the heat is generated entirely by friction. This metallic deposition technique consists of a rotating consumable tool that rubs against the surface of the substrate, and due to the frictional heat and forging generated between the tool and substrate, material is deposited onto the substrate. The material transferred from the consumable tool to the substrate occurs from the side of the tool, while in the conventional friction surfacing method, the material transfer happens from the end of the tool. In this investigation, the single and double-pass deposition of A6063 aluminum alloy onto an A36 carbon steel substrate was successfully carried out. To study the influence of the process parameters on the friction depositions, the substrate was divided into three sections, while the applying forces were varied in each section. Process parameters such as tool rotational speeds, table traverse speeds and normal force were experimented. A customized JET JMD-18 milling machine was used to carry out the experiments. The influence of process parameters on the material deposition was characterized by means of roughness tester and optical microscope. The results of the study reveal that this novel method is capable to create an ultra-thin and smooth metallic deposition with excellent coverage. The material consumption during the single and double-pass deposition was evaluated, and the coating cross-section was assessed using the optical microscope.*

Keywords: Friction Surfacing, Side of Tool, Solid State Coating, Consumable Tools, Friction Deposition

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Friction surfacing is a solid-state material deposition technology based on the plastic deformation of the metallic consumable tool. This technology has been employed to improve specific material properties such as corrosion and wear resistance [1-3], as well as for developing homogeneous fine-grained metallic coatings [4-6], and renovation and repair of worn mechanical components [7, 8]. It exploits the frictional energy generated during the process operation and fabricates a plasticized metal layer of the consumable tool onto the substrate. The frictional heat generated by the rubbing between the rotating consumable tool and the substrate is the key factor for the formation of deposition through the friction surfacing technology. This technique creates a high-quality deposition with low heat influence and deformation, that indicates a slight change in chemical composition enhancing the hardness of the deposition. Friction surfacing technology has been carried out for developing several combinations of materials such as steel, aluminum, and titanium alloys as the consumable materials and substrates [9].

The critical process parameters of friction surfacing are tool rotational speed, applying force, and traverse speed, which determine the physical quantities such as width and thickness, as well as the mechanical and metallurgical properties [9]. In other words, the process parameters are the design variables and have significant influences on the final quality of the coating [10]. Gandra et al. [11] investigated the friction surfacing of AA6082-T6 onto AA2024-T3 substrate, with special attention to the influence of process parameters as tool rotational speed, axial force, and travel speed. The experimental results exhibit that lower travel and tool rotational speeds resulted in increasing the thickness and width of the deposit. Batchelor et al. [12] investigated the influence of process parameters, different

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materials, and the number of coating passes on the quality of deposited coatings. In this study, aluminum, stainless steel, and brass as the consumable material were fabricated onto a mild steel substrate. The experiments exhibit that stainless steel developed a strong thick coating layer, but fabricating process of aluminum and brass was not successful. In [13] an attempt was carried out to fabricate AISI316 stainless steel onto EN24 carbon steel. It was concluded that axial force, table traverse, and tool rotational speeds were the most effective process parameters on the geometry of the coating. The results exhibited that to increase the deposit width and thickness, a higher combination of table traverse speed and axial load should be considered.

Furthermore, employment of reinforcing particles within the consumable tools can improve the deposition quality. For this purpose, some holes can be drilled through the consumable rod and then filled with reinforcing particles. For instance, TiC particles were utilized to reinforce the A7075 aluminum alloy consumable tool for fabrication onto A5754 substrate [14]. The developed deposition was subjected to wear tests, and the result indicated that the coating with TiC particles shows significantly less wear compared to the TiC-free coating. In [2], A2124 aluminum alloy consumable tool was reinforced with silicon carbide ( $SiC_p$ ) particles, and then friction surfaced onto A356 Al-Si alloy substrate. The deposition was evaluated by dry sliding wear and metallography testing, and the result of the experiment showed excellent wear resistance and metallurgical bonding. Moreover, there are several investigations regarding friction surfacing as a new technique for filling and repairing the keyholes created through the friction stir welding process [15-18]. In these investigations, semi-consumable joining tools, including a non-consumable shoulder and a consumable joining bit, were designed to produce the filling deposition.

Since the friction surfacing is a thermo-mechanical process, studying the influence of process parameters on heat generation, and the effects of temperature on the mechanical properties are essential. Sahoo and Mohanty studied different sets of process parameters in developing deposition of A6063 aluminum alloy onto EN24 carbon steel [19]. A deeper understanding of this process could be provided by using finite element modeling. Bararpour et al. [20] and Rahmati et al. [21] developed a finite element modeling using ABAQUS software to anticipate the thermo-mechanical behavior of materials in this technique.

In this study, the friction deposition of A6063 aluminum alloy onto A36 carbon steel using a new technique of friction surfacing is presented. In this novel technique of friction surfacing, material transfer will occur from the side of the consumable tool. In order to study the influence of process parameters, two different tool rotational speeds, two different table traverse speeds, and three different normal forces were experimented. The influence of process parameters on the material deposition was characterized by means of roughness tester, optical microscope, and visual evaluation.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Friction surfacing is one of the advanced techniques to create deposition of wide range materials onto a similar or dissimilar material as substrate. There is no external heat source in this technique, and all the heat required in this process is developed by friction. This study is an attempt to study the friction deposition of A6063 aluminum alloy onto A36 mild carbon steels using a novel method of friction surfacing. In this investigation, the influence of process parameters, tool mass loss and surface roughness are discussed in detail.



**FIGURE 1:** THE CUSTOMIZED MILLING MACHINE USED FOR EXPERIMENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA

As is shown in Fig. 1, a customized JET JMD-18 milling machine has been utilized in the friction surfacing experiments to achieve the friction deposition. In order to increase the maneuverability in using different sizes and types of tools, the original chuck arbor of the milling machine is replaced by ER40 collet chuck tool holder. Using this collet chuck provides this ability to use 15 different sizes of tools from 1/8" to 1". The table of JET JMD-18 milling machine moves manually. In order to increase the accuracy of the experimental results, providing a uniform longitudinal movement and creating a uniform coating, the manual feed handle of the table is removed, and the table is equipped by a servo power table feed. Additionally, in order to measure the surface roughness (Ra) of the depositions, a Landtek SRT6200S surface roughness tester has been utilized. The resolution of this roughness tester is 0.001  $\mu\text{m}$  if reading values less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Friction deposit was conducted using the side of the A6063 consumable rod with 1.27mm diameter and 100mm length, as is shown in Fig. 2. This material was selected since A6063 is a medium-strength aluminum alloy generally referred to as an architectural material. This alloy allows to develop complex shapes with smooth surfaces; therefore, it has been widely used in visible architectural applications. The chemical composition of A6063 aluminum alloy is presented in table 1. Moreover, ASTM A36 steel is one of the most widely manufactured grades of steel alloys, and it has been used for different industrial applications. Some mechanical features of ASTM A36, such as formability, strength, and excellent welding properties make this alloy an excellent alternative for a wide range of welding, bending, and fabricating applications. The chemical composition of ASTM A36 aluminum alloy is presented in table 2. In this study, ASTM A36 steel is used as the substrate with a dimension of 50mm $\times$ 100mm $\times$ 6.35mm.



**FIGURE 2:** FRICTION SURFACING USING SIDE OF THE CONSUMABLE TOOL

The process parameters employed in the single and double-pass deposition process using the side of the consumable tool are presented in table 3.

**TABLE 3.** PROCESS PARAMETERS IN SINGLE AND DOUBLE-PASS DEPOSITION

Tool rotational speed	Table traverse speed	Force
2300 rpm	114.3 mm/min	250 N

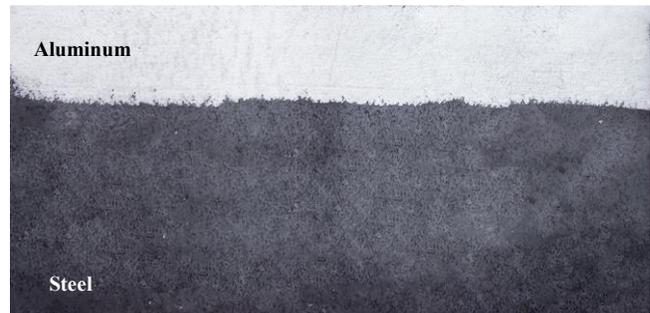
In tribology, the roughness evaluation is one of the most important surface analyses in studying superficial properties. Rough surfaces exhibit higher friction coefficients than smoother surfaces, and wear more quickly. In order to evaluate and compare the surface roughness of these coating layers, 20 random points on the surface of the depositions have been selected, and the average roughness values (Ra) of these points have been recorded.

**TABLE 1.** CHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF A6063 ALUMINUM ALLOY

Materials	Mg	Si	Cr	Mn	Ti	Zn	Fe	Al
% of composition	0.55	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	%0.35	Balance

**TABLE 2.** CHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF ASTM A36

Materials	Mn	P	S	Si	Cu	C	Fe
% of composition	1.03	0.040	0.050	0.280	0.20	0.25-0.290	98.0



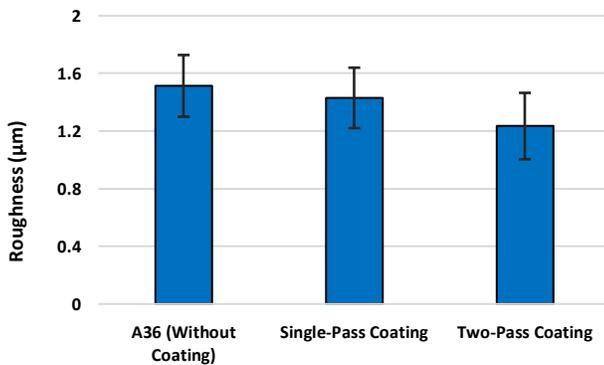
**FIGURE 3:** SINGLE (LEFT) AND DOUBLE-PASS (RIGHT) DEPOSITION OF A6063 ALUMINUM ALLOY ONTO A36 STEEL

### 3. RESULTS OF SINGLE AND DOUBLE-PASS DEPOSITION OF A6063 ONTO A36

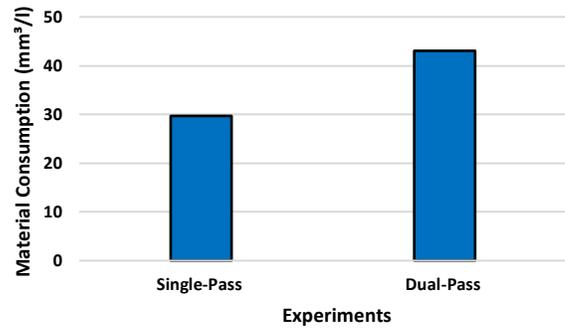
Fig. 3 shows the result of the single and double-pass deposition of A6063 consumable rod onto A36 substrate. The thin coating layer created in this technique indicates a low range of material consumption. The diameter of the consumable rod decreased from the initial diameter of 12.7 mm to 11.1 mm and 10.3 mm, through the single-pass and double-pass deposition process, respectively. The experimental results exhibit a higher rate of material consumption through the first pass metal deposition. The visual evaluation shows an ultra-thin coating with excellent coverage in both single and dual-pass coating; however, the fabricated coating in the double-pass deposition has slightly better coverage than the single-pass deposition.

Fig. 4 presents the results of surface roughness test from the surface of A36 steel without coating, single-pass coating, and double-pass coating. The experimental result reveals that adding the first deposition layer of A6063 aluminum alloy has lessened the surface roughness. Also, adding the second deposition layer results in more decrement in the surface roughness. In other words, the surface of the first layer of deposition is smoother than the surface of A36 steel as-received, and the surface of the second pass of deposition is smoother than the first layer of coating.

The novel presented method of friction surfacing is a great technique to fabricate ultra-thin coating layers. Fig. 5 presents the volume of consumable material consumed per millimeter of deposition width fabricated onto the surface of the substrate. This graph shows that adding the second layer of the deposition results in using more consumable tool material, as the applying force, tool rotational speed, and table traverse speed were constant. Moreover, adding the second layer of deposition, slightly improves the coverage of the coating.



**FIGURE 4:** SURFACE ROUGHNESS (Ra) OF SINGLE AND DOUBLE PASS COATING OF A6063 ONTO A36 STEEL



**FIGURE 5:** TOOL MATERIAL CONSUMPTION THROUGH SINGLE AND DOUBLE-PASS DEPOSITION

### 4. STUDY OF PROCESS PARAMETERS IN FRICTION SURFACING OF A6063 ONTO A36

In this friction surfacing process, the deposits of the consumable aluminum rod have been fabricated onto the A36 carbon steel using two different tool rotational speeds of 2300 and 3000 RPM. A real-time force measurement is carried out during the friction surfacing process using a dynamometer and LabVIEW programming. Therefore, manually controlling of pressing force is possible. In order to evaluate the different pressing forces in the friction depositing process, each sample substrate has been divided into three sections, and three various decreasing pressing forces of 150N, 100N, and 50N have been applied to each section, respectively. These experimental tests have been performed using two different table traverse speeds. Table 4 presents the process parameter values employed in each experiment.

In this investigation, in order to study the geometry and thickness of the deposited coatings, a piece of 1 cm of the samples from section #1 was cut and subjected to optical microscopy. These pieces of samples were mounted in epoxy, and then they were polished using 1 μm and 0.3 μm abrasive particles, respectively.

**TABLE 4.** PROCESS PARAMETERS IN FRICTION SURFACING EXPERIMENTS

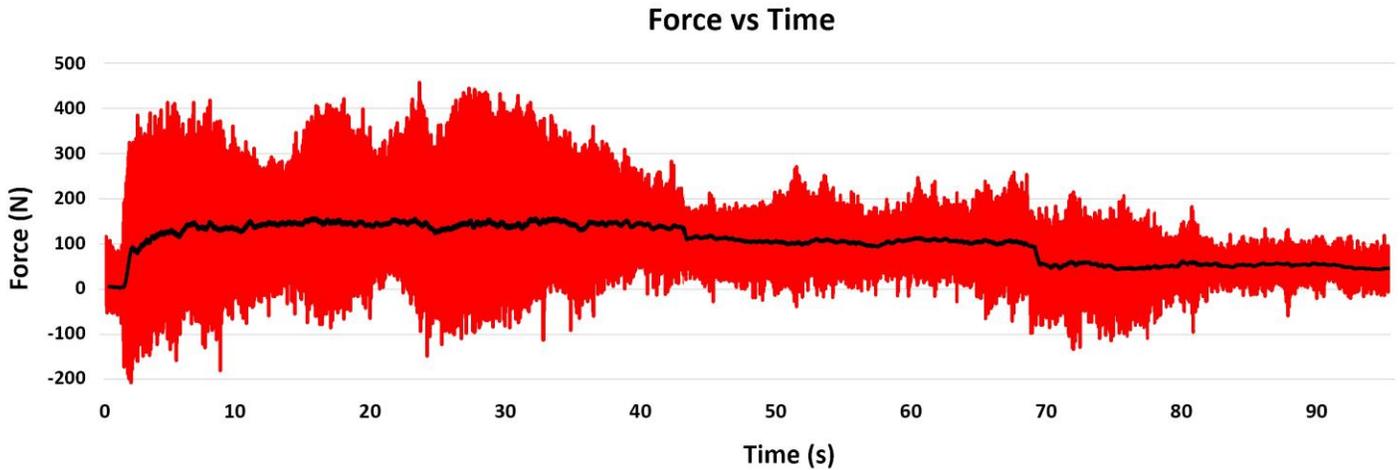
	Tool Rotational Speed	Pressing Force	Traverse Speed
Sample 1	2300 RPM	Section 1: 150 N	76.2 (mm/min)
		Section 2: 100 N	
		Section 3: 50 N	
Sample 2	2300 RPM	Section 1: 150 N	114.3 (mm/min)
		Section 2: 100 N	
		Section 3: 50 N	
Sample 3	3000 RPM	Section 1: 150 N	76.2 (mm/min)
		Section 2: 100 N	
		Section 3: 50 N	
Sample 4	3000 RPM	Section 1: 150 N	114.3 (mm/min)
		Section 2: 100 N	
		Section 3: 50 N	

## 5. RESULTS OF PROCESS PARAMETER STUDY

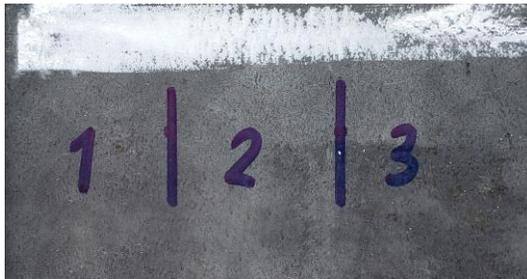
Fig. 6 shows the result of real-time applying force measurements. This graph presents the force values in each section of the process in which the friction depositions have been developed. As is shown in Fig. 7, the interaction force between the consumable rod and the substrate has a significant influence on the quality of the friction deposition. The applied force decreases step by step as the consumable rod moves across the surface of the substrate from section 1 to 3. Reducing the applied force between the consumable rod and the substrate lessens the friction between the rod and substrate. This results in lower

friction heat, which is the only source of energy in this process. Therefore, as the results of the experimental tests confirm, the coverage of all the sample coatings lessens by decreasing the applied force.

Any changes in process parameters that results in an uneven coverage and low-quality deposition, in fact increases the roughness of the coating surface. In order to study the influence of table traverse speed and the pressing force on the surface roughness, the roughness values of 10 random points on each section have been recorded, as is presented in table 5.



**FIGURE 6: A REAL-TIME PRESSING FORCE MEASUREMENT**



Sample #1) Tool rotational speed: 2300rpm,  
Feed rate: 76.2 mm/min



Sample #2) Tool rotational speed: 2300rpm,  
Feed rate: 114.3 mm/min



Sample #3) Tool rotational speed: 3000rpm,  
Feed rate: 76.2 mm/min

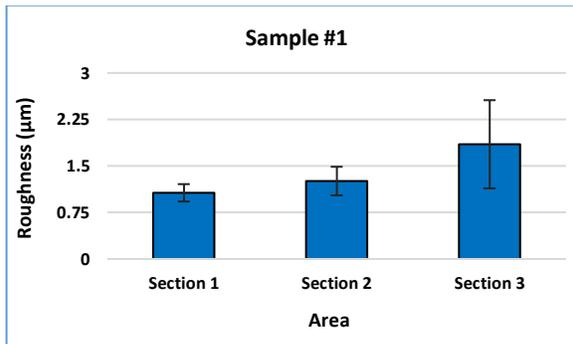


Sample #4) Tool rotational speed: 3000rpm,  
Feed rate: 114.3 mm/min

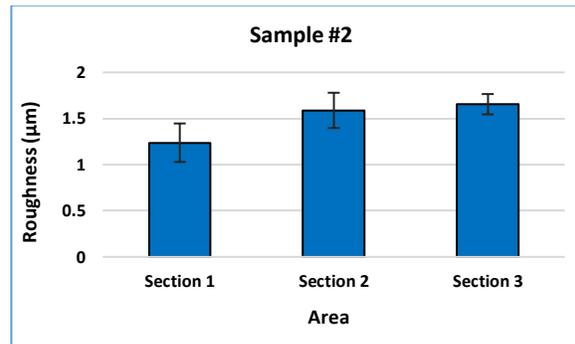
**FIGURE 7: FRICTION SURFACING OF A6063 ONTO A36 MILD CARBON STEEL**

**TABLE 5. SURFACE ROUGHNESS OF A6063 DEPOSITION ONTO A36**

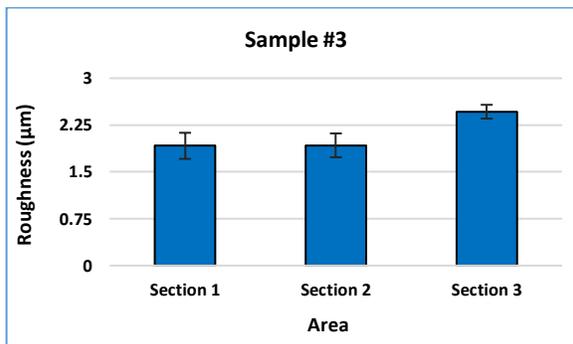
Sample 1			Sample 2			Sample 3			Sample 4		
Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3
0.883	1.313	1.757	1.242	1.737	1.585	1.717	2.413	2.464	1.242	1.333	1.454
0.944	1.065	3.050	1.095	1.585	1.717	1.626	2.120	1.959	1.237	1.595	1.343
0.934	1.292	0.823	1.262	1.595	1.828	1.464	1.727	1.515	1.444	1.424	1.323
0.984	1.717	1.495	1.636	1.767	1.616	2.373	1.818	2.009	1.626	1.247	1.515
1.292	1.217	1.353	0.929	1.565	1.484	2.413	1.868	4.363	1.555	1.464	1.555
1.035	0.888	2.383	1.030	1.414	1.585	1.898	2.191	1.757	1.277	1.495	1.442
1.030	1.020	1.676	1.106	1.656	1.707	1.939	1.697	2.626	1.141	1.424	1.404
1.232	1.353	2.908	1.444	1.141	1.727	1.959	1.898	1.646	1.484	1.272	1.414
1.146	1.313	1.404	1.343	1.777	1.767	1.545	1.848	4.807	1.191	1.383	1.565
1.196	1.394	1.656	1.292	1.646	1.535	2.242	1.676	1.495	1.495	1.267	1.151



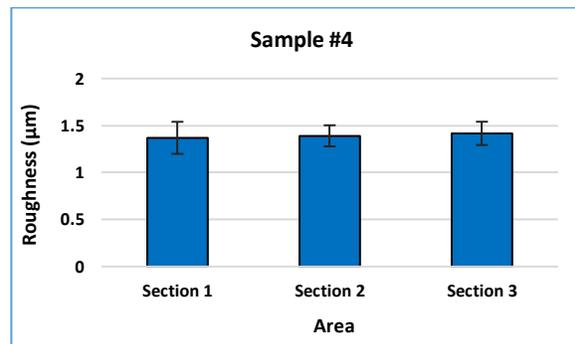
Tool rotational speed: 2300rpm, Feed rate: 76.2 mm/min



Tool rotational speed: 2300rpm, Feed rate: 114.3 mm/min



Tool rotational speed: 3000rpm, Feed rate: 76.2 mm/min



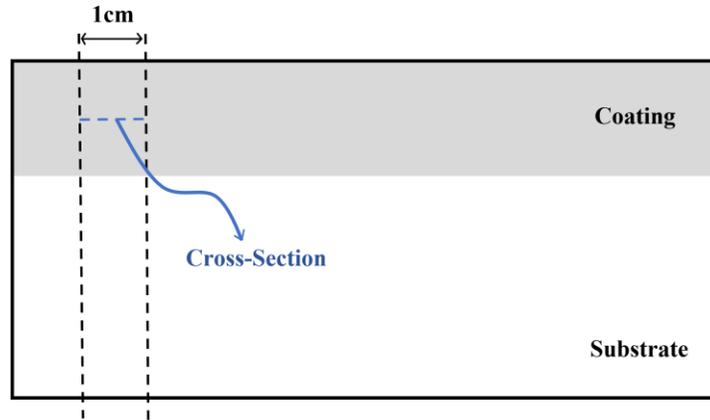
Tool rotational speed: 3000rpm, Feed rate: 114.3 mm/min

**FIGURE 8: EFFECTS OF PROCESS PARAMETERS ON THE SURFACE ROUGHNESS OF DEPOSITIONS**

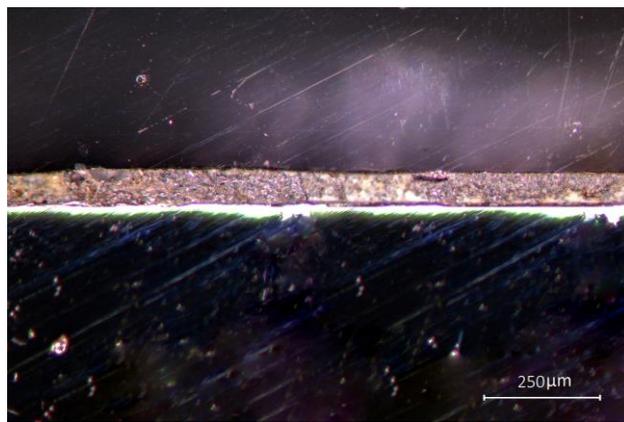
Comparing the result of surface roughness examination of the coated samples exhibits that applied force has a significant impact on the surface roughness of depositions. As is shown in Fig. 8, decreasing the applied force from section 1 to 3 results in a lower coverage and rougher surface, especially in section 3, which shows a low deposition quality. Furthermore, increasing the tool rotational speed results in higher surface roughness values as the table traverse speed was 76.2 mm/min; however, no significant influence observed when the table traverse speed was 114.3 mm/min.

The cross-sectional views of the coating were provided using Leica DM2700 optical microscope. As is presented in Fig. 9, 1 cm of the deposited samples from section 1 was cut and mounted in epoxy. Then, the created samples were polished

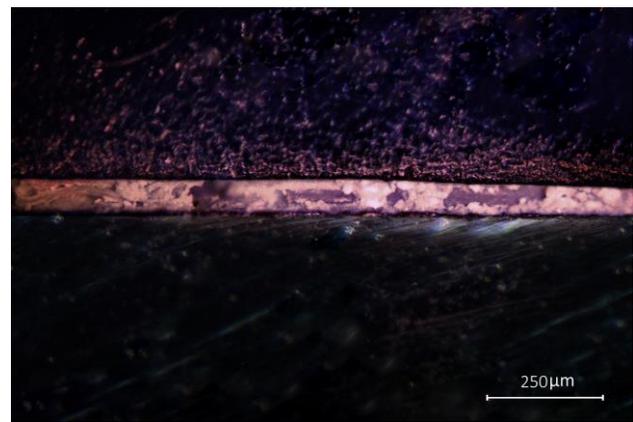
using 1 µm and 0.3 µm abrasive particles, respectively. Finally, the polished samples were subjected to optical microscopy. The result of the cross-sectional viewing exhibits that higher tool rotational speed results in a thicker coating layer, as the pressing force and table traverse speed are constant, as is shown in Fig. 10. Furthermore, the optical microscopy shows that the average deposition thickness increased from 75 µm to 150, as the table traverse speed is 76.2 mm/min, and the tool rotational speed increased from 2300 rpm to 3000 rpm. Also, the average deposition thickness increased from 75 µm to 175, as the table traverse speed is 114.3 mm/min, and the tool rotational speed increased from 2300 rpm to 3000 rpm. It is concluded that increasing the tool rotational speed results in higher thickness values in depositions.



**FIGURE 9: CROSS-SECTIONING OF THE DEPOSITIONS IN SECTION 1**



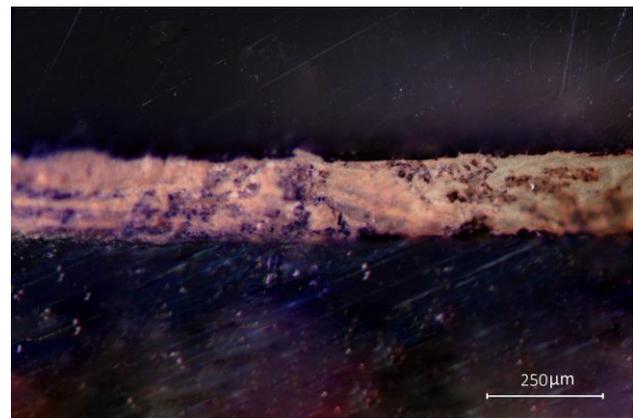
Tool rotational speed: 2300rpm, Feed rate: 76.2mm/min



Tool rotational speed: 2300rpm, Feed rate: 114.3 mm/min



Tool rotational speed: 3000rpm, Feed rate: 76.2mm/min



Tool rotational speed: 3000rpm, Feed rate: 114.3 mm/min

**FIGURE 10: CROSS-SECTIONAL VIEW OF DEPOSITIONS USING 10X MAGNIFICATION OF LEICA DM2700**

## 6. CONCLUSION

This research is an attempt to study the friction surfacing of A6063 aluminum alloy consumable tool onto A36 mild carbon steel using a novel technique in friction surfacing. The major difference in this novel method is that the material transfer occurs from the side of the tool, while in the conventional friction surfacing technique, the material transfer between the tool and workpiece happens from the end of the tool.

The main findings of this study can be summarized as follows:

- The experimental results of friction surfacing of A6063 aluminum alloy onto A36 carbon steel show high quality and good coverage for both single and double-pass depositions; however, the fabricated deposition in the double-pass coating is slightly better than single-coating.

- The experimental results exhibit that fabricating the first coating layer of A6063 presents a lower surface roughness compared to the surface of the substrate as received. Furthermore, adding the second deposition layer results in more decrement in the surface roughness.
- It was exhibited that fabricating the second pass of the deposition onto the substrate results in higher material consumption, and slightly better coverage.
- It was concluded that the applied force has a significant influence on the quality and coverage of the coating. Decreasing the applied force results in a lower coverage and rougher surface.
- It was exhibited that increasing the tool rotational speed results in higher thickness values in depositions. No significant impact on the thickness values was observed when the table traverse speed increased from 76.2 mm/min to 114.3 mm/min.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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