

Tools at the Builders Show

by Clayton DeKorne

Journal of Light Construction editors spotted several tools at this year's National Association of Home Builders Atlanta show that are worth mentioning.

Ergonomic Nailer

Senco Fastening Systems (8485 Broadwell Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45244-1699; 800/543-4596) showed off an ergonomic framing nailer. The SN325+ will shoot 6d to 12d smooth

Senco Framing Nailer



and ring shank commons, but weighs in at a scant seven pounds (the same weight as the SFN2C finish nailer). It sports a shapely handle that is more comfortable to hold. I particularly like the recessed air nipple which enables a full-length magazine (with a slightly larger capacity than the old SN325) to fit in narrow joist bays.

Subfloor Screwguns

ITW/Buildex (1349 West Bryn Mawr Ave., Itasca, IL 60143; 708/595-3500) introduced a tool for attaching subfloors that I expect will land in an industrial archaeology museum someday. However, I don't expect to see it on too many job sites. The *Dec-U-Drive* is a screwgun with a long extension tip that is made expressly for securing subfloors. The gun has a long tube running alongside of the extension bit. You drop screws into the tube, one at a time, while holding the gun at hip height. It will accept conventional bugle-

Muro Vislider



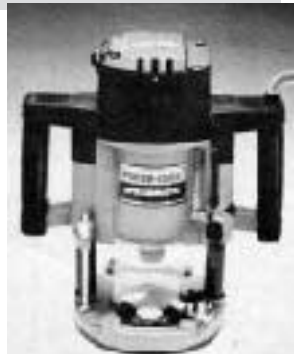
head deck screws, but I found it awkward and slow to feed single screws from a handful in one hand, while driving the gun with the other hand. Meanwhile, a Japanese toolmaker

introduced a self-feeding screwgun that might be better for fast subfloor screwing. Rather than adapting a conventional pistol-grip screwgun (see Toolbox, 4/89 and "Unusual Power Tools," 7/90), the *Muro Vislider* (Muro Manufacturing Inc., 7 Tilbury Ct., Brampton, ONT L6T 3T4; 416/451-7667) started from scratch, producing a D-handle driver with a sliding bit that rides over the motor. With this configuration, a full magazine of screws balances well. And the extension handle, which you hold with two hands like a pogo stick, puts the gun near the floor where it's easy to balance and is less likely to jam.

Porter-Cable Upgrades

Porter-Cable (PO Box 2468, Jackson, TN 38302; 800/321-9443) was showing beefed-up versions of a couple of their tools. The company has designed a new line of routers primarily for working hard solid-surfacing materials and engineered woods. The *Speedmatic* routers have larger motors with turbine fans for better

Porter-Cable Speedmatic



cooling, stiffer armature shafts to reduce vibration and bit run-out, and electronic speed controls. Of particular note is the model 7539 variable-speed plunge router. This production-size router has a 15-amp (3 1/4 hp) motor that runs between 10,000 and 21,000 rpm. These features make the tool comparable to the other variable-speed, plunge routers on the market (see Toolbox, 11/90).

Porter-Cable also spruced up the *Tiger Saw* to compete with the new Super Sawzall. Like its cousin from Milwaukee, the new *Tiger Saw* has an 8-amp motor and a 1 1/8-inch stroke. In addition, the Porter-Cable reciprocating saw offers three orbital settings. All these features noticeably speed up cutting and reduce vibration compared to previous incarnations.

Porter-Cable Tiger Saw



Bosch Sander



Bosch Sander

Bosch (Robert Bosch Power Tool Corp., 100 Bosch Blvd., New Bern, NC 28562-4097; 800/334-4151) took a different approach to design its random orbit sander. The 3283DVS sander has a different configuration than Porter-Cable's or AEG's grinder-type orbital sanders. The Bosch more closely resembles a miniature floor sander than a grinder. It's well-balanced and has a front handle that seems to offer better control. Best of all, it has a dust bag and can be hooked up to a vacuum system.

Weatherhead System



Weatherstripping Tool

My favorite tool on the floor is

part of a weatherstripping system that may solve big problems for cold-climate builders and remodelers. The *Weatherhead System* uses a Bosch 1608T *Laminate Trimmer* secured to a V-shaped base. Holding a special bit, the tool will rout an arrow-shaped channel in the corner of a door frame that will hold a bulb weatherstrip. The trimmer is tilted to fit into corners and would work well for either a retrofit or new construction. A curved base is also available for arched and round windows. The bulb is made of a silicone rubber that should remain pliable in sub-zero temperatures, and is available in white and brown in 1/4-, 3/16-, and 3/8-inch diameters. A complete kit including the Bosch trimmer with the V-shaped and curved bases, carbide bit, weatherstrip roller, and 150 feet of weatherstripping sells for about \$400. All the parts are available separately. (Weatherhead Insulation Systems, 5321 Derry Ave. #F, Agoura Hills, CA 91301; 818/597-8291). ■