



SGB

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MAY 18, 2015

WEEKLY

THE WEEKLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE ACTIVE LIFESTYLE MARKET

SGB WEEKLY

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12

Backcountry Access pioneers
in avalanche safety gear

MAKING NEWS

6 Movers & Shakers

Fitbit Files for \$100 Million IPO

7 Garmin Adds Heart Rate to
GPS Running Watch

RootsRated.com Road Tour

Unites Retailers and Adventure Seekers

8 By The Numbers

DryGuy Undergoes Rebranding and
Realigns Sales Directives

9 TomTom Just Shake to Edit

10 Converse Officially Opens World
Headquarters

11 Schutt Sports Introduces Best Tested
Football Helmet in History

PRODUCT SHOWCASE

12 Brunton Expands Portable Power

FEATURES

14 Backcountry Access Reflects on 20th
Season

18 Back-to-School Primer

22 INDUSTRY CALENDAR

ON THE COVER:
Photo courtesy Vans

SGB 2015 40Under40

Leadership, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Energy. The sporting goods industry requires these elements to maintain its growth trajectory and remain a market that will continue to draw great talent for years to come.

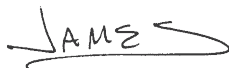
Each year SGB honors 40 sporting goods industry individuals under the age of 40 who exemplify these attributes and enable the industry to continuously move forward. This year, the list of SGB's 40Under40 honorees again exhibit the embodiment of these qualities, with each making a mark on his or her respective company, staff, mentors, peers, colleagues, customers and friends.

The eighth annual SGB 40Under40 awards process started with over 500 nominations submitted by those who know these people the best – the people they work with every day. The preliminary list was then vetted by editors and analysts from The SportsOneSource Group and finally voted on by a group of industry leaders and former honorees.

The SportsOneSource Group invites you and a guest to join The SportsOneSource Group, current honorees and SGB 40Under40 Alumni for a weekend get-away to celebrate this unique honor. The celebration weekend will be June 12-14, 2015 at the Shorebreak Hotel in Huntington Beach, CA.

Please contact SGB Associate Publisher Katie O'Donohue at 828.244.3043 or katieo@sportsonesource.com for details and reservation information.

We look forward to seeing you in sunny California.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JAMES" with a stylized flourish at the end.

James Hartford
CEO & Group Publisher
The SportsOneSource Group



Congratulations SGB 40Under40 *2015 Award Honorees*

From Top Left to Right:
 Dan Abrams
 Linda Balfour
 John Barrett
 Lauren Blanda
 Todd Bronson
 Brian Burnett
 Margaret Chesebro NewHard
 Tammy Christensen
 Drew Davies
 Guillaume DeMonplanet
 Jonathan Degenhardt
 David Feld
 Brendan Gibbons
 Fynn Glover
 Joel Grabenstein
 Matt Helbig
 Jason Hill
 Ted Kushion
 Wendy Lee
 Lauren Mallon
 Sarah Matt
 Kent McKeaigg
 Michael Meyer
 Kelly Milazzo
 Stephanie Militello
 Tai Neal
 Sara Parker
 David Polivy
 Danielle Quatrochi
 Michael Rossi
 Chris Sackett
 Matthew Schultz
 Josh Shaw
 Katie Swenson
 Neal Taylor
 Megan Tompkins
 Tina Wade
 Matt Weiss
 Gavin Whelan
 Laura Wolf Stein



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Contact SGB Associate Publisher Katie O'Donohue at 828.244.3043 or katieo@SportsOneSource.com

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MOVERS & SHAKERS

Amer Sports appointed **Mike Wilson** as the new North American marketing manager for its Mavic cycling components and Suunto sports instruments brands.

Glukos., a natural performance energy foods brand officially launching in May, signed U.S. Midfielder and two-time Olympic gold medalist **Tobin Heath** as a brand ambassador.

Keen hired seasoned footwear veteran **Chris Heffernan** as GM of Keen Utility and promoted **Erin Simons** to Unit Director at its Kid's business.

Kering, the parent of Puma, Volcom, Cobra, Electric and Tretorn, appointed **Todd Hymel** to the newly created position of CEO of Action Sports Brands. Based in Costa Mesa, CA, Hymel will establish a stronger presence for Kering in the U.S., notably on the West Coast, while taking on a more active role in the development of Volcom and Electric.

Lululemon Athletica Inc. announced the resignation of **Delaney Schweitzer**, EVP Global Retail, effective May 29. Schweitzer began her career at Lululemon in 2002.

Princeton Tec named **Michael O'Connell** as Outdoor Division Manager, where he will oversee relationships with U.S. outdoor retailers.

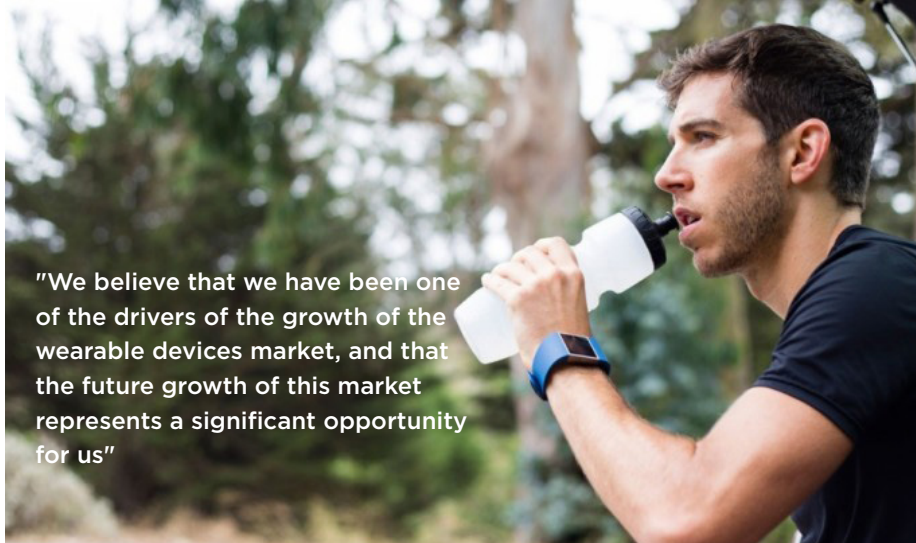
RYU Apparel Inc. named Polartec veteran **Treya Klassen** VP of Product and Brand.

Oofos, a pioneer in the category of recovery footwear, named **Deborah Gendreau-Flynn** to the position of President. Gendreau-Flynn most recently served as the VP of Sales for Sperry Top-Sider.

Reef promoted Reef Sales Rep **Mike Losness** to the new role of Director of Field Sales West while **Greg Osthus** becomes Director of Field Sales East.

Surftech, the maker of surf and stand-up paddle boards, announced that **Bob Rief**, **Trent Pedersen** and **David Uri** were appointed to the company's board of directors during the first quarter of 2015.

Wolverine World Wide Inc. confirmed that **Gene McCarthy**, Merrell brand's President since August 2013, had left the company, effective May. 4. **Jim Gabel**, President of Wolverine's Performance Group, has assumed day-to-day leadership of the brand.



"We believe that we have been one of the drivers of the growth of the wearable devices market, and that the future growth of this market represents a significant opportunity for us"

FITBIT

FILES FOR \$100 MILLION IPO

Fitbit, the fitness tracker leader, filed for an initial public offering to raise up to \$100 million, and surprised some by showing that it's been profitable for several quarters.

The eight-year-old company, based in San Francisco, will be the first Silicon Valley Company focused solely on wearable technology to go public and the offering comes just as Apple gets into the wearable space with the launch of the Apple Watch.

Founded in October 2007 by James Park and Eric Friedman, Fitbit makes a wide range of simple, colorful devices that are clipped or strapped on the body for counting steps, measuring sleep activity and monitoring workouts. Companion software for smartphones and a Web application both display stats, offer insights and training tips and help users track what they eat to measure caloric intake and other daily health metrics.

Touting the opportunity, Fitbit notes in its prospectus that based on information from

industry sources, consumers are estimated to have spent over \$200 billion in 2014 on health and fitness services, such as gym and health club memberships, commercial weight management services, and consumer health products, such as weight management products and dietary supplements. In addition, IBISWorld estimates that the corporate wellness industry will grow from \$7.4 billion in 2014 to \$10.4 billion in 2018 in the U.S.

The company had net income of \$48.0 million for the three months ended in March 31 on sales of \$336.8 million. In 2014, earnings reached \$131.8 million on sales of \$745.4 million.

Fitbit sold 10.9 million devices last year, up from 4.5 million in 2013, and 1.3 million in 2012.

Fitbit also reported that its "paid active users" grew from 600,000 in 2012 to 9.5 million in the first quarter of 2015. These users own either a \$50-a-year Fitbit Premium membership; paired a wearable device or a Fitbit Aria scale with a Fitbit account; or logged at least 100 steps with a wearable device or took a weight measurement with an Aria scale.

"We believe that we have been one of the drivers of the growth of the wearable devices market, and that the future growth of this market represents a significant opportunity for us," Fitbit said in its filing.

Fitbit plans to trade on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol FIT. Its offering is being led by Morgan Stanley, Deutsche Bank and Bank of America Merrill Lynch.



Eric Friedman, left, and James Park, Co-founders of Fitbit.

GARMIN ADDS HEART RATE TO GPS RUNNING WATCH



Forerunner 225

Garmin International Inc. unveiled the Forerunner 225, the first Garmin GPS running watch that measures heart rate at the wrist.

The Forerunner 225 shows runners their zone and beats per minute and a built-in accelerometer provides distance and pace data for indoor running with no need for a separate foot pod.

The Forerunner 225 will integrate optical heart rate technology developed by Mio, a Vancouver, British Columbia-based company that sells its own competing line of non-GPS enabled wearables.

“After more than 10 years of developing GPS running watches we are very excited to team up with Mio to introduce our first device featuring wrist-based heart rate,” said Dan Bartel, Garmin VP of worldwide sales. “Getting and understanding your heart rate is more comfortable and easier than ever with the Forerunner 225’s real time results on a colorful gauge – allowing runners to evaluate and adjust effort quickly so they can focus on their run.”

Garmin has equipped the Forerunner 225 with a built-in accelerometer that enables runners to capture accurate distance and pace data indoors in a deliberate move to penetrate gyms and other indoor training venues.

Said Liz Dickinson, CEO of Mio Global. “More and more, athletes are recognizing the role that heart rate plays in their training intensity and efficacy, and it has become evident that heart rate is a must-have feature in wearable technology.”

The Forerunner 225 will be available in black/red and will begin shipping in Q2. It will have a suggested retail price of \$300. Mio's two smart watches sell for \$169 and \$199, but are not equipped with GPS technology.

ROOTSRATED.COM ROAD TOUR UNITES RETAILERS AND ADVENTURE SEEKERS

The RootsRated Road Tour launched May 1 from Chattanooga, TN - the hometown of RootsRated – and will visit more than 40 outdoor retailers in cities over the next five months.

So while skeptics among us may say, another road tour concept, this grass roots road trip is more than just back patting: it's activating at the local level, engaging brick and mortar retailers and their customers, as well as local outdoor communities, though digital marketing partnerships and real life outdoor action.

RootsRated delivers detailed information about destinations and local outdoor pursuits. Content is not crowd-sourced, but rather created in partnership by local experts and leading outdoor specialty retailers. Their tag line is “the premier online and mobile resource for where to go outdoors.”

And although it seems like something that has been done before, no other app/web-based platform has been able to link up in a simple and searchable manner what RootsRated has accomplished in just two years. In fact, co-founder Fynn Glover was just recognized by SGB as one of its 2015 40Under40 industry leaders for his accomplishments.

The company also recently relaunched its website, showcasing some of the most cutting-edge user-focused technology. “For most people, the biggest barrier to the outdoors is knowing where to go and how to get there,” said Glover.

Throughout the RootsRated Road Tour, team members Jake Wheeler and Ry Glover will co-host local Pint Nights at outdoor shops and Meet-Up events. The Road Tour will be packed with full days, late nights and sunrise trail runs. “The tour is an opportunity for people to get involved in



their local outdoor scene and of course learn more about the RootsRated resource,” said Wheeler.

All Road Tour events are free. Every stop will consist of an outdoor Meet-Up event and a RootsRated Pint Night with live music. A \$5 donation gets a first beer in a RootsRated pint glass and all proceeds will benefit local conservation efforts.

RootsRated.com, founded in 2012, tries to make the outdoor discovery process easy by connecting users with the best outdoor experiences, hand-picked by outdoor retailers and networks of local experts and writers. By tapping local insights and knowledge about the best trails, runs, routes, crags, and waterways, RootsRated.com “makes outdoor discovery simple, trustworthy and inspiring.”

Follow the Road Tour and get more detailed information at rootsrated.com/road-tour, Twitter and Instagram with #RootsRated and @RootsRated. Message suggestions of where to play outdoors in your location.

BY THE NUMBERS

+6.9%

Asics America Corp. (U.S. only) showed a steady positive 6.9 percent increase in net sales in the first quarter on a currency-neutral basis. Asics America Group (AAG), which includes the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Brazil, reported sales rose 1.8 percent and expanded 5.0 percent on a currency-neutral basis.

+7.0

Johnson Outdoors Inc. reported net sales increased 7 percent to \$133.1 million in the fiscal second quarter ended April 3 compared to a year earlier, driven by growth at its Marine Electronics, Watercraft and Outdoor Gear units. Foreign currency translation had a 2 percent negative impact on revenue.

+48.1

Skechers USA, Inc. has been named a top-ten best-perceived brand by mothers according to the consumer perception firm YouGov BrandIndex. Brands were ranked using an index score that measures brand health by averaging sub-scores on quality, satisfaction, impression, value, reputation and willingness to recommend. Skechers was the only footwear brand included in the top-ten index scores for 2015.

-4.8%

CamelBak's net sales declined 4.8 percent in the three months ended March 31, due in part to shipments being delayed at West Coast ports, according to financial results released by Compass Diversified Holdings Inc.

-16.1%

Crocs Inc. reported sales slumped 16.1 percent in the first quarter, to \$262.2 million, in line with expectations. On a currency-neutral basis, revenue decreased 8 percent. The company showed a loss of \$6.0 million, or 8 cents a share, against a profit of \$6.4 million, or 6 cents, a year ago.



Force Dry DX



Force Dry DX



SimpleDry

DRYGUY

UNDERGOES REBRANDING AND REALIGNS SALES DIRECTIVES

DryGuy, a leading supplier of accessory dryers and thermal layering systems, is unveiling a new look in conjunction with a more focused sales strategy recently set forth by its new parent company Implus Corporation. The updates fall in line with Implus' current sales programs and corporate identity, and will be rolled out on packaging, in-store displays and other marketing materials starting next fall.

Acquired last summer, DryGuy falls under Implus' Outdoor Division, which also includes Yaktrax, ICETrekkers and Little Hotties. DryGuy offers a wide variety of boot/glove dryers and thermal layering products to handle cold and wet conditions.

"DryGuy needed some rechanneling at the retail level in order to better segment DryGuy and sister brand MaxxDry," said Steve Couder, VP of sales for the Outdoor Division. "DryGuy will be sold into outdoor specialty and sporting goods channels, while MaxxDry will be distributed throughout FDM and Farm/Fleet. Now that we have the reorganization in place we are excited to give each brand a facelift to better represent the multitude of markets into which the various products are sold."

The rebranding initiative will emphasize how DryGuy is not just a seasonal, winter-only based brand. It will better speak to a wide range of outdoor enthusiasts beyond ski and snowboard; from bikers and golfers to hikers and soccer players, all known users of the DryGuy products that have been left out of previous marketing efforts. At the same time, Couder said they are streamlining the current product line and preparing to launch some new products as well this fall. For instance, the best selling WideBody forced-air dryer (now called the ForceDry DX) is undergoing cosmetic updates and offering accessory options like extenders for helmets and waders.

Retailers got a sneak peak of the new DryGuy look and products at the SHOT and Outdoor Retailer Winter Market trade shows this past January, and the response thus far has been overwhelmingly positive.

"Most of the DryGuy products are solid, they just needed some tweaks and accessory reorganization," said Couder. "We're also adding a new convection dryer, called the Simple Dry, to really solidify the breadth of the product line."

Implus' brand family includes Sof Sole, Yaktrax, apara, Airplus, Sneaker Balls, Sof Comfort, Little Hotties, Penguin, Perfect Fitness, ICETrekkers, FitDeck, DryGuy and TriggerPoint.



TOMTOM

JUST SHAKE TO EDIT

TomTom (TOM2) launched the TomTom Bandit Action Camera, the first camera with a built-in media server, eliminating the need to download footage before editing. The camera works with a companion app to create and share videos in minutes, simply by shaking a smartphone.

“We know that the biggest frustration people have with action cameras today is the time and effort it takes to edit,” said Corinne Vigreux, co-founder and managing director, TomTom Consumer. “With TomTom Bandit we’ve cut the editing time down from hours to minutes - all it takes is a shake.”

“We took a simple but radical approach to solving the editing problem,” said Slobodan Stanisic, lead engineer, TomTom. “With existing action cameras you first need to download gigabytes of footage to a powerful PC, a process that can take a long time. Then you need to find the highlights, put together a story and format it. We know this often takes hours. We have designed a camera where the footage is processed on the camera itself, making the editing process far easier and much faster.”

The TomTom Bandit Action Camera is equipped with in-camera motion and GPS sensors to automatically find and tag exciting moments based on speed, altitude, G-force, acceleration and heart rate (which requires an add-on). Highlights can also be tagged manually with a tagging button on the camera or the remote control.

The TomTom Bandit works with a smartphone app, which includes a viewfinder. Footage can be reviewed instantly with the smartphone app thanks to the built-in media server. In editing mode, “a simple shake” of the smartphone creates a movie. Users can then make changes, add music and overlays of metrics such as speed, before sharing with friends.

The TomTom Bandit Action Camera has a wide-angle lens, 16 MP CCD sensor and a powerful processor. It is also waterproof up to 50 meters with an add-on lens cap, eliminating the need for an additional case. The steel ring mounting system has a quick release mechanism and the low profile of the TomTom Bandit works well on a helmet.

The uniquely designed Batt-Stick combines the long-lasting battery, microSD card and SuperSpeed USB 3.0. It plugs directly into a computer via USB to charge and download footage, removing the need for additional cables or adaptors.

The TomTom Bandit Action Camera will be available on tomtom.com and in select European retailers in May for EURO\$429. It will be available in APAC and the U.S. later this summer.

A premium pack will also be available in June including additional accessories. The app is available only on iOS at launch with an Android version coming soon.

Highlights include:

- » Video at 1080p30, 1080p60, 720p60, 720p120
- » Cinematic at 2.7k30, 4k15
- » Native time lapse at 4k30, 1080p30 (various capture intervals)
- » Native slow motion at 1080p x2, 720p x4, WVGA x6
- » Single and burst photo up to 16MP at 10/s
- » Wi-Fi, Bluetooth Smart and USB3.0 connectivity
- » Multiple accessories



Photos courtesy Converse



CONVERSE

OFFICIALLY OPENS WORLD HEADQUARTERS

Converse Inc. announced the grand opening of its new world headquarters on Boston's Lovejoy Wharf and the opening of its sixth inline retail store in the U.S.

The 214,000-square-foot headquarters, located at 160 North Washington Street, provides a world-class, collaborative work environment for Converse employees and will enable the brand to continue its mission to attract top talent, celebrate consumers through retail, engage the music community, and bring Boston's vibrant cultures together.

The world headquarters sits on three-quarters of an acre of publicly accessible waterfront space, and includes Converse's 10-story office, the flagship retail store and the second new Converse Rubber Tracks recording studio, set to open this summer. Situated at the northern gateway to the city of Boston, between the Zakim and North Washington Street Bridges, the headquarters anchors the revitalized waterfront area of this historic neighborhood, a part of Boston's iconic Freedom Trail.

"The opening of our new world headquarters is a momentous occasion for Converse," said Jim Calhoun, Converse president and CEO. "It brings us closer to the city's creative community, provides greater access to top talent and we're thrilled to be here ushering in this new era for the brand."

Designed to "celebrate and unleash creativity," the offices combine the original commercial building's old brick walls with a new open design concept. Notable features include an open atrium and central staircase connecting each floor to foster collaboration between departments; a grand Chuck Taylor sneaker chandelier installation at the wharf entrance; and outdoor decks on the second and ninth floors with views of the Charles River. Additionally, Converse has curated 22 works of art from various artists for display throughout the building. In 2016, all of the artwork will be auctioned to benefit the arts community and the program will be updated annually to ensure a new cycle of creative artists and philanthropy are represented.

A fundamental part of the world headquarters building will be the new 3,500-square-foot Converse at Lovejoy Wharf store, the brand's second retail store in Boston and sixth in the U.S.

Located at the footsteps of the world headquarters building, the store will offer consumer's access to Converse Blank Canvas, a customization experience only available at this location.

Converse Blank Canvas includes two in-store customization experiences, "Workshop" and "InkBar." At the "Workshop," customers will be able to create their own Chuck Taylor sneakers, designing from exclusive textiles, components and signature details that are only available at the Lovejoy Wharf store. At the "InkBar," customers have the ability to customize and embellish sneakers purchased in store by screen-printing on footwear from a revolving selection of over 150 graphics or using their own original artwork. Customers will also have the guidance of a sneaker designer known as "The Maestro" to help build their own personalized Chuck Taylors.

The Converse Blank Canvas sneaker customizations at the Lovejoy Wharf store will start at \$75 for the "InkBar" and \$150 for the "Workshop."

The store also features a curated and changing assortment of Converse footwear, apparel and accessories for men, women and children, including limited-edition sneakers, Lovejoy exclusives, Boston-inspired styles and collaborations such as Missoni and Andy Warhol.

"The Converse at Lovejoy Wharf store is the most premium retail celebration of the creative spirit of our consumers," said David Kelsay, Converse VP of global retail. "With this store, we've created a truly unique and unfiltered Converse experience that pushes the boundaries of retail, empowering our fans to engage with our products in new ways and unleashing their creativity like never before."

SCHUTT SPORTS
INTRODUCES BEST TESTED
FOOTBALL HELMET IN HISTORY



Vengeance VTD II football helmet

Schutt Sports introduced the Vengeance VTD II football helmet, the best testing helmet in Virginia Tech's STAR Rating System scoring a 0.180 – the lowest (best) score ever posted in the STAR system.

Schutt Sports now holds three of the top four spots for the best helmets tested by the STAR system. In addition to the Vengeance VTD II, the other Schutt helmets rated 5-stars by the STAR Rating System are the original Vengeance VTD and the AiR XP Pro VTD.

"Along with the best testing helmet, we also have the third and fourth ranked helmets," said Robert Erb, President/CEO of Schutt Sports. "That's three of the top four, best testing helmets in the history of the STAR Rating System. Whether you're looking for stars or for other proven impact absorption technologies, Schutt is leading the advancement of football helmets."

The defining technology in all of the varsity helmets made by Schutt Sports is the thermoplastic urethane (TPU) cushioning used to absorb and disperse impact energy. A key performance advantage of the TPU Cushioning is its "tuneability." Schutt can custom engineer the TPU cushions to varying thicknesses and resistance levels, allowing Schutt to "tune" the helmet for specific impact absorption characteristics.

"An independent testing lab has proven TPU Cushioning absorbs more impact across a wider variety of temperatures than any other helmet on the field," said Erb. "Our ability to tune the TPU also allows us to reduce costs in our manufacturing – savings that we strive to pass along to our customers."

Based on information published by the STAR system, the top-rated Vengeance VTD II will cost less than the majority of other 5-star rated helmets.

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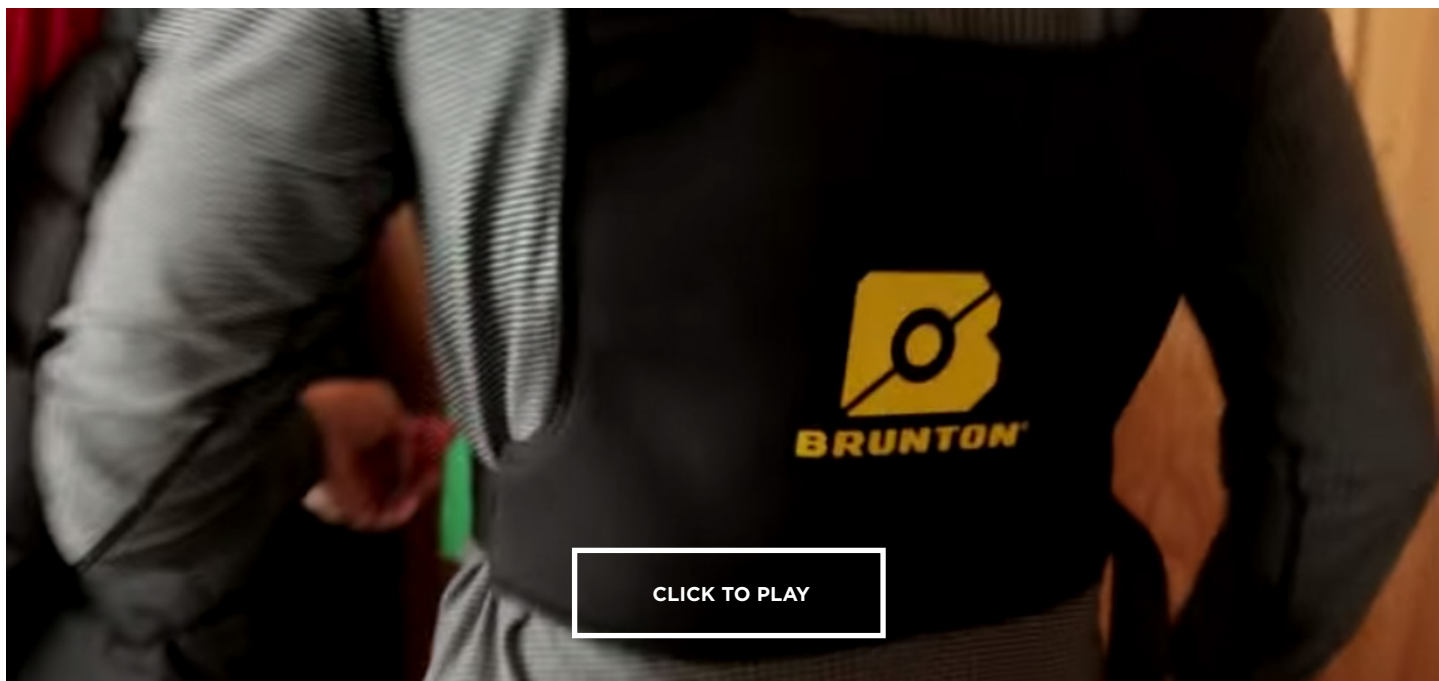
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PRODUCT SHOWCASE

Brunton Expands Portable Power

By Aaron H. Bible

Go to any networking event and one of the hot topics for retailers is going to be portable power. Both from an environmental standpoint (charging via solar or USB instead of using batteries) and the fact that we are ever-more connected in the backcountry, portable power is a growing market for good reason.

Brunton is one of a handful of outdoor equipment brands competing successfully in the space and this Fall is expanding its offerings. Erron Sorrenson, president of Brunton, told *SGB*, “We believe firmly that by delivering an ecosystem of products that are integrated and built for outdoor use, outdoor retailers carrying our products can thrive and break through the commoditization of the basic power banks out there.”

While its game-changing Hydrogen Reactor was a little slow to be adapted, the company is charging ahead (pun intended) with other unique products, including wearables with its Heatsync Collection. Built with a high level of technology and functionality, the new products stay true to Brunton’s mission “to keep people in the outdoors longer.” The new products will be available beginning in July 2015 at specialty outdoor retailers and online at brunton.com. Brunton will continue to build its portable power and powered accessory offerings with new products in its All Day, Heatsync and Resync collections, and will also introduce the Lightwave collection, a new series of rechargeable lanterns.

Lightwave

Brunton will make its return to the outdoor lighting category with the debut of Lightwave, a new series of technologically advanced lanterns designed to enhance the camping experience. The four models feature rechargeable

lithium-ion batteries, USB connection ports to charge other personal electronics, and an IPX4 water-resistant design. The 1,600mAh Beam has a three-function light and one USB output capable of one smartphone charge. The Camp Rocker has the same functionality as the Beam with an integrated Bluetooth speaker system allowing users to share music around the campfire. The AXIS offers a larger capacity with a 10,000mAh battery and three USB output ports. The lighting system on the AXIS, controlled by an integrated Bluetooth system driven by Brunton’s B-SYNC app, features SOS and emergency lighting functions. Rounding out the series, the AMP combines functionalities from the Beam, Camp, Rocker and Axis with an ultra-bright 400-lumen light (on maximum brightness), a rechargeable 10,000mAh lithium-ion battery, and integrated Bluetooth controlled lighting and speaker systems. With an RGB colored LED lighting system and the ability to synchronize lights and sounds to music, the lantern has an infinite range of settings. The Axis and AMP open a new level of convenience, allowing camp lights to be controlled from a distance or from the tent.

All Day

Introduced in Summer 2014, the Brunton All Day pushed the limits of GoPro use extending the camera’s battery life to nearly four times the standard run time. Brunton will grow the collection to offer power solutions for GoPro use in both day and night (low light) settings.



Brunton All Day

The All Day 2.0 takes the original best selling product to the next level with a larger capacity 5,000mAh lithium-polymer battery. Combined with the camera's on-board 1,100mAh battery, shooting time stretches to more than five times the normal run rate. The battery connects to the existing GoPro housing providing a tight seal to increase waterproof performance up to 40 meters.



Brunton All Night

Brunton will also debut the All Night, a similar 5,000mAh battery pack with an integrated 400 lumen Variable Cree LED lighting system. In addition to improved low light performance, the added lighting element combined with the 40-meter waterproof design allows camera usage in dark situations like diving. The All Night offers several settings: High, Low, Flood, and

Spot. Both the All Day 2.0 and All Night feature Brunton's patented secondary door with a USB charging port to charge smartphones and other small personal electronics. Both devices are also updated with a new design that is optimized to fit all camera models in the GoPro line, including the Hero, Hero 3+, Hero 4 Black and Hero 4 Silver. The batteries are also compatible with the Hero 3 model when using a case from the Hero 3+ or Hero 4 series.

Heatsync

Brunton will build on options in its HeatSync collection, providing a portable heating system to extend outdoor play time. In Fall 2015, the HeatSync Vital will be introduced in a larger size, the HeatSync Vital 3XL, and in an advanced high-performance model, the HeatSync Vital 2.0.



Brunton HeatSync Vital 2.0

The HeatSync Vital 2.0 is designed for active use and features ergonomic, stretch-neoprene construction to provide a wider area of heat over the chest and kidneys. The device uses low profile, far-infrared carbon fiber heating elements to provide efficient heating and a slim fit between layers. Brunton will also add two HeatSync

accessory items to protect the neck and extremities: the HeatSync Hood and HeatSync Glove Liner. It will also launch a redesigned version of the ReSync optimized to power the HeatSync line, featuring a 2.1amp USB output, a slim profile (1.5 cm in depth), and integrated solar panels for



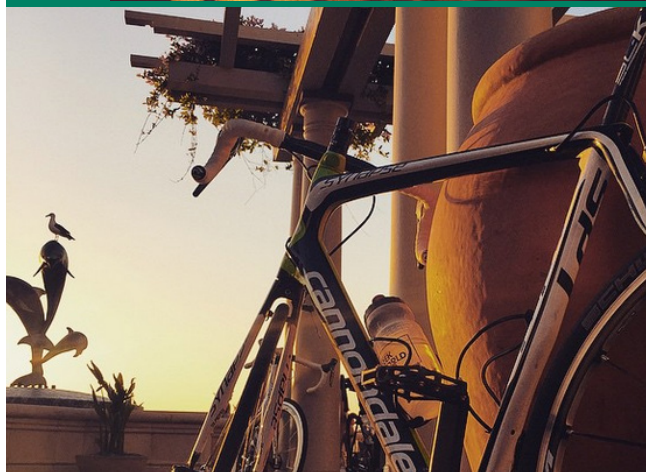
Brunton HeatSync Hood and Glove Liner

emergency charging. Offered in 3,000mAh and 6,000mAh capacities, the redesigned ReSync is built with the waterproof and shockproof standards Brunton is known for.

"The reception of the HeatSync and All Day product has been tremendous. Both products jumped immediately to our top 10. We have aimed to please outdoor consumers by delivering great products in power generation, storage and use, and these products do just that," Sorrenson said. ■

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Backcountry Access Celebrating 20 Years
Photos courtesy Backcountry Access

Backcountry Access Reflects on 20th Season

Backcountry market shows signs of maturing as industry leader ticks over two decades

By Aaron Bible

Bob Wade opened the Ute Mountaineer in Aspen, CO, in April of 1977 and was one of Backcountry Access' (BCA) first dealers. The shop has been backcountry focused since the beginning, helping a fledgling touring market grow in the Roaring Fork Valley and beyond. Regarding the "backcountry trend" that has been infusing the flat winter sports market for a half dozen years now, Wade said, "We're on the front side of it."

"We're growing every year in avi air bags and safety equipment," said Wade, explaining that even if the ski/boot/binding market is showing signs of maturity, there's still lots of growth left both among current backcountry consumers and those converting into lighter weight gear from alpine skiing or as uphill "exercise" skiers.

When it comes to those backcountry accessories, no one has been on the cutting edge of the market, riding its growth wave for the last 20 years while also heavily infusing innovation into the marketplace, more than Boulder, Colorado's BCA.

BCA was born Memorial Day weekend in 1994, when Bruce "Edge" Edgerly and Bruce "Bruno" McGowan got down to business that following Tuesday out of Bruno's condo in Boulder. Like most great outdoor-brand stories begin, the two were paddling and skiing buddies, looking for better, safer ways to push their adventures to new heights.

The first product created by BCA was the Alpine Trekker. This device, which will be discontinued next year, converted standard alpine bindings into free-heel touring bindings, compatible with alpine boots, a technology that was virtually non-existent a couple decades ago. For the first time, people could shred the backcountry in the same gear and with the same confidence they utilized in-bounds, and the concept exploded.

"Dynafit had not really caught on at that time," explained Edgerly, co-founder and VP, global sales and marketing at BCA. "The leading AT binding at the time was the Silvretta 404. Telemarking was the only known form of backcountry skiing. Ramer was around and he basically came out with the first AT bindings. He was super progressive and ahead of his time,

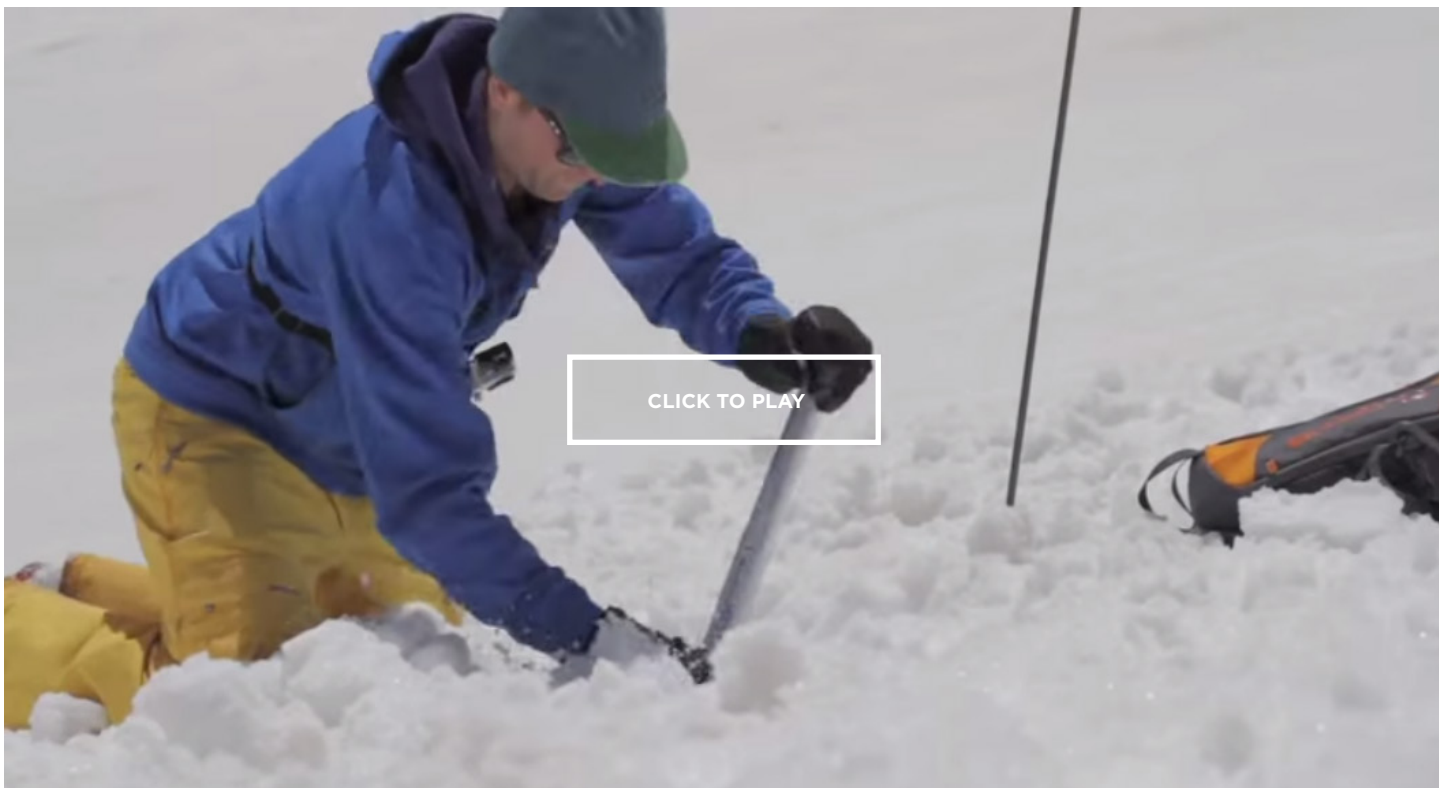
probably too far ahead of his time. He was an engineer but not a good businessman. He was our main competitor when we came out with the Alpine Trekker. Both competed with the Secura-Fix, the Swiss version of the Trekker. It was low quality, would rotate out of bindings, we just made a much better version of that."

"Both of us were very frustrated at the time, I was on Tele gear, and you really had to take a step back on that stuff, tone down the performance level," said Edge. "In the extreme skiing movement we saw a whole new style of skiing that was really turning us on. It was high-performance skiing in semi-dangerous terrain."



Bruce Edgerly and Bruce McGowan with their Alpine Trekker product.

"The Trekker really broke the mold," added Wade. "Both with the Tracker beacon and the Trekker, BCA was willing to break the rules." And, customers love the homegrown, American entrepreneur story behind a brand like BCA, said Wade. Other dealers who have been around for 20 years may remember Edge showing up in his pick-up truck, sleeping out of the back of course, and skiing his way around North America with one prototype of the Alpine Trekker.



Float Pack

“We’ve been successful in putting a North American spin on traditionally European products,” said Edge. “All the top skiers got their start on Trekkers. Shane McConkey, Doug Coombs, Seth Morrison, Dean Cummings, Kent Kreidler, these were all guys that we met in the freeskiing competitions that were purely resort skiers and got their first taste of the backcountry with the Alpine Trekkers and have since become icons of the sport.”

“We went to some of those events and saw the future of skiing in those events,” Edge continued. “Valdez, we went there five times; Crested Butte, got to know all the athletes, judged a few events; it felt like we became a part of the evolution of skiing through that whole movement. It didn’t occur to us at the time, but when you look back at it, it seems that the culture of freeride was hatched.”

BCA was one of the first companies to support freeskiing competitions and to this day is the largest sponsor of the International Freeskiers Association.

Digital Beacons are Born

In 1997 BCA invented the revolutionary Tracker beacon. It was the first digital, multi-antennae beacon, and the first to display distance and direction to users. The Tracker became the best selling beacon in the world due to its effectiveness, durability, accuracy and ease of use. The second iteration was the Tracker2, which followed the original to become the new best selling beacon in the world.

“At the time when beacons were analog they were very difficult to use, most backcountry skiers didn’t spend enough time to learn how to use it,” said Edge. “We got together with yet another kayaking friend of ours, John Hereford, who was working for Storage Tech at the time, and he designed the first digital avalanche beacon. He did the electronics and we worked on the industrial design.”

“Ortovox had been around and they had 80 percent of the market when we came out with the Tracker. I had the F2 dual frequency beacon they put out when the standards were going to change,” Edge continued. “When we came out with the Tracker, it was heavily disruptive. They lost their leadership position pretty quickly and we’ve been rivals ever since. They were so dominant and we came on so strong. Especially in the relatively small snow safety world, at the avalanche safety workshops, when Marcus Peterson and I were in the same room people would wonder what was going to break out.”



“What BCA did as a company was build products to improve the experience of newcomers to the backcountry scene. The Alpine Trekker allowed alpine skiers to earn their turns without having to buy a new binding and boots, just an adapter and a pair of climbing skins,” said *Couloir* magazine founder and backcountry industry stalwart Craig Dostie. “In a similar way, the Tracker DTS allowed newbies to be able to search proficiently, without much practice, for buried (practice) beacons. This has continued to be a company philosophy, aiming not at the professional, experienced skier, but at novices. This has helped fuel growth in backcountry participation by raising the bar of performance, while lowering the bar to entrance.”

“We didn’t do anything special for BCA except to offer them the best channel available at the time for letting backcountry skiers know they existed and they had relevant products,” continued Dostie. “While *Couloir* was excited about the shift in technology that BCA’s Tracker offered, I was skeptical of its advantages the first year due to the inherent limitations it had with regard to range. However, the speed of determining a burial location once the signal was acquired was truly revolutionary. It created a firestorm of innovation and change in the world of avalanche beacons.” Dostie also said the technology raised the bar for the awareness of rescue preparedness and avalanche avoidance.

A Safety and Education Based Philosophy

In 2005, BCA launched a progressive shoveling research and education project, resulting in the addition of “strategic shoveling” to curricula in avalanche courses worldwide.

“Our whole mission has always been to save lives, not just sell products. Once we came out with the digital beacon and people were able to use beacons extremely efficiently, then the opportunities for really saving lives shifted into the next phase of the rescue process and that was the shoveling process. So we did a big shoveling project to see how strategic shoveling could improve,” said Edge.

“The strategic shoveling concept was presented it at the 2006 International Snow Science Workshop, and through that research we got a bunch of numbers. It became very clear to us that if we want to save lives, we need to prevent people from getting buried in the first place. And since we’re based in North America, we see trends in the snowmobile industry, and the snowmobilers were starting to use airbags, so we said, we need to make these things more accessible to your typical skier and snowmobiler.”

So the next European touring concept BCA made more accessible in the U.S. was airbags, coming to market in 2009 with the Float. According to Edge, they simply improved on something the Europeans had been

using for a long time and applied it to North American ski culture. “All of a sudden there was an avi bag that was simpler, more affordable, not as inconvenient, that all the well-known freeskiers were using, and it caught on real fast,” he said. “At that time, snowmobilers were getting in even bigger trouble than the skiers, because the sleds were evolving faster than the awareness level of the riders.”

The Legacy Continues

In a move that didn’t shock the industry, K2 Sports acquired BCA in January of 2013. The partnership gave K2 access to a wider audience of wintersport enthusiasts; it gave them a proven airbag technology; and it allowed BCA to focus entirely on product development, new technology and avalanche education. K2 also provides a massive platform for BCA to circulate its avalanche awareness and education resources, ideally saving more lives and increasing the stoke meter worldwide.

“The only thing we’re getting out of is financing, accounting and the other backend stuff that distracts us from the stuff that really matters,” said Edge. “We’re getting deeper into product development and marketing and sales, and integrating the backend business-y stuff.”

Current data shows BCA leading the backcountry accessory market in dollars, units and market share. Its new BCLink radios are optimizing user interface on FRS/GMRS radios for the needs of backcountry riders. And BCA introduced an innovative line of backcountry poles at SIA this year, featuring a data-based, weight-reduction ski top scraping tool. It completely redesigned its Float Packs in 22- and 32-liter versions while introducing a Float 8 for day travelers, as well as introducing body protection in the MtnPro Vest.

Experts at BCA have created extensive, free online resources for avalanche education and safety. The BCA website features a series of videos on proper equipment use, avalanche prevention and preparation, as well as interviews with avalanche survivors that reinforce the importance of both education and equipment. BCA has an online library of papers primarily authored and co-authored by Edge himself, delving into statistics, equipment effectiveness and techniques, the human factor and technology. Papers presented at ISSW (International Snow Science Workshop) and CSAW (Colorado Snow and Avalanche Workshop) led to the creation of the new Tracker series of transceivers and the BCLink radios.

BCA also spreads avalanche awareness and education via its support of non-profit organizations like Project Zero, events to benefit the Colorado Avalanche Information Center (CAIC), the installation of Beacon Training Parks across the country, and resources to connect backcountry travelers with local avalanche course instructors. ■



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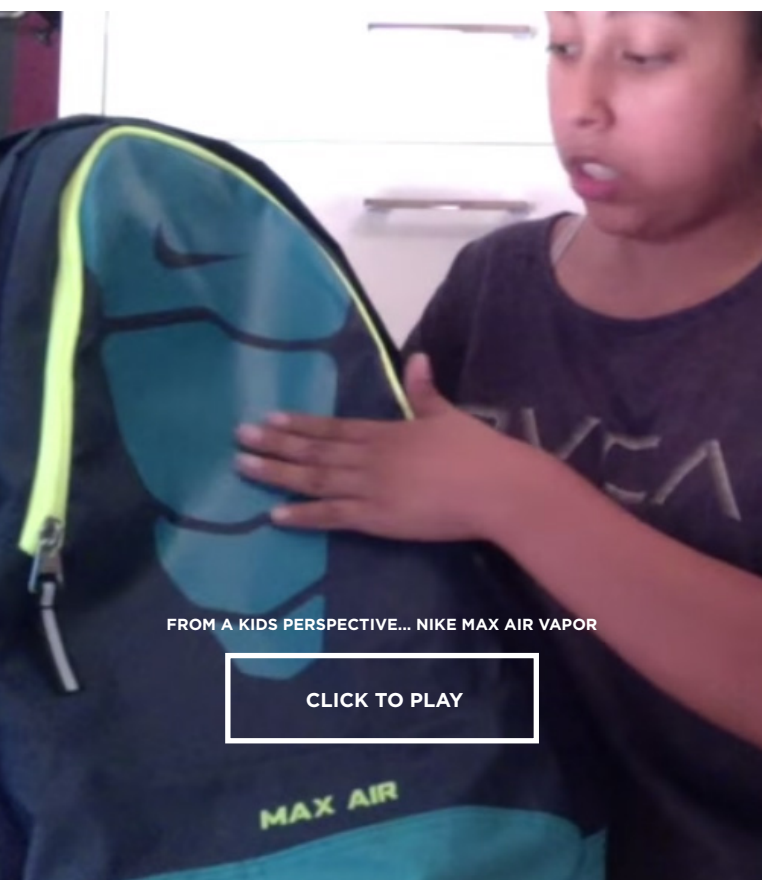
Back-to-School Primer

It's May, which in retail land means time is running out to optimize your back-to-school assortments.

By Charlie Lunan



Photo courtesy Under Armour



FROM A KIDS PERSPECTIVE... NIKE MAX AIR VAPOR

CLICK TO PLAY

Across America, families are giddily hosing off their grills and scanning their favorite barbeque recipes in anticipation of the glorious Memorial Day weekend. But in the crazy world of retail, early May can only mean one thing: time to place those last-minute orders to round out your back-to-school assortments.

This is when smaller retailers can press their advantage against big box competitors by working with their reps to chase trends. There is still time to bring in products well ahead of the season, which kicks off this year on Sunday, July 19, and runs through Saturday, September 11. Expressed in retail terms that means weeks 25 through 32 on the retail calendar.

To zero in on potential opportunities, SGB tasked its colleagues at SportScanInfo to scan retail point-of-sale data it collected from more than 10,000 retail doors to identify a few categories where sales spiked the most during the 2014 back-to-school period. Some findings were more surprising than others.

As one might expect, weekly sales of daypacks skyrocketed nearly five-fold over the course of last year's back-to-school season, while sales of casual athletic and basketball shoes grew five times faster than overall footwear sales during the eight-week period. What may be less known, however, is that weekly sales of mouth guards grew nearly three times as fast as overall team equipment sales during the same period.

Weeks 31 and 33: Basketball Shoes

Basketball shoes remain the undisputed king of the back-to-school season even though retailers sell far more of them in December and March than they do in August. Last year, they outsold casual athletic footwear - a category that includes skate and canvas styles from such popular brands as Vans, DC and Converse - by nearly five to one during the back-to-school season, SportScanInfo data shows.



Under Armour Curry One

Still, weekly basketball shoe sales more than doubled in the back half of August last year and hovered above the \$100 million range through mid-September as kids held off buying their shoes to see what was popular at school.

Andy Annunziata, VP of retail solutions and analysis for the SportsOneSource Group, said the surge reflects savvy lifecycle management by Nike and Brand Jordan, which control the overwhelming majority of the market, as well as Adidas and Under Armour.

"For back-to-school families, who have to buy apparel, books and have many other expenses that time of the year, manufacturers are doing an excellent job of bringing color and style to the mid-price level," said Annunziata.

With the performance-as-fashion trend tapering off in the footwear business, the major brands are incorporating more fashion into the lower priced shoes that are the mainstay of both the back-to-school and the resurgent family footwear business, Annunziata said. In other words, they are trying to make up for a decline in sales of higher priced, lower volume performance styles with more sales of lower priced products to higher volume wholesale channels.



Nike Mavin Low and Hyper Zoom Quickness

This year, retailers are betting on the Nike Mavin Low, \$65, and Nike Without a Doubt, \$80, which will be available in at least six colors. The Nike Hyper Zoom Quickness, which is a takedown of the \$130-plus Hyperdunk worn by top collegiate players, is expected to play well at the \$100 price point for more performance oriented shoppers.



Converse All Stars

Week 31: Casual Athletic Footwear

While much smaller, the demand for casual athletic footwear is growing and continues to be a great traffic builder during the July shoulder season. Last year, category sales began rising sharply in mid-July and peaked in mid-August, before many schools even opened. Converse All Stars remain a must-have brand; particularly for girls who are embracing the brand's many color and profile options. Puma Suedes and Nike Air Force 1 are also expected to remain top sellers at their respective price points.

While skate has been a tough category in recent years, Vans U.S. sales grew 20 percent in the fourth quarter of 2014. Brand managers expect the redesigned Rowley Solos, which will launch June 16, to be a top seller at the \$60 - \$65 price point. The model features premium suede and natural canvas textiles, tonal stitching across the uppers and custom vintage-inspired label-



Puma Suedes



Nike Air Force 1



Vans TNT SAG



Vans Rowley Solos

ing on the tongue. Vans will freshen the offering in the fall with four new colors. Vans' expects the 2015 model of the TNT SAG, which is named for skater Tony Trujillo and available in four colors, to do well at the \$65 - \$70 price point.



Vans Rowley Solos



Compression Sleeves

Week 31: Team Equipment

Team equipment sales also spiked in mid-August as kids and parents geared up for football, soccer, field hockey and other team sports. Rising awareness and concern over the long-term effects of concussions, constrained public school budgets and growing pro endorsements have helped fuel greater than average sales growth for protective and recovery products last year. That is expected to continue for years to come.

Because manufacturers recommend replacing these products every season and because many are priced below \$25, they help drive traffic and add-on sales. They also offer keystone margins.

During the last two weeks of the season, weekly sales of mouth guards hovered at four times their level just six weeks earlier. Mouth guard sales grew nearly three times faster than overall team sport equipment sales over the entire 2014 back-to-school season and grew in the low-double-digit range during the first quarter of this year, when overall team sports equipment sales flat lined. Some of that growth reflected growing use of mouth guards in basketball and soccer.

Retailers sell about twice as many Shock Doctor mouth guards as team dealers, estimates Jay Turkbas, senior vice president of marketing and product development for Shock Doctor Sports, which partnered with NBA player Kevin Love to promote wider use of mouth guards by basketball players last year.

"The team dealers don't always have the breadth of inventory that the large retailers have," Turkbas observed.

Shock Doctor listed 26 different mouth guards on its site in early April. There were models for softball, soccer and basketball players, for players with braces and flavored mouth guards. Turkbas expects new lip guards made from a transparent plastic will sell well during the back-to-school season.

"We have found athletes love the lip guard and expect it to sell simply because of the 'cool factor,'" he said of the new orange and red modes that launch June 1.

Compression sleeves are another low dollar item poised to grow as players replace gear from last season and new players enroll in team sports. Kwik Goal Ltd. expects its sleeves, which soccer players wear over their shin pads, will be one of its top sellers at retail this season.



Shock Doctor lip guard

Week 32: Backpacks

Daypack sales peaked in the third week of August last year, at nearly five times their level just three weeks earlier.

Here again the athletic brands are poised to capture the lower-price mass business, while outdoor brands such as Patagonia, Osprey and The North Face are expected to continue selling well to college-bound students.

Athletic styles such as Nike's Max Air Vapor and Hoops Elite and Under Armour's Hustle and Undeniable, are expected to do the lion's share of the business in the \$55 to \$80 price range. The packs feature basketball silhouettes, big logos and bold colors favored by many middle and high school students.



Under Armour Hustle

The North Face will launch a revamped line of daypacks in the third week of May that reflect its most comprehensive redesign in seven years. The changes are based on research gathered from in-store customer observations, focus groups and even lessons learned from other consumer product companies that have redesigned top-selling products.

"The real magic happens when you find that perfect balance between familiarity and giving people a new fresh take on what they love about the existing product," said Andrew Coutant, product director for equipment at The North Face. "That was one of the things that was so difficult in this process. How do you take the Recon or the Borealis and change it enough so that it's interesting and fresh, but still familiar enough that you don't lose traction."

The line will include new shoulder straps, fabrications and technologies that help make the packs more comfortable, particularly for women. Some packs will use Flexvent, which was originally developed for the brand's technical packs. There are also dozens of tweaks aimed at accommodating rapidly changing technology, said Coutant. For instance, designers moved a sleeve for tablets, which was adjacent to the pocket for laptops at the rear of the pack, to the front of the pack to make it more accessible. The North Face opted to keep the compartment for 17-inch laptops even though college students are increasingly using that to keep their papers from getting dog-eared.

"Women's business is a major focus for this season," Coutant said, noting that the line features back panels, harnesses and shoulder pads designed specifically for the female anatomy.

The entire line will feature design accents more in tune with broader fashion trends that the athletic brands have exploited so well in running shoes and daypacks. On the women's side he sees gray packs with brightly colored zippers and other "color pops" performing well.

"We are seeing a lot of desire for reds and greens, ultraviolet and rich bright colors," said Coutant. "There is very little separation between outdoor and athletic palettes." ■

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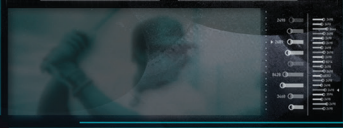
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Photo courtesy Converse

JUNE

- 2-4 FFANY
New York, NY
- 9-11 Licensing International Expo
Las Vegas, NV
- 12-14 SGB 2015 40Under40 Awards
Huntington Beach, CA
- 16-18 EORA Summer Early Show
Greenville, SC
- 16-18 EORA Summer Early Show
Somerset, NJ
- 16-18 MRA June Lansing Market
Lansing, MI
- 22-26 Fleet Feet Franchise Conference
Pittsburgh, PA
- 23-24 MRA June Cincinnati Market
Cincinnati, OH
- 23-25 EORA Summer Early Show
Manchester, NH
- 23-25 EORA Summer Early Show
Lakeland, FL
- 23-25 NRF Protect
Long Beach, CA
- 25-27 Sports, Inc. Athletics Show
San Antonio, TX
- 26-28 NRFtech 2015
Half Moon Bay, CA
- 28-29 NRF Retail Advocates Summit
Washington, DC
- 29-July 1 NBS Summer Athletic Market
San Antonio, TX

JULY

- 8-9 Agenda Long Beach
Long Beach, CA
- 10-12 ADA Spring Show
Minneapolis, MN
- 14-16 ASI Chicago
Chicago, IL
- 14-17 ASA-ICAST International Sport Fishing Expo
Orlando, FL
- 15-18 European Outdoor Trade Fair
Friedrichshafen, Germany
- 15-16 EORA Summer Market
Ellicott City, MD
- 15-16 EORA Summer Market
Manchester, NH

- 19-21 Project New York
New York, NY
- 20-21 Agenda New York
New York, NY

AUGUST

- 4-6 FFANY
New York, NY
- 5-7 BCA International Billiard & Home Recreation Expo
Las Vegas, NV
- 5-8 Outdoor Retailer Summer Market
Salt Lake City, UT
- 13-15 Sports, Inc. Outdoor Show
San Antonio, TX
- 16-18 EORA Greenville Summer Market
Greenville, SC
- 17-19 MAGIC Show
Las Vegas, NV
- 17-19 Agenda Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV
- 20-23 NBS Fall Semi-Annual Market
Ft. Worth, TX
- 24-26 EORA Killington Primary Expo Show
Killington, VT
- 26-29 Eurobike
Friedrichshafen, Germany

SEPTEMBER

- 1-3 WDI Worldwide Fall Show
Reno, NV
- 8-10 SFIA Industry Leaders Summit
New Orleans, LA
- 10-12 Imprinted Sportswear Show
Orlando, FL
- 10-12 Surf Expo
Orlando, FL
- 16-18 Interbike International Trade Expo
Las Vegas, NV

OCTOBER

- 5-7 OIA Rendezvous
Seattle, WA
- 5-7 Shop.org Digital Summit 2015
Philadelphia, PA
- 8-9 The Retailing Summit
Dallas, TX
- 15-17 Imprinted Sportswear Show
Ft. Worth, TX

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nsga.org

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Boulder, CO 80301
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outdoorindustry.org

Sports & Fitness Industry Association
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Silver Spring, MD 20910
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sfia.org

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Snowsportsmerchandising.com

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Tennis Industry Association
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A high-action photograph of a male surfer in a black wetsuit riding a red surfboard on a powerful blue wave. The surfer is leaning forward with one arm extended, and water is splashing around him. The background is a vast expanse of blue water and sky.

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