

BOARDSPORT

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EUROPEAN SURF/SKATE/SNOW BUSINESS

#93 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2018 €5

BIG WIG VANS' KEVIN CASILLO

SURF & SKATE AT OLYMPICS 2020

INDUSTRY EXCLUSIVE WSL CEO INTERVIEW

REGIONAL EURO MARKET INSIGHT



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDES SURF APPAREL, WETSUITS, WATCHES, SUNGLASSES, LONGBOARDS, SUP & BACKPACKS



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HELLO #93

Competitive surfing and skateboarding are on the dawn of a brand new era. We've known for two years that our two founding boardsports would be debuting on the world stage at Tokyo 2020, but it's all becoming very real now with qualification processes and finer details coming to fruition.

With speculation and opinion pieces aplenty circulating in endemic media on surfing and skating's future as Olympic sports, here at SOURCE we decided to deliver the facts and explain exactly what we know with regards to the qualification process, drug testing, governing bodies, broadcast schedules and whether surfing will take place in the ocean or on a manmade wave.

Just a few years ago the notion of surfing at the Olympics on a manmade wave would have seemed far-flung, but with the World Surf League acquiring Kelly Slater Wave Co in 2016 and September 2018 seeing the first Championship Tour event contested at a manmade wave (since the pitiful excuse for a comp held in 1985 at Allentown, Pennsylvania), the peculiar now seems more like reality. SOURCE was there in attendance in Lemoore, California for this monumental event and despite desert-like temperatures, the competition was a success, crowning two champions in Gabriel Medina and Carissa Moore. A wealth of lessons in everything from judging to wave mechanics and broadcasting will no doubt have been learnt, but the competition ultimately delivered very similar waves to all contestants and the best surfers on the day won.

While in Lemoore, SOURCE had the rare opportunity to interview the WSL's CEO Sophie Goldschmidt, in which the Englishwoman delivered insight on everything from the WSL interview process to tour sponsorship, the Olympics and wave pools, right the way through to perhaps the most monumental of all her achievements, delivering an American-based sports first, equal pay for male and female athletes.

We also speak with Kevin Casillo from Vans, a company no stranger to hosting elite level surfing competitions thanks to their work with the US Open of Surf over recent years. But it was at this summer's Vans Duct Tape Invitational in the Basque Country where we caught up with this issue's Big Wig to talk more about the grassroots and cultural side of surfing they look to activate with this expressive event.

Be sure to stay tuned to the SOURCE website for more in depth interviews from the Surf Ranch Pro presented by Hurley. And subscribe to our e-newsletter to stay informed as we enter a very important time of year for the European boardsports industry with a number of key events including the EuroSIMA Surf Summit, Quiksilver/Roxy Pro France, MEO Rip Curl Pro Portugal and Paddleexpo.

Always Sideways
Harry Mitchell Thompson
Editor

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On the cover: Rémi Chaussemiche, Dakine's Surf Marketing Manager Europe. Photo by Guillaume Arrieta

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“SKATEBOARDING BETWEEN SUBCULTURE AND THE OLYMPICS” – A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS FROM RENOWNED AUTHORS

Written by former pro skateboarder Veith Kilberth (and one time SOURCE front cover star) together with Sports Sciences professor Jürgen Schwier, ‘Skateboarding Between Subculture and the Olympics’ explores the debate between the deeper meaning of skateboarding and how its addition to the Olympics will affect the sport from here on. The book itself is a collection of 10 essays by internationally renowned authors exploring sport and sub culture. Note: book written in German language.

BLACK PEAK TRADING APPOINTED TO HANDLE UK SALES AND MARKETING FOR K2

K2 has appointed Black Peak Trading, run by Andy Collin to handle their UK sales & marketing, including K2 Snowboards, Ride Snowboards, K2 Skis, Line Skis, Full Tilt and more. Collin has employed snowboard industry vet, Jonny Russell, formerly of TSA to handle the snowboard side of the business.

PORTUGUESE SURF TRADE SHOW DEBUTED NEAR LISBON, SEPTEMBER 2018

Brothers Salvador and Patrick Stilwell launched Surf Out Portugal, their b2b and b2c surf trade show in Estoril (part of Cascais, Lisbon’s top surf spot) from September 15-16, 2018. The show united the Portuguese surf industry in one place in order to lay plans and strategize future business as well as create an environment for debate of hot topics including sustainability, current affairs and more. With a strong diversity of exhibitors from Portuguese surf retailers such as 58 Surf and Magic Quiver, to international surf brands such as Rusty and Lightning Bolt combined with non-endemic companies such as TAP (airline), C. Santos VP (Mercedes-Benz dealer) and MEO, the country’s biggest telecomms company, the event showed a real interest from the region’s thriving surf industry.

BODY GLOVE PARTNERS WITH SHINER FOR EUROPEAN BRAND RE-LAUNCH

Body Glove is a brand synonymous with water sports thanks to its vast history, helping to make people’s experience in and around the water more comfortable. Founded in 1953 by the Meistrell brothers, Body Glove have recently entered a new partnership with UK-based distributor Shiner who will now manage their European operation.

FORMER DISNEY EXEC APPOINTED PRESIDENT OF KELLY SLATER WAVE COMPANY

Former Disney executive, Nick Franklin, has been appointed President of the Kelly Slater Wave Company (KSWC) by the WSL. During his 18 years at Disney, Franklin worked in corporate strategy and managed areas including global strategy, business development, real estate development, and brand and operations, which the WSL hope will be a skillset to help dive the growth of KSWC globally.

SURF HARDWARE INTERNATIONAL ACQUIRES KANULOCK

Surf Hardware International have acquired Australian brand Kanulock founded by Clinton Hollier. Kaunulock have successful markets in both Australia and the USA, and Europe through distributor agreements. VF Corp, Announces Intention To Create 2 Independent, Publicly Traded Companies

VF CORP, HOME TO VANS, THE NORTH FACE, DICKIES AND REEF

has announced that they will be splitting the company into two independent, publicly traded companies: VF Corporation, a global apparel and footwear powerhouse, and a yet-to-be named company which will be home to VF’s denim (Jeans) and Outlet businesses with intentions of the latter to be a leader in the denim category. Company CEO Steve Rendell says this move will allow its action/outdoor sports brands division to “sharpen its focus as a consumer-centric and retail-minded organization anchored in activity-based lifestyle brands.”

THE EUROPEAN OUTDOOR GROUP ADDS BURTON AND NITRO AS FIRST BOARDSPORT MEMBERS

Founded in 2003, by 19 of the largest outdoor companies, The European Outdoor Group have just added Burton and Nitro to their list of members, marking a real progression in what is perceived as ‘outdoor’ by the general consumer.

ULTRA SPORT NEW UK DISTRIBUTORS FOR SUPRA

LA-based brand Supra has partnered up with Ultra Sport Europe, making the UK-based distributor the sole distributor in the UK and Ireland. Supra joins brands including Nitro, Arbor, Smith, Bern and more under the Ultra Sport umbrella.

BLUE TOMATO OPENS NEW STORE IN LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND

Blue Tomato are opening their first store in a French speaking area. The 350 square metre, two story shop opened in Lausanne near to Lake Geneva on August 9, 2018. “The opening of our first location outside the German-speaking world is for us a further milestone and of course something very special,” said CEO Adam Ellis.

CJB’S SURF COMPANY APPOINTED AS DISTRIBUTOR OF KEEBUNGA

Originally founded in 1997 CJB’s Surf Co, a surf and water sports wholesaler, who currently distribute C-Skins Wetsuits, Mr Zogs Sexwax, Creatures of Leisure and Solarez has been announced as the distributor of Keebunga in the UK and Ireland.

WSL LAUNCHES AIR INVITATIONAL IN FRANCE

The WSL has announced that their all-new Air Invitational will take place during the Quiksilver Pro France on October 3 – 14, 2018 with 18 surfers set to compete. A similar aerial comp also took place during the inaugural Surf Ranch Pro in September, 2018. Former CT competitor and Air Tour pro Josh Kerr will be event director.

UK-BASED STREETWEAR BRAND BENCH HAS A NEW OWNER

Global investment and consulting company, Gordon Brother, based in Boston/USA has acquired the Bench brand and all its related intellectual property assets. The brand, founded in Manchester in 1989 was extremely popular in the 90s but came into financial difficulties when Bench Limited, which holds the trademark rights to the streetwear brand Bench, filed an application for the opening of insolvency proceedings with the relevant authorities in the UK.

SHINER ACQUIRES EUROPEAN DISTRIBUTION FOR PENNY, Z-FLEX & ARBOR

Shiner Distribution has announced a further another brand to its growing distribution repertoire of skateboard brands, having recently acquired European distribution rights for Penny, Z-Flex and Arbor Skateboards from Absolute Board Co (Benelux excluded).

ROYAL WEDDING SELECTS SURFERS AGAINST SEWAGE AS CHOSEN CHARITY, MEMBERSHIP INCREASES 178%

British-based Surfers Against Sewage have been doing fantastic work over the past three decades in raising awareness for the problems our oceans face with pollution, but since the Royal Wedding selected SAS as one of their seven chosen charities earlier this year, the Cornwall-based charity has seen a 178% spike in membership figures since last year.

STOKEHOUSE LAUNCHES NEW FEMALE SURF BRAND SISSTREVOOLUTION

Stokehouse, parent company to Vissla, D’Blanc and Amuse Society has just launched its fourth brand, Sisstrevolution. Paul Naude launched Stokehouse in 2015 and all three brands have seen decent traction within the surf industry, with Amuse Society also finding good traction in retailers away from surf. Sisstrevolution comes as the company notice a strong uptick in female surf and thanks to the success of Vissla, they feel they are well positioned to launch a girls surf brand where they can follow the same principals they do with Vissla: clean distribution, strong product, sensible production and all done sustainably where possible.

WORLD SURF LEAGUE TO OPEN NEW REGIONAL OFFICE IN LISBON

The World Surf League is opening a new regional office in Lisbon, Portugal. The WSL is restructuring its presence in the region to an EMEA model and Hossegor will remain the European HQ.

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10
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BRIGHT, BERLIN, GERMANY, JULY 3-5, 2018

The Bright summer show changed out of all recognition to the event we have all been visiting for many years as the organisers experimented with the idea of dividing the exhibition hall into separate b2b and consumer areas. Overall the show space was reduced by approximately 60% as part of the exhibition hall is becoming increasingly difficult to use because of health and safety issues. The brand stands in the b2b area stretched along the corridor from the organisers office to the Seek entrance whilst the consumer area was focused around the traditional Bright entrance.

The consumer section was busy when events were on in the skateable area, which was sponsored by Adidas, otherwise the crowds came and went during the day. Competitions included Iriedaily's highest wall ride and Adidas X Skatedeluxe cash for tricks session. Art displays in the consumer area included those by RAD, Johannes Böttge X Native Teenage

Studio, Clara Knör & Laura Kaczmarek with Empowering Women, 40 years of Titus and Long Live Southbank. And the video premieres of Ups and Downs and Jockey Club. The official opening party presented by DC went off with a bang at Wilde Renate and got wilder as the night went on. The b2b area was relatively busy but the reduced number of brands meant that retail buyers did not really have enough to see. Some of the brands normally at Bright moved across to Seek and a few moved to a special area in Premium. Brands in the b2b area were happy with the traffic, as quality took over quantity. It will be interesting to see how plans develop for the next show in January.

www.brighttradeshow.com

SEEK, BERLIN, GERMANY, JULY 3-5, 2018

As every summer, the tunnels connecting Bright and Seek in the winter were stripped away and the space in between becomes part of the river beach hangout, which thanks to the glorious summer days, outdoor business meetings just stretched out that much longer. Inside Seek little was changed from the previous edition, with just the layout of the stalls slightly altered to provide additional space for yet more brands, with the hall completely full. All the stands were as usual built from plywood making sure that visitors eyes are drawn straight to the product. A fair number

of the brands from Bright had moved across to Seek, making the show almost as representative of boardsports as Bright was. Most of the brands were happy with the number of retailers at the show, even though they commented it was noticeably down on the last show. Next show dates January 15-17, 2019.

www.seekexhibitions.com

JACKET REQUIRED, LONDON, UK, JULY 25-26, 2018

Jacket Required returned to the Old Truman Brewery on Brick Lane in London's East End for its summer edition from July 25-26, 2018. Action sports brands have always been a key part of the show's DNA, but whereas before the action sports brands all congregated in one of the site's halls, as shows have gone by these brands have upped sticks in search of differentiation and better footfall.

Show organisers have been tinkering with the layout over the past three shows, and this edition saw a total overhaul. Whereas before, visitors could head into the building and make a beeline for their preferred brands, this time around a clear path was defined, with shoulder high white walls stopping any rat runs. The new layout definitely had a feeling of IKEA to it; one way in, one way one out and visiting all the features show organisers determined on the way through. Returning brands from the action sports

space included Crep Protect, DC, Dickies, Doughnut Bags, Earthwell, Element, Herschel, Quiksilver, Santa Cruz, Fjallraven, Makia, Saax Underwear, Sweet Skateboards, and the show welcomed first timers Yes On Life (clothing launch by Yes Snowboards) and Coal Headwear. The show hosted 'In Talks With' where they shone a spotlight on the growing emphasis and importance placed on sustainability within the fashion sector. The menswear trade show also partnered with hype artist Luke McLean, owner of Kill Me Now gallery, to present a collection of his own works along with locally and globally sourced pieces from artists such as Hayden Kays, Le Gun, David Shillinglaw, Babak Ganjei, Pure Evil, Linocutboy, Will Sweeney and Heretic Spectral Nation. Next show dates January 23-24, 2019.

www.jacket-required.com

OUTDOOR SHOW, FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, GERMANY, JUNE 17-20, 2018

With this year's great summer in Northern Europe in full swing, it was a pleasure to spend some time in Friedrichshafen down by the lake. The show has for years been the meeting place of the outdoor industry from across Europe, and this year was no different. This 25th edition, was no exception with more than 900 exhibitors filling all twelve halls with a total exhibition area of 85,000 m2. Over the four days of the fair over 30,000 visitors from 88 countries passed through its doors. During the show there were some 200 international product premieres, 247 award entries and 137 seminars and presentations. With the growth of the action outdoor market in their minds boardsport retailers who made the trip to the show were able to meet brands who will become increasingly important to their business. For the first time there was a parallel programme of events for end consumers under the slogan "OutDoor for All". This included

areas from microadventure to gear testing, talks and movie nights at the Midsummer Festival on Lake Constance to the German National Bouldering Championships. As always, the OutDoor Party on the Tuesday proved a wet and wild affair. On Saturday evening, Messe Friedrichshafen invited retail, industry and media partners aboard the Sonnenkönigin cruise ship to celebrate 25 successful years. However this was the last of the EOG OutDoor show at this location, as after many years show owners (European OutDoor Group), have decided to move the show to Munich, following a vote by their membership. A new show, OutDoor by ISPO will open its doors for the first time from June 30 to July 3, 2019.

www.ISPO.com

Alan Stokes | Typhoon Team Rider

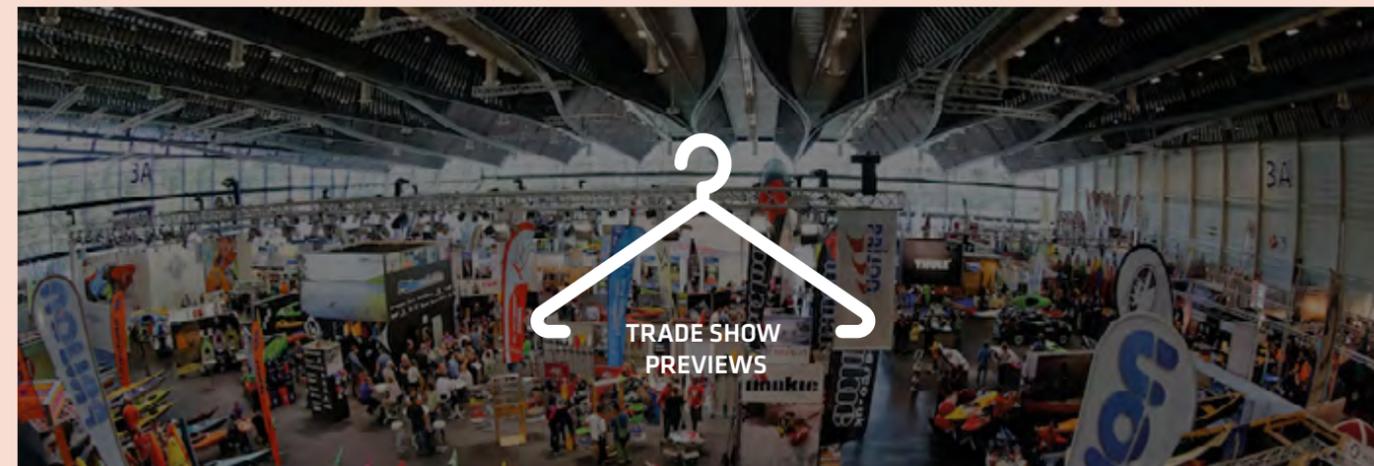
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PADDLEEXPO, NÜRNBERG, GERMANY, OCTOBER 5-7, 2018

The event opens its doors in Hall 7A of the Nuremberg Exhibition Centre and it's back to the traditional Friday-Sunday slot. This year the date has also moved back to the first week of October from last year's slot in the third week of September. Last year 294 brands including most of the key players in these industries exhibited on 148 booths, with the hall sold out. Attendance saw 1408 visitors from 47 nations with international visitors making up around half of the total with most coming from Switzerland, Italy, Czech Republic, UK and France. For 2018 there are more exhibitors and brands than ever before with 158 exhibitor stands and 309 brands spread across 5088 sq metres of booths. This includes all the key players such as Starboard, BIC, Boardworks, Red Paddle, Naish, RRD, Mistral, Fanatic, JP-Australia, NSP, Focus, Indiana, Lokahi, Aquaglide, Aquadesign and many more. This is the 16th edition of Europe's only specialist paddle sports tradeshow, attracting brands from SUP, kayaking and canoeing. The three-day event brings together retailers from all over Europe to Nurnberg who gather to see the latest product and technologies on offer. Additionally many specialist SUP accessories, clothing and wetsuit brands can also be found. Founder Horst Fürsattel says for retailers, Paddleexpo is a one-stop-shop window for all they will need to buy in the paddle business and it's all under one roof in a single hall, simplifying the selection and buying process for retailers and this is a significant advantage for all visiting shops.

In the evenings there will be live music at the after-work stand parties on the first night, and the industry dinner will take place on the second night. The industry dinner is open to all attendees and last year over 2,000 people sat down for the biggest get-together of the SUP community you will ever see under one roof in Europe. The free buffet is followed by live presentations, the annual 'Coolest Products of the Show' awards, presented by KS Publishing and Rai Puig, expedition paddler and Sea Kayak Guide will also present his new film Solo in Papua. Around the show highlights include the visit of Sebastian Brendel, Olympic champion and 8-time World Champion who will this year be at the FOCUS SUP HAWAII stand for talks and an autograph session on Saturday from 2pm to 3pm.

So all action sports retailers should take the time to visit the show and look at this market as it's a product category that many of their customers are interested in, whether it be inflatables for lakes and rivers, or hardboards for the ocean. And with this long hot summer, consumer demand has been high, so the opportunity should not be missed. All industry professionals and retailers can attend the fair at no cost, you just need to register in advance on the website. Opening hours are Friday and Saturday 9am to 7pm and on the final day from 9am to 4pm.

www.paddleexpo.com

EUROSIMA SURF SUMMIT, SEIGNOSSE, FRANCE, OCTOBER 1-2, 2018

Professionals from across action sports sector will gather at Belambra Club Les Estagnots de Seignosse from October 1-2 for the 17th edition of the Surf Summit, under the theme of "inventing the industry of tomorrow." Launched in 2002, this annual surf business congress aims to inspire and to look at all things action sports, with eight speakers over the two days sharing their knowledge and experiences.

The second day opens with Mathieu Crépel, the French snowboard world champion, examining the parallels between the mountains and ocean. We are then in the hands of Claude de Piante, entertainer and hypnotherapist, who will demonstrate the positive effects of self-hypnosis on the development of our potential (concentration, memory, stress management) and give us the keys to understanding and experiencing this style of living. After lunch it's the turn of Ariane Vincent, Communications Director at Konbini France to explain how the web and social media revolution has enabled them to emerge as a global player in trends and pop culture. Finally to round of the conference, Julien Vivier, Director of Studies at Nielsen Sports, will give us a some highlights form their study on the European consumer profiles of action sports.

EuroSIMA President Wilco Prins opens proceedings followed by Kai Lenny, Hawaii's big wave surfer and waterman prodigy, who will share his vision of aquatic sports and his will to push the limits of wave sports by developing new practices. The morning will be rounded off by Gibus de Soultrait, Publishing Director of Surfer's Journal France and CEO of the publishing company Vent de Terre. Gibus will examine the origins of surf and show how the idea of resistance is also constitutive of surf culture. After lunch Frédéric Tain, journalist and Editor-In-Chief of sport-guide.com, will analyse the increasing weight of sales to consumers via the web and show that this does not necessarily mean the end of multi-brand stores. Thomas Rouault, the Co-Founder and CEO of the online sales site Snowleader, which thanks to an innovative brand strategy, has enjoyed a growth of 20-40% per year for 10 years. The end of the first day will see the winners of the EuroSIMA 2018 corporate sponsorship and the Action Outdoor Sports Innovation Call for Projects, pitch their projects to the audience. From 7pm onwards it's the traditional Surf Summit Sunset event at the Cabane Terramar, Plage Santocha in Capbreton.

During the Surf Summit at the conference hall, EuroSIMA will present the 5th edition of the Surfing Lounge exhibition, a selection of the most innovative products and services in the action sports sector, highlighting the know-how, creativity and dynamism of its members. The Surf Summit will be held at the same time as the opening of the Quiksilver & Roxy Pro France, so a great opportunity for the industry to watch the best surfers on the planet as well as hook up with friends and enjoy the Watermans Ball on the evening of October 5.

www.eurosima.com



RETAILER PROFILE

SURF SNOWDONIA, WALES

Surf Snowdonia opened in August of 2015, becoming the first manmade wave centre to serve the general public.

Without fears of flat tidal spells and its waterfront café and bar providing a weather-proof spectator gallery for their own form of beachgoers, the on-site surf shop has a truly unique proposition in surf retail. Three years in, we speak with General Manager Andy Ainscough to delve deeper into this totally new breed of surfer and surf shop.

What have been the biggest lessons learned since opening?

Yeah, it's been fun, and like a lot of these things, with opening world firsts, it's been quite a lot of figuring things out and working out what works best for this type of surf spot. Nobody knew the type of customer we would get and what the product mix should be. I don't think we got the mix too wrong but we've certainly tweaked what we stocked as the years have gone on. The boards and accessories have gone well for us and we've been fortunate enough that both Firewire and FCS have supported us since opening, meaning customers have often been able to demo kit before making a purchase. Then our own branded/location kit has gone really well for us, something people can take away as a gift or memory.

What would be the main differences in the offering between a resort shop such as your own compared with a surf shop by the ocean?

Not a huge amount I don't think. Our location is a bit remote, so we need to stock essentials in case someone has come to surf 10 hours but forgot their fins, for example. We've now got our regular customers that a beach shop would get. People come in for board advice, fresh winter suits etc. We then get a lot of beginners and intermediates looking for their first board or first suit.

Ding repair shops by the ocean will mainly hear stories of dings from other surfers, surfboards and maybe rocks/reef. Are you seeing damage to hardware from the lagoon's structure?

Not really too much from the pier (as we call it). The wave tends to push you away from the structure, but we get the usual ones where people have dropped the board or turned around and bashed it on the fence. We get some people that end up with pressure dings maybe more regularly than they would do at the beach. If people have booked ten hours and they are capable of surfing hard then the work and distance the board goes through is pretty intense – ten hours is potentially 120 fairly long waves on that board as well as the other wear and tear it might have gone through before visiting us.

The lagoon offers discounts for members and multiple sessions etc. Do you have locals?

Yeah, we do. Some people have learned from scratch, just on this machine, and that's pretty cool. They are now going off to the local beaches and getting used to the ocean as well. We then have guys that have surfed for years but are living in Conwy. They are about 40 minutes from natural waves, so they use us as a training ground to keep fit and sharp. We started a Surf Club in 2016 which sees about 50 local kids between 10 and 16 surf every Saturday morning free of charge – that has been great for the valley and some are now coming through as lifeguards and working for us in the summer.

Could you talk us through your partnerships with Firewire, Rip Curl Surf Hardware and now O'Neill?

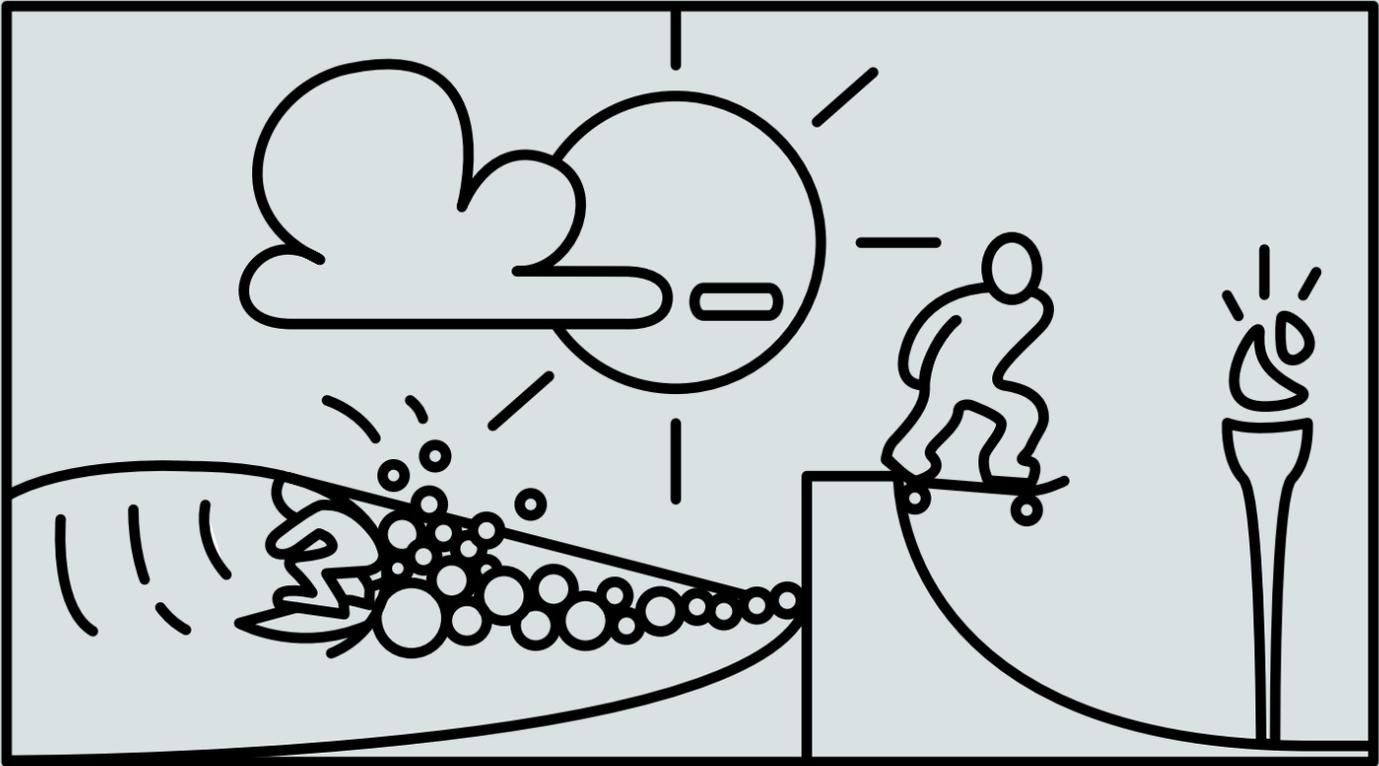
We were lucky enough to be supported by Rip Curl, Firewire and Surf Hardware from an early stage and they have assisted in kitting out our Surf Academy for lessons across all levels. We have just entered into a new partnership with O'Neill which is really exciting. We've done a few events with O'Neill over the years and have been stocking their suits since the beginning. This September we are holding Rookie Rippers with O'Neill – it's going to be cool seeing Jordy Smith on our waves again.

When are your peak periods and how are you making the shop work in the off months?

It's definitely hard. Our best months are between May and the end of September, but the site is open and we are making waves from mid-March until Christmas, so we have a pretty long season really. Like anyone else in this game it's about managing the stock and staff levels and offering an incentive for our surfers to come in the retail shop and have a browse.

What have been the best-selling products of the 2018 summer?

The Go-Fish and some interesting shapes from Firewire have been going really well, O'Neill is selling great on the suits front. I love the Hyperfreak stuff and think with it being so comfortable people have really gone for that. Our Surf Snowdonia branded clothes and re-usable coffee cups have been going well too, although with all this unusual sun we've had in UK, some zinc sales have gone up also! ☺



SURFING AND SKATEBOARDING PREMIERE AT THE 2020 TOKYO OLYMPICS

JUST THE FACTS?

Will the 2020 Tokyo Olympics rob surfing and skateboarding of their core appeal? Let's not get all bitter and negative: SOURCE writers Dave Mailman and Dirk Vogel serve up the facts - and a side order of perspective.

SURFING AT THE 2020 GAMES: WHAT WE KNOW

By Dave Mailman

No matter your opinion on the Olympics and competitive surfing, the sport will be included in the Summer Games at Tokyo 2020. And there is nothing anyone can do about it. "Surfing has entered the Olympic games, a monumental, game-changing moment for the sport. Surfing is ready to embrace the Olympics and take its inspiration, love and passion to the world's greatest sporting stage," said the official statement by the governing body of Olympic surfing, the International Surfing Association (ISA).

Now, one could argue that the ISA is overstepping its bounds by implying that all surfers embrace Olympic surfing. Many hardcore surfers don't think surfing should be a professional sport, let alone be in the Olympics. But there is no denying that the 'sportification' of surfing is very important.

On a conference call with members of the surf media, WSL CEO Sophie Goldschmidt stated: "The 2020 Olympics is another massive opportunity, it allows us to become relevant in markets we aren't to date. Then again, it's the broader media offering: how do we embrace a wider audience and branch out to the lifestyle areas, as well as being very focused on our elite competitions?"

That's exactly the question at stake here. The ISA's qualification system requires WSL surfers who wish to compete in the Olympics to also compete in the World Surfing Games, until now rarely attended by top

professional surfers. But at the same time, by embracing the Olympic movement in order to reach a greater audience, is the WSL is also diminishing the importance of its elite competitions and its world titles? What it does by doing this is legitimizing its direct competition and allowing a new international contest into the mix.

Ask yourself which is more important to sponsors and the general public: a WSL world title or an Olympic gold medal? Not sure? My point, exactly. But all emotions aside, quite a few questions remain about what Olympic surfing will actually look like from an organizational standpoint. Will it be held in a wave park or the actual ocean? Who keeps track of qualifications and how many riders per country are allowed?

"The contest format and judging criteria are still to be determined for the Olympics. Our technical team is working on that," said Evan Quarnstrom, Marketing and Media Manager at the International Surfing Association (ISA).

"The contest format and judging criteria are still to be determined for the Olympics. Our technical team is working on that." Evan Quarnstrom, Marketing and Media Manager, International Surfing Association (ISA).



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But details are starting to trickle in from the ISA, so we have compiled what we know about the ins and outs of surfing at the 2020 Games:

/ The current date window for the Men's and Women's Surfing events at the 2020 Olympics is currently posted as July 26-29, 2020. But according to insiders, these are just placeholders; similar as in Olympic sailing for the same reason: weather. If the competition needs to account for inclement weather and low surf, the events could happen on any day during the official Games until August 9, 2020. It's also worth noting that it is the ISA who determines the call each day, and not the IOC, allowing seasoned vets to run the comp in the best conditions possible. For example, the ISA will be able to run a few heats in the morning when the wind is offshore and then go on hold until the next day, just like on the Championship Tour.

/ The surfing event will feature an equal number of riders from both genders: 20 men, 20 women.

/ In order to qualify, individual surfers earn spots via a hierarchical list of qualification events (see below). In other words: qualifications are determined per rider, not by countries. Generally, there is an allotment of two riders per country in each gender (so maximum two men and women per country).

/ All national team members must participate in 2019 and 2020 ISA World Surfing Games to be eligible for Olympic qualification.

/ The hierarchical order of qualification is the following:

1. 2019 World Surf League Championship Tour: First ten eligible men and first eight eligible women.
2. 2020 ISA World Surfing Games: First four eligible men and first six eligible women.
3. 2019 ISA World Surfing Games: Top finishing eligible surfer of each gender from Africa, Asia, Europe and Oceania.
4. 2019 Pan American Games: First eligible male and female surfers.
5. Host nation slot: One male and one female slot for Japan, unless already filled via other qualification scenario. If so, the slot is reallocated to highest-ranked eligible surfer from the 2020 World Surfing Games.

/ As for competition terrain, there have been some rumours, as some interested parties in surfing are lobbying for artificial wave terrain. But in spite of confirmed Kelly Slater Wave Co. and Wavegarden projects underway in Japan, the ISA insists the surfing event will be held in the ocean. To be precise, at Tsurigasaki Beach in Chiba, 100km from Tokyo centre.

/ Speaking on the issue, ISA President Fernando Aguerre said: "The ISA is excited about showcasing surf culture and lifestyle through an innovative beach festival concept at the Games." The organizers also wish to use the event to promote the beauty of the Japanese coastline and the quality of local waves for surfing.

/ Hours before going to print on this issue, the door to surfing at Tokyo 2020 being contested in a wavepool seemed closed, until WSL CEO Goldschmidt in her press conference at the opening of the Surf Ranch Pro in Lemoore, California on September 5, 2018, stated: "There's lots of discussions still to have, but we hope there is still an opportunity that surfing could take place in one of these facilities in 2020." See interview with CEO Goldschmidt on P28 for more details.

So there you have the facts. As for feelings within the surfing community about the sport's inclusion in Tokyo 2020, everyone who surfs has their own...

SKATEBOARDING AT THE 2020 GAMES: WHAT WE KNOW By SOURCE Skateboarding Editor Dirk Vogel

In 1965, The Quarterly Skateboarder magazine already predicted "a real future for the sport – a future that could go as far as the Olympics." But only under the condition that "skateboarding does not become a sport of rebels and radicals." Well, now it's officially happening: Skateboarding will debut at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. And guess what, the rebels and radical are in full rebellion!

Core companies and practitioners rally behind the argument: "The Olympics need skateboarding more than skateboarding needs the Olympics." They

have a point, as kids these days can hardly be bothered to watch Olympic mainstays such as Fencing or Equestrian Dressage on TV. But looking at current participation numbers, skateboarding could also use an Olympics "boost": Whereas almost 9 million participated in skateboarding in the U.S. in 2007, the number is now at 6.4 million according to the 2017 SFIA Topline Participation Report. Out of these participants, 4 million are casual and 2.5 million core (down from 4 million in 2007).

Core participants are exactly what our industry needs, as they are the ones who shred boards, tear up shoes and buy skate equipment on the reg. Right now the only demographic posting growth are the 24to-34-year-olds, which now outnumber teenagers for the first time (SFIA).

Whether or not professional athletes competing for gold medals in national team jerseys will bring in new blood remains to be seen. Meanwhile, here's the official lowdown of what we know about skateboarding at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics:

/ There will be two skateboarding events at the 2020 Olympics: Skateboard Street (July 24-25, 2020) and Skateboard Park (August 4-5, 2020). Each will feature the top 20 qualifying participants from around the world. These riders are determined in qualifier events recognized by the official governing body for skateboarding, World Skate. There are also quotas in place, for instance a limit of three riders per country.

/ World Skate is the IOC-recognized, international federation governing skateboarding. It was established in 2017 in a merger between the ISF and FIRS. World Skate recognizes 124 national associations around the world, for instance Germany's DRIV. These national associations receive financial and organizational support, for instance by the German Olympic Sports Association (DOSB), to establish teams, hire coaches and conduct camps for training.

/ An equal number of men and women will compete in Olympic skateboarding – so 40 men and 40 women total – in line with the Olympic Charter to "encourage and support the promotion of women in sport at all levels". National associations have established women's teams while brands such as Vans promote women's skateboarding. A wise move: Only 27.5% participants in the U.S. are female, and their share has stagnated for the past two years (SFIA).

/ Both disciplines will have their own qualifying series and judging formats. In Street, the IOC recognizes the Street League Skateboarding (SLS) World Tour as the official qualifiers. Next year, SLS will expand its tour to five events – all featuring women's competitions – and double the number of competitors through an expanded qualifying format. Although yet to be confirmed, the Vans Park Series (VPS), now the official world championship format for Park Skateboarding, looks like the shoe-in candidate for Park.

/ Athletes in qualifying series are already being screened for "performance-enhancing substances" by bodies such as the USADA in the US, the same organization that tests UFC fighters.

/ While marijuana is legal in countries like Canada and the Netherlands, as well as several states in the US including California, the Olympics will not allow its use. One of the world's best park skaters already flunked a doping test for THC – the shape of things to come and a red flag for Olympic opponents.

/ Competition terrain will be constructed by sanctioned park builders, including the official designer and builder of Street League Skateboarding, California Skateparks.

/ Olympic participants will not wear their sponsor's apparel but some kind of national uniform. But sponsors' shoes and decks are okay, if they are commercially available.

/ Skateboarding in the Olympics will receive broad media coverage from national TV networks as well as private broadcasters such as Sky, ESPN, and ABC. Vans also teamed up with skateboard-specific web streaming service ETN to broadcast its Park Series this year as an official partner.

Speaking of partnerships, the Olympics are still a stretch away and skateboard marketing budgets have seen better days. Did you notice that the SLS World Tour this year is no longer presented by previous headline sponsor, Nike SB? Are brands holding out until 2020 and hoping for a boost in exposure once the "Big O" rolls around? Perhaps. Maybe. We'll keep you updated on what we know. 📡



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photo Hurley

WETSUITS SS19 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

The wetsuits main objective is to make you forget it's there, like a second skin. This holds true even more when water temperatures heat up and wetsuits lose a few millimetres of neoprene. For spring/summer 2019, wetsuit brands are back at work coming up with ever more functional collections. **David Bianic.**

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The best way to check the health of the surf industry isn't through textiles, it's all about neoprene. In winter, it goes without saying, but in summer too, in the vast majority of the big surf countries, be it a full suit or not, wearing some kind of wetsuit is indispensable if you want to feel like it's always summer on the inside. "Although we would all like to surf in boardies during the summer, most of us in Europe don't have that luxury," European Product Manager at O'Neill Wetsuits, Tom Copsey reminds us, "especially the core market who are in the water at 6am before work."

For brands, it's a question of distinguishing the core clientele from the more volatile summer clientele, made up of year-round surfers and others, beginners, those who only surf occasionally, or even just your average... bather. For an historic wetsuit brand like Alder, you can't pretend otherwise, thinks Director of Production, John Westlake: "Most of the people buying our summer wetsuits will not be continuing their sport all the way through the winter months." This acknowledgment is creating a veritable dilemma at the brands, which must deal with a more segmented clientele than ever when it comes to spring/summer neoprene collections. For Typhoon rep Pauline Nolan there are three main families: "Firstly, there is the beach buddies, who are looking for the budget suits. This market is then followed by the recreational leisure audience that is looking for 'good

"Most of the people buying our summer wetsuits will not be continuing their sport all the way through the winter months." John Westlake, Alder

value for money' kit, which is serviceable, comfortable and durable. Then the core market individual will be sourcing the right summer suit to satisfy their requirements to excel in their chosen pursuit." But as Tiki Designer Phil Bridges qualifies, sometimes the market isn't so easy to read with "some occasional surfers buying the most advanced gear and some regulars buying the cheaper products." It's up to the brands to position themselves clearly, like Hurley where you won't find any "leisure oriented wetsuits," EMEA Marketing Manager Pierre-Jean Rueda tells us: "We do not want to battle for entry price market."

A SEAMLESS JOB

Traditionally, one of the biggest criteria for differentiating between spring/summer wetsuits has been the choice of stitching: flatlock or blind stitch. This quality/price difference is still valid according to the vast majority of brands we spoke to, such as Alder: "Flatlock suits are perfect for the high summer season with its cost benefit

"If sourced responsibly, natural rubber can improve the average CO2 impact of a suit by ~80%." Gabe Davies, **Patagonia**



photo Alder

notably the Flex Energy system from Rip Curl, "a revolutionary lining that creates heat when stretched," the head of technical products Jonathan Cetran assures us, as well as their E5 FlashLining "that funnels water rapidly out of the suit once it's hung up," for faster drying. The same idea(s) have been used in a different manner at Mystic where graphite has been incorporated into the internal Flaremesh lining "to create a layer that reflects heat," with a jacquard mesh to help water flow off better, explains Edwin Schaap, who is in charge of waterwear design. There are numerous innovations on the outside of the suit as well to help counter wind chill and keep more heat inside, like the Black Diamond Coating by Soörüz, "a diamond shaped coating on the fabric that helps reduce the effect of the wind, capture the sun's heat and reduce water infiltrations without the fragility of smooth neoprene," says Co-Founder, Yann Dalibot.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY WETSUITS

If you're looking for technological innovation, you need to check out the eco-friendly aisle. Not long ago, only a few brands were making it a true selling point; a movement brought to the forefront by Patagonia that is now being adopted by the competition. The young brand NCHE has joined that list and is now turning its back on solvent based glue "eliminating any harmful volatile organic compounds (VOC)," affirms Founder and Designer, Mic Eaton. That is 600 grams less solvent per wetsuit, a fact not to be ignored. NCHE has also decided to use recycled polyester for their external jersey layer and the internal lining, made from recycled plastic bottles: "There are 45 x 600ml plastic PE bottles in each wetsuit." Patagonia continues to innovate and is using a new tinting method for its liners, "saving 100L of water and 96% CO2 per suit compared to conventional dyeing that we did in the past," points out Gabe Davies. Pioneers in the field of natural rubber, the brand is pressing for a massive use of materials like Yulex™: "If sourced responsibly, natural rubber can improve the average CO2 impact of a suit by ~80%, imagine that impact when multiplied across the entire industry." Coldwater surfing brand Finisterre will continue using Yulex as well in 2019 on its Nieuwland models.

"The women's market is very open to change and experimentation." **C-Skins**

For next spring/summer, French brand Picture Organic Clothing will release a new EicoPrene construction, produced from recycled tires, less expensive than their models manufactured with NaturalPrene, while "still using 100% recycled polyester for the inside and outside lining, all glued with an eco water based glue," adds Co-Founder Julien Durant. And they're not the only ones to start using glues that are less toxic for the environment: Billabong, Body Glove, C-Skins, Madness, NCHE, Onda, Soörüz and Tiki are all on board as well. Beyond the finished product, other efforts must be mentioned; most notably factories that run on solar energy like Madness, or NCHE that assures it has diminished its carbon impact by precisely 7,003,014kg, which represents more than 130,000 trees spared per year. Water is another area where savings are being made, especially in the dyeing process, thanks to new machines that diminish water usage by 60% (Madness, NCHE). The pollution and waste reduction measures goes all the way down to the packaging, specifies Mike Mickering, where at GUL "we pack our suits in soya based bags", which is the same at Tiki, as well.

Respecting the planet is to be commended, as well as the people who live on it. Patagonia is still setting the tone in this sector with Fair Trade certified manufacturing workshops debuting fall 2018, and by doing so has taken one for the team: "By investing in Fair Trade certification for the largest wetsuit factory, we've made it easy for other companies to join in and support the effort", says Gabe Davies as motivation to others.

while the blind stitch suits allow an extended season," explained John Westlake. Rip Curl also offer an intermediate option with their exclusive E-stitch that offers more stretch than classic flatlock, but isn't waterproof like the high end GBS (glued and blind stitched) seams. There are even more options at O'Neill, on top of flatlock and Triple GBS offers on their highest end seams: "GBS with TBX tape, Fluid Seam Weld and Double Super Seam Weld in our Psycho Series" said Tom Copsey very precisely. But, watch out for the customer service says warns Phil Bridges from Tiki: "We've also removed all Liquid Seal from our suits as this is just a longevity nightmare." The best solution of all is to limit the total number of stitches as much as possible, William Doornekamp from Jobe assures us while developers are betting on the Minimal Seam Technology developed in collaboration with "local universities to minimize the usage of seams and extra panels." And why not do away with seams entirely? That is the innovation offered by Volte Wetsuits in their 2mm top "in a sonic welded seam construction," revealed RJ Dunzleman. The handmade label is being pushed to the limit at Hurley, haut couture style on the high-end 3/3mm Advantage Elite range, "built by hand, one at a time with supple, premium Japanese neoprene," says PJ Rueda.

NEOPRENES AND LININGS

Even if no one is reinventing the wheel next year, the wetsuit sector continues to refine its offer from year to year. Take for example, the weight of the Red Cell from Body Glove, "30% lighter while reengineering our seam placement (less seams)", specifies the design department. Weight is also a challenge at C-Skins, that the brand is stepping up to with the new X Foam neoprene, "a combination of the lightest foam and the stretchiest foams available." ION and ONDA have similar ideas with two new lighter kinds of neoprene called Ifoam and Ace Foam. Madness is borrowing catwalk lexicon to launch a new collection baptized Couture, "100% full superstretch using the best materials available in the market with a focus on comfort, fitting and elegance," explains Marketing and Team Manager, Benoît Brecq.

As for what has become the object of everyone's attention, the polar/poly fleece linings are getting more and more sophisticated. Most

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photo Volte

THE REVENGE OF THE GIRLS

Dealt a poor hand in the wetsuit sector for decades, the surfer girl is now the object of an outpouring of creativity: the number of silhouettes is multiplying, while prints and colours are becoming more tasteful and audacious. The boys can be justifiably jealous... "The women's market is very open to change and experimentation," confides the crew at C-Skins. One particular collection is the Muse summer collection by ION that offers 8 different styles: "We cover as good as every shape imaginable, ranging from shortys with long/short arms and legs, crossbacks, Long Jane or Neokini", says Marc Burhans. Neoprene leggings are becoming more common as well with Body Glove joining the trend for SS19, with a model that will match selected swimsuits. Same thing at Brunotti where certain neoprene pieces feature the same prints as the textile collection; but girls still have the choice between two different ranges, "one clean and solid designed range and one range where we use more fashionable all-over prints," points out Hans Schaap from product development. Another example is at Madness who highlights their Bootycut springsuit, "a wetsuit, at the same time, sexy sober, clean and comfortable," to which additional panels have been added, "to be sure that all girls can wear it and not only top models," Benoît Brecq assured us. Another trend that is becoming evident: wetsuits that look like bathing suits. Or maybe it's the opposite... "We introduced a no-zip long sleeve spring suit that is not only a very technical and functional piece, but also has a great fit that's more on trend with current swimsuit styles," explained RJ from Volte. Even more so than for men, fit is extremely important as confirmed by Billabong's Technical Division Manager, François Liets: "The most common feedback we get on our women's suits is they're the best fitting wetsuits. We value this above adding accent colour panels and sublimation prints."

TONES & PRINTS

Without doubt, black on black will always be the most popular, says RJ Duzleman from Volte, but spring/summer collections are the moment to slip some colour(s) into the rubber. While flashy neon is well and truly dead, inspiration comes from women's models we're told by C-Skins. The use of prints is becoming common, even a brand's signature, like at Picture where the in-house motifs "can be found on the rest of the water range: boardshorts, impact vests,

etc." but without going too overboard specifies Julien Durant: "We decided to work more on melange fabrics because the prints we use are already very colourful and we wanted to stay sober and elegant." For long lasting prints, Saint-Jacques uses a sublimation process on pastel tones and discrete logos, which are its calling card. Alder has announced gradations from one colour to another, using classic screen printing as well as "digital printing for fantastic brightness." As a general rule, earth tones have replaced bright colours: "Imagine pigeon blue next to more sombre and earthy tones," suggested William from Jobe. Seasonal collaborations are also a new way to spice up summer wetsuits, like on the women's models from Sen No Sen, co-developed with the bathing suit brand Albertine. Sen No Sen, is also offering a custom wetsuit programme, as its creator Mathieu Desaphie reminded us. ION is also proud to announce the Capsule Line collection, produced with the artist Michael Cina: "We incorporated his art, which uses different kinds of brushes and textures into our own wetsuit design", Marc Burhans announced. Last but not least, Patagonia is coming out with a camouflage vest, "inspired by the Gerry Lopez camo sprays, he used in his early days pioneering G-land and Indonesia," Gabe Davies told us.

To sum it all up, the spring/summer 2019 collections won't revolutionize the neoprene market, but will continue the competition for excellence that involves an ever-greater reduction of impact on the environmental and – this is new – on the work force. It's now up to retailers to pass along the message, hand in hand with the brands. 5

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH WSL CEO SOPHIE GOLDSCHMIDT

Championship Tour event contested on a man-made wave, \$30 million Facebook deal and the shiny new announcement of equal pay for men and women in professional surfing. It's been quite the first year for the World Surf League's CEO, Sophie Goldschmidt and SOURCE editor, **Harry Mitchell Thompson** travelled to the Surf Ranch Pro in Lemoore, California to dig deeper. Goldschmidt addressed the points above and also discussed details of the Hawaiian Pipeline scheduling issue (and how tour sponsorship is up in 2019 vs. 2018) and we hear more on the WSL's ambitious rollout plans with Kelly Slater Wave Co.

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOU BACKGROUND PRE-WSL.

I went to university at Baylor University (Waco, Texas) and after graduating I started working for Adidas in sports marketing and then for the WTA (Women's Tennis Association). I then worked for the NBA and then the RFU (Rugby Football Union), in the UK and served as the Chief Commercial Marketing Officer and served on the board. Before this role I was at CSM, which is a holding company for a number of different sports marketing and entertainment agencies, and I was the group MD there. And from there I came to the world of surfing and the WSL.

BUT YOU ARE ENGLISH?

Yes, I am. My family is English and I grew up there. I just moved to America for college on a tennis scholarship.

AND HOW HAS THE FIRST YEAR BEEN?

It's been amazing. It's been a very steep learning curve. I've been a fan of surfing for quite a long time and knew a bit about the professional sport, but not a huge amount. I'd never been to a professional event and didn't really know the surfers and about the brands involved, so I had a lot to learn. But it's been the best job I've ever had and it's exceeded expectations. It's been pretty full on – I've never worked so hard, and I'm used to working pretty hard. But I've loved it. A big reason why I took the job was because I loved the sport and how exciting it is, and what an exciting time it is for the sport. It's at a tipping point for so many reasons – some within the WSL's control, and some not. I've just been blown away by the number of opportunities. Everything seems to be lining up – I mean we've got plenty of challenges and still have a long way to go, but I'm excited about what we've achieved, and yes, more to come!

COULD YOU TALK ME THROUGH THE WSL RECRUITMENT PROCESS?

I was scheduled to have an hour-long video conference call, and three hours later I came off the call, and thought, wow!, that's not what I thought it was going to be at all. I was just blown away by their vision and commitment and the chance to build the sport in a really sustainable and strategic way, which is an opportunity that doesn't usually really exist in sports. Usually sports are tied down to different committees, or even just making change is pretty hard. And these guys really just have surfing's best interests at heart.

I spoke to a lot of people and tried to tap into anyone I knew that knew about the sport and the organization of it – anyone that could give me an unbiased view of the opportunity. But also just looking into the people who run the sport, and finding out that they're really just incredible people who have great integrity and a real passion and enthusiasm for the sport, which is unrivalled.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BIGGEST SURPRISES AND LESSONS LEARNT SINCE TAKING ON THE JOB?

The biggest surprise is that there's even more opportunities than I imagined. I think that one thing that really struck me in the first couple of months, was realizing the whole ocean conservation area is massive. It's so important to who surfers are and the whole organization really cares about it. And now the whole world has become obsessed with it too. I think the world's fascination with this is a great opportunity for us. We are hoping to be a really very inclusive leader in this space. I think the athletes and

With the Olympics in 2020 and the wave systems coming online, the schedule is going to change a lot.

stakeholders have really embraced our evolving vision and our willingness to be open minded to change. They've all also been really welcoming of me.

Prioritizing the number of opportunities is really hard. We have some very ambitious plans. It's all about staying really disciplined on what can make the best difference.

EQUAL PAY – CONGRATULATIONS ON THIS GROUNDBREAKING ANNOUNCEMENT – YOU'RE BRINGING WOMEN'S PRIZE MONEY UP TO THE SAME AMOUNT AS THE MEN.

Yes, we haven't actually announced what the prize money will be for next year yet, but it will be at least the same as for the men this year. There are only still 18 surfers on the women's CT, 36 on the men's - the depth just isn't there yet on the women's side, because they haven't had as many chances. But this will happen in due course. And the equal pay also goes through the Big Wave Tour, Longboarding and Juniors as well. It's a really proud moment for the sport and it's been in the pipeline for a long time, even a long time before I arrived, since the new ownership took over in 2013. This is the next step and there's more to come.

WERE YOU INVOLVED IN THE FACEBOOK DEAL AND HOW THIS CAME ABOUT?

Yes, but Facebook has been a long-term partner of the WSL, so I was really involved with extending that and expanding that significantly. And it's a really great moment for us having a company like Facebook want to back us. Really for us, the main reason why we did that deal was because; 1) to partner with one of the most innovative companies in the world – which is something we pride ourselves on, pushing the boundaries – and 2) when you want a great audience, their platform is extremely important. We also have some other really important distribution partners. We still have a lot of content that we push out on our channels and we also have linear distribution in over 100 countries. The Facebook deal is for our live CT content, but we have lots of different layers from conservation to lifestyle, so we have a really broad range we can offer to all sorts of different distribution channels.

TALKING PARTNERS AND EVENTS – GOOD TO SEE THAT PIPELINE IS STILL THERE IN THE CALENDAR AFTER THE SCHEDULING ISSUE.

In the end we got the permitting we wanted, we just decided that the calendar is going to change a lot in the next couple of years. We wanted to have the flexibility for our athletes, but we also want multi-year approval because we have to go through this process, which sometimes goes down to weeks before, which just isn't fair on the other promoters and athletes. So thankfully we have a really good relationship with our partners, allowing us to get some of these changes through, but with the Olympics in 2020 and the wave systems coming online, the schedule is going to change a lot.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WAVE SYSTEMS COMING ONLINE?

We are planning to build more of these (KS Wave Co facilitates), and we want to host more events. We'll still have the majority in the ocean, and the ocean will always be at the heart of what we do.



photo HMT

CAN YOU TALK MORE ABOUT YOUR ROLLOUT PLANS FOR THESE WAVE POOLS?

We are hoping to build one in Tokyo, we've announced we are going to be building one in Florida. We are looking at Australia and Brazil and Europe, with a real focus on Paris and France. But there are other markets in Europe as well. We have a lot of demand. This has really captured the surfing world, but also the broader sports world's attention. So we have a lot of interesting developments with partners, governments etc. We are still learning a lot about this, so we are being quite cautious – we don't want to run before we can walk. They are big infrastructures and aren't cheap to build, so we are being careful with the rollout. But I am confident there will be many more of these in the next few years.

I NOTICED THAT FEWER BRANDS ARE SPONSORING CT EVENTS NEXT SEASON.

Actually, because we've announced the calendar much earlier than we have in the past – normally the calendar is only announced in November / December – we are in the process of renewing a number of deals. So a lot more of the events on the calendar will be sponsored, we just haven't finalized those deals yet. But it was really important for planning purposes to get ahead with releasing the schedule. So another four or five titles will be announced in the next month or so and actually we're in a much better shape than we were for this year's tour.

DOES THE WSL LOOK AFTER ITS ATHLETES IN TERMS OF PENSIONS AND HEALTH CARE ETC?

We have surf insurance plans and now have a pension plan for them, so they are actually a stakeholder in the business. And that articulates itself in a pension plan – that's how we invest back in them. We want to do more, but we provide them with a lot of different resources and have a lot of different departments internally. It's a good relationship and it's getting stronger.

This has really captured the surfing world, but also the broader sports world's attention. So we have a lot of interesting developments with partners, governments etc. I am confident there will be many more of these in the next few years

TALKING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMPANY - HOW MUCH INTERACTION DO YOU HAVE WITH THE ZIFFS AND ZOSEA?

Dirk and Natasha Ziff are the principal owners (of ZoSea) and then Terry Hardy (Kelly Slater's Manager) and Jeff Bizack (Kelly Slater's business partner) are ZoSea shareholders but quite involved in different aspects. [Editor's note: WSL acquired majority shares of Kelly Slater's KS Wave Co. in 2016]. So they have all been hugely helpful to me as they have all had very different experiences, contacts and skillsets, so they've been fantastic to work with. They are involved in some things, but not in others. It's a very free flowing relationship and I've definitely tapped into them a lot over my first year here. They care a lot and are very passionate and they've invested in this significantly and are in this for the long-term.

DO THEY HAVE A PLAN AS TO HOW LONG THEY WILL BE INVESTED FOR?

It's long term. 5-10+ years. Most importantly they want to leave the sport in a better place than they found it, but they bought it for business reasons. And I think they have already significantly increased the value of the company and the profile of surfing. And hopefully this will continue.

Make sure to read our online interviews from the Surf Ranch Pro with new KS Wave Co. Director, Nick Franklin, Hurley's VP Sports Marketing, Pat O'Connell and an extended version of this interview.

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photo Dragon

SUNGLASSES SS19 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Retro-Looks, classic shapes, wrap-around lenses, transparent frames – sunglasses trends for next season offer something for all tastes. But boardsports-specific eyewear not only scores big on style, it also checks all boxes on quality. **Natalia Maruniak** looks at key SS19 styles in our Retail Buyer's Guide.

The right pair of sunglasses for every situation. That's the current approach to the sunglasses segment. "We think of our sunglasses in the same way riders think of their boards – our goal is to create quiver-killing styles that go with you for every adventure," said Mike Lewis, Director of Brand Activation & Digital Strategy at Zeal. "Nobody wants to carry an arsenal of lenses when they're heading to the beach, the mountains, or the streets," said Matthieu Perez, Global Marketing Manager at Shred. Brands need to adapt to "multi-sports consumers," confirmed Tom Lazarus, Operations Manager at Dirty Dog, because "no longer does the surfer only surf and the cyclist only cycle." A pair of sunglasses should work in all environments, whether it's fishing, climbing, or having an after-work beer on the patio.

In order to meet these multi-use demands, sunglasses need to offer outstanding performance features, as customers are increasingly quality-oriented. At the same time, next season is all about making a fashionable statement. "Performance eyewear is being used as lifestyle and fashion pieces," said Will Conk, Global Product Director at Oakley. But regardless of these high demands on boardsports eyewear, consumers still want a low price point. "For our customers, it is essential to buy a high end product that will 100% protect their eyes, looks great but will not cost as much as a new smartphone," said Tomas Koudela, Head of Sales and Marketing at Horsefeathers.

FRAME SHAPES

As far as frame style goes, a number of trends are emerging for next season. Leading the pack: 1990s style! "Retro fashion came to stay and to boost an all Retro Trend, especially influenced by the 90s," said Pedro Fernandes, European Brand Manager at VonZipper, pointing out SS19 styles featuring rather large square lenses and delicate rounded frames.

"We think of our sunglasses in the same way riders think of their boards – our goal is to create quiver-killing styles that go with you for every adventure." Mike Lewis, Director of Brand Activation & Digital Strategy by Zeal.

Roxy is also bringing back oval shapes from the 1990s while Sinner is all about retro-shapes from the sixties and seventies, executed in rounded frames with cross-bar elements. Overall, almost every brand is offering rounded lens shapes. To no surprise, since Horsefeathers noted that these are a natural fit for almost all faces and haircuts.

Another retro classic from the 1990s is joining the party in SS19: "Cat eye frames are a major trend," said Mike Lewis at Zeal, who serve the demand with the Bennett model. Cat eye fans will also get their kicks from Roxy and CHPO. Buoyed by the trend, retro visors are also making a comeback in collections by Quiksilver (Mikey Wright Pro Model), Roxy and Red Bull Spect Eyewear: "One of the main trends we see in the sunglass segment are mask glasses and frames." Fans of classic wayfarer sunnies also get their fill, as Horsefeathers, Epokhe and Melon Optics have them covered. Bollé draws inspiration from mountain expeditions and pioneering alpinists of the 1950s in styles like the Cobalt model – with lateral shields along the lenses for a new take on vintage mountaineering sunglasses, brought into the here-and-now with a sleek metal cross-bar design.

Since this is boardsports, there's always room for anatomically shaped performance glasses. Highlights include Oakley's very first model designed specifically for watersports, featuring a headband, hat-

Dragon's "6-Base Polycarbonate lenses that are offered in a series of vibrant and neutral lens offerings – with hydrophobic and oleophobic coatings to resist dirt, scratching, water, and obstruction from natural oils."

compatible design, improved peripheral dimensions and nose pad for secure fit. "The Split Shot blends the best of lifestyle and sport for an all-in-one solution for on-and-off water adventures – from deep sea or fly fishing excursions and SUP workouts to kayaking and sailing." Additional highlights in the performance segment include sunglasses by brands such as Bollé (Shifter Model), Dirty Dog (Axle Model), POC (Clarity Model), Sinner (Tupper Model) and Shred (Provocator).

FRAME MATERIALS

Several brands trust in TR90-Grilamid as the ultimate foundation for boardsports-ready performance. Believers include VonZipper, POC, Dragon, Spy, Otis, Melon Optics, AZR and Dirty Dog: "TR90 sunglass frames are lightweight, extremely flexible yet super strong, with 100% memory allowing the frames to bounce back to their original shape." Even upon exposure to extreme conditions such as heat, cold, moisture and dryness, Grilamid retains its superior properties. Next to Grilamid, many brands are featuring acetate styles in their line-up, including the likes of Quiksilver, Spy, Horsefeather, Dragon and Epokhe. Others pursue their own material creations, including Oakley who have a long track record. They develop "materials dependent on the consumer need – from lightweight O Matter" to stainless-steel and titanium that have extremely high strength-to-weight ratios."

Metal frames are also trending in SS19. "It's all about metal," said Sinner. This trend also looms large over collections by Roxy and Quiksilver as well as lifestyle collections by Epokhe.

SUSTAINABILITY

Growing consciousness for environmental impact has sparked a rise in the use of sustainable materials such as natural polymers. Zeal is among the brands spearheading this trend: "For us, eco-friendliness is the name of the game in our frame materials. All Zeal sunglasses incorporate the use of Z-Resin, a plant-based material derived from the castor bean. This material replaces traditional petroleum-based plastics and significantly reduces the amount of CO2 produced," said Mike at Zeal. The brand even brings sustainability into their lenses via Ellume bio plastics, also plant-based. "We believe it's our responsibility to take the charge and create a change." CHPO is also proud that, "part of our collection is manufactured entirely from recycled PET bottles," said Johanna Åkerström, CHPO-Marketing Coordinator. The Roxy POP SURF capsule collection also shared the sustainability trend for 2019, including styles such as the Jane Pop Surf crafted from natural Rilsan.

LENS TECHNOLOGIES

Polarised lenses with 100% UV-protection have emerged as the standard in the premium segment and have also trickled down into some entry-level collections. Polycarbonate lenses remain a popular choice, including Dragon's "6-Base Polycarbonate lenses that are offered in a series of vibrant and neutral lens offerings – with hydrophobic and oleophobic coatings to resist dirt, scratching, water, and obstruction from natural oils." Other key performance features include colour and contrast enhancement, exemplified by Oakley's Prizm lens technology. VonZipper is expanding the use of its Wild Life Lens Technology while Melon Optics continues to implement Amplify Lens Technology: "It enhances the colours seen by the wearer for a much more pleasurable optical experience. Long gone are the grey monochrome days of old while wearing your sunnies!"

Shred is banking on liquid-cast urethane lenses, blended with "Contrast Boosting Lens Technology" to enhance sharpness, contrast and colour intensity: "While some companies tout contrast formulations that are highly specialised, the resulting lenses are extremely limiting. Consequently, we created a single lens tint that could handle all terrain and conditions."

Otis relies on polarized and colour-enhancing mineral glass, while Quiksilver also features a mineral glass collection for "watermen". Roxy and Quiksilver also implement Zeiss lenses in their lifestyle collections, offering "100% UV-protection for excellent scratch resistance without compromising on clear vision." POC has also developed Clarity-Technology in collaboration with Carl Zeiss Vision, specifically suited for biking in specialised lens variations based on terrain such as Mountain Bike, Road, and Urban.

RX-GLASSES

The demand for prescription glasses from boardsports brands continues to increase. "Spy has seen substantial growth within the optical market and this is a key focus area for us," said Rich Kaiser, Category Manager. In order to seamlessly blend into day-to-day wear, RX-glasses need to be

light and comfortable. Sinner is launching an entire collection of optical styles, primarily in metal or in combinations of metal and TR90. Look out for rounded shapes featuring double cross-bars. Dirty Dog is also coming to market with an entirely new prescription collection that "offers a more fashionable alternative to prescription frames." These allergy-free styles are crafted from acetate or a nickel alloy.

Prescription frames always need to live up to the active lifestyles of their wearers. That's why Spect Eyewear is equipping its frames with their proprietary Dual Temple System, "which is a second hidden metal wire that can be slide in and out and secures the prescription glass on the head."



photo Dirty Dog

FRAME AND LENS COLOURS

When it comes to lens tints and frame colours, the spectrum is as varied as the models themselves. Transparent frames have been a building trend over the past seasons and take centre stage in SS19, featured by almost all brands. Horsefeathers is releasing new transparent pastel frames, with a gorgeous baby pink model specifically for women. Dirty Dog, VonZipper, CHPO, Epokhe and Otis also offer transparent styles, much like Otis with colour tints such as Plum, Whisky, Havana and Cherry. Zeal draws inspiration from "the colours of nature" and introduces transparent earth tones. Then again, black "is a must-have" (AZR) and "stands the test of time" (Shred). Speaking of endless trends, tortoiseshell shows no signs of slowing down. While Dragon is "exploring new tortoise shades," brands such as Zeal, Otis, Quiksilver, Roxy, CHPO and Horsefeathers are also on board. Sinner offers consumers metallic colours such as gold and silver as well as rosé gold for women. In the Spect Eyewear line-up, look out for metallic colourways such as gold, silver, gun, khaki, and anthracite blended with a number of styles from "used" to industrial.

Lens tints also add variety to the colour spectrum. Dragon likes to combine colourful lenses in blue, orange and silver with rather neutral frame colourways. Reflective gold and dark tinted lenses are the focus at Melon Optics, while VonZipper boasts grey chromatic tones and satin colourways. Pink lens tints are emerging as a key look for women in collections by Horsefeathers and CHPO, and if the variety and creativity in terms of colourways are an indicator, the future of the boardsports eyewear segment looks peachy. 🍑

For more information on brand offerings in this category go to www.boardsportsource.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- Crossover-Eyewear between fashion and sports
- Retro looks
- 1990s styles
- Cat Eyes for women
- Rounded frames
- Transparent frames
- Tortoise still hot
- Sustainable materials

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AZR - Beach



AZR - Retro



AZR - Vegas



Bolle - 3D Kobalt



Bolle - Frank



Bolle - Graphite



Carve - Havana



Carve - Ivi



Carve - Voyager



CHPO - Amy



CHPO - 3



CHPO - 5



Dirty Dog - Cryptonic



Dirty Dog - Ranger



Dirty Dog - Shadow



Dragon - Baile



Dragon - Meridien



Dragon - The Verse



Electric - Crasher



Electric - Nashville



Electric - Zombie



Epokhe - Candy



Epokhe - Denz



Epokhe - Dylan



Gloryfy - Kingston



Gloryfy - Soho



Gloryfy - St Pauli



Horsefeathers - Foster



Horsefeathers - Merlin



Horsefeathers - Nomad



Ion - Ray Zeiss



Ion - Hype Havana



Ion - Hype Zeiss



Melon - Drifter



Melon - Echo



Melon - Halfway



Neff - Brodie



Neff - Coastline



Neff - Daily Shades



Oakley - Jawbreaker



Oakley - Fire



Oakley - Latch



Otis - Hawton



Otis - Lifes On Mars



Otis - Suki



POC - Aspire



POC - Carve



POC - Require



Quiksilver - Ferrisslim



Quiksilver - Jericho



Quiksilver - Rekiem



Raen - Aliso



Raen - Aren



Raen - Bower



Roxy - Flume



Roxy - Joplin



Roxy - Moanna



Shred - Belushki



Shred - Provocatore



Shred - Stomp



Sinner - Diamond River



Sinner - Mad River



Sinner - Tupper



Smith - Caper



Smith - Flywheel



Smith - Lowdown



Spect - Pyrmont



Spect - Shade



Spect - Wing



Spy - Czar



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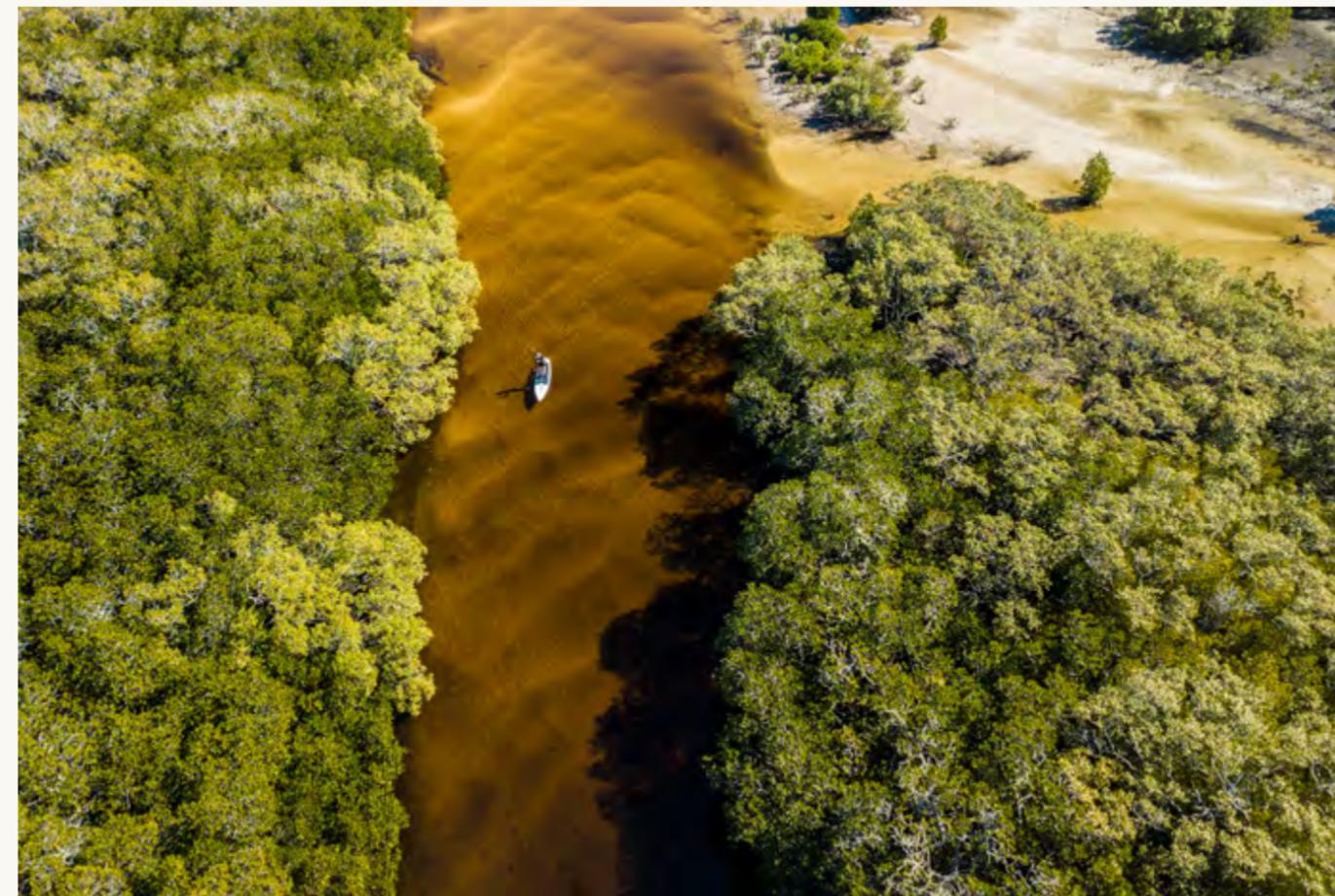


photo Indiana

SUP SS19 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

This October, Germany will host two great events for foam lovers – Oktoberfest in Munich and PADDLEexpo in Nuremberg. After giving it great thought, we decided to drop in to these great gatherings of paddlers of all kinds and to give you a sneak peek at everything new in SUP for spring 2019.

A buyer's guide as refreshing as an ice-cold beer with **David Bianic**. Cheers!

There are signs that don't lie. After ten years of (discrete) partnership between PADDLEexpo and ISPO, the Munich tradeshow is starting a new chapter that will give new visibility to paddle sports through the creation of a Paddlesport Village in the heart of the premier OutDoor by ISPO from June 30 – July 3, 2019. This inclusion is further demonstration of the gradual integration of SUP into the boardsport family, as well as the great crossover between the worlds of outdoor and action sports.

And it's not just a feeling. The figures concur and indicate a market consolidation, with an average annual growth rate of the global SUP market estimated at 11.9% from 2018 to 2028 (according to the Stand Up Paddleboard Industry 2018 Global Market Trends study). Nonetheless, hidden behind these stable growth figures there's a ferocious fight between the authentic actors of the SUP sector and the unscrupulous big-money manufacturers seduced by the easy

"It's possible to find SUP across many channels: online, in surf shops and outdoor shops, but also in supermarkets, pool stores and so on." Terry Barbier, Aquadesign

accessibility of the inflatable SUP market. For Airboard CEO, Joe Steiner the results are a double-edged sword with on one side "a massive increase in terms of production and sales volume," and on the other an ever increasing number of pseudo brands and direct imports from Asia. Some manufacturers have decided to fight these non-brands on their own footing, like Germany's Indiana, who've released a new brand, Apatcha, designed to "cover the lower price market," explained Co-Founder, Maurus Strobel who is offering two boards at 599€ and 699€ including kayak seat and accessories. Distribution channels are multiplying and because SUP consumers don't share habits as other boardsports enthusiasts, it leaves the door



photo Starboard

open for non-boardsport brands to enter the market. "It's possible to find SUP across many channels: online, in surf shops and outdoor shops, but also in supermarkets, pool stores and so on," Aquadesign manager Terry Barbier pointed out. Brands are adjusting their sales strategies, trying to find the right balance between retailers and direct sales, like Mistral, who putting more emphasis on online sales: "a key area in which we are having to expand our focus in order to meet the growing demands of end-users," specified Steve West.

"(The Compact model) packs down to half the size of a standard inflatable board but still retains the Red DNA of a no compromise experience."
John Hibbard, Red Paddle Co.

Another growing trend is the arrival of surf apparel companies who are putting their trust in proven manufacturers from the sector. After the BIC/Oxbow partnership, it's Body Glove's turn along with O'Neill to offer boards (mostly inflatables) produced by One Kin (Lokahi). Considered by many to be more of a recreational activity than a sport, the SUP market is greatly influenced by the weather, and as such, "business has been good!" Sales Director at Siren SUPsurfing, Lukas Aalderink attributes an excellent start to the year to the great weather, as well as Co-Founder of Red Paddle Co., John Hibbard who even sees it as a good way to separate the wheat from the chaff: "Hot weather plays havoc with the cheap (inflatable) boards. They buckle and bend, so we are finding customers waking up to the fact that when you buy a Red, you are buying 10 years of research, innovation, blood sweat and tears." Although it's a great springboard into the world of stand-up paddle boarding, the inflatable board is not the object of frequent and repeat purchases, pointed out Benoît Brecq, Marketing Manager at Ari'i Nui, where iSUP represents 95% of sales. This eventual market

saturation leaves the door open for manufacturers of hardboards, as Andy Wirtz from Norden indicated: "As we are only producing hard boards, we are happy to see that this market is slowly growing again."

ISUP TRENDS

Amongst the 300 or so exhibitors who will open their stands to professionals over the course of the first weekend of October, many depend on the show to fill their pre-order books with an eye on next summer. To maintain an element of surprise, some keep their lips tightly shut, like Joe from Airboard: "We need to keep the news under cover – to not be copied, before exposing the latest innovations." Luckily for us, other brands are more talkative: "For PADDLEexpo, we will bring our entire fleet of boards," NSP Marketing Director, Caren Forbes assured us – most notably the Quest, a new adventure-style iSUP (whose USP is a triple cylinder system), along with their 2019 race board, the Carolina Race. At Red Paddle Co., John Hibbard is betting on a less-is-more philosophy when presenting their Compact model, and you heard it here first: "It packs down to half the size of a standard inflatable board but still retains the Red DNA of a no-compromise experience." To be able to do this, the English firm developed a new material, the PSL Pact, gifted with a high-density core with a mesh matrix, and an exterior coating that makes the board more packable once it's deflated, while the stiffness is guaranteed by a quadruple stringer. It's without a doubt one of the leading models to check out at the show.

Equally exciting, the new Antitorx system that will be presented by RRD at PADDLEexpo – an inflatable anti-torsion construction that will be added to their Perfo technology, aimed at race and downwind fanatics: "Antitorx is a special system built with two stringers of TPB (Thermo Plastic Belt) 3cm wide crossed all together to prevent any possible twist of the board, also in choppy conditions," explained International Surf and SUP Marketing Director, Jacopo Giusti.

Photo: Thorsten Indra



Keahi de Aboitiz

new shape

FOIL

For 2019 Werner has developed the dedicated Foil shapes with great input from Keahi. The boards are short for reduced swing weight during pumping and maneuvers. The extremely beveled rails help reduce the wetted surface at take-off and prevent the board from catching the water in the turns. The cut-out tail section on the bottom surface has the same purpose.

The flat deck ensures stability. The pad features an increased arch line along the center so that you can feel the center of the board without even looking down. The pad tail kick is positioned perfectly for optimized foiling stance. The boards come with 2 foot-straps and foot-strap plugs.

The 2 track boxes for the plate mounted foils have a generous length of 33cm so you can also use the board for light wind windsurf foiling at the back position.

SIZE	TECHNOLOGY	LENGTH	WIDTH	VOLUME	THICKNESS
6'8" x 26"	PRO EDITION WOOD EDITION	203cm	66cm	96L	11.2cm/4.4"
7'0" x 28"	PRO EDITION WOOD EDITION	213cm	71cm	115L	11.2cm/4.4"



PRO

WE



photo NSP

Over at Ari’Nui, they will also be presenting a new inflatable single layer construction, the H-light, with a PVC stringer on the top and bottom, as well as a new model for SUP yoga, accompanied by “a new platform concept that can evolve to create different groups and capacities,” pointed out Benoît Brecq. Starboard is also continuing the progression of its high-end dropstitch fusion model called Deluxe: “Not only the deck and bottom are made with fusion technology, the rails are also welded on all inflatables,” revealed Starboard Germany’s Marketing Manager, Florian Brunner. They’re not the only ones taking a closer look at rails on inflatables (a technological weak point). Of note is the DoubleStack technology from American firm Hala Gear, which is very present in the SUP river category: “This patented, narrower rail system can be found on the 2019 Hala Peno and 2019 Hala Playita,” revealed Communication Manager, Olivia Ohegyi before explaining that “a stacked, lower-volume dropstitch tube creates an edged rail, which enhances carving responsiveness.” Fine-tuned rails are as important in the race field and Philip from JP Australia is stoked that “a great number of our iSUPs now come with a real trailing edge, which gives them way better glide abilities resulting in faster and longer distance covered by each paddle stroke”. An interesting example of these performance-oriented iSUPs will be their JP CruisAir, now available in LEC construction (Light Economy), a 2-layer and 6” thick touring board, “for a very interesting price”.

As we’ve talked about in SOURCE in the past, the Tripstix 10’ Allround, built using the VaccuAir technology will also be eagerly awaited in the aisles of PADDLEexpo. Just a reminder, it’s a multi-chambered iSUP, whose compartments are filled with granules, which once vacuum packed, gives the board its stiffness, “like a pack of coffee,” promised

“The 2019 Blue Carbon boards are the first ever Gold level ECO SUP board.” Florian Brunner, Starboard

Stefan Klare. Multi chamber inflatables are definitely popular, like the double chambered Touring model by Aquamarina, as well as the Mistral iSUPs with four air sections, while the brand is also abandoning the classic dropstitch for a woven construction “offering lighter weight per square metre and improved rigidity,” affirmed Steve West. Jobe has also worked to evolve the heart of its iSUPs with “a cross stitching instead of normal drop stitching,” revealed William Doornekamp, the aim being to achieve the same result: less weight, more rigidity. At the same time, their traditional decorative stripe down the centre of the board has now transformed into a functional stringer – adding a layer of material to stiffen the board. Another brand searching to reduce excess kilos is I Love SUP (the brand by JLID Distribution, which also imports Jimmy Lewis and Infinity). They’re promising a 25% lighter board next year thanks to “a secret process directly from the best manufacturer on the market, 3ms,” announced Leonardo Lazzeri. They say the devil is in the details and Body Glove know it well, offering a particularly clever central handle on its iSUPs, made from a comfortable neoprene, it features a Velcro strap for attaching a paddle or water bottle, as well as two small, very useful D-rings.

HARD SUP TRENDS

Generally, composite hardboards evolve little in terms of construction, but it’s now easier to read between the lines in the catalogues and identify which technology corresponds to the board’s intended use.



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photo Red Paddle Co.

Norden offer a Surf Glass technology on their high-performance surf SUP models, sandwiched Double Wood on their intermediate and all-round models, while their race models continue to swear by carbon only. It's pretty much the same at Fanatic, whose wave boards are either made from their Custom Surf or Vectornet technology, while their more polyvalent boards are made with a bamboo sandwich construction, and finally, their race/touring models with a carbon sandwich construction. As Lukas from Siren SUPsurfing summed it up, "we don't see the importance of inventing something new every single year." Lessons seem to have been learned: gone are the catalogues multiplying references and technologies (sometimes on the same model), the SUP industry wants to avoid confusing consumers and equally the phenomenon of overstocking followed by non-stop promos. Added value, that is the message, as confirmed by Phil Bridges from Tiki: "We are careful not to generate short shelf lives by releasing new tech and new colours, designs, etc. year after year, as that practice is not helpful to retailers." And indeed, the multi-product brand (surf, SUP, bodyboard, neoprene, accessories and textile) is offering the same range next year as this, aside from one new model.

The environmental aspect has not been neglected either, with the new Fanatic Fly Eco made from flax, cork and wood, in place of fibreglass and PVC sandwich. Starboard also wants to make their composite models cleaner, producing them with bio-resin and using other sustainable technologies such as flax and balsa: "The 2019 Blue Carbon boards are the first ever Gold level ECOBOARD SUPs," [from the Sustainable Surf organisation] Florian Brunner said proudly. The same efforts have been made by Lokahi, which highlights the manufacturing of its eleven hard models made in the heart of their brand spanning new French factory. The brand uses recycled and eco-friendly materials as much as possible: "All sourced in Europe from the EVA, to the resins developed for us, the fibres and all sandwich components," said Product and Brand Manager, Sylvain Aurenche, before reminding us that the production facility is open to any brands interested in their eco-conscious processes.

Of course, foiling will be on the menu as well, with Fanatic unveiling its new Sky SUP & Surf models, "two 100% dedicated foil boards for lots of fun in the waves designed by Sky Solbach," announced Marketing Manager, Karin Gertenbach. That's not all – Fanatic will present its new Aero Surf Foil 1500, "the fastest and most versatile foil setup to date designed by Kean Winner." At Infinity, a foil baptized Tombstone will hit the market next year, just like at the giant NSP that has, "targeted the entry level SUP foiler with our first production board, as we feel the sport is in its infancy stages and we want those just getting into the sport, to have a great experience and feel comfortable with the board under their feet," explained Caren Forbes. Throw JP Australia in the mix – with "a special and dedicated foil & foilboard which makes it easy and accessible to experience this new dimension" – and all the big players have now upgraded their SUPing ranges to the above water experience. The foil ranges are filling out with generally speaking a high-end all-carbon offering on one hand, and more accessible aluminium alternatives on the other, like at Indiana: "There are two different carbon front wings with 120cm and 85cm spans, and three aluminium mast options with 50, 75 and 90 cm," specified Maurus Stroble who also offers three SUP foil boards.

But most brands are still hesitant about entering this market segment, and with good reason: "Foiling right now is a creative distraction away from the grass roots of pretty much every board sport [...] and it is also proving to act as a destructive force. SUP is still attempting to define itself and along comes foiling to act as yet another confusing influencer and optional extra," analysed Steve from Mistral. And when he speaks of a destructive force, we can take his words seriously, backed-up by Andrew Mencinsky from Boardworks/Rogue who evoked, "a ton of complaints about breakage and poor performance," and wants to position himself in the market in 2019.



2019 Inflatable board range

oneill@one-kin.com



photo Sic

SPORT VS. LEISURE

Walking the halls of PADDLEexpo, visitors and exhibitors will have the opportunity to discuss at length the future of SUP – the activity as well as the market – over a nice, cold pint of pilsner. We wanted to get out in front of the discussion and present the brands with a debate about the status of SUP, and to find out whether the sporting aspect has a future or not. And what better way to answer the question than to ask them about the issue of race models in their ranges, since race is now far in front of SUP surfing in terms of overall numbers and esteem. Steve from Mistral identified very clearly the dilemma around SUP racing: “We understand the relationship between success on the race course and the marketing spin-offs it creates, however, it categorically makes little difference to sales of the broader range.” Even better, he added that he’s convinced that “many brands are indeed wasting precious resources in over-focusing on racing,” which is a niche market and that “it’s the recreational appeal of SUP which must be nurtured.”

For Andrew Mencinsky from Rogue (celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2019), the two are not incompatible, on the contrary: “We believe everything we learn at the highest performance levels trickles down to the average consumer.” Obviously, for a brand like NSP, whose riders such as Travis Grant and Titouan Puyo grace international podiums, racing’s impact can’t be neglected. Caren Forbes answered: “Racing makes up about 10% of our sales, however, with each win at each event, our race program is driving awareness to all our product lines.” We got the same feeling from Anthony at SIC, a brand where “35% to 40% of our range is dedicated to elite and recreational racing.” Even if racing only accounts for 6% of sales in the US, he feels

that the investment in the discipline wears off significantly on the brand’s image – a feeling confirmed by Karin at Fanatic. Above all, the question is to really know the values your brand embodies, highlighted by Sylvain from Lokahi, a brand that stopped producing race boards to come back to the original brand DNA: “Accessibility to all, touring and wave riding.” For the 100% inflatable brands “the [race] market is not representative,” felt Terry from Aquadesign, “however, they are essential products if you want to aim for high level products and brand value,” mentioning the Race Bi-Drop (dual chamber) model that won the prize for the most innovative board last year at PADDLEexpo.

It’s a rather positive observation for core retailers that can/must continue aiming at a performance-oriented approach (surf/race/ touring/foil) to complement the all-round low cost offers. Because who else, if not them, possesses the knowledge and has the tools to sell the “sport” and not just a “recreational activity”? ☺

For more information on brand offerings in this category go to www.boardsportsource.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- Lighter, stiffer iSUPs
- Surf Apparel brands
- More eco-friendly hard SUPs
- Multi-chamber iSUPs
- Keep an eye on foil

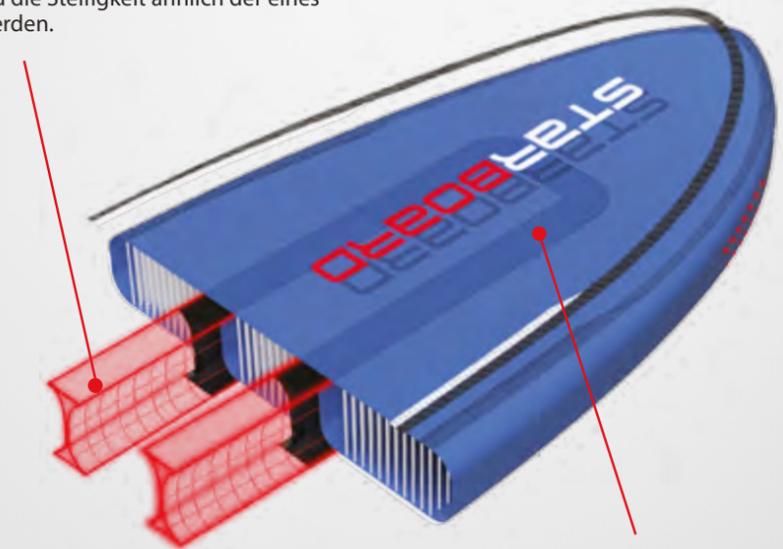
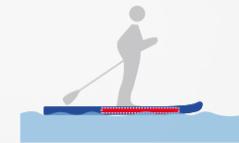


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Der Testsieger im SUP-Mag: “In Kombination mit den Versteifungsbändern an der Kante überzeugte das Starboard mit einer Steifigkeit, die wir bei Inflatables noch nicht erlebt haben. Direkt im Standbereich biegt sich auch bei Hüpfen und Springen kaum etwas, das Board wirkt unter den Sohlen extrem fest und direkt Nah dran am Hardboard-Feeling.”

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Photo Vans

BIG WIG INTERVIEW VANS' KEVIN CASILLO **GLOBAL BRAND MARKETING MANAGER** **FOR SURF & SNOW**

Kevin Casillo is a former snowboarder pro who is now Global Brand Marketing Manager for Surf & Snow at Vans. An enthusiastic and likeable character, Kevin has now worked for the iconic action sports brand for five years and we caught up with him at the Vans Duct Tape Invitational in the Basque country earlier this year. Vans are currently sharpening their focus in surf and we spoke through the brand's strategy here with Kevin and touched upon subjects including grass roots action sports, Olympics, surf culture and how Vans plan to increase their relevance in the ocean, on the mountain, and beyond. Interview by CR & HMT.

Tell us about your background, Kevin.

I have been at Vans for five years and was brought up in the snow world, moving to California over ten years ago. Since being at Vans, I have been the Global Product Marketing Manager for surf and Brand/Product Marketing manager for snow at Vans and recently, have been promoted to Global Brand Marketing Manager for Surf & Snow. It's my first time in the beautiful Basque country and I'm blown away by the scene over here - the people, the culture, never mind the red wine and the red meat!

Tell us about the Duct Tape festival and its importance to Vans, starting with its name.

The Duct Tape name context comes from its use as a quick repair tool to cover over dings on longboards. The Duct Tape Invitational event itself has been running for 10 years and only two years ago,

Vans created the Duct Tape Festival. The idea behind the festival was to get the message of surf culture and lifestyle out to a broader audience, inspiring to experiment and create. It was important to us that it is seen as more than just a surf competition. The festival showcases music, skateboarding, product giveaways, board shaping and attracted a great crowd out who were rewarded with great waves and performances. In addition to that, the Invitational is about giving exposure to the next generation of longboarders, while supporting legends like Joel Tudor and Alex Knost to push the boundaries of the sport. They provide the opportunity for us to produce great content to help get the message out to the world. The importance of the event for Vans is emphasized by surf media from across the globe who are in attendance, from Australia's Stab to South Africa's ZigZag mag to our more local friends Wasted Talent and 3 Sesenta.

The Duct Tape festival gives us another string to our surf event quiver that enables us to support all aspects of surfing. While the Vans Triple Crown delivers a taste of performance surfing at its finest, the Duct Tape brings self-expression to the forefront.

Could tell us more about the board shaping program at the event?

As with the previous Duct Tape Festivals, we provide a platform for our athletes to take an opportunity to shape boards and experiment with different ideas. This helps to see what the impact is on the board's performance, whilst others shape their boards to work better with the specific aspects of the local spot. The boards are then available to the community to try out themselves during the festival. For example, the Zarautz DTF boards were hand-shaped by Dane Reynolds, Lee-Ann Curren, Alex Knost and Tanner Gudauskas. After the festival the boards are donated to a local account, in this case Pukas Surf Shop, one of the Basque Coast's greatest surfing destinations, so that the community can continue to demo all the different shapes indefinitely.

We believe that encouraging experimentation in board shapes will inspire people to push themselves in their own creative pursuits. This also reflects the giving-back-to-the-community ethos of the event, which is another fundamental core value of the Duct Tape Series. Another example: we organized a beach clean-up in conjunction with the local Surfrider Foundation team. We want to leave the beach cleaner than it was when we arrived.

What's on the horizon for Duct Tape going forward?

We are going to be bringing the Duct Tape platforms to regions around the world, impacting surf communities of all sizes. We are looking at South America, Asia and Europe again for next year, as we are trying to target diverse surf communities. Some events will be held in remote locations and others in spots with a broader audience, like Montreal or the Munich Wave.

The Duct Tape festival also gives us another string to our surf event quiver that enables us to support all aspects of surfing. While the Vans Triple Crown delivers a taste of performance surfing at its finest, the Duct Tape brings self-expression to the forefront. And even though we believe that the forthcoming introduction of surfing to the Olympics will raise the profile of the sport at a global level, we want to activate grass roots events and get consumers out on the water to really experience the meaning of surf culture.

What are your key focuses in surf products?

As a footwear brand, surf has been a key market for Vans from day one, the early Duke shoes were a demonstration of this. Today, the surf product side of Vans is focused on footwear and apparel. We are constantly evolving our product offering as consumer tastes change. This summer we launched Dane Reynolds' signature footwear in June. At the same time, all-terrain technology is increasingly important in our shoe range. Tougher shoes for cross country treks and cliff access; it all helps you get to where you want to go, making it easier to access those hard-to-get-to spots. Boardshorts is another category where we are investing more into development. We have a new technology coming out in SS19 that we have been working on for two years, with sneak peeks happening at the Vans Triple Crown.

How about the Vans branded wetsuits your surfers wear. Who makes these and is this a future product category?

The wetsuits are supplied by a Japanese manufacturer for our global team. It's just for our athletes. We don't plan to enter any other surf product categories for now.

Any new collaborations within the VF stable to talk of?

At the moment, we don't have any collaborations planned with other brands within the VF portfolio, but we are looking to grow on the energy we have had with core surf partners like Finisterre, a UK brand with a great reputation in cold water surfing and high quality products.

We continue and are always on the lookout for the right partners that fit in with the Vans ethos.

How important are events like the Duct Tape Invitational not just for Vans, but for surfing as a whole?

As the original action sports brand, it's our job to help grow the next generation of surf enthusiasts and support inspirational legends like Joel Tudor. The more we can showcase surfing and get people in the water, the stronger we can grow the surf culture. The Duct Tape platforms are here to stay as one of our key consumer touch points in our global surf program.

Could you explain the reasons behind a big marketing push behind surf at the moment?

Surf has been a key part of Vans' foundation since day one. Over a year ago, we came together as a brand and decided it was time to sharpen our point in Surf and start to amplify all of the things we do for the culture. Surf will continue to be a key focus for Vans and we have some radical ideas in the pipeline already.

Even though we believe that the forthcoming introduction of surfing to the Olympics will raise the profile of the sport at a global level, we want to activate grass roots events and get consumers out on the water to really experience the meaning of surf culture.

Do you have any snowboarding activations planned for this coming winter?

For Snow, we have two exciting content pieces releasing this fall. The first one is a focused piece on our women snow athletes; Hana Beaman, Mary Rand and Leanne Pelosi. They teamed up with legendary film maker Jake Price and created an amazing 15min video, all shot on film. The second content piece is focused around our team and their travels. We feel this is a great follow up to LANDLINE. In addition to the content piece, we are stoked to welcome Hailey Langland to the family. From a platform standpoint we will be continuing our Hi-Standard Series across the globe, with one new component to the event that I can't speak to just yet.

Vans has seen unprecedented revenue growth over previous years, what are you doing as a company to plan for when the steep growth curve levels out?

We are beyond grateful for all of the growth we have seen. As a company, our key focus is to continue our deep understanding of our consumers, providing them the products that fit their lives. We feel that having a true deep understanding of our consumers, we can provide them better experiences at all of their touch points within the brand.

You come from a professional action sports background – how important is it that roles such as yours at Vans are filled by former pros, and how does Vans score the right mix of business types and surfers/skaters/snowboarders?

I am grateful every day for the role I get to play here at Vans. Being able to support and drive the sports that fuelled my passions when I was growing up is an honor. From my perspective, coming from both sides of the aisle can provide great insights within sports marketing including understanding athletes and their careers, product knowledge, campaigns etc. At Vans, we are lucky to have the right leaders at the helm that live and breathe the cultures we love. We support the Vans brand with a true commitment to its youth spirit and long standing sports heritage. 🍷



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LIFESTYLE BAGS & BACKPACKS SS19 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Functional carry-all, stylish accessory, all-day companion, and safeguard against identity theft: Next year's boardsports bags and backpacks have you covered. Major trends for 2019 in our Retail Buyer's Guide by **Dirk Vogel**.

Today's consumers are changing the world. They spend less money on things, more money on experiences. Car ownership is trending down, public transportation and ride sharing are on the rise. As a result, people spend more time out and about without a quick ride back home or a trunk to store their belongings. In the process, the humble backpack emerges as the trusty keeper of everyday carry items on all-day missions.

"We see the backpack business as a very future-oriented market. Everyone needs and will need bags to carry their stuff," said Niklas Pastor, Brand Manager at AEVOR. As people spend their days lugging around more and more technology while also looking to stay active, bags get to flex their technical muscle. "We see a trend towards more versatile and functional styles. Packs that will serve different purposes adjusting to your kind of day," said Flavien Foucher, Marketing and Merchandising Manager at Dakine.

Functionality in boardsports bags has come a long way over the past decade. Today, you can fully trust one and the same bag to securely hold your laptop or tablet, plus your soaking swim trunks or wetsuit without any issues. And performance features previously reserved for three-digit price ranges have trickled down into entry level offerings; at least in collections from endemic boardsports brands.

PRICE POINTS & MARKET

Speaking of price ranges, bags and backpacks may exhibit the broadest spread of any category at your everyday board shop. Backpacks start as low as €20, crystalize around a main price point window between €80 to €120 and go all the way to premium

"We see a trend towards more versatile and functional styles. Packs that will serve different purposes adjusting to your kind of day." Flavien Foucher, Marketing and Merchandising Manager at Dakine.

offerings over €350 by brands such as Filson. Much like in other categories, consumers get what they pay for – although they can get a lot at relatively reasonable price points. Eastpak stands behind most of their products with a 30-year warranty and applies military testing in their quality control. The FUL brand includes RFID protection (see trends) in bags under the €60.00 threshold, while waterproof and weatherized models sell for under €100. Ultimately, finding the right bag depends on the individual customer's needs and motivations. As Jarrod Clarke, EU Brand Manager at Doughnut bags, notes: "Consumers are becoming more and more interested in knowing about the people who make the product – are they treated well, do they get a fair wage, are the fabrics ethically sourced." As it turns out, sustainability looms large over 2019 collections as one of the **SEVEN BACKPACK TRENDS RETAILERS NEED TO WATCH IN 2019:**

1. Season Trend: Urban Performance

Putting a finger on next season's biggest trend, Niklas at AEVOR said: "Urban performance – the fusion of outdoor performance with urban fashion." Think all-day bags enhanced with weatherization, padding, and functional features in an understated overall package. Features include wet pockets for swimsuits or gym clothes, laptop

“Consumers are becoming more and more interested in knowing about the people who make the product – are they treated well, do they get a fair wage, are the fabrics ethically sourced.”

Jarrold Clarke, EU Brand Manager, Doughnut bags

sleeves, waterproof zippers, sunglasses pockets, and roll-top entries for extra cram factor. Picture Organic Co-Founder Julien Durant says: “Bags that people can use for their urban escapes thanks to the cool design and image for their daily life, to wild escapes thanks to the technical features. Actually, today, a backpack is a fashion and an outdoor essential!” Outdoor performance experts Evoc nail the style side of things in their new daypack, which also has a smart expandable function. The Roark Bearing Series is all about blending “the rigors of travel and style for the city.” Quiksilver serves the trend with the Adapt Carry On, a travel-savvy pack loaded with surfing-approved features. Doughnut bags assist urbanites with the Colorado, “a daytime backpack with super secure side entry laptop pocket that is padded both sides.”

2. Small all-day bags

Next season, smaller bags under 20L capacity are gunning for the spotlight as the perfect all-day, carry-all solutions. Flavien at Dakine recommends the Wonder Sports 18L Pack, “a minimal all-purpose pack with the right amount of storage to suit any kind of day.” At Evoc, Co-Founder Holger Feist sees a major trend behind “light packs up to 12L with a high carrying comfort and perfect body fit.” Lefrik touts the Handy Backpack with a “10L capacity, inside zipped pocket and double strap fastening system, this backpack can comfortably fit all the essentials.”

3. Sleek outside, complex interior

Next year's bags are tailored in the streamlined, pod-like style without superfluous straps and dangling parts on the exterior. To hear Florian Lang, project manager bags at Nitro Backpacks, tell it: “Styling-wise we will see a more sleek and reduced look on the outside, while the inside is feature-loaded and thought out.” Dakine's The Network 32L Pack exemplifies this design with water-resistant main zippers, mesh pockets for headphones, storage for gym clothes, cord management solutions and a foldable laptop compartment to speed through security. Retailers may want to turn these bags inside-out to show customers the function-laden interiors, for instance the Quiksilver Adapt capsule collection boasting “internal luggage organization, top and side carry handles as well as sternum straps and back trolley sleeve to fix it on your trolley luggage when your back needs some rest,” says Alizée Rames, Global Product Manager.

4. Splashes of colour

While branding remains minimal in most collections – think business-card sized labels in the mode of Herschel Supply Co. – colour palettes break past seasons' monotony of black, grey, olive, and navy. Doughnut celebrates colours in a single colour series, “where every aspect of each bag is the same colour,” including pastel pinks and aquamarine hues. Evoc celebrates 10 years of sports travel with a sky blue, orange and grey pattern. Dakine pays tribute to its surf and Hawaiian roots with print patterns “Cannery” and “Kassia”. Eastpak goes big on prints that are, as Domitille Parent, Product Director put: “Inspired by one of the hottest streetwear trends of the moment, Chatty Pattern plays on the visual aspect of the graphic or written words.” Eastpak also announced designer collabs such as Raf Simons, Marcelo Burlon, White Mountaineering, and Maison Kitsuné for SS19.

5. Next-level materials

At the end of the day, price points in the segment fluctuate around materials. At the top of the line, Filson incorporates Rugged Twill Cotton, Ballistic Nylon, and Matt Nylon printed with Mossy Oak Shadow Grass. Dakine keeps it tech on the heels of their “Ready2Roll” range last season, with 1000D Cordura Nylon and Cotton blend featuring DWR coating and 420D Hypatex rubberized material (in other words, it's hella rugged and water-proof). Quiksilver is stoked about “the introduction of the waterproof Hypalon fabric in our range. Commonly used on floatable boats, it has a very high puncture- and abrasion-resistance.” At upcoming brand Lefrik, CEO Curra Rotondo emphasizes sustainability: “Lefrik offers

practical commuter products made using 100% recycled polyester (RPET), providing a sustainable alternative to the fashion accessories market, at the same time we keep prices affordable.” At Picture Organic, “every single bag uses recycled polyester and/or organic cotton, made in ethical factories.”

6. Enhanced security

Spending all day on the go leaves consumers vulnerable to predators looking to steal valuables or even digital data via RFID skimming. That's why security features, previously pioneered for the travel segment, are finding their way into everyday backpack lines. Pioneers Pacsafe double down on PopNLock, Roobar Locking Systems, eXomesh slashguards, and RFIDSafe blocking pockets. At FUL, Director Mark Griffiths points out: “The RFID protection pocket is essential for storing your bank cards, passport, key fobs etc., to ensure you're not prone to possible identity theft.”

7. Hot Trend: Cross-body bags

It all started with skateboard style icons wearing their old fanny packs (bumbags) boldly across the chest in a sideways arch. Now it's the latest season trend: “Cross Body Bum Bags of all shapes and sizes,” confirms Leigh Kilby at Mi-PAC. UK brand Daniel Poole has been down from day one: “Fanny packs, side bags, man bags – call them what you like, but they're back in various formats! In the early '90s when these were huge, consumers were not carrying smart phones, so we have adapted our bags accordingly,” says Marketing Director Laurence Poole. Cabin Zero offers colourful hip bags with RFID pockets, while outdoor aficionados Evoc go XXL with the Hip Pack Pro that holds two 3L water bottles to keep you hydrated on your next rave.

SOME COOL 2019 BAGS THAT AREN'T BACKPACKS

Tote bags have arguably peaked when Gravis dropped the Dylan Rieder (RIP) skate tote bag in 2012. But next season's offerings carry the torch in equally sleek and functional pieces such as Quiksilver's Upshot tote in cotton canvas style and Pacsafe's Dry Lite 30L tote. Water-resistant and splash-proof – plus loaded with the brand's signature security features – it's “the perfect companion for a day on the beach or shopping at the market,” says Brand Manager Thomas Ryll. And to keep documents safe, Evoc created a nice zipped passport folio as part of their travel collection.

Duffel bags feature front and centre in next season's collections, many have same level of performance exterior as their backpack counterpart, plus equally neat inside compartments. Season standouts include the Filson Ballistic Nylon Duffel Pack and Roark's Bearing 3-day duffel. And for something completely different, Picture Organic kills it with the Hey Bro Cooler bag in a cool navy colourway – 14L capacity, plus side pockets and a padded shoulder strap for low-impact chilling with the homies. Retailers need to watch the category, because as Florian at Nitro says: “Bags are a great way to express your style. Bags get people excited. Bags are like shoes, everyone needs them, and you can never have enough.” 📌

For more information on brand offerings in this category go to www.boardsportsource.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- Boardshorts highlight brand history
- SEASON TREND: Urban performance bags
- Quality at all price points
- Sleek exteriors, compartments inside
- Small all-day bags
- Performance materials, water-proofing
- Duffels, totes, cooler bags
- Minimal branding, brighter colours
- HOT TREND: Cross-body bags

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LONGBOARDS SS19

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Surfing on concrete, flying down hills, and carving on banks and ditches: Longboards are built for action. Next season, brands are supplying riders with quality boards that perform and look gorgeous. 2019 Longboards Retail Buyer's Guide by SOURCE Skateboard Editor **Dirk Vogel**.

Only one year ago, the European longboard business was in a tough spot. But as we head into 2019, speaking to core companies in the segment reveals: "We're seeing a turnaround in the EU longboard market that has now hopefully bottomed out and started ticking its way back up. Requests for classic longboards are starting to pour back in, as well as a little bit of interest piquing in the progressive sector," said Dave Gitlin, Senior Skateboards Designer at Globe. At Loaded Boards, Sue Denim shares the optimism: "The European longboard market has been growing over the past few years, particularly in Eastern Europe. We're stoked to see dancing continue to gain in participation throughout Europe."

Speaking of participation, international sales rep David Price at Landyachtz said: The core scene is small but always there. Big name downhill events like Kozakov and KNK still sell-out and attract hundreds of riders. Dancing events like So You Can Longboard Dance in the Netherlands attract over 500 attendees. The casual scene has shrunk from three to four years ago but people are always out there discovering the fun four wheels can provide."

MARKET TRENDS & PRICE POINTS

One segment has been growing in the pursuit of longboard fun: women! "We have definitely seen a surge in female riders over the years. Our longboards are perfect for beginners to advanced females who want more surf-inspired skateboarding and like to carve in the streets. As social media grows and females can see their community of riders grow, participants have multiplied. We only expect an upward trend in this area," said Desiree Moore at Dusters California/Dwindle.

*"We're seeing a turnaround in the EU longboard market that has now hopefully bottomed out and started ticking its way back up. Requests for classic longboards are starting to pour back in, as well as a little bit of interest piquing in the progressive sector." Dave Gitlin, Senior Skateboards Designer at **Globe**.*

Speaking on the issue, Mike Jucker, Co-Founder and Brand Manager at Jucker Hawaii says the trend is already strong in the United States: "Here in the US I definitely see an influx of female riders, particularly since surfing has attracted so many female riders in the past years. Girls are so often underrated but I think this is slowly changing now."

As for price points, last season's hot price window still holds at €149 for completes. "People want affordable, fun boards which still perform in our opinion. All fresh graphics seem to do well, too, so trying to not let ranges get stagnant but building momentum within a range is always a fine balance," said Andy King, Mindless Brand Ambassador. With that said, consumers are getting more for their money than ever. Upscale materials and hardware tech (see Trends) previously reserved for €300 retail price and above now find their way into completes priced at €219. But those are completes. A hand-picked set-up from premium brands such as Loaded Boards can cost over €450 with custom components that create a notably different riding experience.

For the kinds of rides consumers are looking for, here are the 5 Longboard Trends Retailers need to Watch in 2019:

"We have definitely seen a surge in female riders over the years. Our longboards are perfect for beginners to advanced females who want more surf-inspired skateboarding and like to carve in the streets. As social media grows and females can see their community of riders grow, participants have multiplied. We only expect an upward trend in this area."

*Desiree Moore, **Dusters California/Dwindle**.*

1. SEASON TREND: CONCRETE CRUISING

Last season's surf-skate trend has evolved into an all-out assault on banks, ditches and bowls. Let's call it concrete cruising, which brands support with rugged, fast, and street-friendly set-ups. At Sector 9, Andreas 'Maui' Maurmeir notes "more demand on bigger street decks for larger parks or pump tracks. Traditionally with the shapes like the Cloud 9 or the Budro Pro we have been a specialist in this segment and people are stoked on surfing the Park on those babes." Season standouts for 2019 include: Ray Collins Unagi and Session Bat Ray (Sector 9), Icarus (Loaded Boards), On-Shore Series with Revenge Trucks (Globe), Core Dancer (Mindless), and Makaha and Hoku Series (Jucker Hawaii).

In shapes, the "stubbier" board trend continues. "Core downhill and freeride boards are getting smaller and more compact. We had many requests to make mini versions of our popular downhill and freeride boards," said Shane Maloney at Madrid Skateboards. Customers are looking for wide-bellied cruisers such as the Pau Hana Cruiser surf style Mini Cruiser from Jucker, Landyachtz Dinghi, OB Five Magma and Pastel Plasma, and Globe Blazer. Next season's wider decks offer more standing room for your feet, while models like the Sector 9 Unagi and Globe Surf Craft signal a quiet comeback of the swallow tail.

2. MATERIALS: BRING ON THE TECH

Last season's exotic woods, bamboo, coconut, aluminium and fibreglass are great storytelling material, but in 2019, consumers want notable performance benefits. And they're getting them from core brands. According to Alvar Gutiérrez at Long Islands Longboards, "the fibre-flex composition for the boards brings the perfect balance between flex and durability." At Madrid, the "formica and maple lamination produces boards that are tough and rigid enough for the highest levels of racing, without breaking the bank."

For 2019, Landyachtz is doubling down on Hollowtech for a lighter, more robust ride. Globe flexed its manufacturing skills on the Insider model, "featuring a nice walnut veneer spliced with slick-bottom plastic on the bottom and a copper strip up the top. Combining the three very different materials took a great deal of effort." Sue Denim at Loaded Boards points out "the urethane tails, UHMW rails, and basalt construction of the Tarab model. The five-piece biscuit construction of the Icarus was also a noteworthy development in our manufacturing capabilities for complex curvatures in vertically laminated bamboo."

3. SPECIAL GRAPHICS AND ARTIST COLLABS

After several seasons dominated by an understated, natural wood aesthetic, full-blown graphics are back with a vengeance, both on the top and bottom of the deck. Dusters California not only has the manufacturing backbone but also the artist connections – with great results. "Our customers are not only drawn to the designs, colours and shapes, but shops can also appreciate how they look on the wall. Although engineered to be technical and functionally superior, our boards can be purchased as wall art due to our special artist collaboration and detailed craftsmanship," said Desiree at Dusters California, who go into next season with art including COPE2, Kentaro Yoshida, and rock legends KISS, adding: "Special finishes include: laser etch, glow in the dark graphics, elaborate top graphic grip, raised ink, V-ply wood finish, graphic wrapped trucks, and foil wrapped boards."

Sector 9 just dropped the gorgeous Ray Collins Wave graphic on the swallow-tailed Unagi board to expand on artist collaborations like the @Kookslams Series or the Bob Marley line. Arbor is teaming up with Portland-based artist Aaron Draplin for equally iconic and timeless designs executed in bold lines and primary colours. Dave at Globe is stoked on "the Mod Series, inspired by the use of mixed materials in mid-20th century modern design. There's a couple of featured artist series, from UK and Japan studios." Shane at Madrid is continuing the successful licensing deals with movies and TV shows such as Stranger Things in 2019.

4. WHEELS: SPEED & SLIDE

Several brands are heading into 2019 with reengineered urethane recipes built for two things: speed and slideability. Orangatang Wheels introduces the latest performance core wheel poured in the high-speed Happy Thane Formula. "The 85mm Orangatang Caguama is already a big hit with commuters, carvers, and electric skateboard riders thanks to its smooth-rolling diameter and gently rounded edges." With speed as a major focus,

borrowing tech from the racing segment is a logical step. Catering to the concrete cruising trend, Landyachtz took their "high-end downhill urethane and put it into a 63mm package, creating a super grippy, fast wheel for your double kick urban set-up."

For riders looking to get their slide on, Sector 9 presents the 63mm Omega Wheels from the Shred Thane Series that "isn't just some re-hyped urethane poured into a different shape – it's a completely new formula designed with sliding for days in mind." Smaller wheels are also a focus at Long Island Longboards, who work in partnership with Cinetic wheels to bring to the street wheels like the Hydra, a 56mm wheel with an 84a durometre. Mike Jucker sells tons of cruiser skate wheels and skatepark wheels at his shop, while Shane at Madrid lists his 2019 faves as Venom Wheels, Cadillac Wheels, and Blood Orange Wheels.



photo Globe

5. TRUCKS: ANY WAY YOU ROLL

Wheels are not the only segment rife with innovation. Trucks are getting more diversified to accommodate for all different types of riding. Landyachtz just dropped a new truck for the burgeoning cruising movement: "Our popular Kodiak forged downhill/freeride trucks got a new, narrower cousin as we introduced 160mm Kodiaks this year." Andy at Mindless said: "Our Talisman V2 trucks are still a firm favourite with many stores, they are affordable and perform perfectly for carving and cruising whilst looking great!"

Over at Sector 9, the partnership with Gullwing holds strong: "We have excellent feedback on the Gullwing Sidewinder Trucks that permit a faster, fun carve thanks to its double Kingpin." Sector 9's Verde Mini Fractal board is a glorious stubby carving board that lets riders choose between a bottom mount or drop-through set-up. Meanwhile, Carver and Paris trucks have become go-to staples in many shops, and Shane at Madrid urges retailers to stock up on Caliber Trucks and Rogue Slalom Trucks. Alvar Gutiérrez at Long Islands Longboards announced development of a new surf-skate truck, "all kinds of riders are in love with it." 📍

For more information on brand offerings in this category go to www.boardsportsource.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- Female participation
- Concrete cruising
- Stubbier shapes
- Return of swallow tails
- Artist collab graphics
- Top board graphics
- Innovative urethane wheel formulae
- Performance core wheels
- Hybrid truck mounts



Rhythm.

THE SOUND OF CHANGE

Rhythm brings together a unique group of individuals with a shared dream of creating a livelihood doing what they love. Drawing on influences from art, music and surf - past, present and future. Rhythm speaks to creative self-expressionists who yearn for new frontiers off the well-worn path.

EUROPEAN DISTRIBUTION | **HOFF** | CONTACT@HOFF.FR



photo Protest

MEN'S SURF APPAREL SS19 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Like a genetically modified organism, surf textile has had its DNA fiddled with for decades, influenced by streetwear, skate apparel, then by technical outdoor clothing. However, for the last few years, surfwear has gone in reverse in order to find itself and recharge its batteries. The men's collections for spring/summer 2019 will be a perfect example of that. By **David Bianic**.

Surfwear's glory days are well and truly dead and buried, with double digit growth figures being worthy objectives only in science fiction novels! And do you know what? That's a good thing. Surf textile has found its place, its true place, without ever disappearing. Gone are the days of frenetic development. Today, "the segment has shifted towards a structure and strategy that is more sustainable long term," explained Dan Preston, head of men's textile design at Globe. "Brands have tightened up on the amount of messages they are putting out there, reducing the size of their ranges, concentrating on higher quality, potent collections with a stronger focus on in-store merchandising," said Dan thinking strategically. "Keep it simple" summed up the design team at Rusty, another brand that has reduced the number of references "by isolating the best shapes/silhouettes and offering a variety of designs in these proven winners." Isolating the right product, definitely, but defining its place through a clear brand image, is the message hammered home at Vans: "Our design team consistently works alongside the Vans surf team to continually refine what Vans' point of view is on surf related product," explained Colin O'Connor, the director of textile design. And this policy isn't valid just for industry giants, it's also shared by smaller players such as French brand Sen No Sen, which is well tuned in to consumer purchasing habits in the sector: "Customers look for cheap items or they look for items that have worth, and they are OK to pay the right price for it," says brand Founder Mathieu Desaphie. Hurley are also on the same hymn sheet: "We target demographics who love surfing as much as they love quality products. More than prices, we are bringing value to our retailers and consumers."

Surf brands are locked in a raging battle with large fast-fashion brands. These large chain store brands "tap into trends on the same timeline

*"Brands have tightened up on the amount of messages they are putting out there, reducing the size of their ranges, concentrating on higher quality, potent collections with a stronger focus on in-store merchandising." Dan Preston, **Globe***

as us," commented Dan from Globe, but the finished products arrive in stores much faster, and also in their brand owned megastores. Fighting them on their own turf hardly makes sense (but finding inspiration in their strategies does) and it's "by staying true to values and our brand ethos, we are set apart from throwaway fashion," assured Sam Westley from the marketing department at Passenger Clothing. As such, the brand proposes that its clients affirm themselves as actors in a more sustainable method of consumption, by purchasing products made from recycled materials, using less plastic, or by promising to plant a tree for every new order. Mathieu from Sen No Sen even evoked adopting a slow-fashion philosophy, taking the time to conceive good products, that are better than the clothing chains, but also with "a story that we can tell to retailers so they can tell to people." Telling a story, not tall tales.

ONE BRAND, ONE STORY

Affirming a brand identity has become an obligation, rather than just jumping on the fashion bandwagon and following the latest trend. As such, the young English brand Passenger Clothing has positioned itself in the surf-style travel/adventure niche where clothing collections are matched with "a comprehensive travel accessories line for all kinds of travel, no

"The trend of the future is to look to the past. We have gone back to Rusty archives and dusted off the classic prints to give them a new time to shine." Rusty

matter how near or far," explained Samuel Westley. Inspiration can be found in road tripping, and the vanlife movement, between salt water, mountain tops and forests. For historic brands like Rusty, the movement to find inspiration in your own history that started two seasons ago continues: "The trend of the future is to look to the past. We have gone back to Rusty archives and dusted off the classic prints to give them a new time to shine." The designers at Vans had the same idea and are mixing the most emblematic of the brand's styles "with an updated look and feel." To say it another way, their spring/summer 2019 collection is based on shocking and lively colours, associated with more classic, saturated tones, designer Colin O'Connor told us. That seems to be the same choice as another historic brand, Lightning Bolt, which has revisited classic motifs and added more daring touches to them: "Retro colours and clashing brights provide a fresh update for high-summer graphics and tropical shirt styling", explained Maria Joao Nogueira in charge of European communication. This flashy side of things is exactly what has built the reputation of Claudio Brunotti, the windsurfer who was one of the first to use bright colours on his boards in the 70s. Those colourful boards will be the focus of a special theme within the 2019 collection with the colour block making a comeback on different pieces: sweats, t-shirts and boardshorts. Another variation of the same concept can be found at Body Glove whose collection is "driven by Body Glove's surf lifestyle heritage with classic bold tropicals, photomontage and retro colour blocking", stated textile head Andrew Maclean.

PATTERNS & COLOURS

Most of the brands will be offering a choice of two chromatic universes, with on one hand more flashy and lively pieces, and on the other more washed-out and discrete tones. Hurley are working with "more vibrant colors such as pink, yellow and blue – in addition to the core colors that are basics and fundamentals for easy mix-and-matches." Billabong has decided to offer two distinct graphic variants, Tradewinds and Under The Sun. The first tries to renew the tropical theme with "shades of grey, with bold edges of purple, mint and lemon accompanied by earthy shades and camouflage," says Marketing Coordinator Amélie Brignon. The second universe, Under The Sun is based on "blue and earth tones inspired by the Atlas", an African influence that comes back with green nuances inspired by the Majorelle Garden in Marrakech, to which are added touches of red and yellow meant to evoke the spices from the markets. The same duality can be found at Body Glove that on one hand focuses on subdued colours – pink, lemon yellow, turquoise – and on the other more brash clothes based on neon palettes: pink, ceramic blue, and lime. At Protest, this bi-polarity is expressed on one side by very sporty pieces, in blue, red, green and grey, and the other by "a palette with more earthy, faded tones with army green and Bordeaux paired with neon accents" explained in detail, Head of Menswear Design, Ingrid Kalma. More of the same kind of thinking at Globe, but aiming for a more skate oriented clientele with their very 90s influenced Concrete collection (red, off-white, black, turquoise and flashes of citrus colours), and more surf oriented clients using a dusty looking effect with paste colours in their Oceans collection.

THE CITY AT THE BEACH, THE BEACH IN THE CITY

Hybrid pieces will become even more commonplace in spring/summer 2019; trendy clothes that incorporate materials and characteristics of technical pieces. "Urban styling influenced our outdoor collection, making pieces versatile enough for wearing in the city or the outdoors," explained Maria from Lightning Bolt about pieces that incarnate the perfect balance between the fresh feeling from the beach and New York-style cool. This meeting of outdoor and surf fits the credo of the Salty Crew as well, whose muses are surfing fishermen. Technical features can be found in all of the brand's products, notably their multi-stretch, anti-UV surf t-shirts (SPF 40+ and UVA/UVB protection) with anti-microbial and water-repellent treatments. This technical dimension is also part of the DNA at Passenger Clothing, but with a greater accent on more natural materials, such as "a soft-hand-touch organic cotton, recycled pre-consumer cottons and a natural Yak hair and organic cotton blend that offers soft, breathable, odour-resistant and all-natural properties," listed Samuel Westley. And you don't have to look very far to find technical inspiration: Brunotti is renewing



photo Lightning Bolt

its wetsuit-inspired BR-TECH line, with finishing touches like stitchless seams, large zippers or water evacuation eyelets on sweat-shirts and sweat-pants: "The fabrics are laminated and have the strength and softness of a wetsuit. Other distinguishing details in this line are the 3D-embossed and reflective logos." On top of its two main collections, Billabong will continue highlighting it all-terrain textiles with its ADIV (Adventure Division) capsule collection, dedicated to big-wave surfer Shane Dorian and 100% eco-friendly for 2019: "We brought some comfortable fabrics that are lighter (Airlite fabric from our boardshort range) and with wicking properties (t-shirts, walkshorts)", explained Amélie Brignon. Hurley continued their technical win borrowing innovative features from their parent brand with the Swoosh: "Our offering of very stylish and technical items makes a big difference, as we see exceptional sell-through of our most technical pieces, such as the ones including Phantom or Nike Dri-Fit technologies."

This quick look at some future spring/summer 2019 collections proves that from now on not all surfwear brands look alike and that they are no longer interchangeable on the rack in shops. By reaffirming their positioning(s), they seem to be stronger and more authentic. This introspective exercise should be undertaken by retailers, as well: before you decide to sign on with one brand or another, you should know who you are and the clientele you are targeting. As Socrates said, "Know thyself". Or maybe it was Gerry Lopez. ☺

For more information on brand offerings in this category go to www.boardsportsource.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- Less references, more visibility
- Revamped classics (90s, tropical, stripes...)
- Flashy vs. soft colours
- More hybrid pieces and tech trends

JORDY SMITH

#HYPERFREAK
#ONEILLBOARDSHORT

RIDE THE WAVE

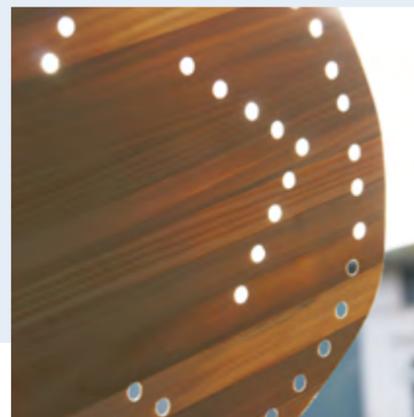
RIDE THE WAVE

RIDE THE WAVE

RIDE THE WAVE

ONEILL

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BUDDY BUDDY

German-based BuddyBuddy are producing boards that are extremely strong, maintain their pop and don't delaminate thanks to their patented AnchorCoreTechnology. All while maintaining rigorous sustainability practices. SOURCE speaks with Sales & Distribution Manager, Rainer Soelch to find out more.

How did BuddyBuddy come about?

Mike (Gelbricht) had this method of connecting the top sheet and fibres directly - similar to how a suspension bridge works. The first tests proved that anchoring the upper and lower chords through the core increased breaking strength by up to 50%, so we decided to make a series of test snowboards and longboards with our ACT construction. The only producer who was able to meet the required quality was GST - so we made the deal with them. The boards performed better than expected - even the experienced GST technicians were amazed by the results of their tests. However, with GST's decision to discontinue snowboard production in Europe in July 2015, Mike was left with an ingenious product, but no means of production. It sounds like a fairy tale that a customer of his shop (Brettladen, Dresden), was so convinced by the boards that they invested in a workshop for producing ACT. Preparations began in 2016, and in the spring of 2017 we started producing longboards in our workshop in the Erzgebirge. The investor is now our Managing Director, Mike the technical visionary, Christian Kaden is the in-house Manager, and I take care of distribution and sales.

Where do your boards differ from those of other manufacturers?

Our laminate is constructed three-dimensionally - we call this patented technology

AnchorCoreTechnology (ACT). We pierce the core in predefined areas, then tie and connect the reinforcing strands in specific directions, positioning "anchor points" depending on the desired outcome. This "anchoring" of the top sheet and fibres has been proven to achieve:

1. 50% better break values - therefore we can build much thinner and lighter, without the risk of delamination.
2. 25% higher dynamics, e.g., significantly more snap. We can't see any reduction in the flex of boards that have been in use for four seasons.
3. 70% more effective shock absorption and thus a smoother ride. In addition, we have set ourselves the goal of taking all steps to make us as environmentally friendly and resource-saving as possible. This is essential if we want to give the generations after us some quality of life. But communicating about sustainability (without actually doing anything) because it has become an indispensable marketing tool, and acting sustainably are two different worlds

What is your contribution to sustainability?

The lifespan: Regarding flex, our boards do not seem to change at all with regular use. As long as they're not tuned too often, or are destroyed by misuse, their performance remains like new. To back this up, we give a 5-year guarantee on delamination. We have customers coming into stores saying that our boards should be more expensive, considering the quality and durability they offer.

Raw materials and semi-finished products: We do not use components from overseas, let alone transport our boards to other markets around the world - each material originates in Europe, and if possible, it is sourced regionally. We use bio-based adhesives, the only plastic parts we currently use are the sidewalls, which

are recycled. The laminate fabrics are mineral and thanks to ACT, we can completely do away with synthetic reinforcements, without sacrificing our superior physical values. We are continuously working on how to improve our footprint and are in the test phase with laminates made from 100% renewable fibres and 65% organic adhesives. But the pure product is only one aspect when it comes to sustainability criteria: How much energy is applied to manufacture the product? We have hydropower on our doorstep, can entirely avoid emission-intensive products such as carbon fibres that have not yet been disposed of, and we are aiming for the shortest possible freight routes with our suppliers.

What is your vision?

The benefits of ACT are undeniable, the industry is hungry for innovation and we deliver the technology to produce greater performance and durability for boardsports products. If the advantages of ACT are applied in all areas, we have made a very significant contribution to better the energy balance in our industry - and if we achieve this with fabrics made from renewable fibres in combination with pure bioadhesives, the vision will become a reality. ☺

MDS

MDS pride themselves in their use of premium materials and top of the range manufacturing to provide quality and style within all their waterproof bag solutions. Brecq Benoit, Brand Manager, talked to SOURCE about the company and what sets them apart from their competitors.

Please give an overview on how and why MDS began?

MDS use only the best quality materials and technologies available on the market to produce a unique range of 100% waterproof bags and accessories. Design, quality and durability are the main focus of the MDS brand, to create products that fit all your needs.

Who's on the management team and what are their backgrounds?

The MDS management team are dedicated to the outdoors and travel. In our different sports and activities, we constantly come in to contact with water, so we have the need to protect our equipment in different ways. In the past we have used various waterproofing solutions but decided to create the best range of bags and accessories to transport and store our gear without any risk of damage from water and rain.

What sets you apart from your competitors?

Having a product that is 100% waterproof is our main focus. When you look for a waterproof bag, you need the best materials. At MDS we use only the best materials and technologies to achieve total impermeability.

- High frequency welded seams
- Roll top sealing system
- 210T Polyester PVC Coating
- Tough PVC Tarpaulin 500

Why should retailers sell your brand?

Quality/price ratio is the main reason why retailers need to choose MDS. MDS offers a solid range with the best products in each category: backpacks, tubes, pouches, duffel bags, bum bags and phone cases, all available in different colours. The brand offers solid sales figures and a good margin for shops.



Could you tell us about the way in which you use the finest quality materials in your products?

As I explained before, quality is our main focus - we take time to choose the best materials available on the market to produce our range. We test all of our products around the world, year round, in our respective sports and activities, in order to improve them using the feedback we collate from our team and clients' experiences. For example, in our backpack, we developed a removable neoprene pocket to protect our computers.

What do you see for the future of your company?

We will still be working closely with our retailers and end users to maintain quality and to improve our range. We know that the success of our company is linked to our retailers and clients, we are constantly expanding our range to meet the demands of our customers.

How do you support athletes and boardsports?

At MDS we support surfers, bodyboarders, snowboarders and travelers. We work with them to adapt our products to their needs. We also support the French federation of surfing and offer backpacks to all French surf instructors.

Where can we check out your products?

MDS is a division in the Madness surfing Brand. You can find all our products on our website, Youtube, Facebook and Instagram.

Which territories are your best performing and where do you see the biggest potential for growth?

Our main territories are France and Spain, but we are growing in the UK and Germany too. Our sales force is well represented in France where the MDS brand is based but we see a



big potential to export into the rest of Europe using waterproof bags in sport and outdoor activities.

Which product categories do you see MDS moving into in the future?

Our best sales are in backpacks. At MDS our backpacks are made for exploration and in our 2018 collection we have two different models, the 20L & 30L. In the future we will improve our backpack range in terms of volume, options and colourways. We're currently looking into different categories for waterproof bags, potentially bike accessories.

Are you going deep with any big internet retailers?

At MDS we work closely with different retailers but we focus on real retail stores. Some of them also have online stores, so you can find our product in bricks and mortar retail stores but also online.

Why was the bag category the right category for MDS to move into?

At MDS we are all action sports and outdoor lovers. We all need to store our stuff while practising our activities, so that's why we decide to focus on waterproof bags and to develop a dedicated range for all our needs. ☺

EASY

Based high up in the Haute-Savoie region of the French Alps, EASY Snowboards are all about making affordable snowboards that their retailers can make good margin with. With no better testing ground than the Espace Killy on their doorstep, Co-Owner Nico talks product tech and their appreciate for the changing retail landscape.

Please give an overview on how and why Easy Snowboards began?

The EASY snowboards collective started four years ago. We wanted to do something positive for snowboarding and our philosophy is simple: we want to give our customers a good quality product, at a reasonable price, so they can still afford to ride, and encourage more people to do the same.

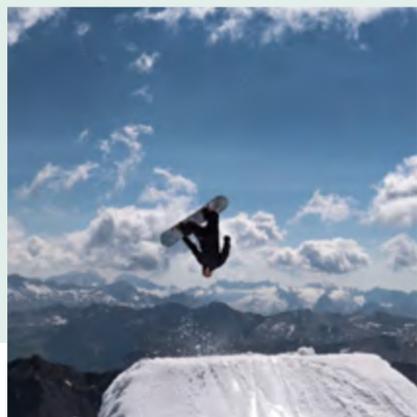
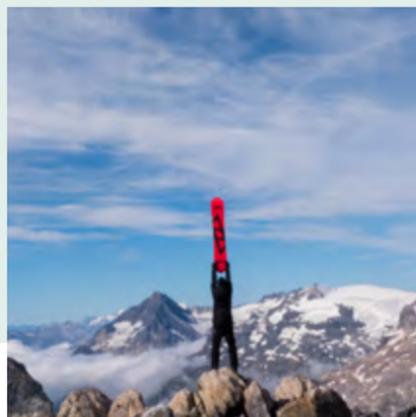
Who is on your management team, and what are their backgrounds?

We manage the brand as a collective, we have people from within the snowboard industry and others coming from the snowboard scene, whether it be a school teacher or park builder and designer. We have one thing in common – we love snowboarding!

The good thing about being part of a collective is that we are independent financially and can grow the business with more security and less pressure. We have a lot of flexibility and can be ready when we want to make a new product. We can adapt our business to the situation we face – as you know right now the market is moving rapidly and the attitude of the consumer changing.

What sets you apart from your competitors?

Our product is made with high quality materials, our technology is unique, but more importantly, we know snowboarding and we want to keep the boards at a reasonable price. We've worked hard to develop fun tech – our Magic Flex and Easy Grip edge technology for riding ice are two



to look out for.

What do you see for the future of your company?

We are working to expand our sales in key European countries like Austria and Germany, as well as in Japan too. We are still investing money in prototyping for new and exciting boards.

What do you find important about the European market?

The true spirit of snowboarding is coming back – carving, powder, having fun with friends, not focusing too much on competition and riding in the street. We are starting to see kids learning to snowboard again and that's awesome.

What do you see for the future of the industry?

A fair-trade industry taking care of the sport we love, in good spirits and helping new people to join our passionate way of life. The core shops and other shops have difficulties to face with the changing business landscape and it's important for us to help them live through that.

Could you talk about your new collection.

Our new collection is awesome. We still want to offer a big range of boards (22 models) – we've got freestyle focused boards, all mountain and freeride, as well as a pure old-school guns because our purpose is to give the opportunity to riders to find their dream snowboard!

We're starting to see people building a real quiver with EASY and we are happy about that.

Our latest news is the introduction of a splitboard at a really competitive price – 579€.

What kinds of different technology are you developing?

For freestyle we've created Magic Flex – the flex is completely different between your feet and around the nose and tail. You can find Magic Flex in our Noise and Black Torsion models. In our Wood Collection we use a multi edge side cut that makes any kind of turn possible. If you mix our EASY Grip and Mellow EASY Grip tech with different cambers, you get a fun range of boards.

What kind of relationship do you have with your shops?

We create a real synergy with them. We are here to offer them product and help them to sell it. We offer them a demo centre and personalise our supply to their marketing needs. All the shops that we work with believe in our strategy, and as a result they are making good sales with a good margin.

How do you support athletes and boardsports?

Our way to support athletes and boardsports is to provide good product to people, and this helps us to invest in new technology. We help athletes out with product, and we tell everybody about technical features to teach them about the snowboard science we are using. 

EASYBOARDCOMPANY.COM



January 20 – 22
Ski Juwel Alpbachtal Wildschönau (AUT)



www.shops-1st-try.com

NEW PRODUCTS

01 - STANCE SOCKS JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT COLLECTION

Chip away the veneer in lower Manhattan and you'll find the faded remnants of the late 70s and 80s American punk scene. It was a time when the boisterous expressions of a counter culture evolved into a celebrated art form. At the helm of the historic accent of punk art and neo-expressionism was Jean-Michel Basquiat. This collection honours the ultimate Punk and Poet showcasing Jean-Michel Basquiat's signature use of codes, textures, pictograms, and bold colour with Anatomy. www.stance.com



01

02 - NORTHCORE ADVENTURER SERIES DUFFEL BAGS

This rugged collection of luggage is designed to meet the demands of adventurers and travellers. Features include heavy duty water resistant tarp construction, large D-zip opening with weather protection flap, padded vented shoulder straps with quick release to convert the bag from a backpack into a haul bag, external side zippered pocket and four haul handles. Available in 3 colours and 3 sizes: 40L, 85L and 110L. www.northcore-europe.com



02

03 - ALL-IN CLASSIC PONCHO

This classic poncho from their Bumpy Line comes in zebra stripes in Beige or Brick. Made from 100 Cotton, 380gm2 velvet it's Azo free and is manufactured to meet Oeko-Tex 100 standards. Features include 2 big pockets, double lining hood and embroidery. www.all-in-company.com



03

04 - FLYN X LANGE MORA WETSUIT

Zipless long Mora 3/2mm wetsuit uses ecological Yamamoto neoprene, made from Japanese limestone, which guarantees high water impermeability and durability of the product. The low absorbency of the foam guarantees lightness and maintains the perfect temperature of the body. The inspiration for the Mora pattern comes from the Polish Army's uniforms back in 80s. If you specialize in kitesurfing, windsurfing or wakesurfing it's the perfect choice. www.getflyn.com



04

05 - DAKINE B4BC COLLAB

Dakine has teamed up with B4BC to develop a special edition of snowboarding board bag + mitts + socks to spread awareness of breast cancer and celebrate a healthy, active and sustainable lifestyle. The mitt selected for this collection is the Tracer Mitt, a low profile, form fitting pipe style glove. It has DWR treated shell and tricot lining, perfect for resort riding in spring weather or fighting off the chill on your way to the post-ride celebration. www.dakine.eu



05

06 - MYSTIC SURF PRO BOARDBAG

The Surf Pro fits a classic shape board up to 6'3. The new HXcomb shell and heavy duty tarpaulin is prepared to take a beating. The XL wheels make it easy to take your gear anywhere and the 3D mesh airvents keep your gear fresh. www.mysticboarding.com



06

RRD

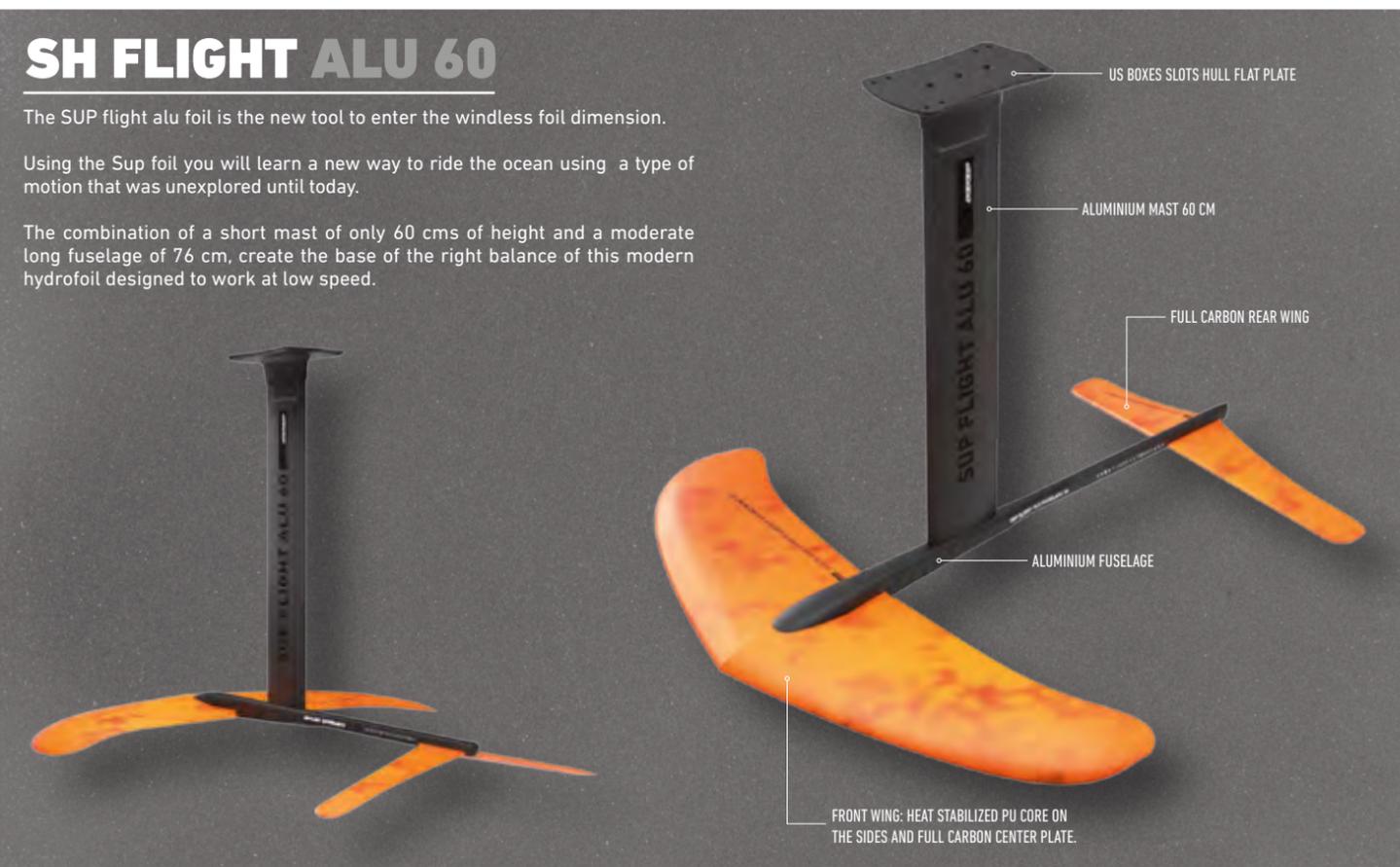


SH FLIGHT ALU 60

The SUP flight alu foil is the new tool to enter the windless foil dimension.

Using the Sup foil you will learn a new way to ride the ocean using a type of motion that was unexplored until today.

The combination of a short mast of only 60 cms of height and a moderate long fuselage of 76 cm, create the base of the right balance of this modern hydrofoil designed to work at low speed.



EUROSIMA SURF SUMMIT 17TH EDITION

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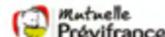


photo ©WSL/Poullénot



MARKET INSIGHT

GERMANY

UK

FRANCE

ITALY

SPAIN

AUSTRIA

SWISS

Oh my Lord. The Brits love nothing more than talking about the weather – and boy have we had some stuff to talk about. The heat. I'm talking about the heat. Not the rain. The countryside looks more like the Spanish plains than the rolling hills and highlands. And how long did it take someone to moan that it was too hot? About a week. That's the British.

So, with one of the best summers we've had since 1976 and perhaps even better than '76, surely our retailers are going to be happy, happy. Surely...
Before we get to that let's get the Brexit thing out of the way. Our stupid politicians now indicate that we may be heading for a 'no deal' Brexit. Is this just posturing, and if so, it's simply damaging the UK, damaging relationships with our EU brethren and damaging the value of sterling. Bank of England Governor, Mark Carney, suggested that the chances of a no deal Brexit were "uncomfortably high" with "severe consequences for the economy". WTF!

Traditional high street retailers continue to fall and struggle, online business continue to grow apace and yet our humble industry appears to be doing OK. "Stonking. Week after week we are breaking records. Really happy." Dave from Reactive in Plymouth started his business in 1996 after previously working eight years with other retailers. "Of course, given the weather we would expect to be busy, but it really is going well." So, what's hot? "SUP – our low-end inflatable iSUP's at £300-£400 complete have helped the market a lot – people were always coming in looking for second hand stuff and now the price is so low we can meet that demand with new kit. That said, we are still doing good business in the mid-to-high end as well. SUP is really sustaining us at this time."

What else is good? "Wake has fizzled out, we only do kite stuff to order and the only windsurfing kit selling is foil kit. Whilst the summer has been fantastic there's been no wind which obviously has an impact." So mixed fortunes but overall a very happy Dave.

The next store I visited is a dedicated online store – King of Watersports (KOW) – probably one of the most successful online watersports outlets specialising in kite, SUP, wake and neoprene. Charlie Kernan started the business literally selling on the beach to friends back in 2003 – the business really started to take off in 2006. Now well established as a 'go to' website for many a watersports enthusiast. "Really good. Very happy. Sales volumes are consistent, but the margin is up and that makes me happy," commented Charlie. "Kite is our biggest market and is doing well, wake is doing really well – one of our best years so far and wetsuits are still selling in good volumes." KOW is very much a watersports business and whilst the majority of the turnover is indeed in the summer months the split is not as large as you may think. "It's 60/40, summer/winter", says Charlie, "we have a really good, loyal customer base – both in this country and overseas – and these are real enthusiasts who will generally participate in their chosen sports as much as they can, whenever they can. They're more interested in the wind than almost anything else. Temperature is a second thought."

I suggested to Charlie that he is known as an off-price outlet. "Not so – we sell plenty of stuff at full RRP. Of course, if the offers are there for the taking then we'll get involved in the mix, but we also want to sell at full price where we can."
Moving swiftly on to my own 'back yard', Rhosneigr in North Wales – this summer it is busier than ever. Funsport is arguably the most 'hardware dedicated' shop in Rhosneigr and it is certainly the oldest

shop in the village. I know this for sure because we used to own it and sold it to the current owner, Dave, who has been in residency for about 20 years now. "Busy busy. It's SUP central here. It's the weather. We're busier than ever!"

Once again it appears that SUP is thriving. "We can sell SUPs all day long and whilst kite and windsurf are very weather dependent, SUP is less weather dependent and appeals almost all of the time and to a much broader spectrum of customer."
So what of windsurfing and kite? "It's been a very low wind summer but when it blows they all come out of the woodwork. A couple of weekends ago we had over 100 kites out in the bay. Windsurfing is the same – as soon as the wind gets up they come out of the woodwork." But what of sales? "Windsurfing is steady and the customers that are left are keen as mustard. They love to buy new kit and being predominantly middle class, they have the money. Kite is fairly similar and even on no wind days we still have enthusiastic customers wanting to talk kit."

But do they also want to talk price? "Of course some do. We pride ourselves on customer service, technical knowledge and our location. We're here, on the spot to help our customers when they need us. Of course some will always buy on price but there's nothing we can do about that."

Dave was pretty happy with all areas but also commented on the fickle nature of our business and the weather. "Last year we could not sell a shorty for love nor money. This year they are flying off the rack. Don't you just love the weather?"
Overall, as you can tell, Dave was very buoyant and his only complaint? "Customers. Too many of them!"

Moving inland I spoke to George from Robin Hood Watersports (ROHO) – many of their customers will use Rhosneigr as their venue of choice but as George points out, not being a venue shop has certain disadvantages. "Wetsuit sales for us are pretty flat. Customers are not making a considered purchase to get a new wetsuit and are 'making do'. They do not need to forward plan the purchase, and for those destination stores the impulse buy decision is an easy catch." ROHO was established in 1981 and George has been there for a good number of years: "I can say that this is probably our best wakeboard year yet. Most of our customers are boat boarders and with boat sales doing well, we are confident that this is a positive trend moving forward and that this will continue."

As with all stores, SUP is also doing well. "It's really good, best ever year on SUP but as it's a growing market we can expect that. We're not entering the fray at the bottom end – we start at £500 and are getting good sales in the £700 - £900 sector." And other sports? "Kite – we're not focussing on and keeping our attention on areas where we can make solid gains – kite is such a mess with discounts across the board." I pushed George on this comment asking if it were simply the discounting that put them off. "Yes – we'd like to do more but are not going to enter the scrap."

He summed up his view of the season thus far, "We're firing on all cylinders – it's very buoyant". So there you have it – it's hot – the temperature and the business. Overall a positive roundup with some large differences as to what's firing and what's not!

Gordon Way



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Unfortunately, aside from a few days of jubilation, France's victory at the 2018 Russia World Cup did not translate into durable euphoria across the country. The general mood of households measured by the INSEE (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies) remained stable in July, with polling conducted in the middle of the World Cup. Underlying factors such as unemployment and inflation have dwindled the optimism of the French, and the success of the football team in Russia has not had the effect that we might have hoped.

How have things been on the ground in reality for retailers? How has the start of the 2018 season been in stores in terms of foot traffic and sales?

After an exceptionally rainy and cold winter and a non-existent springtime from a weather standpoint, the particularly sunny summer was welcome. At the Okla shop in Toulouse, Florian told us: "The start of the season was somewhat difficult. After the rather wet weather this winter, the nice weather arrived just six days before the sales. As a result, we had quite a bit of summer product already in stock, so the sales went very well, and they were beneficial for our customers too." At the Neway shop in La Rochelle, Jérémy remarked: "The summer has been pretty exceptional with nice weather across the country. Despite that, the month of July was rather bizarre with low foot traffic in the store, but at the same time sales were decent for the time of year." He sees several possible reasons for that: "The conditions for skiing were really good this year, so people spent more time on the snow than usual and less at the beach. And that more and more often people were waiting until the last minute on deciding whether to go on vacation or not, and with nice weather all over France many have chosen just to stay home." At Olo Surfshop in Hossegor, the opinion seemed to be the same: "In-store traffic was down at the start of the season, but sales have been stable since the beginning of July. However, the pre-season was rather positive, notably during the Easter holidays and the month of May." In the beachside town of Henday in the Basque Country at Extreme Glisse, Romain confirms: "We are very dependent on the weather and especially the waves. We didn't have many good waves this season and therefore we really felt a reduction in the number of people in the store." It was the same situation at Quai 34 in Narbonne, where Guillaume said: "It's been hot and our activity depends on the wind. So, naturally we've seen a reduction in foot traffic and sales. As soon as there are a few waves, or the wind picks up, people come into the store, which was the case at the same time last year when on the contrary things were pretty good."

Even with retailers specialising in street products, most notably skate shops like Transfert in Bordeaux, it seems as if the great weather hasn't just had positive effects. Julien told us: "It's been hot, but much too hot for skating. As a result, the month of July was rather calm in the store with sales logically falling due to the heat wave." When we asked them about the World Cup effect and the superb victory of the French Team at the 2018 tournament, we expected a bit more enthusiasm and a more positive aspect in stores. However, it would seem that the World Cup in Russia has not been positive for retailers. Vincent from Olo said: "It's not a sporting event that incites people to go on holiday or take off for a weekend away from home. They preferred to watch the games with friends and a certain number of them probably put off leaving for the holidays until after the end of the tournament." Bertil from Barik added: "The timing of the games didn't help either, with many scheduled at 4pm, which is generally a good time of day for the store." At Okla

in Toulouse, Florian noticed: "With the French team playing games at 4pm on Saturdays the store was empty, while we did really well on sales during the same period last year," adding that, "the World Cup in Russia didn't have the same positive impact as the 2016 UEFA European Championships held in France. Even though France won, because the event was held in a foreign country, it didn't bring the same influx of tourists."

As for the most sought after products in stores, it would seem that the nice weather had a rather positive impact on apparel sales, especially summer products. Vincent from Olo in Hossegor said: "The beautiful weather in the month of July obviously oriented purchases towards summer products, with solid sales of things like caps, shorts, boardshorts and bikinis." At Okla, Florian confirmed: "Shorts, sleeveless t-shirts, t-shirts and caps saw a solid level of sell-through. We saw the fanny pack make a comeback as well this summer. We've also seen early sales on back to school items in our baggage aisle." Brands that sold well were essentially small French labels and others that have raised themselves to the same level as large brands, such as Tealer or Ripndip being mentioned. Bertil from Barik added: "The street and skate universes are resonating with teenagers again with brands like Thrasher, Powell, Santa Cruz and Bones being more and more sought after by the youth." It's a trend that has been confirmed by Julien from Transfert who has been focused on the market segment for several years: "People are looking for small labels and core products, that have a strong identity that they can relate to."

As far as sales of technical products is concerned, it would seem that softboards were quite sought after by customers this season, confirmed by Bertil from the Barik shop who told us: "Softboards have been selling pretty well, notably high-end brands like Softech and Catch Surf, because for beginner boards people tend to buy them in large chain stores or somewhere that is offering cheap prices." Jérémy from Neway told us: "Like every year, funboards have made up the majority of our sales this season. However, the general skill level of customers has increased and therefore more and more often they're looking for large fish models like those made by Torq that are experiencing a solid sell through level in the shop." SUPs, especially inflatable models that represent 90% of in-store sales have still been selling well this summer. Jérémy added: "People come to us to buy quality products at a reasonable price. Listening to our advice and explanations, they quickly come to understand the difference between what we sell and the beach toys sold in supermarkets for 300€." According to storeowners, the top selling brands are Red Paddle, Fanatic, Ari'i Nui and Surf Pistol. At Quai 34 in Narbonne, kite and windsurf gear also seems to have been selling well. Guillaume told us: "The foil craze in these two sports seems to be having a positive influence with more and more people coming into the shop to buy gear." The most sought after brands in both sports are essentially North, Fanatic and Gunsails.

Summer 2018 seems to have been a sunny one, but despite that traffic didn't necessarily live up to expectations. The World Cup effect that we hoped would increase store traffic generally didn't. Nonetheless, sell-through seems to have been attained at acceptable levels, and the continuing nice weather leads us to think that the end of summer and early fall should show positive results for shops. We shall see...



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When temperatures in Germany sat at the tropical 40°C mark for an extended period, it became clear to everyone what consequences global warming will have, even in the temperate zone. Sales of textile products in the spring were slow – in the beginning it was simply too cold, and shortly afterwards it was way too hot for long trousers and transition jackets.

The German e-commerce association announced that the number of online orders increased by 9% in the second quarter to a total of 2.8 billion euros. Things are still growing and German online retailers are facing serious competition from China. JD.com and Alibaba are in the starting blocks to participate in e-commerce in Germany as well and aiming to gain market share from Amazon. The digital trend in shopping remains unbroken and led to busy days at the parcel delivery service, which had already processed as many parcels in the summer as on some days during last Christmas!

“Just because there’s snow, doesn’t mean everyone starts snowboarding again. The situation is similar with the kids who get on skateboards. You can see them in many places, but far from the level of 15 years ago. Overall, the kids are no longer as focused on one thing as they were at the turn of the millennium,” says Jörg Ludewig, owner of Urban Supplies in Wiesbaden.

Let’s ask: How have skateboard sales generally developed in spring/summer 2018 for decks and complete boards? “Hardware sales development was positive for us. It did not explode but was significantly higher than last year. Decks, trucks, wheels in particular. Completes have risen slightly,” Jörg continues. “At the moment we are on the same level as last year with a slightly stronger summer than 2017, we also expect to reach our planned values for Q3 and Q4,” says Maxi Schaible of Beast Distribution. “Deck and Complete sales increased significantly – a good sign,” says Martin Propfe of Pivot Distribution. Richie Löffler and MDCN were also doing well and see clear growth. With many people buying a skateboard “again”. “Sales are positive and we have growth compared to last year – both for individual brands in the portfolio and for total sales,” explains Philipp Schmidt of Mosaic Sales. With 247dist., deck sales have increased by 15% on average, according to Nils Gebbers. Santa Cruz, Welcome, Toy Machine, and Powell Peralta Flight Decks have even risen strongly. Completes sales are up by 25% - especially for the classics like Santa Cruz and Powell Peralta.

What about the longboard/cruiser/surf skateboard business in the last half-year? “The market is stable or even rising slightly in the high-end segment. You notice that many have sold off their stock and many “lateral entrants” have said “goodbye” to longboarding again because it’s not so easy to make money,” reports Richie Löffler from the far north. Martin Propfe from Pivot adds: “After the long time when traders have ordered virtually no longboards, longboards are now often used again. The amount has no comparison to the number we were doing few years ago, but still makes up a certain part of total sales.” Urban Supplies is selling longboards and cruisers in the same way as in the previous six months. “The supply of goods in all shops is likely to remain extremely above demand.” “Again, most articles are sold at regular prices,” adds Nils Gebbers from 247dist. Markus Hensinger of L.I.N.K. Distribution sums up the longboards category as follows: “In the meantime, everything has settled down and stabilised back to the level of 2011. You can be positive again, because high-quality longboards and cruiser boards are still in demand and especially sliding is very popular, which is also noticeable in the sales figures of the longboard wheels”. Martin Propfe of Pivot can see an increasing demand for surf skateboards. “In our case especially after the completes of YOW (Your Own Wave), which in contrast to other surf skateboards simulate the movements of surfing almost 1:1. This allows you to train your surfing

memory while riding with a YOW board so that you automatically call up the correct movements in the waves and thus improve your surfing technique – even if you can’t be in the water.”

How’s the skate shoe business? Philipp Schmidt of Mosaic Sales hits the nail on the head: “Vans is charging, so is Nike, Adidas has its place and the rest of the manufacturers are fighting for the remaining 30% space on the shoe wall.”

How has the skateboard dealer structure in Germany developed in the last six months – have dealers died off, have some removed skateboarding from the range, are there new dealers? According to Richie Löffler, more dealers have sadly given up : “Currently it is very difficult to maintain an independent core shop. There are hardly any new shops.” “Unfortunately, a few local skate shops have closed, which is a pity for the scene,” Martin Propfe points out. “The shares of the large online shops and chains in total sales continue to increase.” The dealer structure for Beast Distribution has not changed since last year. Their goal is to grow with the same portfolio of dealers. “We don’t try to open too many new accounts and try to push our existing customer base in the best possible way”, says Maxi Schaible. “There has been a prolonged movement in the market. There are new customers – not even so few,” says Jörg Ludewig. “Existing customers reduce their commitment or stop completely. That’s been the case for some time.” Philipp Schmidt adds: “For some traders, skateboarding is no longer attractive – on one hand, financially because of poor margins, and on the other hand, some of the traders are getting older. This brings with it a shift of interests and so the assortments in the shops change. For the big dealers we work with and who focus primarily on skateboarding, the numbers are good and they also sell our hardware.”

Manfred Leupold is a “veteran” in the business. He has been surfing since 1975 and has been running the Surf+Snowcenter Augsburg since 1983. “One is always euphoric when the winter is good, but this didn’t mean more products were sold. There is fierce cut-throat competition, which is why traders break away and you can live on. There is hardly any growth in snowboarding, sales have remained similar, but our net profit has been significantly higher because we have become more price-stable. When it comes to Stand Up Paddling, the weather is great. We have €299 boards, which are going out of stock slowly, but also boards for €1,500. Last year the very cheap boards went better but now most people have become a little smarter and choose quality because the cheap boards are only a better version of an air mattress. More and more people are realising that these things will break after two years and are buying something worthwhile!”

Heiko Schatz (Bavaria representative for RRD & JP) sees the SUP market still rising and can also profit from the sale of the €300 cheap sets. This puts people on the water who would have been deterred by the retail price of a premium set, he says. “Anyone who actively operates or wants to get into Stand Up Paddling will soon notice that there are big differences in inflatable boards. The customer will sooner or later visit a specialist shop and look for competent advice and a wide range of products. So it’s hardly surprising that new dealer inquiries, especially from the water sports sector, come in and existing SUP dealers report back with sensational sales. Germany certainly still has potential with hardboards, especially with people who live by or near the lake. There are also other new Stand Up Paddling categories, such as tandem boards for two or more people and corresponding races. In general, there are more and more SUP events and participants who then stock up on equipment.”

Jochen Bauer



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Spain has been under its new Socialist Government since last June. It's strongly committed to Europe which, coupled with a dynamic economy, should lead to sound conditions for the economy and improved labour conditions. Sustained growth of the Spanish economy has been confirmed and it continues to grow but at a slower rate than has been the case over the last few years of recovery. Family consumption also continues to grow both in terms of financial conditions and job creation, maintaining its 0.5% increase from 2017 into 2018.

We entered summer with a foreseeable increase in both consumption and leisure, and excitement for holidays and to practice our favourite sports such as surfing and skating is on the rise. This is something confirmed by Arjuna Zapatero Arratibel, of the surf store and school Buena Onda in San Vicente de la Barquera, next to the El Rosal beach, on calle Francisco Giner de los ríos, 48. Buena Onda now boasts more than 20 years of experience. "Our sales have increased in August. This season the weather has played a particularly significant influential role. The winter was rough and cold and our customers hailing from outside San Vicente (inland cities such as Valladolid or Burgos), have not come as often as usual. Spring took some time to pick up and the same can also be said of July. We hope that the good weather keeps up, and if it does then this will prolong the season through Autumn."

Arjun talks about products that are performing well for him: "Technical items sell well. Our customers learn to surf with us and let us assess their level. People demand high quality at a competitive price, especially when it comes to wetsuits. 5/4 neoprene sold well last winter. Our customers are much more informed than they used to be and this is the big difference as they are now much more demanding. Clothing has dropped as people buy more online or prefer to wait for the sales." Arjuna concludes: "The surfing sector has

undergone a substantial evolution here. It is much more competitive now. I think that for the good of the sector, it is essential that we maintain quality levels rather than focusing on pricing. I also believe that our customers who practice the sports would be better off gaining more knowledge in exactly what surfing is, how to behave at the beach, in the waves, etc. It would be great to see institutions also supporting the evolution of this side of the sport.

Given the situation, we spoke with Juan Carlos of Fuck Skateboarding, a skate shop which has been in operation for a decade at calle Iparragirre, 48 in the Bilbao district of Indautxu. In his particular case, he commented on how sales had dropped over the past year. Since the beginning of 2017, sales have suffered a severe drop (approximately 35% - 40% compared to previous years). "We are coping and have had to make changes in terms of focusing our campaigns and purchase methods. Truth be told, lately not a single product is selling well compared to before and we are managing through our sales of footwear and skate hardware. Apparel sales are a complete washout, with the exception of a few trends such as the Thrasher brand."

Juan Carlos believes there is no such thing as skateboarding shoes or fashion wear any more and less people skate than they used to. Accordingly, the market has suffered. "Not only that, but buying habits are evolving with more and more people preferring to buy cheaper clothing. Not to mention online purchases and imitation products. I would also say, in our humble opinion that brands and distributors are very much to blame for the present situation as they made the mistakes from the word go. It's about time stores stopped having to bear the brunt of the blame. We will carry on striving forward and working hard; skating and supporting our local scene."

Jokin Arroyo - Cluster Surf City Donostia

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For the moment, 2018 is looking like a year with real seasons. We'll see what autumn has in store, but for now a rough winter, a fairly moist spring with a few sunny spurts, followed by a hot summer means that all of the elements are falling into place for a successful year. Retailers are hoping to see solid sales and will have to find fault with something other than the weather if that's not the case. The retail market in Switzerland, like elsewhere is reinventing itself - looking for answers to questions posed by an ever-changing marketplace. Some are succeeding, while others are not. Sure-fire formulas for success from the past aren't necessarily such a sure thing today.

Generally, it's been a good summer, the weather has encouraged people to get out there and do the activities that interest us. According to Matthieu Rouiller from Lévitation in Martigny, skateboarding is making a strong comeback, especially street. Probably due to skateboarding being back in fashion with the youth, but also due to a push from the construction of lots of new skate parks in a large number of towns across Switzerland. For Matthieu it is the Châble skatepark (between Martigny and Verbier), which has helped his business. But he says it's just having a skate park close by that does it. As with all boardsports, you have to be involved constantly, all year long, on the internet and in public as well, hosting parties, demos and product testing, putting special events on and more. This help create a spirit that online platforms can't provide, which in turn helps to gain and maintain customer loyalty.

Matthieu has a small bone to pick with brands that have decided to do direct B2C sales via their websites. Brands using this distribution channel isn't a problem itself, but when it becomes clear that everything is geared to go in this direction in the future, and effort is no longer made to service retailers, it's hard to swallow. There are numerous examples, like having more items in stock in B2C than for

retailers and much shorter delivery times for direct customers (often 2-3 days) than for shops, who often have to wait up to 10 days. Obviously, this is not a general rule and does not concern all orders, nor all brands, but isn't just a question of a few isolated cases either. Faced with such a situation, his dismay is understandable and after asking other shop managers, it is evident that he is not the only one to be upset by the situation.

For Balazs Bodonyi at Surfmaschine in Bulle, like in Martigny skateboarding is doing well with more and more people buying boards, helping to maintain a good level of sales. Full set-ups from Globe are selling very well, and Jart decks are also best sellers. Sales of cruisers and surfskates are stable, but sales of longboards and downhill boards have declined significantly. As far as apparel is concerned, classic boardshorts have not sold through well because clients have trended towards hybrids between bathing suits and walk shorts. This summer, the beach poncho is an accessory that has sold very well. Originally designed for surfers, it has become a common sight at lakes across Switzerland or wherever people are spending time on the water. The brand After seems to be leading sales in the category at Surfmaschine, as well as at TipToTail in Bern.

Blue Tomato is continuing its expansion in Switzerland, and they opened a store in Lausanne, with the intention of continuing to open new stores. Also in Lausanne, it is sad to see the closure of Escape Shop. After 20 years of good and loyal service, Escape had become a reference in the Swiss-French skate and snowboard scene. We can never thank Manu, Sacha, Claude and the other people who played a part enough for all they did over the course of the last 20 years in a what was for many much more than just a simple shop. I wish them the best of luck for the future!

Fabien Grisel

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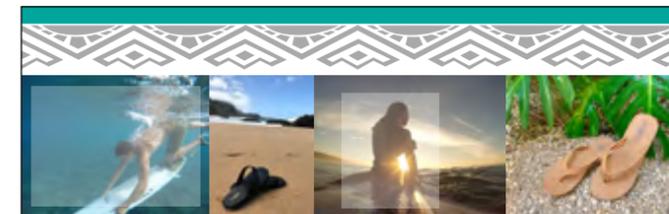


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BRIGHT, BERLIN, GERMANY, JULY 3-5, 2018



DC Shoes Jonathan Franck and Manu Labadie



Maui and Sons Nuno Fonseca



RVCA's Etienne Pinon and Pilot Fish's Phil Lalement



Titus, Julius Dittmann and IrieDaily's Denise Graff

JACKET REQUIRED, LONDON, UK ,JULY 25-26, 2018



Crep Protect's Steve Hancock and Lorraine



Dave Whitlow (Ellis Brigham Creative Director), 1966 Agency's Fred Royle, The Riders Lounge's Lucy and Robin Waite formerly of Non Stop store in Nottingham



Shiner's Pete Royston and Joe Bourne



SPIV Agency's Carl Burnham

OUTDOOR SHOW, FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, GERMANY, JUNE 17-20, 2018



Fjallraven Leif Ohlund



Klean Kanteen's Michael Duffy and Henry Hoogenveen



Nikwax's Megan Lambert



Pacsafe's Maria Schmieder and Thomas Ryll

SEEK, BERLIN, GERMANY, JULY 3-5, 2018



Element's Yohann Storez and Julien Duval



Homeboy's Holga Dahlen and Julian Wolf



Supra's Sascha Weil



The James Brand's Pacome Allouis and Philipp Gauswindt



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Why develop your business project in San Sebastian?

- For the economic subsidies.
- For the free business advisory services.
- Because we are a coastal city with a privileged surfing environment.
- Because we are close to France.
- Because we promote the local sector through the Donostia Surf City cluster.
- Because we lead the international network of surf cities.
- Because it is a city that you can get around by bicycle.

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