

BOARDSPORT

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EUROPEAN SURF/SKATE/SNOW BUSINESS

SASCHA WEIL SUPRA EMEA BRAND DIRECTOR

HOT TREND: WOMEN'S SKATEBOARDING

BRAND PROFILES, BUYER SCIENCE & MORE



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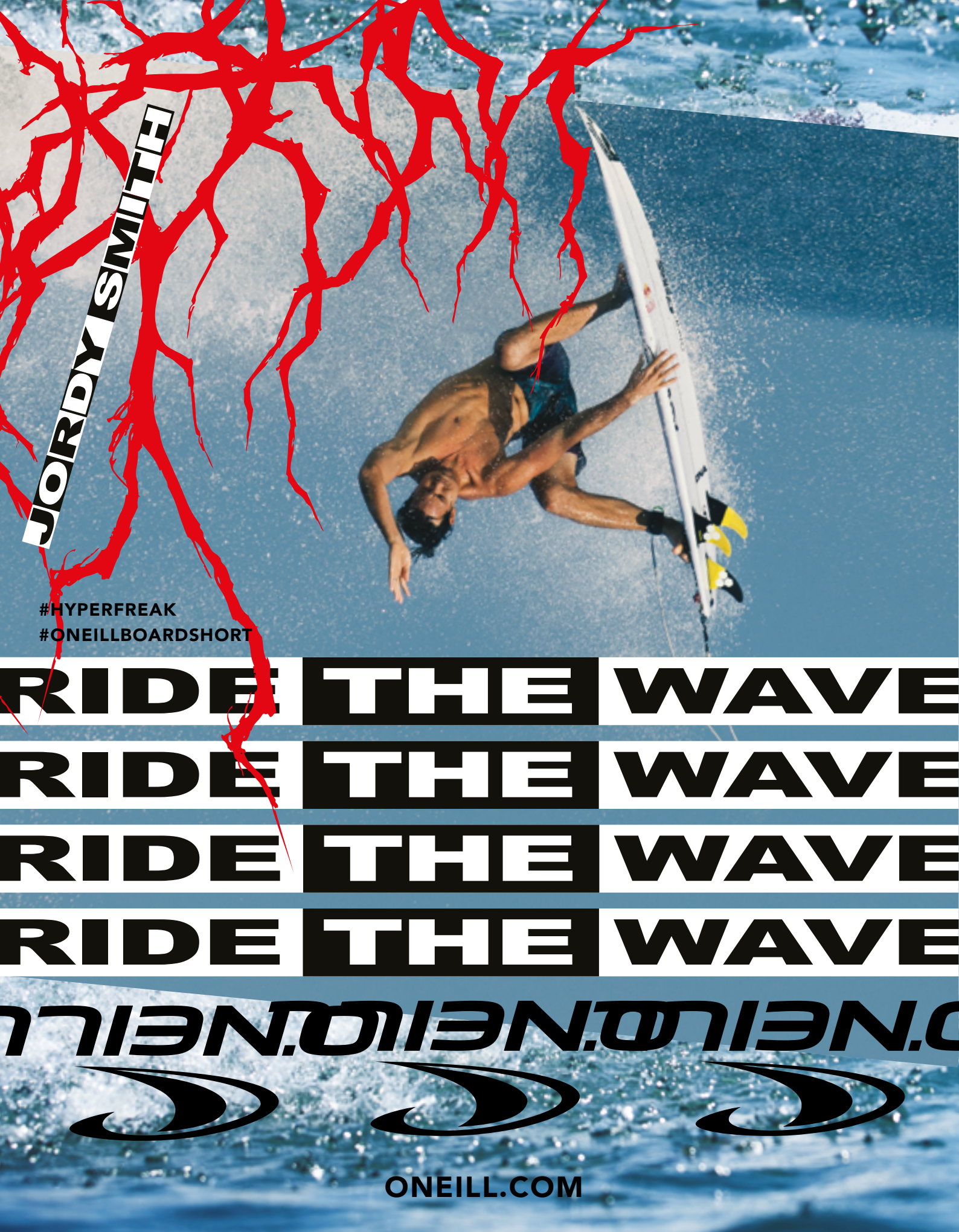
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US

Editor Harry Mitchell Thompson
harry@boardsportsource.com

Skate Editor Dirk Vogel
dirk@boardsportsource.com

Senior Snowboard Contributor
Tom Wilson-North
tom@boardsportsource.com

Senior Surf Contributor David Bianic
david@boardsportsource.com

Senior Wakeboard Contributor Tim Woodhead
tim@boardsportsource.com

German Editor Natalia Maruniak
tala@boardsportsource.com

French Editor Marie-Laure Ducos
ducos@boardsportsource.com

Graphic Design Adrien Ballanger
ballanger@boardsportsource.com

Proofreaders
Natalia Maruniak, Marie-Laure Ducos,
Sam Grant

Contributors
Jokin Arroyo, Benoît Brecq, Gordon Way, Fabien
Grisel, Franz Holler, David Bianic, Ruth Cutts,
Dave Mailman, Oliver Connelly

Advertising & Marketing
clive@boardsportsource.com

Accounts Manager
accounts@boardsportsource.com

To Subscribe
www.boardsportsource.com
subs@boardsportsource.com

Publisher
publisher@boardsportsource.com

Published by
ESB
22 Friars Street, Sudbury
Suffolk, CO10 2AA. UK

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HELLO #92

Putting this issue together, two words have really resonated: fickle and hybrid. Fickle is a word we use a lot in boardsports; the weather, trading conditions, the consumer. The weather can be an evil mistress - you'd have thought with the record snowfalls in the European Alps last winter that retailers would have been elated. But with no sunshine on weekends, many of our shops struggled to truly maximise their selling potential and astonishingly complained of too much snow.

So how has the European boardsports industry kicked off its 2018 summer season? Surely with every weekend in May a public holiday in one part of Europe or another, we'd hear strong feedback in our Market Insight series after the multiple heat waves? But once again that word 'fickle' reared its troublesome head. Warm weather drew droves of people to the English coast on May Day weekend, but unseasonably warm weather combined with cold seawater drew a dense mist reducing visibility to squat – however, we did hear reports of good sales. And although bank holidays mean footfall for beach and resort shops, spare a thought for shops in urban areas reliant on grom sales who see their traffic dwindle as families head for the coast.

Alas, we may be subject to fickle trading conditions, but if there's one thing the boardsports industry is, it's resilient. As well as being resilient, we in boardsports are known for being innovators. 'Hybrid' has been a tech industry buzzword for the past five to ten years, signifying the perfect

balance of different components to result in ultimate performance. And while the use of the word has trickled through many different market categories, over the past three years it's been those boardsports retailers creating their own hybrids who are now ahead of the curve. Successful retailers have combined bricks and mortar with internet sales and stellar customer service to deliver innovative retail concepts. Examples of such hybrids can be found in both this issue's Retailer Profile (A LA BONNE PLANCHETTE, P.17) and our Buyer Science (P.46), where we speak with 2017 Vans Shop Riot winners, Skateboutique SBQ from Belgium to hear about their ground-breaking setup, which includes an indoor park, two retail units and park building business.

A resilient industry of innovators; hybrid systems to combat a fickle trading environment. One such innovator is SUPRA's Sascha Weil who is this issue's Big Wig. Sascha worked in action sports from 2002-2012 but left for different pastures only to return due to the heavy pull of boardsports and in particular, skate. Perhaps the grass isn't always greener...

In our 92nd issue we debut our first look at hydro foils, a trend taking the surf industry by storm while featuring all of the Buyer's Guides you'll need to walk the summer season shows.

Always Sideways
Harry Mitchell Thompson
Editor

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On the cover: Celebrating Titus' 40th year in business, Hardgoods Buyer, Adam Przybyla. Photo: Jan Reherrmann

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OUTDOOR SHOW MOVES TO MUNICH FOR SUMMER 2019 & RENAMED OUTDOOR BY ISPO

After a tender process, the members of the European Outdoor Group (EOG) voted for the proposals put forward by Messe München and the ISPO team. As such, the first edition of the new trade fair “OutDoor by ISPO” will take place in Munich from June 30 to July 3, 2019. Since the decision, EOG and ISPO have been working on the details. These will be presented to the sector at an event planned for June 27, 2018 at the ICM – Internationales Congress Center München.

WORLD TEAM CLINCHES VICTORY AT FIRST EVER WSL FOUNDERS’ CUP OF SURFING AT KELLY SLATER SURF RANCH

Performing in front of a sellout crowd at Kelly Slater’s Wave Ranch in Lemoore, California, Jordy Smith (captain), Paige Hareb, Kanoa Igarashi, Bianca Buitendag and Michel Bourez clinched victory, collectively as World Team, at the first-ever WSL Founders’ Cup of Surfing contest beating the likes of Team USA, Australia, Europe and Team Brazil.

SALTY CREW HOSSEGOR STORE LAUNCH PARTY OPENING GALLERY

Salty Crew have been growing their European presence over the past couple of years since their integration into the Globe International family and mid-May saw the opening party for the brand’s first European store. Company founder CJ Hobgood was in town for the opening, which saw plenty of meats and fish hit the grill for a good old cook out and beers, overflowing from the location in the European surfing mecca of Hossegor.

SURF DEMO DAYS HOSSEGOR TO SERVE AS MEETING POINT FOR SURF INDUSTRY & CONSUMERS

Surf Demo Days Hossegor will made its debut on June 15-17 this year, providing a platform for industry shapers, manufacturers, pro surfers, retailers and consumers to meet, share ideas and hear feedback from consumers. The three-day event saw surfboard testing during the day with evening sessions including live music and relaxed party vibes to end the day. Based on successful, established snowboard consumer tests such as the Rock On Snow tour, Surf Demo Days Hossegor sought to become the first event that gathers the European surf industry in one place at the same time. Taking place in Hossegor, the event is ideally located at the heart of the European surf industry and the event allowed consumers to interact with brands before, during and after surfboard testing. The test village overlooked La Graviere at La place des Landais, with between 20-30 branded test tents and a great vantage point for surfers to easily select their preferred surf spot either at La Graviere, La Nord or La Sud depending on surf conditions.

RED BULL ROLLER COASTER: ALL-NEW SKATE CONTEST FORMAT TO DEBUT AT MUNICH MASH 2018

Red Bull have introduced the Red Bull Roller Coaster; a brand-new skateboard competition launching in Munich, Germany on June 23. The Red Bull Roller Coaster is a 400-metre downhill course combining street, bowl and vert elements, bringing 18 of the world’s best skateboarders together to compete.

FORM SURFBOARDS BY ALAN STOKES LAUNCHES EXCLUSIVELY AT BOARDSHOP

The team at Toy Factory Surfboards have teamed up with long-term team rider Alan Stokes and the guys at Boardshop to create a new brand designed by Alan called Form Surfboards.

UK RETAILER ABSOLUTE SNOW LANDS NEW WATFORD PREMISES WITH HSBC FUNDING

Moving a mere five miles away from their previous site in Hemel Hempstead, UK-based snow retailer Absolute Snow have moved to a bigger 18,000 square foot location in Watford thanks to £2.3m of funding from HSBC, which will allow the company to grow both in staff and stock. The store benefits from its proximity to Hemel Hempstead snowdome and the new space – which is five times the size of the old space – will house an extra 10 staff.

FINISTERRE OPENS NEW STORE IN EDINBURGH

English Westcountry surf brand Finisterre continue to grow their reach with a brand new store on Edinburgh’s popular George Street, which opened on May 5, 2018. The brand now operates stores across the following locations: London, Bristol, Falmouth, St. Agnes, Exeter and Hawksfield.

RIP CURL ADD FOUR NEW EUROPEAN STORES TO KICK OFF 2018 WITH MORE IN THE PIPELINE

Rip Curl have consolidated their network of European stores with the addition of four new stores since the start of 2018. With new retail locations in Tenerife, France, Spain and Portugal Rip Curl’s European store count now sits at 47 with more openings in the pipeline as they look to underline their slogan, “The Ultimate Surfing Company”.

CONSTRUCTION OF EUROPE’S FIRST PUBLIC WAVEGARDEN COVE (BRISTOL, ENGLAND) COMMENCES AS PARTNERSHIP IS FINALISED

Over six years after the initial news came out about a potential wave pool in Bristol, a partnership has now been finalised between Wavegarden® and The Wave© Bristol, with construction set to begin imminently. Autumn 2019 is the proposed date for completion.





OUTDOOR SHOW, FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, GERMANY, JUNE 17-20

The outdoor show in Friedrichshafen is Europe’s leading get together for the Outdoor Industry. This year’s edition, the 25th, is no exception with more than 900 exhibitors filling all twelve halls with a total exhibition area of 85,000 m². The OutDoor Show is a must for all retailers looking to grow their business in this market, from core outdoor shops through to boardsports shops who should be getting involved in the outdoor and camping markets as their existing consumer base is increasingly using these kinds of products being the adventurous outdoor types they are. More than 20,000 industry visitors are expected as retailers from both Europe and further abroad come to evaluate the latest brand offerings. The international flavour of the visitors is matched by the exhibitors with over 40 countries represented and 80% of exhibitors hailing from abroad. This year with its new Retail First Initiative, the show is focussing strongly on retailers and wholesalers who will benefit from a new range of services, including free entry to the show and priority booking for the nearby Eriba City accommodation. After their successful launch last year the four OutDoor Plus areas have been further developed. New in the Water Sports Area, in addition to the canoe and kayak areas, SUP, swimwear and accessories, there will be an action area in the atrium with a specially installed pool. The pool will be used for product testing and demonstrations. Once again, the supporting programme includes a fashion show, numerous workshops, activities and presentations. The HangOut in the Open Air Exhibition Grounds West will be celebrating the happy-go-lucky side of outdoor life with a creative exhibition space for brands offering cooking equipment, outdoor games, and camping furniture will be found there. The Lifestyle Collection in Hall A6 is a dedicated area for urban fashion presenting products designed for both outdoor and urban use. It offers the

ideal platform to harness synergies and network in a relaxed atmosphere. OutDoor Industry Awards sees its 13th edition and the winning products are announced at the grand award ceremony on the first night of the show and placed on prominent display in the Messe Friedrichshafen Foyer East. At the show a number of seminars will present the industry’s future trends and issues. Topics covered include: “Fashion & Colours in Outdoor Clothing”, the digitalisation of fashion, purchase decision-making processes and sustainability in textile production. The EOG will be providing an overview of the European outdoor market and presenting the latest figures in its “State of Trade” market research report. The conference and presentation programme is free of charge and offers retailers and manufacturers alike important industry insights and insider knowledge. For OutDoor 2018, more than 270 hotels and the OutDoor Camping Park and surrounding Lake Constance campsites offer a wide range of accommodation to cover every requirement. For visitors who prefer camping, there are also plenty of options near the showground. The Eriba Caravan City just a few minutes from the East Entrance is 40% bigger. This year’s OutDoor Party is on the Tuesday and Messe-Express shuttle buses will be on hand throughout the evening to take party guests free of charge to the harbour station/ ferry dock and Friedrichshafen railway station. Additional activities available include a microadventure event in the Lake Constance area and the Midsummer Festival on the lake shore from June 16 - 17. So head to Friedrichshafen to discover all that is new in the Outdoor business.

www.outdoor-show.com

JACKET REQUIRED LONDON, UK, JULY 25-26

is year nearly 250 brands will be present at the Old Truman Brewery exhibiting their spring/summer 2019 collections as the show continues to be a key stop in the European men’s and women’s wear trade calendar. Brands for the casualwear, tailoring, sportswear, streetwear, denim, footwear, accessories and lifestyle markets all come together in the vibrant East End of London. For July the show has reworked its floorplan in order to accommodate more brands in fewer individual rooms. This will allow easier navigation for visitors, offer stronger positions to those exhibitors with a rich heritage in classic street, skate, surf, outdoor and action sports; and provides the most relevant locations for the increasing number of collaborative collections, such as Sweet Sktbs x Ali Boulala and Element x Griffin Studio, who are looking to attract the more fashion-led retailer. For SS19 Jacket Required will continue with its womenswear edit that was introduced last year to support the growth of casual clothing and sophisticated streetwear for women. New brands joining the womenswear offering include sustainable Danish brands Tretorn and Colorful Standard. Also new this season, Jacket Required will shine a spotlight on the growing emphasis and importance placed on sustainability within the fashion sector with ‘In Talks With’. This is a key speaker/panel discussion to provide

insight into sustainability and corporate responsibility and give industry leaders a platform from which to share knowledge with retailers, press and consumers about best practice. Returning favourites to the show include DC, Dickies, Edwin, Element, Herschel, Porter-Yoshida, Quiksilver, Red Wing Heritage, Sandqvist, Santa Cruz, Teva, Fjallraven, Saax Underwear, Sweet Skateboards and Thunders Apparel. New brands of interest in the mix include Edmond (men’s clothing), Howies (men’s clothing), Litoral, Lil’ Brims (unisex headwear), Millican (unisex accessories, sustainable), Mocha Salt (Australian premium men’s swim), Saint James (men’s clothing, sustainable), Yes On Life (clothing launch by Yes Snowboards) and the Craghoppers Archive Collection. Opening hours are Wednesday 10am- 7pm and Thursday 10am - 5pm and if you’re driving to the show there are two car parks available within The Old Truman Brewery on Brick Lane and Grey Eagle Street. Otherwise Shoreditch High Street, Liverpool Street Station, Aldgate East Station and Old Street Station are all within walking distance. So if you’re a retailer on the lookout for what’s hot in men’s and women’s wear you know where you need to be. See you in London.

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SKATEBOARD FOOTWEAR RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SS19

What are the brands, models, colours, and constructions skateboarders demand this coming season ?
Find the answers in our Skateboard Footwear Retail Buyer's Guide for Spring/Summer 19
by SOURCE Skateboard Editor **Dirk Vogel**.

It's no secret that the past ten years have been tough for endemic skateboard shoe companies. The bigger brands become bigger and squeeze the market. "The Top 3 in skateboard footwear know their position and force retailers into a certain position they don't want to be in: dependence on these brands, forced collections, lower margins and loss of independence," said Sascha Weil, Brand Director EMEA at SUPRA, adding: "It is the task of the smaller brands like SUPRA to help these retailers with a strong collection that can withstand the force of the Top 3."

This enormous consolidation of market shares is only part of a bigger shift. Looking at statistics on participation, the last decade also saw a decline in the numbers of active skateboarders: Whereas over 10.13 million participated in skateboarding in the U.S. in 2006, the number had dipped to 6.44 million by 2016 (Statista). Lower participation means less wear-related replacements of skate shoes; which means lower sales, at least for core companies not playing the sneakers hype card. But core brands are reporting a turnaround, although they remain cautious.

"We have seen a progressive uptick in business every season in 2018 vs 2017. However, I am seeing more skate retailers close than open," said Scott Sentianin at Lakai. This coming season, shops have a plethora of choices in core skate footwear, including new energy behind DC Shoes: "DC retailers should be excited about the brand refresh DC is currently undergoing. We have introduced new models that push the consumer forward while also keeping our DC roots well ingrained in each product," said Halsey Keiler, EMEA Footwear Regional Merchandiser at DC.

MARKET & PRICING: POWER MOVES

Looking ahead, analysts at Technavio expect the global skateboard footwear market to post solid growth, reaching \$1.6 billion in annual sales by 2020. But Fabio Di Molfetta, owner of European brand Ade Footwear points out: "There are too many big players for a niche

market, not all those players share story, passion and feelings with skaters." Nevertheless, there are signs of hope. "Some good news is that we signed a licensing deal to bring C1RCA back to the North American market," said Doug Weston at Osiris Shoes. Fallen Footwear is rumoured to return, and Vox Footwear is also back in skate shops with a tight line-up: "We are here to prove that authenticity and affordability are not mutually exclusive," said Tony Chen, International Sales, adding: "Vox is priced to be a good value to the consumer and the retailer, because skateboarding doesn't have to be expensive to be enjoyable."

Speaking of expensive, price points are slightly up this coming season in part due to macroeconomic changes in terms of exchange rates, trade tariffs and manufacturing costs. Most of the action now gravitates around €74.99 for current performance models loaded with tech and longevity (see Technologies). But there is room at the top with a growing number of upscale entries at €89.99 including Tony Hawk's new cupssole model on Lakai, plus top-of-the-line models from the likes of SUPRA selling at €119.99.

SEASON TREND: GLORIOUS 1990S TECH

In SS19, previous season's trend towards tech-loaded 1990s-style skate shoes is going from a slow simmer to a rolling boil. Designer shoes like the latest drops by Balenciaga, Kanye West's Yeezy line and A\$AP Rocky for Under Armour blatantly copy mid-1990s skate models created by the likes of DVS, DC Shoes, éS Footwear and OSIRIS. "You know you're back on trend when A\$AP Rocky is paying homage to your classic profile," said Doug Weston at Osiris, adding: "We've seen a big resurgence in our classic heritage profile, the D3 2001 over the past year. The 90s styling is hitting everywhere and there's even a 'dad' shoe trend that's emerging in the bigger footwear market." Over at Sole Technology (etnies, Emerica, éS Footwear), brand strategist Don Brown points out that the early 1990s were all about cup sole styles, while the mid-1990s brought in the bulkier tech shoes: "The

*“Vox is priced to be a good value to the consumer and the retailer, because skateboarding doesn’t have to be expensive to be enjoyable.” Tony Chen, **Vox** International Sales*



photo : Supra

big trend in hip hop/fashion right now are the bulkier styles and éS gets tagged constantly as people feel the influence from their design is from ‘90s skate... The éS Scheme has become one of the most requested styles to bring back along with many other iconic éS styles and will relaunch in small numbers for Holiday 2018 and continue through 2019, all éS riders are all full backing this look and we’re planning to pioneer the puffier shoe trend within skate culture through 2019 as we did back in 1995.” Skate shoe brands are serving this trend by releasing their icons with crucial tech updates under the hood, including the D3 (Osiris), Lynx (DC Shoes), and Scheme (éS), as well as current models like the Maswell (DC), Silo and Contract (éS), and Comanche (DVS) inspired by 1990s design DNA. Globe has specifically created the HERITAGE LAB, “in which we engage in re-design of ‘90s classics to ensure a future heritage model is born. Our new model the OPTION EVO fuses this mindset of ‘90s past and skate present,” said Globe shoe designer Morgan King.

SILHOUETTES: LIGHTWEIGHT PERFORMANCE

The trending core skate shoe for SS19 is a classic-looking cup sole loaded with plenty of performance tech for comfort and performance. “We believe consumers want style and freshness with an inherent comfort factor, so they can wear their shoes rolling out of bed all the way to stumbling home from a late night out,” said Halsey at DC Shoes. Current models pair a slim-fit silhouette and stitch-less toe design with longevity in a lightweight package in SS19 styles including; Hammer Skate (SUPRA), Inward (Ade), TILT EVO and OPTION EVO (Globe), Salix (C1RCA), Barksdale (DC Shoes), Comanche 2.0 (DVS), Newport and Tony Hawk Proto model (Lakai), Techniq and Turin (Osiris), Shifter and Chino (SUPRA), Trooper II (VOX), Swift 1.5 (éS), Marana and Jameson eco (etnies), and Leo laced (Emerica). There’s also room for shoes that break the mould, like the HUF driver shoe in memory of Dylan Rieder (RIP), the SUPRA Greco Mauve suede dress shoe and adidas’ teched-out 3ST styles in a sock-like construction. Morgan King at Globe is also “bringing new life into larger silhouettes that complement a change to chunkier apparel shapes and outlines.”

TECHNOLOGY: COMFORT VS. PERFORMANCE

With performance emerging as a major differentiator, each brand has fine-tuned its tech for next season. Lakai introduces Para-Mount

outsoles composed of hex-tread patterns for maximum board feel, while Sole Technology uses STI Thermothane for the ollie areas. Globe has updated EVA outsoles, Ade blends comfortable EVA material with silicone gel insert on the heels, while Vans releases tri-density Ultracush Lite 3D footbeds blending dual density cushioning and structural support. Tech highlights for SS19 include: Shock absorption via Impact Air (DCShoes), Ultracush Lite 3D (Vans), AeroCush (C1RCA), Push Internal Crash Pad (SUPRA), PU Insole (State), DELUX-LITE premium insoles (Lakai), Heel Reverb Insoles (Vox), and Capsole (Ade). Added sole traction via Dynamic Grip technology (DCShoes), Wafflegrip (Vans), FusionGrip (C1RCA), and Formula G (Emerica). Anatomic fit via Vaporcell (DVS), SureFit sockliner and UltraFlex (C1RCA), and Deluxlite liner (Lakai). Also added durability via Duracap (Vans), DuraFlick and HT Drag (State), Para-Mount outsole (Lakai), Everstitch (éS), and FusionGrip (C1RCA).

COLOURS & STYLING: PRINTS & EARTH TONES

Much like in skateboard helmets, even the most progressive skateboarders are conservative in their preferred colour choice, which is basically like a Danzig concert – black with black laces. Elaborating on SS19 colourways, Tony Chen at Vox said: “Black continues to be the mainstay of the Vox line. Other key colours include blue, grey, white and oxblood.” Brent Phelps, Design Director at DVS promised, “lots more earth tones! Sand, olive, chamois are working really good for us and continue as a big trend. Camo prints and textiles are definitely back and working in tandem with this colour trend.” Osiris and several other brands are backing the camo trend, while SUPRA brings back the white rubber toecap with confidence in the Hammer Skate. For retailers looking to customize their own shoes, Tony at Vox offers: “We have a new customization program that we are introducing with the Kruzer model. We have a replaceable tongue label on the model, so that skate shops can now have a custom collaboration shoe.

MATERIALS: SUEDE ALTERNATIVES

Much like colourways, material choices stay close to home during SS19. “Suede is still king. We do have demand for textile shoes, which is why we put in a rubber-material underlay as a material backer,” said Scott at Lakai. Brands are branching out into suede alternatives and upgrades, including DVS: “Materialization has become a key element to modern footwear design. We’re exploring Frisco suedes (waxed) and pig suedes, non-tear knits with obvious skate-related applications, rip stop and refreshed reground. Textures are key.” SUPRA is playing with upscale fabrics and textures in the Cornerstone Collection: “You see the mash-up of colours and materials like everyone used to from SUPRA. Suede, canvas, mesh, leather, sometimes all in one shoe.” Meanwhile, synthetic and vegan-friendly options continue to resonate with consumers. C1RCA offers a lot of 100 per cent vegan shoes and keeps increasing the use of synthetic leather while Lakai uses water-based adhesives and recycled cardboard for shoe boxes. etnies even plants a tree for each pair sold, boasting 1.8 million trees planted on three continents so far.

HOT TREND: GIRLS SHOES

Female participation is the biggest story in skate for SS19 (see market analysis in this issue, P.28), and brands report mixed results in this category. Joe Marckx, Global Brand Director at DVS said: “We cancelled our Kids’ and Women’s programs due to a lack of demand.” Meanwhile, Scott at Lakai is, “seeing the women buying smaller sizes of the men’s.” Don Brown at etnies said: “For etnies we do create specific products for girls and kids and we have seen the market demand increasing especially as we build on riders.” And global mainstay Vans is not only hosting skateboard clinics for girls in 100 cities worldwide, but also expanding the women’s offering. “Vans is actively reinforcing its ongoing commitment to the development of women’s skateboarding,” said Laura Doherty, Vans Global Public Relations, adding: “Lizzie [Armanto] will be lending her creative eye to a new collection of Pro Classics footwear and lifestyle apparel this June.”

HIGHLIGHTS

- Rise in core participation
- Slightly higher price points
- Revitalization of discontinued brands
- 1990s-inspired shoes
- Synthetic leather
- Return of cup soles
- Skate shop collabs

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À LA BONNE PLANCHETTE

A LA BONNE PLANCHETTE operates two stores in France, one in Tours and one in Nantes and as well as realising the need for ultimate customer service in order to survive against internet stores, they also have a skate team who shredded their way to the 2017 Vans Shop Riot finals. We speak with Nico Klotz and Maxime Nicolas to profile these exciting French stores.

In 2017 you made it to the finals of the Vans Shop Riot finals.

How did this help the shop gain exposure?

It was great to see such a high level of skating for the European final! We qualified in Lyon. Everybody really lived up to the challenge over the course of the weekend of “street filming”. As a matter of fact, the guys from the French marketing department did a great job. It was a nice change from a traditional contest that brought it all back to the basics and brought everyone together to experience a new town with a board under their feet. Vans did a great job in that aspect, helping to boost the local skate scene and the riders who make it happen. That kind of event really helps create a good bond within a team. It’s also great for the shop’s reputation as a legitimate specialty skate shop.

What marketing/things do you do to get people in store?

Nico: The mini-ramp in the basement of the shop in Tours is one of the few spots you can skate when it rains. There’s no indoor skate park here. So, this winter we opened it up to all the local riders three nights a week. After three months of free sessions, for the entire month of April we did team battles. Everyone really got into it.

Max: In Nantes, the city helps out more and the scene is big with lots of skaters and kids who rip. With the Summer Olympics coming, parks are popping up everywhere, but are very often poorly built. As far as the shop is concerned, we organize a wide variety of happenings on a regular basis. Every month, we put on an art exhibit upstairs with illustrations, photographs and graphic art. It helps create a bit of diversity and opens up the skate community, too!

We try to stay close to the scene, to understand what’s going on and try to do as best we can to help it develop the right way, by which I mean doing things that are qualitative, helping out by teaching the kids, supporting

different D.I.Y. and video projects, and work with brands that are going in the same direction.

I think that it’s the end of the era of the classic skate shop. You have to be service oriented. In Nantes for example, having the possibility to print a visual you bring in or one you’ve seen during an expo in the shop on a piece of clothing. There are also things like working on distribution model with limited edition products... Offering collabs that you can only find in the shop, and nowhere else.

Is social media a big part of selling products or simply creating a hub for the store?

Marketing is an essential part of this scene. We’re continually inundated by content, and to set yourself apart from the rest you really have to offer something completely off the wall, and funny. It’s become an integral part of our job, even though, in my opinion, nothing beats having a passionate skater behind the counter with a big smile on their face... Being able to talk about the “skate game”, the latest video production or local spot... That’s also part of what’s so great about going to a skate shop.

Nico: We’re very active in social media, especially on Instagram. We post a lot of stories with the latest products, while trying to add a bit of humour or an artistic touch to things. It’s a lot of work, though. It’s hard not to get repetitive and bore your followers. We also try to put out quality content with local riders...

Lots of clients really pay attention to social media and it’s not uncommon to conclude a sale thanks to a post or series of posts. Like Maxime told you before, another very important thing when you own a skate shop, is above all to be hardcore skater yourself to be able to talk about skating with clients, but also to help make things happen in the local skate community just by helping to motivate people to go skateboarding. 🙌

photo : O'Neill



BOARDSHORTS

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SS19

More than just a seasonal piece, the boardshort is well and truly and essential attribute to the identity of our business. This article of clothing remains the original artefact of boardsports and by extension, the entire industry that has been built around it. The challenge today is figuring out how to mix this heritage with modern trends. This is a overview of the trends for 2019 by **David Bianic**.

The boardshort is a difficult stylistic exercise for brands: a fashion piece that must remain first and foremost an item of technical wear, designed for aquatic sports, be it surfing, SUPing, wakeboarding, etc. "One of our constant key focuses is that nothing should stand between you and the action, and certainly not your clothes," says Katrina Stronkhorst from Protest. For a historic brand like Rip Curl, the stakes are high concerning boardshorts: "It's in our genes to exceed our offer in terms of technicality and quality each season, to produce the ultimate." So, it's not surprising to find that their Mirage model is experiencing one of the highest growth rates within this product category. It's even less surprising to find brands from the hardgoods and accessory markets entering into the segment, like Dakine: "Our consumers live in their boardshorts in and out of the water," Product Line Manager Karrie Blittersdorf reminds us. As such, the brand is offering a line for summer 2019 made entirely of multi-directional stretch material, and higher prices to go along with it. Billabong also go all-in on stretch, as the brand is expanding the use of the fabric into their line, emphasizing on the Airlite model, "with a body mapped and multi-tier stretch fabric."

In the same spirit, wetsuit brand Body Glove will be entering the European market for the first time with a summer 2019 collection and will remain loyal to its technical reputation by focusing on "performance fabrics and finishes," Emily Abbott from the Shiner distribution company in the United Kingdom informs us.

STYLES FOR 2019
70s retro, 80s neon, 90s rock, Y2K street or 60s style scalloped mini-shorts... Which decade has caught designers' attention this time around? The pleasant surprise we've noticed is that the brands are

"There are so many different trends and vertical brands that you need to build something that is honest to your brands values but is still able to shift with certain colour and prints trends." **Rhythm**

no longer acting like a herd of sheep: instead of all choosing to go in the same direction, specific identities are being claimed and put on display: "There are so many different trends and vertical brands that you need to build something that is honest to your brands values but is still able to shift with certain colour and prints trends," say the people at Rhythm. This is also the case at Volcom, which has always done its own thing in terms of artistic direction, as Senior Global Boardshort Designer Joe Frizelle reminds us: "Volcom boardshorts stick to our roots by using our creative license to project our own design direction and aesthetic." Liberty is the watchword, but of course, more than a few brands have still decided to play the vintage card, starting with Body Glove, whose Spring/Summer 2019 collection will take a look back at the brand's 65-year long history in aquatic sports. Lightning Bolt play on the "Hawaiian golden days, through SoCal endless laid-back appeal to urban NYC surf lifestyle." Dakine also feels that the retro side of things still has its place and that, "you will find this through many of our colours and prints," remarks Karrie Blittersdorf.

However, make sure you are clear on the decade you're making reference to when applying the term "retro", which now covers a broad range of time periods as illustrated by different trends within

"High performance materials melted with vintage inspired styles." **Quiksilver**

the Rip Curl line: "California 50s resort spirit, Venice 90s sport, retro 90s surf with our historical logo." Since, there's nothing better for a brand than its own rich history, Quiksilver is promising flashbacks to their emblematic Warpaint and Echo Beach collections, but using "high performance materials melted with vintage inspired styles." Last but not least, is it the same thing for boardshort lengths on the inner thigh, or the infamous perfect inseam that brands were searching for like the Holy Grail? The answer is often found by offering two or three different lengths, from 18 to 21 inches with a renewed trend towards longer inseams say a majority of respondents.

COLOURWAYS AND PRINTS
It's not surprising that these very pronounced aesthetic differences translate into such a wide variety of colours and patterns of prints, often at the heart of the same collection. Which explains why Body Glove will offer "a colour palette with hits of neon pink, lime and bright royal (that) gives a distinctly 80s' throwback vibe," but also "a subtler palette of washed olive, pastel lemon and rose for a more laid back look." It's much the same idea at Protest, where the colours are split into two families: "The first is a sporty group with blue, red and green mixed up with black and white. The second palette has more earthy tones with army green and Bordeaux red paired with neons," details Katrina Stronkhorst from the marketing department. The thematic is purposely very conceptual at Mystic, while the collection "radiates with the forces of nature and the surfer's desire to control and ride them," the Head of Textile, Femke Lingen tells us. It's a desire translated into images by "fresh" colourways and "pop panels" that contrast with "the darker and nature inspired prints." You don't change a winning team is the maxim at Volcom, Joe Frizzlle reminds us, which is why the brand is remaining faithful to its fetish colours, black and white, "with pops of yellows, oranges, blues and purples for 2019, while the flagship motif seems to be that of the Ozzie Wright collection, "a custom tie-dye that is featured throughout the line." It's only a short step from tie-dye to washes and Rip Curl sees the "washed" effect being one of next season's big hits, along with bright retro colours. As far as prints are concerned, Rip Curl is betting on "figurative prints and placement stripes."

As a general rule, we'll be seeing a lot more of the following once again in 2019: colour blocking (Billabong, Dakine), pattern mixing (Dakine, Protest), vintage prints (Dakine, Protest), flower/palmtree prints (Quiksilver, Rusty, Maui and Sons) and pastels from almost every brand (especially on boardshorts).

"Now, 100% of our boardshorts are made of recycled polyester fabric". **Billabong**

MATERIALS & INNOVATIONS
Don't expect any revolutions in the boardshort category in 2019 after such a large number of technological advances over the last few years: stretch, absence of rashes, closure and locking systems at the waist, pockets and quick-drying fabrics... That's a long list of challenges that the brands have already overcome.

So, any new advancement will be rather subtle, along the lines of Dakine's introduction of their recycled fabric Repreve (made from plastic bottles) or a recycled polyester, multi-directional stretch fabric from Mystic. Once again, Rip Curl is coming on strong with its Mirage 3/2/One model, which uses three different materials in a single boardshort: "Cordura at the waistband and back panel for complete durability, Elasto-stretch front panel and E5 neoprene performance side panel for increased mobility." We must also point out their Surf Grip technology, which is a 360° strip at the waist that keeps the boardshort from moving in the heat of the action. More work on the waist at Rusty that is offering extra laces to allow clients to change colours and personalize their boardshort. Slightly lower down, but still in the same zone the No Tie Fly zipper from O'Neill promises to revolutionize the traditional closure system: "Drawcords are a thing of the past!" category manager Jan Lindeboom assures us.

As we mentioned above, more and more, innovation is equalling environmentally friendly (see recycled polyester) and along those lines Rip Curl would like to remind everyone of the existence of their Surf Craft collection since 2016, an eco-friendly range that accounts for 12% of their product offering and is made from organic cotton and recycled fibres in the case of their boardshorts. Billabong proudly announces that "now, 100% of our boardshorts are made of recycled polyester fabric".

For Mathieu Desaphie from Sen No Sen, choosing a local supply chain for production makes perfect sense, since their Econyl fabric (recycled nylon) is made using plastic bottles recovered in the ocean and is produced in Italy. In addition to recycled polyester, Volcom is also highlighting their use of hemp and communicating the fact that their efforts to protect the environment have become a critical issue in the brand's product development. In order to make their efforts more visible, Protest has created the GeoGreen label, which is meant to highlight products made from recycled and/or sustainable materials, like "the Seton boardshorts, (which) for example, are made from renewable bamboo," points out Katrina Stronkhorst.

So, it's well and truly a challenge for the designers, whose boardshorts must remain true to the codes of an entire culture in a few square centimetres of fabric while still keeping up with the high-speed train that is the world of fashion. Who could have imagined that boardshorts would have such a story to tell one day?



photo : Dakine

HOT TREND: BEACHSHORTS
Although it is the technical and cultural flag bearer, boardshort sales pale in comparison to those of traditional swim trunks as O'Neill reminds us: "The majority of volume is done in swimshorts." These trunks that were once snubbed by core surfers are now an integral part of their quiver of summer surfwear, as confirmed by the team at Rhythm, and at Rusty: "We've seen a lot of growth in elastic waist boardshorts." Less "sport" oriented and more "casual", these trunks often benefit from more artistic freedom, confesses O'Neill: "Pastel (is) not ideal for performance boardies, but pretty cool for swimshorts." Boardies can also go with pastels, but mixed with black for a more rock 'n' roll result, promises Nick Crook: "The results should be electric." Lightning Bolt opt for a "hybrid between a swim trunk and a traditional short. A style using fabrics appropriate for the water but features design cues lifted from traditional shorts like fly-front zippers, button or snap closures and side pockets." Maui and Sons came up with an interesting hybrid suggestion, as their Party Rocker Volley shorts is "a line of surf shorts smaller than the traditional boardshorts and are not stretch. Unlike the pool shorts that have elastic waists, these have a fixed waist." To sum things up, let's no longer leave this category to ready-to-wear stores only, since surfers love them too! 

HIGHLIGHTS

- Boardshorts highlight brand history
- Pastels & bright colours
- Mix of patterns
- Recycled fabrics
- Hot: beachshorts

PROTECT YOURSELF & YOUR PLAYGROUND

MADE WITH PLASTIC BOTTLES & WITHOUT HARMFUL CHEMICALS



ORGANIC & RECYCLED PRODUCTS



photo : Heimplanet

THE GREAT OUTDOORS RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SS19

The outdoor segment is having a moment, fuelled by an increasing need for people to unplug from their digitally accelerated routines. Aside from pure-play outdoor brands, several boardsports labels are serving this growing market. Time for our Retail Buyer's Guide with all the SS19 outdoor trends by **Natalia Maruniak**.

"We are experiencing a shift, with people going back to nature while gaining some distance from the digital world, and connect with mother earth joined by friends and family. Being offline, if only for a short time span, is the new luxury," said the team at Petromax. Spending as much time as possible outside is a goal shared by boardsports and outdoor enthusiasts alike. "We love being out in open nature, regardless of the weather. We like to be active out there or just hang out and have fun," said Burton. In order to prepare for outdoor conditions, we need clothing with several functional features. At the same time, outdoor apparel is increasingly subject to fashion criteria. The trending garments are a hybrid between outdoor action and lifestyle. "The outdoor product category is no longer just limited to mountain climbers looking for pants that zip into shorts," said Julien Durant, Co-Founder of Picture Organic Clothing. As we speak, outdoor is evolving into its own lifestyle, replete with a unique language and dress code.

TECHNICAL PERFORMANCE MEETS STYLE

As the common ground between the fashion and outdoor markets continues to grow, the design DNA of Mons Royale has matured into a versatile combination of style and technical performance. "All so that you can bring optimal performance to your next adventures while also looking great," said Natalia Norman, Head of Product. At RMBLR, Co-Founder Fred Coyle said it's all about designing products that "work perfectly in the city just as much as in the mountains." HippyTree's Director of Sales, Josh Sweeney says, "we have strong climbing and surfing ambassadors and make products that can perform to the highest standards regardless of the elements they find themselves in. Roark Revival also designs their gear to work "from the hiking trail to the bar. We strive to fulfill this goal by creating technical products that withstand the elements in any type of climate, but also have the style to be worn in an upscale location for a glass of whiskey." Plenty Humanwear positions its brand between outdoor apparel and urban fashion label, and "bridges the gap" between

both segments. "We are creating a line between both. A fine line exploring both sides with the goal of creating unique looks," said Catherine Bernier, Marketing & Creative Strategist. In order to hold their ground against the major outdoor brands, Roark Revival is aiming at a very specific target group in the outdoor market: "the traveling adventurer." Because consumers are involved in various outdoor activities and lifestyles, it's becoming increasingly hard for a single brand to cover all needs. "Having a focused position in your assortment and branding is a must... But what will help further validate and differentiate companies in such a large market now is how you compliment that with brand initiatives and identifying a need or potential use that you can't find in current marketplace," Roark Revival.

SUSTAINABILITY

Aside from blending style and performance, sustainability is an important trend in the outdoor apparel segment. "As an industry manufacturing equipment for nature, we should be role models in sustainable production," said Moritz Lorenz, Founder at Jeckybeng. In order to reduce their environmental footprint, brands are emphasizing environment-friendly manufacturing methods together with a long product lifespan. "Nowadays it is more important than ever to consider what we purchase and reduce the impact on the environment," said RMBLR, a member of 1% For the Planet, adding: "We don't follow any trends but locally manufacture timeless products. This helps us reduce damage to the environment and support regional manufacturing sites." The growing amount of waste and a lack of consumer consciousness for the pollution of our oceans has inspired Brian Linton to start the brand United By Blue. But he is also aware that "change will not happen overnight." In order to combat oceanic waste, United By Blue has vowed to "clean up around half a kilo of garbage in the ocean for each product sold." Burton vows for the longevity of their products with a lifetime warranty, while also conforming to Bluesign standards in their

*“It’s a must to maintain a targeted position in your collection and branding... What separates one brand from the rest are targeted marketing initiatives and the focus on a need or potential not to be found anywhere else on the current market.” – **Roark Revival***

softgoods collections. Nikwax offers a range of cleaning and coating solutions that not only protect outdoor clothes from the elements, but also extends their lifespan. Tom Willox, PR Manager at Nikwax says: “Our products make clothing last longer. They support longevity and enable people to save money and protect the atmosphere.” Not only the brands, consumers are also increasingly focused on sustainable production methods. As Eron Chorney, Senior Manager of Product Line at Arc’teryx, explained: “Sustainability and ethical sourcing and production standards are immensely important to customers.”



photo : Nikwax

MARKETING STORIES

Going into SS19, marketing stories and collection themes are as diverse as the brands themselves. Arc’teryx places a focus on hiking, climbing, and running with a functional, lightweight and long-lasting collection while celebrating its community: We are “celebrating those that live at the edge.” Mons Royale has added some bike shorts to the bike capsule collection, because “cycling is a major theme for us in 2019.” Picture Organic Clothing calls its SS19 outdoor collection the Summer Expedition Line, inspired by the fast pace of major Northern European cities with a blend of technical and stylish clothing. “This collection will take you from outdoor adventures to the office, from bike rides to subway commutes,” said Julien Durant, Co-Founder, Picture Organic Clothing. HippyTree’s user generated #52weeksofnature creates content on a weekly basis, while picking four winners per week, each of which having \$100 donated to either Access Fund or Surfrider Foundation on their behalf. As well as generated content and giving to charity, the campaign also gives the brand “a great way for us to get back to our photography roots and inspire the next generation of photographers to pursue their dreams,” says Josh.

For Plenty Humanwear, versatility is key in 2019. The label is also paying homage to outdoor fans who spend as much time as possible in nature. “We want to honour all the versatile humans, not necessarily the pro athletes, who are active out there every day.” Meanwhile, Jeckybang demands: “Go outside! Experience your own adventures, not the ones you see on social media.”

MATERIALS + TECHNICAL FEATURES

Picture Organic Clothing has developed a range of environment-friendly fabrics “that are breathable thanks to body mapping construction,” as well as “water and wind repellent to keep comfortable and dry in any type of weather.” They also “incorporate stretch in order to keep clothing comfy during activities with high and low intensity levels,” apparent in their Arcadia Light Jacket. Over at Arc’teryx, the team sees customers looking for lightweight and comfortable products, while breathability is key. For the running segment, the brand has developed the Incendo SL jacket with a zone-based material composition weighing in at a mere 80 grams, while “eliminating every possible gram without any compromise on protective functionality.” For extremely hot days, Roark Revival has designed the Bless Up Woven Shirt featuring a mesh construction crafted from a nylon-polyester-stretch fabric “in an extremely breathable and comfortable finish, especially in tropical climates.” Mons Royale continues to bank on their Merino-Tencel blends that “create a fresh feeling on hot days,” as well as the ventilation

principle AirCon. RMBLR incorporates wool and a number of natural fibres, crafted into the brand’s most popular socks “by the country’s best sock workshops in Leicester.” The brand is also researching the addition of hemp fibres into their products. Majola has already incorporated hemp stretch, while United By Blue manufactures some of the SS19 looks from organic cotton, recycled polyester and hemp.

Gore-Tex remains an important material across collections: Maloja named their Gore-Tex ShakeDry-Jacket for road bike touring as their standout product for SS19. Burton also implements Gore-Tex, for instance in the GORE Packrite Jacket, together with temperature-adjusting tech in the Living Line, organic cotton, RPET and DryRide technology. What’s more, packable styles are becoming an increasing collection focus. The Traveller Poncho by Wave Hawaii was also built with portability in mind: “It’s perfect for all travellers, as its package rolls into its hood. Supplemented by the buttoning system, you always have a travel pillow at hand.” For Plenty Humanwear, the most important technical features and materials include, “packable clothing and foldable memory foam in the lids of caps.”

“As an industry manufacturing equipment for nature, we should be role models in sustainable production.”
*Moritz Lorenz, Founder at **Jeckybang***


SILHOUETTES & STYLES

When it comes to styles and silhouettes, collections are a mixed bag in SS19. While Mons Royale silhouettes stay close to classic and slim fits, Burton places an emphasis on “clean cuts with a focus on prints.” Arc’teryx will serve “silhouettes that flow away from the body to offer the wearer a full range of motion without sacrificing style.” Clean lines and a loose fit, inspired by traditional “working class” clothing is the main theme for Picture. “Concerning colour and print, we are using pastels and ones with a kind of zebra print to match with an urban style, different from the very flashy colours we are used to seeing on outdoor apparel collections.” According to Maloja, prints continue to be in high demand, “while streetwear is loosening up after years of tighter silhouettes.”

ACCESSORIES

All the mentioned features apply also for Camping Gear. “It has always been important to us at Heimplanet to develop sustainable, good looking and, above all, uncompromisingly functional products,” explains Stefan Clauss, Co-founder of Heimplanet. He also addresses the multi-functionality of products that become “daily companions” and create a counter trend to fast fashion: “Why change your backpack for every activity, if you can have one for everything?” The James Brand are also dealing in daily companions, not least their new knife, the Ellis. “It’s designed to have a couple of blades to help you handle the most pressing issues that come up in everyday life.” Capping off accessories, maybe not such a daily necessity, but still something that’ll brighten your camping experience is the Petromax Waffle Iron; compact, robust and purveyors of fine waffles!

OUTLOOK

The trend towards spending time in the outdoors continues to intensify. According to analysts at outdoor.markt, the growth rate seems to hold and the growth of past years will last into 2019. But anyone looking to win over customers in this highly contested market needs to play current trends in a smart way. Customers want smart materials and designs that support wearers out in open nature just as much as in the city or the office. And due to the strong connection to nature, the outdoor segment favours products with proven longevity. All aspects of the outdoor market follow the mantra: “Collect experiences over things,” said the team at Arc’teryx. 

HIGHLIGHTS

- Outdoor lifestyle crossover
- Longevity in products
- Sustainable production
- Packable styles



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photo : TSG

SKATE HELMETS & PROTECTION RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE 2019

Wearing safety gear is a no-brainer for a young generation of beginners, while more and more seasoned skateboarders stay protected by padding up. Skate Helmets & Protection
Retail Buyer's Guide 2019 by SOURCE Skateboard Editor **Dirk Vogel**.

tudes toward protective gear are changing among core skateboarders. For decades, street skaters would scoff at safety gear, only donning it after the damage was already done. Salman Agah spent his entire career fluctuating between a cast and wrist guard. And while some of today's leading vert rippers still refuse to pad up and wear helmets – looking at you, Chris Russel and Clay Kreiner – riders like Mike Vallety set an example by always skateboarding with helmets. And did you know that leading street skaters wear body protectors under their baggy shirts when it's time drop hammers?

The anti-protection attitude is crumbling, especially among new beginners. "Skateboarding is definitely in a growth phase. Although many core skaters choose not to wear a helmet full time, helmets for the younger generation are a must as well as the older skate population who are having kids and want to lead by example," said Kevin Sansalone, Sandbox Founder. "Same as with winter sports enthusiasts, it seems as though more skaters are switching on to the concept that protecting your dome is a good idea," according to Bern.

Retailers can play their part by dedicating floor space to protective gear and stocking pro-tested products from core companies. "Our main story certainly is our company slogan 'designed by riders'. We are riders ourselves and know what needs a product must fulfil. But even more important is the constant exchange with our pro riders. They use the products day and night and are very critical," said Jordi Torres, TSG Designer & Art Director, adding: "Our team riders use exactly the same products that are out in the shops for our customers. We don't do special team designs that are not available for sale."

MARKET & PRICEPOINTS

Speaking of sales, forecasts for the protective skateboard gear segment are muted at best. While the global skateboarding equipment market is expected to exceed \$5 billion by 2020 (Technavio),

protective gear is expected to generate more than \$1.3 billion. Safety gear has the smallest share compared to hardware and softgoods, and Technavio analysts expect the segment "posting the slowest rate growth rate over the next five years." By ways of explanation, the report offers that safety gear is highly restricted to professional skateboarders, while regulations prescribing mandatory safety gear are lacking. But on a bright note, "visibility and awareness" are growing.

Awareness begins in retail, for instance with POS displays and racks provided by almost all endemic helmet and pad companies. As a major sales argument, skateboard-specific protection offers significant value – meaning certification and advanced technologies – at comparative attractive rates. The main price window for helmets crystalizes around €44.95 right now, while pro-level knee pads cost as little as €34.95.

Further added value comes from the fact that most skate helmets can easily cross over into sports such as snowboarding, mountain biking, and kayaking. Brands are actively serving this trend, which has also lead to an influx of skate helmets with visors such as the Sandbox "Classic 2.0 Street" model, among many examples. To hear R.P. Bess, Global Brand Director Pro-Tec, tell it: "We offer helmets and protection to skate, bike, water sports, and snow. Technologies differ across the different categories but we see the crossover of our products from category to category an opportunity for customers to experience new technologies in categories where it's not widely accepted." Bern has been "seeing a big increase in liner sales that allow our customers to seamlessly switch from summer riding to winter shredding," and they emphasize the Macon All-Season (winter-upgrade compatible) skate helmet. Tobias Dray, Brand Manager at REKD said: "REKD Helmets are perfect for longboards just as much as they are BMX or scooters, and the same goes for our pad ranges, too." For kids and young adults, Bern has the Ollie and

*“Skateboarding is definitely in a growth phase. Although many core skaters choose not to wear a helmet full time, helmets for the younger generation are a must as well as the older skate population who are having kids and want to lead by example.” Kevin Sansalone, **Sandbox** Founder*

Nollie models. “EGG is working intensively launching its new helmet, multi-purpose (ski, skate, bike). Estimated release by the end of this year,” said Charly Heusschen.

HELMETS: CERTIFIED SAFETY

Even quality helmets have a limited life span, and all EPS (expanded poly styrene) helmets should be replaced every three years or after a major impact. Retailers need to communicate this fact to customers, while stocking certified models according to international safety standards. All brands include certification info in their marketing materials and packaging, including safety seals such as EN1078, CE, ASTM, AS/NZS 2063:2008, and CPSC. Also look for a new wave of helmets incorporating MIPS protection (see Helmet Technologies).



photo : Sandbox

HELMET DESIGNS: LIGHTWEIGHT AND CLASSIC

Realistically, not much has changed since Pro-Tec nailed the formula for hard-shell polyurethane helmets in 1978 with the Full-Tec helmet model; which later evolved into the half-shell “skate helmet” still popular today. The main difference, however, is that today’s helmets are much lighter and better ventilated. “We feel that the classic skate style helmet will always lead the helmet market. The aim now is to make the best helmet possible that fits into that style. Consumers are moving away from non-certified helmets to make a fully certified, lightweight skate helmet the perfect direction to go in. Our new In-Mold helmet will do just that,” said Kevin at REKD.

Next season’s biggest seller remains the classic half-shell helmet with models such as the Classic Skate (Pro-Tec), Meta (TSG), Macon (Bern), Certified Sweatsaver (Triple 8), Elite (REKD), and Legend Street (Sandbox). Next to lightweight EPS liners and EVA pads, also look for adjustability options like TSG’s “Dial Fit System for a perfect fit on the move. Additional adjustment via interior pads allows the helmet to be optimally adapted to the shape and size of the head.” The comeback of full-cut helmets, worn by pioneers such as Mark Gonzales, is a major trend this season. “We have seen a huge resurgence for our Full Cut or Full-Tec over the ear helmet in skate and bike. It being our 45 year anniversary we have also added the Full Cut in the Snow line as well,” said R.P. at Pro-Tec.

HELMET TECHNOLOGIES: IMPACT-READY

The trend towards in-mould helmets continues to build, including REKD’s pairing of heavy-duty ABS (Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene) in the outer shell with high density EPS (Expanded Polystyrene) for the inner mould, and similar concepts across several brands. Bern packs performance tech with the Zipmold+ liquid foam technology. Last season’s trend of softshell helmets that perform like hardshells continues across several brands. Triple 8 addresses the problem of sweat in the Certified Sweatsaver helmet, pairing high-impact EPS foam with a proprietary Sweatsaver liner. The rotational impact protection system from MIPS has found its way into several line-ups, including Triple 8, while Pro-Tec has already implemented it in snow and bike with skate coming next. “Skate may not be looking for it just yet, but they will have access to it.”

HELMET STYLING: BRING ON THE COLOURS

Much like skateboard shoes, helmets sell best when they are fully black. But dark colours may backfire under extreme sunlight by drawing heat, plus today’s kids ask for more variety. Next season,

look out for camouflage prints from various brands, subtle earth colours, brighter accents and geometric patterns (Pro-Tec), black-gray-camo (REKD), and metal flakes and glittery paints (TSG). Also similar to skate shoes, the trending colour for next season is burgundy. Pink helmets are also trending among young girls, one of the biggest growth markets at the moment (also see Retail Buyer’s Guide in this issue).

PADS: FOCUS ON QUALITY

While pads may not require replacement as often as helmets, buying the right pads makes all the difference in the long run. The market is flooded with cheap, commodity offerings and “beginner sets”, but true quality lives at the core shop. Retailers need to steer (young) customers towards certified quality, said Nadja Herger, Marketing/Communication at TSG: “The fact that all our pads are certified and that we comply with the guidelines of the new EU regulation (EU) 2016/425 for personal protective equipment, we need to communicate more.” For added value, skateboard pads cross over into other sports, but always should be checked for their suitability.

PAD DESIGNS: FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Today’s skateboard pads offer an unprecedented level of flexibility, thanks to viscoelastic foams such as TSG’s Arti-Lage soft foam that uses body heat to adapt perfectly to the curvature of the knees and absorbs up to 95% of impact energy. REKD implements ergonomic knee recesses on the Protection Pro Ramp Knee Pads, paired with butterfly closure on the rear of the pad. Pointing out the major trend in pad design for next season, Nadja at TSG said: “High quality protectors for kids. Kids start younger and go more extreme. So, they need pro pads in kids’ sizes. In 2019 we will launch our Force III kneepads in a youth version to follow this development.” Next to traditional pads featuring hard caps, soft pads that can be worn under clothing have been gaining traction over past seasons, including Triple 8’s Exoskin line and offerings from TSG and REKD. In the downhill segment, slide gloves are gaining traction, including REKD’s model with palm impact support and sweat absorbing micro fibre on the thumb at €44.95 RRP.

Our team riders use exactly the same products that are out in the shops for our customers. We don't do special team designs that are not available for sale.” Jordi Torres, TSG Designer & Art Director

PAD STYLING: SPLASHES OF FLAIR

In another unwritten rule of skateboarding, knee and elbow pads also come in any colour riders want, as long as it’s black. But anyone familiar with Skateboard Hall of Famer Steve Alba knows that a little flair by ways of tiger stripes can go a long way. For next season, Smith blends in leopard skin and “Pszcho Rasta” patterns, Pro-Tec has a cool checkerboard pattern in knee and elbow pads, while One Eight Seven pads made royal blue their calling card. Several brands also offer replacement hard caps in a rainbow of colours to let riders customize their pads. Because after all, safety may come first, but individual style should never come second. 📌

HIGHLIGHTS

- Crossover helmets
- In-mould and full helmets
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WOMEN’S SKATEBOARDING IN 2018

MARKET PERSPECTIVE

Is female participation the next big growth market in skateboarding?
Perspective and retail strategies by SOURCE Skateboard **Editor Dirk Vogel.**

Let’s face it: Women in skateboarding have occupied a fringe position all these years. Sure, the first skateboarder to ever bring skateboarding into millions of households was a woman; Patti McGee performing a rolling handstand on a 1965 cover of LIFE magazine. And yes, our industry has elevated women to the pro ranks, including trailblazers such as Cindy Whitehead (1970s), Cara-Beth Burnside (1980s), Elissa Steamer (1990s), Vanessa Torres and Louisa Menke (2000s). But they were the exception, not the rule. Especially keeping in mind that the company named Girl Skateboards is about to turn 25 years old without ever sponsoring an actual girl.

Now the tide is turning. Arbor’s Skateboard Marketing Manager, Nate Shute says once they noticed a real uptick in female board sales, they started making women-specific shapes. “We estimate that 35% of all Arbor Skateboards are sold to women. That number increases to 45% at our flagship store in Venice. Based on Arbor’s success with women, we started developing skateboards specifically for women.” And the brand also notices “50% of our most popular Instagram posts feature women skating.” At Penny, girl skaters account for 40% of their audience and the brand is upping their female marketing offering: “Our Spring 18 campaign centered around the incredibly talented female skateboarder Elise Crigar, and we continue to partner with female artists, athletes and influencers each season.”

With Nikita’s brand slogan ‘For Girls Who Ride’, they’re a truly endemic female skate brand. “We work with and collaborate with female skateboarders across all levels of our brand, from our core employees, to our athletes, to the creatives we collaborate with, to

*Feedback from some of our retailers has seen a growth in sales to female skaters who are starting to skate from ages as young as 6 years old.” Jamie Smith, Brand Manager at **Enuff Skateboards***

photographers and filmers- these people are all so dynamic and offer such rich creative drive and input that Nikita would not be what it is today without them.”

PARTICIPATION

Desiree Moore, Dwindle Marketing Director, reports a recent spike in participation and says: “The digital era has made it easier for girls to find other females to connect with, look up to, and learn from. In addition there are also more skate programs, camps and classes directed towards females, giving them more learning tools and space to grow their skills. With the Olympics on the horizon, we forecast the numbers of female participants to grow on a global level.” From a mainstream perspective, the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo will further legitimize the role of women in skateboarding, as an equal number of male and female riders are going to participate. “Skateboarding at the moment is in a relatively good place with more facilities in the UK than ever before. Plus, with its introduction to the 2020 Olympics, it is becoming more socially accepted. Feedback from some of our retailers has seen a growth in sales to female skaters who are starting to skate from ages as young as 6 years old,” said

*“Having just one item of each style on a rack is not what women want to see. It looks like leftovers. And we feel that it’s an afterthought. If we see three of the same style tee on that rack, we know you get it, and are investing in product just for us.” Kristin Lawson, **GN4LW***

Jamie Smith, Brand Manager at Enuff Skateboards. Speaking of young participants, several organizations such as GN4LW, Skate Like a Girl, and Camp Rubicon in the UK are hosting specific initiatives to bring girls on board. This year, Vans will host more than 100 girl skateboarding clinics in major cities such as Brooklyn, Chicago, London, St. Petersburg, Shanghai, Bangalore, São Paulo, and Mexico City through the ‘This Is Off The Wall’ campaign. “As a brand, we want to ensure that we grow skateboarding participation worldwide and support the creative culture that goes with it. Everything from shining a light on emerging women’s skateboarding communities around the world through the campaign, to providing premium performance skateboarding footwear for women, and expanding the Vans Park Series 2018 Pro Tour season with the addition of two more Women’s World Championship qualifying events in Brazil and France,” said Laura Doherty, Global Public Relations at Vans.

MARKET & PRODUCTS

Retailers today have a wealth of women-specific product to choose from, starting with street and ramp pro models for riders including Nora Vasconcellos (Welcome Skateboards), Lizzie Armanto (Birdhouse), Leticia Bufoni (Plan B), Samarria Brevard (enjoi), Alana Smith (Hoopla), Lacey Baker, Vanessa Torres, and Lore Bruggeman (Meow). Almost created collaboration decks and a complete board with outreach organization Skateistan and Almost flow skater Sky Brown, available for pre-order now. Jamie Smith at Enuff maintains that his brand’s shapes can be ridden by riders of all genres and Romy Bertrand at Element Europe suggested: “I see most of the girl skaters skating 8.3 to 9 inch decks!” Spitfire wheels offer Lacey Baker pro edition Formula Fours, Bones has a Lizzie Armanto pro wheel, Samarria Brevard has a model on RICTA Wheels and Nora Vasconcellos endorses signature OJ Wheels and Krux Trucks. The Girl is NOT a 4 Letter Word (GN4LW) brand sells a unique line of girl-specific apparel with stylish tees, flannels, and tank tops – featuring slogans like ‘Pretty Radical’ and ‘It’s Not About Pretty!’ – and has developed various products in collaboration with other brands, including XS Helmets. The latest drop is a complete with Dusters California and artist Priscilla Witte: The GN4LW “GIRL POWER” cruiser skateboard featuring Tensor trucks and Dusters Wheels. A portion of the sales benefit the social outreach program Bridge to Skate. Says GN4LW founder Cindy Whitehead: “We are also a Not-for-Profit, so we give 100% of our sales back to girls in skateboarding via 501c3’s, micro grants, contests, and supporting our team riders.” Helmet and protector companies such as TSG, Pro-Tec, Sandbox, Rekd, and Bern also sponsor female pros and offer specific safety equipment for women. R.P. Bess, Global Brand Director at Pro-Tec says: “Women’s is a huge growth area for action sports in general so we see it as a big potential business. We’ve been a supporter of women in action sports for years by sponsoring riders in all categories we’re involved in.” Wearing a pink helmet even holds cultural significance among young girl shredders – follow @pinkhelmetposse to see why.

In the longboard and cruiser segment, companies including Sector 9, Arbor, Globe, OB Five, Jucker Hawaii, Madrid, Flying Wheels, Goldcoast and more have been offering products aimed at women for years. Arbor released the world’s first women’s-specific boards line, the Solstice Collection, and now collaborates with Boarding For Breast Cancer. “From shape selection to construction, to material selection and graphic development, to content creation and overall presentation, to how Arbor gives back; the Solstice endeavour is run by Arbor Women for women who skate,” said Rachael Fritz, at ArborGirls. Sector 9 also has something special on deck: “We are proud to introduce the Tia Pro, the signature skateboard for professional surfer and Sector 9 team rider Tia Blanco. This is the first time we’ve ever worked with a female rider to develop a specific board, and it ended up being a highly functional skateboard.”

WINNING RETAIL STRATEGIES

1. Show commitment. Score points by dedicating, “a specific area, rack or rounder” to women’s products, said Kristin Lawson, at GN4LW, adding: “Having just one item of each style on a rack is not what women want to see. It looks like leftovers. And we feel that it’s an afterthought. If we see three of the same style tee on that rack, we know you get it, and are investing in product just for us.” Also consider separate dressing rooms for female customers and ask brands for POS materials featuring girl skaters. And keep it neat, said



photo : Dusters

Maui at Sector 9: “Ladies hate mixed-up presentations of skateboards. So a rather coherent and branded look is very important. And if you want to target women specifically, try the Bamboo Boards. Also if the quality doesn’t hit the expectations you will lose.”

2. Be social. Desiree at Dwindle encourages retailers to, “help facilitate a female community in their shop and be welcoming to newcomers.” For starters, you can tap into a wealth of content on social media and also learn a lot about what’s hot and trending in female skateboarding. Follow accounts such as @girlsshred, @girlsskatenetwork, @theskatewitches, @skateliteagirl, @girlisnota4letterword, @pinkhelmetposse, @meowskateboards and use hashtags like #skateliteagirl, #girlskater and #ladiesofshred for your own posts. Jamie at Enuff skateboards, who create tons of social media posts around their team rider Roxana Howlett, has a pro tip: “If you’re building web banners for your store, use men one week and next time you swap it up and put your female rider in.”

3. Walk the walk. Aside from creating a welcoming atmosphere in your shop, consider sponsoring female skaters and events. Just follow Sector 9’s example: “In our brand history we can look back on a long list of highly skilled ladies that wave the Niner flag. Erica Hosseini, Jen Smith, Gayla Berkefeldt are just some of the most iconic names.” Jamie at Enuff is on the same page: “In all honesty, just give girls as much time in the spot light as possible. If a shop has a team with both men and women, do a promotion of them skating together to show how inclusive it can be.” Showcasing this level of support will ultimately get your shop noticed: “Girls see you are female-friendly and have products just for them and they will support you,” said Cindy Whitehead at GN4LW.

Industry insiders are hopeful about the future of women in skateboarding, including Romy Bertrand at Element: “Time will tell. There is a more fashionable aspect to skateboarding as a whole these days, but it could stick this time around as everyone’s mind seems more open than before.” Jamie at Enuff is convinced: “Females in skateboarding are a growing market, which, if nurtured correctly, could be even bigger benefiting the whole of the skate industry.”

HIGHLIGHTS

- Women’s divisions in global competitions
- Increased media presence
- Global women’s skate clinics
- Young girls getting on board
- Support from core brands
- Influx of women-specific product
- Appreciation for girl-friendly shops
- Social media movement for #skategirls



photo : Nikita

WOMEN'S STREETWEAR RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SS19

Street culture is all the rage these days, and the fashion business is full of brands looking to share the streetwear mantle. From high fashion to activewear companies, they all follow the streetwear market for inspiration. Our Retail Buyer's Guide for Women's Street Wear has all the latest looks from boardsports-based brands for SS19. By **Natalia Maruniak**.

TRENDS

"Most recently, we've all been influenced by 90s-inspired streetwear, and this trend seems to be one we can count on sticking around for a while," said Nikita's Lifestyle Apparel Designer, Elise Roy. For its SS19 women's collection, the Scandinavian brand offers more sportswear silhouettes with fashion tweaks, ruched waistlines, lots of nylon "Golden Girls"-inspired windbreakers, and a hint of "lazy" styling. This attitude is also reflected in graphics with a Miami Beach vibe. Almost all brands focus heavily on catchy graphics and prints this season. Santa Cruz delivers colourful neon accents paired with impactful prints. For Berlin-based brand Iriedaily, "expressive, tropical patterns on dresses and pants are a must." The label is inspired by 1980s-style colour blocking, while sweaters and jackets incorporate fresh and bold colour combinations. In true "mix-and-match" style, all Iriedaily collection items invite free combinations: sweats with colour blocking play nicely with all-over-prints and Hawaii-inspired embroidery. Brixton is also taking a trip down memory lane to bring the "Dance Hall/ Rocksteady music and culture of the seventies and eighties," back to the streets. At Protest, the focus lies with structural details as well as ribbons and bows, blending functionality with design: "Functional straps take on a decorative role as they are knotted, crossed and made into patterns."

Sustainability is another major trend for SS19 across the board. More and more consumers demand sustainable fabrics and environment-friendly manufacturing processes; which ultimately affects their wardrobe choices. Ragwear are among the streetwear labels with a focus on developing sustainable concepts. Their PETA-approved vegan collections are crafted from natural and recycled raw materials. Iriedaily, whose clothing is predominantly manufactured

"Most recently, we've all been influenced by '90s-inspired streetwear, and this trend seems to be one we can count on sticking around for a while." Elise Roy, Lifestyle Apparel Designer, Nikita

in Portugal, is championing better working conditions in the textiles industry as a member of the Fair Wear Foundation, especially in countries such as Bangladesh, India, and China.

THEMES

"If you can't bring the city to the beach, bring the beach to the city," claims Iriedaily with a collection grounded in tropical patterns and prints, full of palm trees, hula dancers and colourful stripes. Ragwear is also feeling the tropical vibe next season, as the team draws inspiration from the Caribbean islands reflected in floral patterns, pastel colours, and delicate all-over prints. At Protest, the collection is dominated by a fun-loving vibe: "For this Spring/Summer 19 collection, we have been inspired by the idea of Shangri-La - a paradise here on earth, a summer utopia. For us, it's a place where there's a great swell, the sun is shining and the sand is between your toes." Protest is also combining functional features with a streetwear look in order to bridge the gap between beaches and streets with their looks. Brunotti stays true to its roots and combines streetwear with boardsports Look for sweatshirts with a neoprene-like material or bold zippers otherwise found on wetsuits. And true to tradition, the ocean features front and centre in upcoming Brunotti collections.

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“If you can’t bring the city to the beach, bring the beach to the city.”
Ines Schwitzky, Category Manager Womens, **Iriedaily**

Makia is not looking towards tropical escapes, but finds design inspirations for new collections in their native city of Helsinki and the surrounding natural landscapes. As a result, the brand offers wearers practical clothing for everyday wear. “Our goal is to minimise the problem of getting dressed appropriately, so you’ll have time to worry about the bigger picture. Whether it means waking up to a hectic routine with kids, an overwhelming day at work, or just plain harsh weather,” said Elina Lappalainen, Women’s Designer.

For SS19, Nikita is further expanding its initial “Girls Who Ride” ethos. “Summer and sun are the perfect combination for getting out with your crew of girls and exploring new skateparks, finding late-season side-hits in the snow or heading out at night to see a new favourite musician on tour in town.” The collection reflects this approach in a successful blend between East Coast beach vibes and Japanese influences.



photo : Brixton

COLOURS

Pastels are the hot ticket in SS19 colour palettes. Nikita paints the season in a mix of pastels, bold green and earth tones. Iriedaily is banking on, “summer pastels mixed with bright colours like yellow and bright green,” much like Ragwear. Makia features summery shades of pink, light blues, yellow as well as basic black-and-white. Strong retro colours and colour blocking inform the Brunotti collection next to soft tones. Protest segments its line into two collections: the first story is earthy tones with beet red and olive green at its centre, the accent colours are bright. The second colour group is blue-grey with blues and orange with a marvellous bright red as accent. Santa Cruz is counting on bright orange and lime green, paired with lavender. Brixton is all about warm red hues, while also catering to fans of eye-catching looks: “Gold is a key colour throughout our Spring women’s collection.”

PATTERNS & PRINTS

Prints and graphics remain in high demand. “Patterns, prints as well as mini embroideries are the most important part in the collection,” said the team at Iriedaily, whose all-over prints on viscose and jersey create a summer-ready vibe. Nikita is styling with fun all-over-repeats in Harajuku fashion, while Ragwear enters the season with plenty of prints, including animal patterns, as well as geometric and nature-inspired shapes. Brunotti offers leopard stripes together with florals and palm tree patterns. Protest discovered dot prints as, “a fresh simple print that goes with everything, it signals the summer and

comes with a playful vibe.” Santa Cruz is also sticking with its bold prints, including gingham and a repeat print using elements of Jim Phillips original ‘Salba Witch Doctor’ artwork on a number of different tops.

Aside from prints and patterns, brands are differentiating their looks with small embroideries, lace, and Broderie Anglaise for a sense of lofty summer freshness. Protest’s floaty Anyze dress has, “a mix of solid fabric and broderie anglaise – a beautiful dress to take you through your festival days.” For another eye catcher, look no further than Iriedaily’s “Fleuri Sweat” with impactful floral embroidery.

Collabs also look large over SS19 collections. Nikita presents a range of graphics in cooperation with artist Victoria Jones, reminiscent of a blend between Santa Monica Pier culture and a hint of grunge. Iriedaily joined forces with artist Juli Jah, while Makia created a capsule collection with Finland-based streetwear brand CTRL including prints by label founder Mr. Freeman. The CTRL-Makia capsule is not just for girls, but based on the current unisex fashion trend.

“For this Spring/Summer 19 collection, we have been inspired by the idea of Shangri-La - a paradise here on earth, a summer utopia. For us, it’s a place where there’s a great swell, the sun is shining and the sand is between your toes.” Katrina Stronkhorst, Marketing Team, **Protest**

SILHOUETTES

Going into SS19, silhouettes are versatile and cater to all tastes. The oversized trend of past seasons is still alive and well for warm weather season. Iriedaily is serving this trend with a range of boyfriend fits, especially in sweatshirts like the slightly oversized ‘Different Hoodie’ featuring a logo on the front and embroidery on the back. Makia is also pursuing a relaxed approach, with outfits naturally draped in a loose and elegant fit.

Nikita is unveiling new jacket concepts in its windbreaker collection, with the ‘Gauge Windbreaker’ as a key look in a “cool streetwear vibe”. The sleeves are adorned with branding, while micro flower prints add refined accents supplemented by ventilation strips to keep wearers cool on sessions at the skate park. Ragwear is also going into SS19 with new jackets concepts. “As the last seasons short jackets were really strong we believe that the trend is going to change to longer jackets.” Iriedaily is placing emphasis on cropped tops and tees, Santa Cruz has boxy looks and a revival of cigarette trousers in store. Nikita is expanding its denim collections with new styles, but also offers the usual range of chino pants, including the new ‘Deck Pant’ with hemmed legs. “It’s our bread and butter of pant options for our rippers.”

Spring/Summer collections would never be complete without dresses. For Ragwear, the centrepiece is the ‘TAG’-dress featuring a summery all-over print. “With its short sleeve, the lovely belt and the small details it’s perfect for all occasions during the summer. You can wear it to go to the beach or even for a nice evening in a restaurant.” For the team at Protest, their ‘Cam’-skirt is a must-have with a bow that turns a rather simple garment into an elegant showpiece. For ladies looking for that final accessory to pull an outfit together, Brixton has you covered: The ‘Audrey Beret’ in a black-and-white animal print elevates every outfit with a cool street vibe.👓

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sportswear silhouettes with fashion detailing
- Impactful graphics
- All-over prints
- Summery pastel tones
- Boyfriend styles

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Photo : Supra

BIG WIG INTERVIEW SUPRA’S SASCHA WEIL

Sascha Weil serves as SUPRA’s EMEA Brand Director and since joining the company in 2017 he’s taken some key decisions including cleaning up distribution and limited marketing budgets and tackled them head on with a refreshing approach. Sascha started out in the action sports biz working for O’Neill in 2002 and after 12 years with the company Sascha decided to leave the company for a stint away from boardsports, but when SUPRA came calling, he couldn’t resist. Interview by **Harry Mitchell Thompson**.

Sascha, could you tell us about your history in action sports. You served as EMEA marketing manager at O’Neill for over a decade?
Like many kids growing up in Holland in the 80s, I was hooked on windsurfing. World Cups in Scheveningen drew a crowd of 200,000 people easily back then and I spent every free minute on the water. After high school, I went to Hawaii for a year and also took up surfing. That was 1991. Coming back to Europe a year later, the water was too cold during wintertime so we drove to the Alps to go snowboarding in order to get our fix. After university and some other adventures, I landed a job with O’Neill in 2002 – I was so stoked! I couldn’t believe that I got paid for doing what I loved, being involved in all three sports, around the globe, doing international marketing, which I had studied. Really, how many jobs like these are there? So I felt very fortunate and logged many hours that didn’t feel like work at all. Unfortunately, like many surf brands, O’Neill suffered from other trends and internal struggles. After almost 12 years, it was time for me to leave. I focused

on my family and my personal development, gaining more experience in sales and business leadership. Last year, I returned to the action sports business as Brand Director for SUPRA. It felt like coming home.

What were the most valuable lessons you learnt in your time away from action sports?
That it’s all about the money! Being in marketing at O’Neill, it was all about brand image, brand building and to a lesser extent, commercial sense. Cost savings, yes, but how much does this marketing investment truly add to the bottom line, hardly. At Buddha to Buddha, but also here at SUPRA, making money is what counts. Not only for the company, but also for our partner retailers. Without cash in the drawer, everything becomes pretty difficult. Our marketing budgets are pretty limited, so with every dollar spent, I make a very professional consideration: how does this support sell-through? Even if it’s about image, it should serve more than just that: how does this positively

I challenge my teams constantly to think as if they were entrepreneurs themselves - would you spend this if it was your own money?

affect SUPRA as a whole, and what are we building towards to? Also on the cost side, I can be picky, and I challenge my teams constantly to think as if they were entrepreneurs themselves - would you spend this if it was your own money?

What did you do between your time O’Neill and SUPRA?
At O’Neill, my main responsibilities were brand, retail and online marketing. I did this for so many years, that I felt that I had to supplement my knowledge and experience with sales and general business leadership. I seized the opportunity at Buddha to Buddha, an Amsterdam-based lifestyle brand, where I became General Manager. International expansion, key account sales, supply chain management and leading the company to sustainable growth was what I did for the next four years, but I missed the boardsports industry. When SUPRA crossed my path, I didn’t have to think twice.

What have been the highlights of the past 12 months for SUPRA and where are you placing marketing focus over the coming year?
SUPRA is on the rebound and it is great to be part of it. The brand was just sitting there for a couple of years, but with renewed energy, some very good and professional additions to the team and focus on product, brand and retail partnerships, the future looks very promising. Everyone in the team feels it. We started to clean up the market place and act as a partner for our retailers. Retailers are suffering tremendously these days, with the big brands squeezing them or abandoning them, and smaller brands not being able to help much. It is pretty tough out there, so we thought, “let’s team up with the guys who kept believing in us, are fair to us and know the consumer like no other.” Of course this cleaning up is quite an effort and has financial impact, but everything you give love and attention to, grows. And we’re in it for growth!

In terms of marketing, we have to make choices. The cleaning up costs a substantial part of the budget. Also, we know we cannot compete with the big brands at the moment. So our marketing focus is on credibility in the core skate market and by reaching the young, urban, trend-forward kids. Focus is also the mantra here – we cannot afford to waste only one dollar, so every dime spent, we think very well before doing so.

Please could you give us some strategic examples of what you mean by ‘cleaning things up’ in distribution.
Over the last couple of years, selling-in was what SUPRA did pre-dominantly without taking care of sell-through. The result was high stock positions at retailers and sell-through performance that was tapping from successes in the past. We discussed this with many of our accounts, took back stock, participated in marketing campaigns and made sell-in offers that made more sense. It was a hard pill to swallow, but absolutely needed, in order to come to a fresh start. Communication is always key in these situations.

How does SUPRA differentiate its marketing and product offering between lifestyle channels and performance skate?
Segmentation is one of the most important things while doing business in action sports. Not only to have a clear offering for a clear consumer group, but also to protect the retailer and the brand. SUPRA segments according to clear guidelines and the collection serves four different consumers and channels. We identify five different tiers, of which the core skate segment is of course the most important for us. But even within core skate, we segment, with Crown Coalition retailers at the absolute pinnacle of the pyramid.

‘Lifestyle’ is a very broad definition and can go from tier 0 to tier 5. We know our place in the market and know what stores could and

should be interested in certain parts of the collection. Our Estate Collection is edgy, trendy, qualitative and has this eyebrow-raising “keep SUPRA weird” signature. These are the eye catchers and something you see in tier 0 sneaker stores, in magazines and on the feet of the most exclusive influencers. They are very cool, do their job for the brand and keep the buzz going. But our mainstream lifestyle collection is probably even more important, because it is this fine line between commerciality, accessibility and yet our SUPRA signature. We want to stick out in a positive sense in everything we do.

Please could you name the five tiers of segmentation and who the target demographic is for each tier.
Tier 0 is for the Innovators, the premier sneaker accounts, very good for a brand’s image. Tier 1 are the Core Skate accounts, the ones who carry hard goods and are super credible in the skate market. Tier 2 are Specialty and Independent accounts where the consumer goes to buy the right brands for the right occasion of the moment. Tier 3 is a take-down from that, the better Department and Athletic accounts where the majority likes to get their staple products from. Tier 4 & 5 are the channels you want to stay away from as a substance brand and only use for clearance if necessary.

What’s your Amazon policy?
We’re reviewing our policy regarding online cross-border accounts at the moment, with in the back of our mind three important principles: fair partnerships to all, including retailers and distributors, commercial success, and decreasing complexity. We’re a small team and we want to hustle and not have to be tied up in bureaucracy, smoke and mirrors or a lot of extra work without reaping the benefits for it.

Of course this cleaning up is quite an effort and has financial impact, but everything you give love and attention to, grows. And we’re in it for growth!

What’s your strongest performing market in EMEA and how do you see this evolving over the next 3 years?
France with its boardsport culture has always been a big and important market for us, and it definitely will be on the top of our list. Germany is big, with some key, pan-European players. Although every market we’re in is important to us, they are not equally big. Take Romania for instance, what our guys over there do is absolutely amazing and a lot of the bigger countries can learn a lot from them. With minimal means in a market that is not known for its buying power, SUPRA is rocking in Romania and enjoys a very good image and a high awareness. So our guys there deserve all the love and attention they can get from us. At the same time, we know that many markets look at the US and UK for their trends, so our focus is to build the brand in these markets, and have local relevance in the others.

How are you combining direct sales with wholesale?
Direct sales adds to the visibility and image of the brand, and indirectly all wholesale customers benefit from that. I believe wholesale and direct complement each other, instead of being in each other’s way. With mutual respect we take our decisions, always with sustainable growth of the brand in our mind. And our retail partners play a very important role in this. Also, we never under-estimate our consumer, he is not stupid, he knows where he can get the information about the product, the best deal and the exclusives. There are so many components in deciding where to buy what product, in the end it’s about making SUPRA stronger as a whole and everyone will benefit.📍

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photo : Rip Curl

SWIMWEAR RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SS19

Swimwear in 2019 is all about giving women the choice between practical swimwear that looks great and/or high-fashion swimwear that still feels comfortable. Brands are creating swimwear that is the perfect combination of design merged with functionality with many citing their most popular pieces as either offering full coverage or skimpy coverage. High cut hipster briefs are just as popular as high-waisted retro bottoms with the middle ground evidently not being on-trend. Retail Buyer's Guide by **Ruth Cutts**.

TRENDS & SHAPES

Women want choices when it comes to their swimwear options and brands are taking inspiration from more than just what's currently fashionable in their SS19 collections; versatility, longevity and adaptability to all body types are just some of the added considerations. Wear Your Waste are bringing new shapes into their SS19 range with the addition of a one-piece swimsuit that "offers just the right amount of coverage for women who are not so keen on exposing so much of their body, yet like to feel sexy" alongside a new bikini bottom shape which "offers two positions so your level of coverage can be tuned to your mood on the day," explains Founder Rocio Enriquez.

When it comes to active swimwear, clean lines that create a minimalist aesthetic are proving popular with brands such as Protest eliminating any unnecessary seams, closures and other elements that might interfere with your fun in the water. Body Glove are using a lot of flat-lock seams on their active pieces to reduce the possibility of chafing and Picture Organic Clothing are using B-Stitched seams for added comfort and anti-irritation, "without forgetting to work on bringing in vintage style with original prints," explains Co-Founder Julien Durant proving that practicality doesn't necessarily mean sacrificing on style. Similarly, for Glidesoul their focus is on functionality whilst incorporating accentuated zips, tapes and trims which won't interfere with performance, "we are passionate

about shapes, comfort and usability of our products to provide the best solution for women to do all sorts of water sports," explains Glidesoul's Julia Pipchenko.

One of the most popular shapes at Rip Curl continues to be their one-piece swimsuit that features sleeves and a back zip fastening much like a wetsuit. Valerie Wieser, Head of Design at Rip Curl Girl, explains how their customers "are really liking the look of the swimsuit with the bikini print on so it looks trendy but can be worn for surfing too."

Active swimwear pieces certainly still hold a prominent spot in SS19 as a staple for women that are wanting practical pieces for surfing, SUP, kayaking etc, but these are now working alongside stylish crossover pieces that are designed for the streets as much as the beach.

Carmen Krijnen, Marketing Coordinator at Protest Sportswear explains: "Our design department is exceptional and we are known for how well we translate street trends into our clothing while not compromising on how our garments perform when on duty." Daniela Messina, Senior Women's Designer at Rusty echoes this statement explaining: "we design our ranges to merchandise effortlessly for the Rusty girl, ready to go from beach to bar." Stylish one-piece swimsuits that can be worn as bodysuits under denim shorts or

“Billabong explore the highest of high cuts, the cheekiest of bums and give more than a glimpse of side boob.”
*Christelle Kipping, **Billabong** Women’s Marketing Manager Europe*

bikini tops that double-up as bralettes to be worn with oversized rock t-shirts are on-trend.

Another key theme to look out for in SS19 is the vintage cut of the 80s one-piece; think a high-cut leg, plunging neckline and retro prints. Christelle Kipping, Billabong Women’s Marketing Manager Europe, explains that within their SS19 swimwear range they “explore the highest of high cuts, the cheekiest of bums and give more than a glimpse of side boob.” Protest have followed suit bringing the deep plunge neckline into their range, “taking our cue from the evolving street trend of diving necklines, we’ve interpreted this into our swimwear”, Carmen Krijnen explains.

Pukas are looking to the past for inspiration too with Designer Marta Campamà informing that the brand are “working hard on a retro line focused on the 80s in the line of bikinis and swimsuits, mixing leopard prints, and rubberised fabrics,” focusing their attention on their surfing history as a brand in the Basque Country, looking through old super 8 movies and vintage photo albums for the most outstanding looks.



photo : Rhythm

PRINTS & COLOURS

As expected, tropical floral prints continue to be popular keeping in line with the beach culture surrounding women’s swimwear, but an emerging trend is the juxtaposition of bright floral prints atop black backgrounds or similar neutral solid tones. “Sun yellow meet reds and flirty pink, whilst midnight black and earthy olive keep things grounded,” explains Christelle at Billabong. Volcom are “having success with dark ground florals”, a “vintage inspired tropical print” continues to be a best-seller season on season at Rhythm, “original prints of flowers or birds, mixed with sober colours” are key for Picture and “a heavy focus on tile prints in modern colour palettes and botanical silhouette prints” is the direction for Rusty in SS19.

Rhythm and Rip Curl are both including spots in their collection whilst Body Glove are working with geometric shapes. Billabong, Body Glove and Rhythm will all have a focus on stripes too with “spots and stripes [being] reinvented in fresh, feminine new colourways” explains Rhythm’s Trade Marketing Manager Helena Scholl.

Rip Curl will be featuring colours inspired by nature such as bright ocean blue and watercolour florals, for Billabong it’s bright seafoam meets mandarin and sweet pink, for Glidesoul their theme is candy colours with a floral thematic and for Protest it’s all about earthy tones such as beet red and olive green complemented by bright red and blue accent colours.

MATERIALS

Textured fabrics continue to be popular in SS19 with ribbed, mesh, metallic, matte and sheen fabrics all making an appearance. Continuing the success of their textured fabrications in previous seasons, Rhythm have chosen to carry over their popular Palm Springs Rib bikini in new styles and colours. They are also introducing

two new textures including a gingham seersucker fabrication and a new raised rib which they’ve titled Flashdance. Christelle Kipping from Billabong explains that “texture is still strong with innovated fabrications of true knit, wavy stripe (for a vintage look) shiny fabric and rib fabric” all appearing in their SS19 range.

Pukas will be working with garment-tined cottons and crepe, Protest are introducing functional velvet using “new technology to create a fabric that has stretch and quick-drying properties while having the sheen and softness of sumptuous velvet.” Volcom are bringing in novelty fabrics such as mesh and metallics, Body Glove are working with new and sophisticated ribbed fabrics whilst Rusty introduce a gorgeous metallic foil accompanied with matching metallic trims.


SUSTAINABILITY & COLLABORATIONS

Conscious shopping continues to be a hot topic for consumers with many specifically choosing to buy from companies that are using sustainable materials and that follow more ethical procedures within their operations.

The whole concept of sustainability relies on the production of pieces that will last many seasons, an ethos which Wear Your Waste stringently adhere to. They choose to use a very high-quality fabric made of regenerated polyamide (ECONYL) mixed with Lycra XtraLife® to ensure the product is long-lasting. The ‘Simply Solid’ collection at Volcom is also made from an eco-friendly ECONYL recycled yarn produced from lost fishing nets and other discarded nylons that pollute the ocean. For Picture Organic Clothing, they’re choosing to use EicoPrene in their SS19 spring suits, which is made from 30% recycled tyres, alongside eco-friendly water-based Aquagluue and 100% recycled polyester for their internal and external linings.

Rip Curl have worked with TitsUp to create fun and fashionable products that bring awareness to breast cancer whilst also contributing financially (€1 per product sold) to the cause.

Through social, eco and betterment initiatives, ROXY are looking to protect the very oceans that their customers like to enjoy through their Roxy Pop Surf collection. Their Pop Surf wetsuits, wetsuit jackets, surf shorts and neoprene tops are crafted using an innovative water-based glue in the neoprene and lining lamination which eliminates toxic solvents that are harmful to the environment. They have implemented a new dope-dyed yarn process to not only cut down on the amount of water and waste being used but also to save energy without losing any of the ‘pop’ in their colours, and the neoprene is made from recycled Repreve polyester fabric in which recycled plastic bottles are transformed from harmful PET into polyester fibres with 25 plastic bottles being recycled per wetsuit.

Away from sustainability, there is Rip Curl’s partnership with the brand TitsUp. Wanting to use their platform to highlight women’s health, Rip Curl have worked with TitsUp to create fun and fashionable products that bring awareness to breast cancer whilst also contributing financially (€1 per product sold) to the cause. The products are bikinis, t-shirts and fleeces with a fun embroidery placed on the bust such as palm trees, pineapples, hearts and hibiscus flowers. 

HIGHLIGHTS

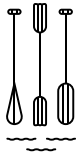
- Practical one-pieces
- Streetwear crossover pieces
- Retro 80s one-piece
- High-cut leg, cheeky coverage, plunging necklines
- Textured fabric
- Conscious shopping

SURF
EXPO

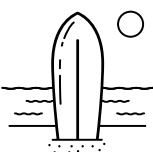
SEPTEMBER 6-8, 2018
DEMO DAY SEPTEMBER 5
ORLANDO, FL



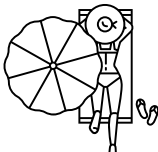
The Global Watersports and Beach Lifestyle Tradeshow



Paddle Life



Board Sports



Coastal Life

Register to attend at surfexpo.com
A Trade Only Event.

photo : Slingshot



HYDRO FOILS

RETAIL BUYER’S GUIDE 2018

They’re everywhere, on all your kinds of screens, on everyone’s lips and in all of our wildest dreams as surfers. But are they in your shop yet? Foil surfing is creating a serious buzz, but it remains to be seen if it will create serious business for surf retailers. This is an in-depth look at the high-flying hydrofoil craze by **David Bianic**.

If the term “disruptive” gets entrepreneurs in search of the next big thing salivating, foil surfing is only just starting to kick their imagination into gear. While SUP is shaking up the aquatic boardsports market, it’s not a disruptive technological force, more like a clever mix of surfing and paddle sports. What makes foil surfing unique is the way in which it has invented a new way to approach riding a wave... and even better, an unbroken swell. Expanded horizons also mean a wider range of opportunities to make money from this brand new market. However, before running in blindly with your head down, read these words of wisdom from a few key players in foil surfing.

With the advances in hydrofoil technology seen on boats in the America’s Cup, windsurfing and especially kitesurfing became early adopters, with the first manufacturers going into business almost 10 years ago, as naval architect and foil designer for the multi-board brand F-One, Charles Bertrand reminds us: “Kiting is the sport that has enabled foiling to emerge for real and show its potential these past few years. The setup fits really well with foiling and really belongs to the identity of kiting now.” The distributor of Naish products in France and the Benelux, J.W. Mulder feels the best exposure possible will without a doubt be the 2024 Summer Olympics where the kite and windsurf athletes will use hydrofoil boards, which should lead to exponential growth in the sector. But will the same theory hold true for surfing and SUP? These two sports are the ones that really matter for surf shops and the rate at

which they’ve been evolving can be daunting for retailers: to wait for just the right moment or to jump in before it’s too late?

“Surfing is the most niche market for foiling right now, but the size of the total market is big enough for surf-foiling to become the biggest of all foiling markets,” thinks Charles from F-One, adding that the SUP foil is a good first step before transitioning on to foil surfing on a shortboard. Jeff Logosz from Slingshot is also convinced that foil surfing will become a goldmine: “Foiling is hard, so it will be respected. And it does not replace surfing. In fact, it changes what you can do in areas that you don’t surf in.” The enthusiasm is catching. Even endemic players in the wind/kite market are convinced by the potential of the hydrofoil in the SUP/surf market. “Foiling in crappy surf is really fun”, guarantees Alex Aguera from Go Foil.

IS THE HYDROFOIL, AN INSTRUMENT OF DEATH?

The most important question facing retailers interested in investing in the market segment is how large is the risk factor, since a foil’s sharp wing can transform instantly into a meat-cutting knife as much for the rider as other people in the line-up... For the president of Ke Nalu, Lane Mead there’s a one-word answer: “Communication!” According to him, instilling foiling safety rules and etiquette from the start is essential, and he adds “there’s almost never a need to be around surfers”. If we take the example of Slingshot, the answer to the education question is in the form of an online platform (foil-

*“Surfing is the most niche market for foiling right now, but the size of the total market is big enough for surf-foiling to become the biggest of all foiling markets.” Charles Bertrand, **F-One***

academy.com), whose brand neutrality is commendable. But, the self-inflicted injuries are not the kind you’d expect. “I have seen a lot more dangerous wipe-outs due to higher impact stresses than I have seen bad cuts related to the blades of the foil,” notes Charles from F-One. Which is why there is so much focus on the impact vests that are more often used by kite/wind specialists, but are starting to appear in the SUP market as well. At Manta Foils, Renaud Barbier recommends wearing a helmet, in addition to the impact vest. Another solution put forward by the president of Crazy Foil, Serge Fraser is the use of footstraps, because “being fixed to the board keeps you away from the foil and one has better control when falling.” We should also pay close attention to Go Foil’s Alex Aguera when he recommends avoiding long masts during the early stages of learning how to foil SUP/surf, since “when you flip over, the wings will be closer to your face.” Therefore, it’s better to start with masts around 24” (60 cm) and to not use sharp kiteboarding wings, which Alex warns can result in severe cuts. For Jeff from Slingshot, it’s still essential to trust in the future and technological development: “When kiting started it was 10X more dangerous than foiling. After about seven years of product and schooling innovation, the kite industry has made it pretty safe.”



photo : Ke Nalu

ONE OR TWO FOIL MARKETS?

In spite of its short existence, the foil market has already played host to several opposing trends. At first, foil developers sought to work with board manufacturers, before the latter began developing their own technologies in order to produce a complete “board and foil” offering. Today, a number of foil manufacturers are counter-attacking with their own SUP/surfboard lines. What should retailers do? Go for a “foil only” strategy, or offer fully equipped “board and foil” package deals? “Actually, there is place for both markets”, thinks Serge Fraser from Crazy Foil. “Bundles will appeal to starters or users that do not want to spend any time assembling the foil and board together” while “younger or budget sensitive people will try to reuse older model boards with their foil brands.” As Charles from F-One confirms, most of the time it is possible to mix and match products from different brands, because “a lot of them are based on the same connection system,” which are “fin boxes like Tuttle or plate systems,” specifies Renaud from Manta Foils. Nonetheless, J.W. Mulder from Naish warns that the biggest obstacle to the market taking off may not be technological, but financial, since in the surf segment “foil hardware is way more expensive than a normal board.”

Nonetheless, Stéphane Mocher from Select Foils feels that foils for SUPs and surfboards can eventually be built from less expensive materials, since the forces exerted are less than those on a windfoil: “A foam core, with 80% fibreglass and 20% carbon is enough for this segment and the price is much more in phase with the SUP and surf

market.” Jeff from Slingshot is of the same opinion, insisting on the fact that using an aluminium construction won’t result in a mediocre level of performance any more than using carbon guarantees optimum performance levels. So, the brand offers hybrid aluminium carbon constructions that are both less expensive and that will help people “learn faster and get better on it faster than going with a straight up high-performance carbon version.” However, not everyone agrees with that take on the matter, like Alex from Go Foil who states: “Carbon is king!” For him, aluminium foils are dangerous because they don’t float and maintain their momentum after a fall due to their heavier weight.

FOILBOARD VS. HYBRID

While the price of a foil alone remains a handicap for the democratization of the sport, the purchase of a foil-specific board adds to the cost of a full set-up. Wouldn’t it be better to offer hybrid boards that could be used with or without a foil? “Adding the connection system represents a significant alteration to the original board,” specifies Charles from F-One, implying that it’s not such a good idea, except possibly on a SUP, whose performance would be less affected by such a modification. The choice of a foilboard over a hybrid will become more and more common taking into account the (ultra-quick) evolution of board shapes. “Smaller boards used in foiling are harder to use in their regular disciplines,” explains Alex Aguera pointing out that the very muscular Dave Kalama, who weighs in at 95 kilos rides a SUP board that’s only 5’6”! For the founder of Go Foil, the hybrid concept is better suited to a SUP/windsurf combination. As a matter of fact, Mantafoils brought a new innovation to the table last year, by commercializing an inflatable SUP/wind foil.

*“Bundles will appeal to starters or users that do not want to spend any time assembling the foil and board together.” Serge Fraser, **Crazy Foil***

As far as foil surfing is concerned the boards are now so specialized that it would no longer be possible to surf on them, assures Jeff from Slingshot: “They are short, no rocker, and offer super sharp rails. They are designed to catch a wave fast and get on foil.” At the very least, these micro-boards compensate for the size of the foil, which is another negative point on the “for and against” list for potential buyers.

The last question is also one of the most important for retailers: is now the time to get into the hydrofoil segment or not? In the opinion of Charles Bertrand from F-One: “We’re past the early adopters and we’re selling today to the early majority with a transition soon to the wider crowd.” Jeff from Slingshot thinks that the best advice to give to retailers is to “choose a leading brand in foiling” that has been around for a sufficiently long time, and to do your homework on foil developers: “If the designer’s name isn’t featured front and centre, buy another brand.” We’ll let Lane Mead from Ke Nalu have the last word: “Go for it! But learn about it, know the proper terminology and ideally get out there and foil, too.” No more excuses. It’s time to learn how to fly. 🏄

HIGHLIGHTS

- Do your homework
- Stock safety gear (impact vests & helmets)
- Hybrid boards only in SUP
- Makes crappy waves fun!



GLOBE

SPRING/SUMMER 19 | APPLEVARD

The AppleVard collection includes tees made from Hemp and Organic Cotton. It's a small change that can make a big difference in the long run. Eco friendly Hemp is eight times stronger than regular cotton fiber. It's breathable, durable, and antibacterial which helps decrease odor.

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photo : Brixton

MEN'S STREETWEAR RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SS19

Streetwear is influencing the upper echelons of high fashion, but boardsports brands still find inspiration where it all started: the streets. Spring/Summer 2019 Men's Streetwear Retail Buyer's Guide by **Dirk Vogel**.

Not a day goes by without some hype blog reporting another high-calibre streetwear collection "drop" that has fans queuing around the block. Beyond these newest-latest styles, vintage streetwear appears to be aging better than fine wine; at least judging by price points for mid-1990s SUPREME box logo tees on eBay. But through all this hype, there is a key difference: While fanboys mainly like street-style apparel for striking a pose on their Instagram feeds, boardsports enthusiasts mostly choose streetwear not just because it looks great, but because it works on missions out in the urban environment. For this very reason, boardsports will always play a special role in the increasingly complex streetwear universe. "Streetwear is using boardsports, especially skate, as a crystal ball to take a little peek into what comes next and as a tool to keep the 'gnarly vibes' up. The larger part of streetwear fans are these timid kind of people who like to watch others doing gnarly stuff while for them identifying with their style seems to be enough. The boardsport brands themselves are influencing and even creating the streetwear trend without even recognizing," said Julian Wolf, Head of Marketing at Homeboy. Industry insiders confirm this style leadership, including Michael Spitzbarth, CEO and Men's Designer at Bleed Organic Clothing: "I think boardsports and especially skateboarding are again more and more influencing the streetwear designs and the market. That is good for both markets!" Most brands respond by cultivating their own design DNA, while also keeping an eye on big-picture influences such as the growing urban/hip-hop aesthetic. "Urban streetwear is HOT! The trend of hip hop and urban jungle continues and more and more brands are tapping into this. And SUPRA, being from the biggest, trendiest urban jungle on the planet, is in the middle of it," said

"Streetwear brands gain more floor space in boardsports influenced stores. Customers mix their styles throughout the spectrum of fashion."
Joni Malmi, Makia Brand Director

Sascha Weil, Brand Director EMEA at SUPRA, who are expanding their apparel offering for SS19.

THE MARKET: MIXING STYLES AND FASHIONS
Ultimately, what's hot and what's not remains for customers to decide. And today's boardsports customers are unpredictable and brand-agnostic, which also affects product line-ups at board shops. "Streetwear brands gain more floor space in boardsports influenced stores. Customers mix their styles throughout the spectrum of fashion," said Joni Malmi, Brand Director at Makia. This impression is confirmed by Heribert Willmerdinger, Managing Director at The Dudes: "People from the scene start to also wear stuff from brands that are not rooted in the core of boardsports. The Dudes reflects this. Our interests moved more towards music, design, tattoo or vintage bikes and cars." From a market perspective, boardsports apparel is still emerging from a period of overstock and market saturation. But course corrections in pre-order and distribution structures are starting to gain traction, allowing retailers to tell better stories around new collections. Meanwhile, the off-price apparel segment continues

to grow, especially online, which erodes margins and cannibalizes sales for core brands. As the antidote, an on-point and on-trend approach is key. “In Europe, the trend orientation is into the streets. The streetwear market has never been so high, but a brand from boardsports which is not [serving] trends will lose some market shares,” said Mathieu Santoni, Volcom’s Head Of Product Europe. Next to trends, price points are a major sales argument, and boardsports brands continue to deliver value at affordable cost despite geopolitical changes. Brands such as Bleed Organic sell eco-conscious tees for €39.99 and organic denim for €99.99 retail; a strong proposition compared to price tags at high street men’s clothing stores. Iconic designs from core skateboard brands are even lighter on the wallet, including tees for around €29.99 and hoodies for €59.99. “We aim to make quality clothes that skateboarders can afford,” said Nathaniel Jones, Senior Apparel Designer at Santa Cruz Skateboards.



photo : Iriedaily

SEASON TREND: 1990S ATHLETICA

Similar to footwear, the pendulum swings back to 1990s nostalgia in SS19 streetwear collections. Back to that glorious time when Wu-Tang Clan and sporty-tech designer gear dominated the scene at street spots and skate parks. “The Nineties are still the dominant trend in SS19. Sportive colour-blocking, classic checks and wild all-over prints all in the mix. It’s all about style clash, celebrating the imperfection,” said Patrick Kressner, Men’s Designer at Iriedaily. Keep an eye out for athletic garments such as jerseys, track suits – from the likes of éS Footwear and Santa Cruz – as well as baggier fits and more generous logo placements. And did we mention that 1990s trailblazers Droors Clothing are back? Light a blunt to that!

MATERIALS: SOFT AND REFINED

Warm weather season is all about comfort and lightweight garments. Marion at Ragwear said: “We’re all about nice soft mélanges, very fresh summer colours and streetwear details on every single garment.” As the main season trend, Dan Preston, Global Apparel Design Manager at Globe identifies, “printed woven shirts. Party vibe shirts headline our wovens and feature head-turning custom prints combined with functional and breathable fabrications.” SUPRA is playing with “multi-coloured knits,” while Santa Cruz brings “some great piqué yarn dye stripe tees and polos.” Almost all brands are implementing hemp as a great natural fit for summertime threads, next to organic cotton, bamboo viscose and lyocell. Brixton “keep line pretty timeless, but are now adding some stand-out pieces, such as acid washes, plaids, and bright colour pops.” True to the performance aspect of boardsports, brands across the board are also implementing tech into their materials, most notably stretch, quick dry, UV protection in chinos and denims, as well as coatings and membranes in jackets. The sustainability ethos remains strong in SS19, including fabrics such as Bleed’s Econyl from recycled fishnets and Tencel. Makia is boosting sustainability with SpinDye and PureWaste in sustainable colouring and materials, supplemented by RePack reusable and returnable packaging on the back end. Iriedaily has joined the Fair Wear Foundation, while Ragwear is PETA-approved for animal-friendly production.

FITS & SILHOUETTES: ROOM FOR MOVEMENT

In line with the 1990s throwback, fits are getting roomier – also in part as a rebellion against mainstream appropriation of boardsports trends. “More than a decade ago, the skate scene started wearing skinny

jeans and tight tops, because it was new, it was kinda punkish and it was just different from mainstream. Now that they see their parents wearing these fits they have to start a movement against them,” said Julian Wolf at Homeboy. There’s also a functional element, said Dan at Globe: “Featuring roomier tees and pants cut for skating, the Globe ‘Concrete collection’ blends directional colours and graphics with this season’s essential relaxed fits.” Brixton are also backing that functional vibe, seeing things go oversized as “comfort and function drive the trend.” In terms of lengths, pants are trending towards a shorter, cropped look in order to show off sneakers despite their bagginess. Shirts tend to run longer, extending below jackets that are cut around the waist. Speaking of jackets, coaches jackets still remain in play next to a new wave of 1990s-style pullover windbreakers with hoods and kangaroo pockets, for which Droors and Nautica nailed the formula in 1996. At Protest, Katrina Stronkhorst, Marketing Team, has a new classic: “You’ve probably noticed the rise of the raincoat in both men and women’s fashion. This season we’re coming out with our own longer length men’s raincoat, the Cliffe.” Asked about fits in accessories, The Dudes said: “We see that unstructured caps are getting more and more popular.”

“The Nineties are still the dominant trend in SS19. Sportive colour-blocking, classic checks and wild all-over prints all in the mix. It’s all about style clash, celebrating the imperfection.”
Patrick Kressner, Iriedaily Men's Designer

COLOURS & GRAPHICS: STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD

Colourways are a mixed bag for SS19. The monochromatic, black-meets-white trend is still in play across boardsports collections such as The Dudes. Out in the streets, get used to the staple uniform of black chinos paired with white long-sleeve tees and a dad hat. Then again, summer time is about standing out and celebrating some colours, which endemic brands are doing with a strong surge in subtle tones of blue, aquamarine, and green. “Pastel is definitely the main colour orientation. Not too bright, but keeping some flashy background, need to be washed, stoned. Red is also coming back because of the 90s,” said Volcom’s Mathieu Santoni. Also look for darker baseline colours contrasted with neon colour pops across the board. SS19 graphics fall into two categories: big and bold VS. detailed and refined. The latter influences Protest’s SS19 men’s collection via so-called “conversational. These mini-prints add a touch of humour to your summer outfit. Check out our Fearless tee. Another trend is retro Hawaiian prints,” said Katrina at Protest. Also look for monogram prints and repetitions of detailed icons in a tattoo style (mermaids, florals, marine life) across collections, joined by graphic stripes and digital/glitch patterns. On the other end of the spectrum, “big photo graphics and big logo prints are definitely on trend, after years of clean Scandinavian looks without any prints and graphics,” said Julian at Homeboy. As a sleeper trend, also keep an eye out for the shiny, athletic glory of sports jerseys – fuelled by the 2018 Football World Cup – and racing-style tops, as seen in the recent SUPREME x FOX Racing collab. With that said, SS19 collections leave retailers with so much to choose from, and so many styles in play at the same time. But here’s the good news: Everyone is looking at streetwear, and everyone is looking at boardsports to lead the way. “Streetwear is not just for the subculture of boardsports youngsters anymore. There are a lot of fashionable influences in streetwear now,” said Marion Maier, Communications at Ragwear. 📍

HIGHLIGHTS

- Boardsports brands influencing streetwear
- Consumers mix and match styles
- 1990s athletic styles
- Baggier pants
- Photo print tees
- Printed woven shirts
- Sleeper trend: Racing jerseys



1988
2018



STREETWEAR OF 30 YEARS

BUYER SCIENCE SKATEBOUTIQUE SBQ

Skateboutique SBQ from Belgium are the reigning Vans Shop Riot champions, having taken the win at the 2017 finals in Holland. These guys have a really impressive set up, with two skate shops, their own indoor skate park and their own skate ramp building business. We spoke with Co-Owner Maarten Roose to find out more about this Belgian skate powerhouse.

Tell us about your setup.

Rampaffairz LLC is owned by me, David Roose and Wesley Galle and is in the West of Belgium, near the French border. Our three main activities are: Rampaffairz Skatepark: indoor skatepark formerly known as Zumiez skate park, famous for several demos and contests over the past 20 years. Rampaffairz Skateobjects: building ramps and skate parks for third parties, mostly rentals for events, e.g Antwerp Skate contest Skateboutique SBQ: two skate shops, one in the city centre of Kortrijk, a lovely small town near the French border and the second at the skate park in Wevelgem. In Kortrijk we focus on footwear and apparel. At the skate park we focus more on hardgoods. I started Rampaffairz as a side activity together with my brother back in 2005, when we noticed there was an important demand for temporary ramps for events etc. At that time we were both employed at Zumiez Skatepark (no affiliation with Zumiez USA), we were building and maintaining the park and managing the skate shops together with our colleague, Galle. We all started working in the park/shop in 1997, first as students and later fully employed. In February 2013 Zumiez went bankrupt due to a personal crisis with one of the bosses. My brother David, Galle and I struck a deal with the old bosses and we turned Rampaffairz into a LLC. We started a new shop in the city of Kortrijk, called Skateboutique SBQ in June 2013. Later in December 2013, we reopened the skate park and shop at the old location in Wevelgem.

What have been your biggest lessons on writing orders and selling products at your shops?

Take nothing for granted. Trends are moving faster then ever and are harder to predict then ever. It 's more important than ever for a buyer to connect with the sales. To be in the store himself on a regular basis and not only rely on the things that appear on the computer screen. We try to order more on stock than pre-order than before, it allows us to interact quicker.

Looking at sales figures, what have you learned from product categories in the last two years?

One year ago we were selling more shoes than now, but apparel is growing and compensating some of the loss of turnover. Hardgoods have been pretty stable for us over the years, definitely at the skate park. We've been selling a lot more completes since we started with our skateboard academy a couple of years ago. Longboards and cruisers are almost completely over and out. Headwear dead.



If you could ask brands for support, what would it be for?

I think it's a bad evolution that some of the bigger brands are skipping sending their sales reps to visit clients. Travelling to showrooms 300km away isn't always possible and making pre-orders via a B2B system with a minimal info may be the easiest way for the brand but not for the shops. On the other hand a decent B2B for re-orders with a decent stock is mandatory. Some of the brands have more stock on their B2C than on their B2B.

What's your process for finding new brands?

We listen to our customers, follow them on the social media etc. Also we look at what's happening in other cities and countries. We have the advantage of being in a conservative region of the country, so when something new is happening in the big cities we still have time to wait and see if the trend is coming through.

In 2017 Skate Boutique won the Vans Shop Riot – talk us through this and what exposure it has given your setup.

We always tried to support and give back to skateboarding as much as possible. We invest a lot of time, energy and money in the skate park and the team. We've always been lucky enough to have good team riders in the past: Fries Taillieu, Axel Cruysberghs, Fabian Verhaeghe, Kevin Tshala.... They served as an example for the new generation to push their skateboarding to a higher level. Simon (Deprez), Jonathan (Vlerick) and Trevor (Capon) have been skating together since their childhood. Winning the European Vans Shop Riot was the biggest reward they ever dreamed of. Vans is doing a great job with this event. Participating in it doesn't really affect your sales, but this contest is so good for skate shops. It brings skate shops from across the country and it motivates them to invest in their team. And a team is mandatory for a core skate shop, it's your connection with the local scene. 🍩



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photo : Mizu



BOTTLES & FLASKS

RETAIL BUYER’S GUIDE 2018

Our first-ever SOURCE retail buyer’s guide on bottles and flasks provides a comprehensive overview of key 2018 trends and products in this dynamic category. By **Natalia Maruniak**.

A growing number of boardsports brand are taking responsibility for the environment by developing sustainable products. Reusable drinking water containers provide an opportunity to protect the oceans, mountains, and landscapes we all love and enjoy. Consumers are on the same page and welcome smart options for staying hydrated on their outdoor adventures, which help to reduce plastic waste on skate, surf, snowboard, and camping trips.

Aside from protecting the environment, reusable drinking containers also save real money. According to Hydro Flask, investing in a Hydro Flask coffee cup and taking it to your coffee shop every day can save £180 per year. So it’s no surprise that reusable drinking bottles for sports are an active growth market: Market research agency Technavio expects the segment to grow at a 6 percent rate until the year 2021.

BRAND PHILOSOPHY

A large number of drinking bottle brands are founded and operated by boardsports enthusiasts. “Nature is the playground for boardsports athletes. That’s why they take a great interest in protecting the environment. Bottles Bottles by Squireme. help reduce plastic waste and save the mountains and oceans,” said Roman at Swiss brand Squireme. Former pro snowboarder Jussi Oksanen founded the Mizu brand to “reduce the usage of disposable bottles in daily life, changing people’s habits towards a more sustainable lifestyle to protect our planet and our future.”

The 15 Day Challenge of the Mizu Reusable Revolution Program integrates the “Big Three” product categories – reusable water bottles, reusable coffee cups and reusable cutlery – to reduce everyday waste. Why 15 days? “Because it takes more or less 15 days to break or make habits!” The brand also provides companies with options to customize their own Mizu products at attractive rates.

Nolla takes a unique approach: “Our main goal is not selling our bottles but providing solutions for people to prefer a reusable product over a disposable one.”

All brands questioned for this report want to reduce the amount of plastic rubbish as their main mission. Earthwell, Nolla and Klean Kanteen also support the 1% For the Planet initiative by donating part of their annual profits to environmental activism. This also offers value to retailers: “They are actively supporting products for a better future. We are mainly selling competitive products that create a clean conscience.”

MATERIALS & FEATURES

Most brands offer a broad selection of drinking containers to cover all usage scenarios, from camping trips in the outdoors, to staying hydrated at work, and having an evening beer in the park. The most important mark of quality is the insulated lining in a bottle in order to maintain the desired temperature of their contents. “Hydro Flask’s mission is to... keep your water icy cold on a sunny beach and to serve piping hot coffee in an elevator on the chairlift ride.” The brand relies on double-walled, vacuum-insulated drinking bottles from stainless steel that keep drinks hot up to 12 hours and cold up to 24 hours. Mizu, Earthwell, Nolla, FLSK, Stanley and Klean Kanteen also use BPA-free 18/8 stainless steel as a safe and toxin-free alternative to plastic bottles.

Earthwell provides, “premium drink containers with a long life span in a wide number of sizes and capacities, featuring enclosures for all uses and maintaining the desired quality of their contents.” The brand’s must-have items for this season include the Earthwell Roaster Loop Bottle 473ml “for urban commuters”. It keeps chai tea warm for 10 hours, cools ice coffee for 40 hours and beer up to 16 hours.

Klean Kanteen and Mizu also sell simple, single-walled and lightweight drinking containers for cold beverages. Light weight is important for portability and affects material selection, with stainless steel as the top choice. The Ultralight bottle by Thermos lives up to its name at only 370 grams, “supplying athletes and outdoor enthusiasts with plenty of fluids, either hot or cold, on long outings.”

*“Right now there is a growing interest in reducing plastic waste. Hopefully, plastic bottles, straws, stirrers, and coffee cups will soon vanish and **Hydro Flask** provides a range of reusable products, from Insulated Sports Cap to Coffee Flip Flask.”*

Stainless steel also prevents the transfer of flavors, “so your morning coffee will not taste like last night’s beer,” said Hydro Flask. Longevity is also a key factor. “A drinking bottle should last a lifetime. That’s why we make them from 18/8 food-save stainless steel, coated with corrosion resistant, long-lasting Klean Coat powder finish, which is three times more durable and scratch resistant,” said Klean Kanteen. Stanley even extends a lifetime warranty on all their drink containers.

But there are also alternatives beyond stainless steel. Swiss brand Squireme. manufactures bottles from hand-made borosilicate glass “for a healthier, flavour-neutral drinking experience.” A silicone sleeve protects the glass from scratches and breakage. The main advantage of glass is that it “assumes no odor” but as opposed to stainless steel bottles, is not suitable for carbonated beverages. Squireme. is mainly focused on urban commuters. “The 500ml capacity makes it perfect for carrying along... a trusty companion on your fixed gear or subway ride.” The new Go Series by Stanley explores new material combinations: The 0.7 litre STANLEY GO bottle with Ceramivac “has all of the same tough Stanley steel and famous thermal retention, but with a smooth and outrageously satisfying ceramic feel.”

*“Prices will go up, as consumers come to appreciate products with a long life span. This makes reusable bottles an interesting segment for retailers.” **Squireme.***

DESIGN

Purists will be attracted to the clean stainless steel finish of Mizu, Klean Kanteen, Thermos, and Stanley bottles. Hydro Flask provides plenty of colour choices in their powder coated bottles. The selection of prints and patterns is not huge, but Nolla offers nice glass and Isotherm bottles adorned with weather forecast maps and floral patterns. The powder coated finish not only allows for playful colourways, but also “long-lasting grip and protection from the elements,” said Earthwell.

The Flsk brand is highly design-driven and has been recognized with the 2018 German Design Award. “We place special emphasis on timeless design. That’s why we take great care in choosing our colors. Our mantra for launching colourful editions is always, Less is More!”

CAPS AND FILTRATION SYSTEMS

The enclosures of reusable drinking containers come in a large amount of variations. Earthwell incorporates ThermoGrid technology in its insulated caps with an extra large mouth opening and a latch for easy portability. One of the highlights is the patented Kewler Bottle Opener Cap, “which helps open beer bottles in a flash.” Mizu, Klean Kanteen and Hydro Flask manufacture simple loop caps as well as sports caps and tops with integrated drinking straws. Klean Kanteen, Nolla and Earthwell also have sophisticated bamboo tops. Nella’s Isotherm bottle can be opened with one hand at the bush of a button, much like Stanley’s Classic Vacuum One Hand Mug.

The main focus of bottle top designs is to prevent contents from spilling out. Thermos integrates the Sports Flow drinking system in its Ultralight collection, which “provides a clean and convenient drinking experience in action. The safety lock system keeps the bottle 100 percent leak-proof, so nothing spills into the backpack.”

In June 2018, Mizu launch their 360 filter system with futuristic technology. “This nano technology was initially developed by NASA. It allows for filtering water on the go.” Integrated into the bottle top, the filtration system is available in two versions: the Every Day and Adventure model. The first model improves water flavor and removes impurities that are common to tap water. The Adventure model is the perfect companion for outdoor adventures, allowing for filtering water from basically any water source. “People should have access to clean water everywhere, whether it’s on the road, during exercise or at the office,” said Jusi Oksanen.

EQUIPMENT FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Most brands go beyond drinking bottles and stock a full range of outdoor-ready equipment. Mizu provides coffee and wine cups as well as shot glasses and rust-resistant cutlery from stainless steel to reduce plastic waste from disposable silverware. Hydro Flask

includes the Soft Cooler tote and a backpack in their award-winning Unbound Series of cooling bags, “perfect for trips to the grocery store, the beach or outdoor adventures.”

Thermos also sells food containers and cooler bags. Stanley sells small cooler cases and camping cookware sets. They also cater to high-percentage beverages with flasks and matching shot glasses from stainless steel. Beer growlers are also a budding trend: The Klean Kanteen beer growler is suited for carbonated beverages and keep beers icy cold. Hydro Flask also provides beer and wine cups, keeping wine cold with double-walled TempShield vacuum insulation.

PRICING & COLLABS

Price points in this segment vary according to insulation levels and capacities. Insulated drinking bottles with a capacity between 500 and 600ml start at €25.00 (Hydro Flask, Squireme, Earthwell), followed by a mid-price range €31.95 (Mizu) and €34.75 (Flsk), while Klean Kanteen is in the upper price range with €44.95. Almost all brands cater to companies with the option to customize their own drinking bottles. Klean Kanteen supports numerous enterprises and organizations in creating a plastic-free workplace. Their custom drinking bottles and cups can be designed to customer specifications via prints, laser engravings and specific colourways. For Mizu, “collabs are a key component of our label,” with partner brands including boardsports mainstays such as Burton, Nixon, Volcom and Capita.



photo : Earthwell

FUTURE VISIONS

“Organic, green, eco, and fairtrade,” are Nolla’s catchphrases for the future in a wide variety of markets, including boardsports. Hydro Flask also expects environment-friendly products and concepts to gain traction in the next few years. “Currently, there is a huge focus on cutting down on single-use plastic waste. Plastic bottles, straws, stirrers and coffee cups will soon be extinct and Hydro Flask provide reusable solutions to that from their Insulated Sports Cap to their Coffee Flip Flask.”

Sustainability extends all the way into more environment-friendly production processes. Klean Kanteen is working on materials with “better thermal efficiency to keep drinks hot or cold for longer durations.” Mizu’s future focus lies with further improving their built-in filter technology, weight factor and versatility of their products to cover all use scenarios in daily life. And Squireme. sees a bright future for retailers: “Prices will increase as customers appreciate durable goods. Multiuse beverage containers are an interesting field for retailers.”

HIGHLIGHTS

- Eco conscious consumers
- Prices set to soar
- Hot for a day, cold for longer
- Odour-free materials



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Pacifica Tan



photo : Cool Shoes

HANGING SHOES

RETAIL BUYER’S GUIDE SS19

For SS19, the focus for many brands within the category of Hanging Shoes has most definitely been to cater to the customer’s desire for uncomplicated comfortable designs, with a focus on producing quality products at exceptional value. The emergence of ‘realistic dressing’ has meant that some new developments and innovations have appeared which retailers can capitalise on this summer. Retail Buyer’s Guide by **Ruth Cutts**.

TRENDS

For SS19 it seems that the current athleisure trend is set to continue with sliders working their way into most collections. Once shunned for having zero style appeal, this is a phenomenon that’s no longer merely limited to the poolside. Mascha Pieterse, Product Manager at Sinner explains that their range of sliders feature “shapes and prints [that] are a nice mix of sport, fashion and beach life.”

Cobian have echoed this sentiment by introducing two new slide styles to their line, one of which is based on the design of their most popular ARV2 sandal. “This style came about via popular demand of our customers loving the ARV2 and wanting a slide option to make a trend relevant option,” Cobian Men’s Product Manager, Chris Bence explains. The women’s line at Cobian has also introduced new slide sandals – the Melrose, Bahia and Koloa – to cover this key trend, whilst footwear brand Gumbies are also bringing in slides for the first time within their 2019 range.

The aesthetic appears to be focused on simplicity and comfort, “as the customers appear to desire more minimalistic silhouettes though aren’t willing to sacrifice the comfort,” explains Craig Townsend, VP of Sales and Business Development at Flojos. Minimal single straps have seemingly replaced fussy designs to create a clean and contemporary look, with many brands choosing materials such as textile, suede or leather, as well as sporty looking PVC, in order to stay true to their outdoorsy roots.

Away from sandals, the same idea rings true. Footwear brand Freewaters are experiencing good growth season on season with their traditional closed toe offerings which feature seamless constructions, clean lines and no-fuss easy lace-up systems. David Goulding, Managing Director at Primer Europe Limited says: “the comfort aspects of all our products are at the forefront of the design process.”

MATERIALS

As previously mentioned, the modern customer’s want for comfort is increasingly becoming a priority for most brands with cushioning EVA footbeds making their way into most designs in SS19. Customers are now wanting full arch support through sculpted footbeds and moulded constructions in favour of the old ‘flat’ basic sole. Cobian have introduced new EVA formulas into their footbeds that will reduce the unwanted ‘pack out’ that you see in many other soft sandals.

Many brands are opting for non-animal-based product materials in their designs with Sinner having cited products crafted from “soft PU suede and canvas insoles” as some of their most popular styles. Cobian single out materials “which have a rich leather look but that can get wet and are vegan friendly,” as key to their SS19 range, and Flojos have taken this a step further by suggesting that they have invested in more synthetically engineered materials that offer better ‘water resistance’ properties after extensive customer research and insights.

“The customer appears to desire more minimalistic silhouettes though aren’t willing to sacrifice the comfort.”
Craig Townsend, VP of Sales and Business Development at Flojos

Benjamin Steckermeier, Owner of Mayori explains how many factors influence their designs including; “sustainability, ever-increasing environmental pollution, vegetarian and vegan lifestyle, sports affinity, and the joy of travel.” Mayori have tried to incorporate these themes in their SS19 collection mainly using leather, textile, linen, cork and also neoprene. Their best seller is the Levi model which puts a special emphasis on natural cork material, which not only looks great but also has a variety of special properties; anti-allergenic, sweat absorbing, and is a renewable material.

The team at Mayori also wanted to create a homogeneous overall picture for both men and women by using the same materials for both lines, therefore embossed leather, contrast stitching, natural materials and various textile patterns can be found throughout their entire product range.

The want for ‘green’ materials also continues to be a top priority for brands with O’Neill including sustainable TPU straps within their Summer 2019 range whilst introducing two new styles which feature recycled Plusfoam footbeds.



photo : Mayori

Knitted uppers are continuing to prove very popular across traditional closed toe options too due to their breathable and athletic nature, meaning that customers can easily pull on these shoes without the need for socks. Freewaters “will continue to work with various aspects of knitted uppers as well as our proven winning materials that we have worked with since we launched the brand,” explains David Goulding.

MANUFACTURING

In terms of the actual manufacturing of many SS19 hanging shoes, the focus is most definitely on producing a quality product, with brands such as Gumbies and Cool Shoes still opting for handmade processes. Jeremy from Cool Shoes explains how, “each item is handmade in our factory and we make sure that everything is made to a high standard by incorporating really good and detailed quality control procedures.”

Evidently, the mid-range option that strikes that fine balance between quality and value is the focus for many brands as Chris Bence from Cobian explains that the brand’s “standards of quality and comfort make sure that the store can offer a comfort-focused footwear that is a great value at the same time.” By avoiding ploughing too much money into their marketing Chris explains how Cobian direct their resources directly into the product.

COLOURS

Neutral based tones with splashes of colour are key for SS19. Earthy hues such as tan, clay and tobacco are great additions to classic colour palettes, which continue to be popular. Chris Bence from Cobian explains how their men’s range will, “focus on making sure that the brown and black options are rich looking and work well with on-trend shades of grey, chocolate and charcoal.”

Other colours that are set to accompany these classic tones are rustic reds, bottle greens, other neutrals such as beige and white and even some blue colours are appearing in many of the men’s ranges too. Jeremy at Cool Shoes says: “our classic colour range is black, brown, grey and any hue of blue that reminds us of the ocean. We enhanced our line with flashes of colour, prints and original patterns and we also used a lot of natural colours that are close to the sand or earthy tones.”

The SS19 summer collection at Mayori is also heavily focused on natural tones such as beige, brown and olive, not only to match the beach and summer lifestyle that the brand adheres to but also to provide a versatile option for their customers as they can be easily combined with a variety of outfits.

Flojos has a rich Mexican and southwest influence running through their SS19 range inspired by the sunny beaches of Mexico & California where the brand originated from. Many of these colours and patterns are apparent in their designs, “from rich earthy browns to vibrant Mexican blanket colours,” these designs are crafted from advanced fabrications including fly knits and breathable mesh uppers alongside more traditional burnished faux leathers, soft nubuck, and summer suedes using a combination of core colours and bold colours.

For the women’s ranges it is apparent that an injection of pastel colouring is making waves in SS19: “pastels and pop colours such as powder blue, dusty rose, lilac and matte aqua will be the key ‘fashion’ colours that will be used as an accent colour in SS19,” explains Craig Townsend at Flojos.

The SS19 range at Gumbies reiterates this trend as Martyna from the Customer Service team says: “we always try to have something for everybody, so you will see that some of the designs are pastels and others are very vibrant prints,” whilst Cobian Women’s Product Manager Milla Camargo explains how the brand have “incorporated some fun accent colours, including coral and turquoise” to their range.

Benjamin Steckermeier, Owner of Mayori explains how many factors influence their designs including; “sustainability, ever-increasing environmental pollution, vegetarian and vegan lifestyle, sports affinity, and the joy of travel.”

POINT OF SALE

Many brands are supplying retail spaces with some really great aids in a bid to capitalise even more on this relatively easy and rewarding product segment. Different kinds and sizes of display allow for presentation in different spots in and outside of the shop, to attract as many customers as possible. Gumbies provide stands (accompanied by eye-catching display card hangers) which have been made in their warehouse from recycled bike tyres and wood sourced from FSC certified suppliers providing a great story around the brand to capture the interest of the customer.

Cobian have innovated what they have called the ‘hanger tie’ which is the point of purchase marketing material that is hanging between sandals on the specialised hanger that they developed. “This allows us to communicate the key aspects of the product itself, instead of just having the same small hangtag over and over on all product,” explains Chris from Cobian.

For SS19, Flojos have completely revamped their packing, including new boxes for each category of footwear that offer great POS material and vibrant/appealing graphics. Their new hangers feature a modern design which still highlights their heritage, and they have added helpful hangtags to their products which clearly tell the customer about the product’s technology, comfort and lifestyle story e.g. Water Friendly, Hammock Comfort, Bottle Opener etc. 5

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sliders so hot right now
- Comfort is king
- Ethically sourced, vegan? Check.
- POS materials refreshed



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BODY GLOVE

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. We spoke with Body Glove Brand Manager, Emily Abbott to find out more about how they're re-launching the brand in Europe.

Please give an overview on how and why the brand began?

Body Glove was founded in 1953 in Redondo Beach by twin brothers Bill and Bob Meistrell. Bill and Bob had always been fascinated with water. When they were just 14 years old, they fashioned their own diving helmet out of a vegetable can and a tyre pump. One of them sat underwater and read magazines on the bottom of the pool while the other held the air pump on the surface. They were later offered a partnership in a local dive shop, Dive N' Surf, and then produced their first practical wetsuit which "fit like a glove" and Body Glove was born.

It is the history of innovation and the love of the ocean that challenges Body Glove to continually build products to fit every waterman and waterwoman's needs, both above and below the water's surface.

With the appointment of Shiner as the head distributor for Europe, how will distribution now be organized in the national markets? Shiner will make the most of its existing European structure of country managers in the UK, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, The Netherlands, and the Nordic countries, as well as master agents in Italy, Croatia, Greece... We are working on appointing dedicated Body Glove agents to help us to grow the brand across Europe.

What is the brand's USP?

Body Glove is a heritage watersports brand, born out of creativity and innovation, and rooted in the southern Californian beach culture. We have seen Body Glove in Europe over the years, most notably in Baywatch, but it has not been over-exposed. Shiner will be able to bring consistency and structure to the European business which means it is a great opportunity for retailers to get something fresh but with authentic history.

Body Glove promotes an active lifestyle with an inclusive attitude. We can all participate with Body Glove and its story be it through surf, swim, wakeboard, SUP, yoga, jogging, walks on the beach or a session at the gym.

What are the key Body Glove product categories and why?

All the categories are really strong and we're excited to be taking them into Europe. Swim and activewear are probably the largest categories and will be popular in all markets. Both categories make use of great fabrics, fits and colours which means we have an offering to suit everyone. In addition, our lines of men's, women's, and kids' apparel, wetsuits, pfd's (personal flotation devices), aquatics, iSUPS, body boards, soft top boards will be launching imminently and so the key category will change a lot depending on the country and location.

How will the brand now be marketing itself to consumers?


We will market to consumers through a mix of

carefully developed initiatives across multiple markets. It is very important that we continue to drive brand awareness, centred around heritage and authenticity. We will be working with the brand owners to build our team of athletes and ambassadors, supporting events, driving PR across multiple channels, working with customers to build our in-store presence and doing all we can to make positive noise and buzz around the brand.

What are the strongest markets in Europe for Body Glove at the moment and where do you see the greatest potential for growth?

The iconic Body Glove logo is well-known throughout Europe. The initial success will be from UK, France, Spain, and Germany, but there are also great opportunities in the Nordics, the Netherlands, and Italy.

How will the brand be supporting retailers during the re-launch?

As a company, we pride ourselves on the strength of relationships we have with our customers. Ultimately, the vast majority of our brand promotion will focus on building relationships with the end consumer and driving them to purchase. We will be working hand in hand with our customers to help support the brand however we can – be it through supporting digital assets which they can use on their websites and social channels, or in-store POS material, or providing product for promotional giveaways or even running Body Glove branded events in store such as early morning yoga sessions. 



LOVENSKATE

Started in 2001 by Stu Smith, Lovensakate is one of the UK’s best-respected skate brands. With the best part of two decades of hard graft under their belt, the North London-based skate outfit ooze credibility thanks to collaborations and partnerships with endemic skate titles, legitimate team riders and artists and recent collabs with the likes of Metallica underline the brand’s burgeoning status.

Please give an overview on how and why the company began?

Lovenskate has been running since 2001. But for the first few years I just made fanzines, printed posters, stickers and the odd t-shirt. It has been a fully-fledged company for just over 12 years, with us printing our own boards and apparel since day one.

I went to art college in a small college just north of London to study fine art. I got really into screen-printing there. When I left, I got a job in a print factory printing tees and all sorts of stuff - print runs in the 100s and 1000s. All by hand, real factory work you know, hard graft. I’ve been skating since I was around 16. Back then I used to hang out with a kid who had all these old boards, Lucero Hippy Stick, Blender boards, Jason Lee. I loved the graphics, but it didn’t dawn on me until I started working at that printers and looking back at the history of skating that those boards were hand printed. I thought it was amazing, and I thought, ‘I’m gonna do that!’ Around that time I was making zines, just about skate stuff, silly jokes, some of my drawings and photos etc. I had a small print bench in my mum and dad’s garage, so I printed the front covers and some stickers. It started to grow from that little shed really, in 2001.

How did the brand come to being?

I started using the printers as my own studio a bit. Those guys were really good to me, letting me order inks and making my own screens. So I started making the odd shirt and experimenting. The time came where I got my own studio (a little porta cabin in Hackney) and went part time at the printers and then I started to print everything myself. It just grew slowly, and alongside I was running a screen printers of my own called Error Solutions, printing for the UK skate industry and some fashion brands - anything I could to make money and keep everything going. It’s been steadily growing like that since then. Lovenskate has never had a huge cash injection, or an investor. I just always used the profits to buy more than I bought previously.

I’m a big believer in firm foundations, strong roots. From working as a printer I’ve seen so many companies come and go, huge initial orders for thousands of pounds, and then nothing... they started too big with no base. I was determined that this wasn’t going to happen to me. I’m really proud, because when I think back to how it was 15 years ago, now there’s a team, they are like my family, and they are smashing it! We just did a collab with Metallica! Fucking Metallica! Like them or hate them, I have to pinch myself when I see those boards hanging in my little office.

Which skaters are you working with?

The UK team is Alex Hallford, Jordan Thackeray, Aaron Wilmot, Ewen Bower, Lucy Adams, Dan Hill, and Alex Barton. Then through the Euro distribution we have Donald Huycke from Belgium and Robbin Oost from the Netherlands.

How do you market Lovenskate?

I try to advertise in at least one magazine. I spread it between Confusion, FREE, Vague... UK and Euro mags. I still really believe in print, I like to see photos of the team in print. Then we do trips and often these are run as articles, this helps to push the brand and show people what we’re about, we also sponsor competitions and giveaways.

What are Lovenskate’s goals for the coming 24 months?

We have a full-length video coming out at the end of this year with parts and the whole team. We also have two new pro boards coming out in summer, but more about that when they drop. We’ll be doing some print based activations and workshops at Vans events and we are also doing an amazing trip to Nepal with some or the Vans team and an association called Skate Nepal. We are taking some hardware out there, going to organise some demos and document and support the scene any way we can. Then next year we are going to go ballistic! 🇳🇵



ALL-IN

ALL-IN is Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Caste’s accessories brand conceived to deliver ultimate comfort for every stage of a surfer’s daily journey, from their changing poncho for the beach, seat covers for the car and slippers for when you return home. ‘The Sweet Transition’, is the phrase coined by JB and having cut his teeth at Rip Curl and with guidance from Rip Curl Europe’s head honcho Wilco Prins, JB’s now looking to take ALL-IN to the next level.

Please give an overview on how and why the company began?

ALL-IN was born in 2012. After an internship at Rip Curl Europe, it was hard to find a job in the surf industry, so I decided to make my own experiences and create my own brand. At the time I realised there were only black ponchos on the market and it inspired me to bring some colour and quality to the segment. My parents lent me €3000 to start up and with this I managed to grow the company step by step. I actually started working back at Rip Curl as a sales rep, which was great but in 2015 I left the company to focus 100% of my attention on ALL-IN.

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

When you create a brand from the start and without financial support, you don’t have any other choice than to go solo. I’m the CEO of ALL-IN and I manage all parts of the business. My background is pretty simple. I started windsurfing when I was five in my hometown Martigues (near by Marseille) and started surfing when I was about 10 years old. I was 100% into Olympic windsurfing amd did a lot of competitions and trips, and then when I was about 17, I switched to waves and trips with my friends and started to do a few World Cup windsurfing events on waves. At the same time I was studying and graduated from Business school in Marseille.

When I finished my studies I had the opportunity to do an internship in Rip Curl Europe, which changed my life! Wilco Prins was my mentor at Rip Curl and I learnt - and am still learning - a lot from him. He gave me the chance to be part of the surfing industry and I think without him I would now be working in bank.

I have one head designer, five commercial agents and distributors in different counties. My wife Julia helps me a lot with decisions and keeps me motivated all the time. She has a good background in communication/marketing and it’s interesting to discuss strategy with her. We are now in 13 countries, mainly in Europe and we just entered the US market at the end of May. The USA is an exciting challenge - really hard work to set up but we found the best people to work with us there and I can’t wait to see our products on American beaches.

What is the company ethos?

ALL-IN is an accessories brand designed for comfort before and after surf sessions. Our goal is to bring this comfort to our customers with great products. We call it ‘The Sweet Transition’, which is our slogan and motto. All of our products must correspond to our criteria - to have maximum comfort during transition time.

We provide customers with products for their journey from their home to the surf spot.

We provide the Poncho line for the beach, our Clean Kit to put their gear inside and we protect their boards with our Sweet Socks (board socks). When returning to your car, our Seat Cover line does what it says on the tin and finally our Iconic Slippers will be waiting for you at home.

What sets you apart from your competitors?

ALL-IN was the first brand to bring colours and quality to ponchos. We continue working hard to be different as much that we can, with our own style and designs such as the V Poncho, which is a poncho for larger shoulders

But the main difference is that ALL-IN is not only a towel brand, it’s a complete accessories brand with a strong identity and a large offering focused on comfort. We have the best prices of the market and try to keep them the same year on year. Our main range of prices is between €49.95 - €59.95 with premium quality.

How do you support athletes and boardsports?

Thanks to my days as a pro windsurfer we’re well connected to this scene and have top riders wearing our products. I organize the French windsurfing tour, the ALL-IN Windsurfing Pro Tour. We also have ambassadors in kitesurfing and wakeboarding and we’re stoked to welcome the talented young surfer Sam Piter to the team alongside Hugo Prins and more. 🇳🇵

NEW PRODUCTS

01 - NIXON BASE TIDE PRO WATCH

Base Tide Pro is built tough with a double-overhead dose of durability and functionality. Featuring 550 pre-programmed tides and sunrise/sunset locations, water-resistant pushers and a 10ATM water-resistant rating, all housed in a durable TR90 case – the Base Tide Pro is one of the toughest in the lineup. Features include: Dial featuring a negative LDC with printed tide graph for easy reading. One time, weekly and daily alarms, countdown time – preset and customizable, Chronograph with split function, silicone strap with grooves to shed water and patented double locking loop to keep the strap in place while you are in the water.
www.nixon.com

01



02



02 - ISLAND TRIBE SUN PROTECTION
CLEAR GEL SPRAY SPF 30

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03



03 - JETPILOT X1 WOMEN'S RAPID
DRY IMPACT NEOPREN VEST

The X1 is a high performance vest that is set to become the lightest and most flexible EU impact approved vest on the market. This vest is a very lightweight and highly resistant wakeboard vest which is especially designed for women. Special features include 100% Flex-Lite stretch panels, super lightweight design for comfort and fit, PVC foam core for supreme buoyancy, vibrant sublimation, custom printed logos, CE impact approved vest.
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04



04-THE JAMES BRAND - THE ELKO

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05



05 - ELLIOT BROWN CLIPPER RACE
BROADSTONE UTC WATCH

With its dual time zone UTC/GMT hand and neat inner timing bezel, Elliot Brown's 43mm limited edition Broadstone exists for adventure. This model is being worn right now, circumnavigating the globe on the wrists of skippers and crew of the Clipper Race, brushing off every element in mother nature's armoury as well as the harsh knocks and constant salt water conditions endured on board.
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06



06 - LOADED BOARDS BASALT TESSERACT

Building on their experience manufacturing the Tarab, Loaded Boards has updated the Basalt Tesseract with a high-performance, eco-conscious basalt fabric construction for a lighter, damper and more freestyle-friendly board. The Basalt Tesseract integrates rocker, wheel well flares, W concave, and multiple wheelbase options into a lightweight package designed for hilly descents, snappy slides, lofty ollies, techy manual combos, and cross-steps galore. The symmetrical shape and kicktails encourage switch riding and a multitude of tricks and slides and multiple wheelbase options allow you to fine tune your setup based on riding style and truck geometry.
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MARKET INSIGHT

GERMANY	UK	FRANCE	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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It’s May. Spring has sprung – apparently! This week I was scraping ice off the windscreen of my car on Monday - five days later it was a Bank Holiday weekend and I was on the water wakeboarding in a shorty and getting sunburnt. The weather appears to be like Donald Trump. You have to ask yourself “what on earth is going on?” Thankfully Trump is unlikely to be around for too long (in the grand scheme of things) whereas the peculiar weather may be around for many decades to come.

The Brits have short memories when it comes to the weather and it doesn’t take much to get us off the settee and out on our boards. We’ve got a Royal Wedding (done by the time you read this) another Bank Holiday and a mini heatwave in store.

‘Warm weather shredding’ has woken up and, after finishing a pretty good winter, retailers should be buoyant – albeit that the actual starting date for the season was late. It also appears that we may be doing better than retail in general, as April sales figures for the UK were not so good.

So with the sun shining where better to head than to Box End Park, one of the premier cable parks in the UK. Russ was pretty buoyant despite a slow start: “We always think that Easter should be the start of the season but the reality is that with an early Easter the weather did not do us any favours – it was a little flat to say the least. Since then however it’s really picked up and if we looked at a graph we’re on track for a great year. Best start so far”. I asked Russ about the retail side of the business. “To be honest we’re focussing on getting people on the water. The retail side has been neglected and is likely to be phased out. We’re not a specialist retailer and it’s better left to those people who wake up and think of selling kit. I wake up and think of running a 100 acre waterpark.”

Many of us involved in the wakeboard industry saw the rise of AquaParks as a threat but listening to Russ there may be some good news: “For sure the aquapark is bringing in a lot of new people and initially we did see a decline, particularly in cable first time kneeboarders, but I think that’s turning round and people are looking at the cable as the ‘next thing to try’. There is definitely a cross pollination between the two.” This could be good in the longer term for wakeboarding.

Next up we spoke with Angelo of S2AS in Poole and, as always, he was not without a view. “Thinking time. That’s the issue we’ve got. People have not had ‘thinking time’. We’ve not had a Spring and that’s when, as the weather starts to warm up, people spend time to ‘think’ about their sport and ‘think’ about new kit. It’s still too cold to get out on the water so the only way they can get their fix is with new kit. Now they’re straight out on the water using last year’s kit with no time to even ‘think’ about buying new kit.”

Angelo had really thought about this one and perhaps he’s got a good point. But I got him to talk about specifics: “SUP is still booming but it’s a really hard market with more and more low price entrants, kite is

on its knees – we can sell second hand kit all day long but new kit is just too expensive and deliveries are late. Some brands will be going on sale soon and they’ve not even delivered our new stuff. WTF! Wake needs some innovation to drive sales and the wetsuit market is now dominated by the clearance outlets. It’s not easy.”

On reading that you may think that Angelo was a bit down. “No. Not at all – I know that the industry goes through peaks and troughs and this may just be one of them. What I am not going to do is join the fight to the bottom – that will not work for us. We’ve been 15 years in the industry and we’ll overcome an hurdles put in our way.”

And talking of hurdles Angelo is off to school sports day tomorrow – I’ve asked him to let me know how he does in the Dad’s race. He was pretty confident “I’ll smash it. Won it 3 years running so far.” Not competitive at all!

Last issue I spoke to Paul at Zuma Jay’s (Bude) who was busy selling bodyboards as sledges. Not so this time: “It’s great! It’s definitely happening. When I start getting stressed out because I am running out of time to do this and that before the season then I know it’s going well. Customers are here and they are spending thick and fast – particularly on hardware which is going really well.”

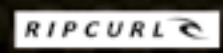
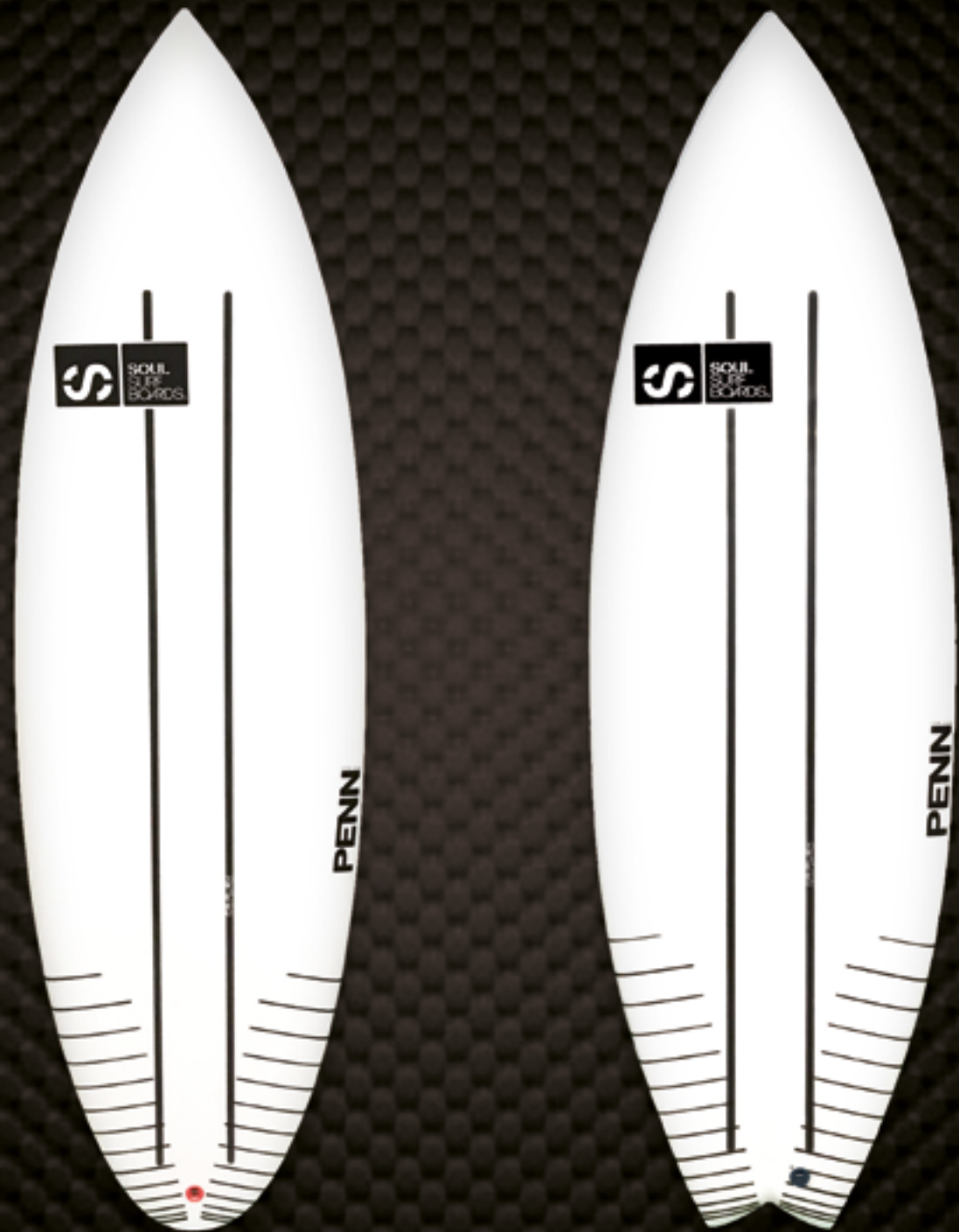
You see all it takes is a little sunshine: “It’s true – the weather brings people out and there is a great vibe to the start of the season – even though during the recent blast of good weather we had a freak mist on the beach we still had good surf and people were out and about,” says Paul.

What about wetsuits – I know that has been difficult with the increasing outlets: “Yeah – our winter wetsuit business has to be refined and we have to really take note of peoples’ buying habits. But now the season has started people will be back to buying in store. All we have to do is adjust our purchasing to make allowances for this through the winter months.”

My final stop was to Rollersnakes in Derby. Daz, who has a three-month-old daughter, was tired and busy but happy to talk. “It’s good, with a distinct increase in decks mostly at the £35-£50 price point. It’s also good to see completes increasing in volume.” Rollersnakes came to life over 30 years ago as a traditional retailer and Daz says, “even though we’re on an industrial estate in Derby people find their way to our store – we’re busy. Of course online is the main focus for us, but our bricks and mortar roots are important to us.” What about non-hardware areas? “Apparel and footwear are steady and we’re in a better place compared to two years ago when it was a lot tougher market. We’re seeing some growth, once again.” Happy days!

Anyone spot something missing? The B(rexit) word was not mentioned once – by any of us. See what the weather does? And finally: Angelo did win the Dad race at school... More than I ever did.

Gordon Way





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MARKET INSIGHT

GERMANY

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SWISS

The French economy seems to be well and truly in good health in spring 2018. According to the Bank of France, GDP in France should increase by 0.4% in the second quarter of 2018, which is the same rate as in the first quarter. For the entire year of 2018, current predictions are calling for a 2% increase of GDP due to the good results recorded from the year past.

The somewhat slower rate may be the result of the school vacations and exceptionally large number of bank holidays in May: 1 May, 8 May, Ascension Day and Whit Monday... This year, the month of May looks like a slice of Swiss cheese with all of the holes in the calendar left by all of the bank holidays. Let's see how this many bank holidays has affected boardsports business.

As far as in-store traffic is concerned, the observation is easy: the exceptional calendar for the month of May 2018 largely contributed to French families going on holiday. So, it's only natural that stores in urban locations suffered from lower levels of traffic due to city dwellers leaving town for bank holidays and other days off work, while shops on the coast on the other hand really felt a true increase thanks to the long weekends in the month of May.

As Cyril from Tamarindo on the Ile d'Oléron confirms: "As it does every year, the season really kicked off at Easter when we had really great foot traffic in the store, with a large number of foreign visitors." He adds: "In spite of the unpredictable weather, lacking many signs of the arrival of spring, the long weekends in May were rather beneficial in terms of foot traffic and sales numbers this year." For Alban who just opened his brand new Unclezaz store in Mimizan, it's the same conclusion: "Sales figures have been positive and pretty good. The store opening has probably added to the favourable calendar, but compared to when I was in my old location across the street, foot traffic and sales figures have generally been higher than for the same period last year." Julien from Au Spot in Paris has noticed the same trend as his colleagues on the coast: "Spring started strong this year, as much in terms of foot traffic as in terms of sales figures. It's always comforting to start the season early and get ahead of things. We like strong sales early and not having to chase things." He adds: "This winter was long and hard, but since mid-April we've had warm days and people are looking forward to summer. Riders are starting to get ready for the season and are coming into the shop to pick up the gear they need. The start of the season is promising for the rest of the year."

More street oriented stores like Nozbone in Paris are more or less on the same wavelength: "The springtime is still an ideal time of year for skateboard sales. The return of nice weather brings skaters back to the shop, because some skaters take a break during winter." He adds: "Being a shop in an urban location, school and bank holidays don't really work in our favour as far as sales figures are concerned. It's more about nice weather, which we haven't had much of so far this year." The crew at NDJ Skateshop in Nantes feels the same: "The weather hasn't been very good, and it seems like spring has had a hard time getting started, which means that we've had a hard time selling our spring products. Also, the calendar hasn't worked very well in our favour as an urban store, because people tend to go to the beach for the long weekends in May, which has had a definite effect on sales in the shop."

On the sales side, the weather hasn't been very favourable to truly kick off sales of spring textiles. At Evasion Proshop in Lorient, sales of neoprene have been leading the way, most notably Rip Curl for men and Billabong for women. The wetsuit isle has also been working well at Tamarindo on the Ile d'Oléron: "We've sold quite a few wetsuits, especially Rip Curl, O'Neill and also Vissla." Julien from Au Spot

in Paris adds: "As far as equipment for people is concerned, and especially in neoprene, the fashion side of things has definitely found its place, with clients searching for good looking and assorted products. It's a trend that is definitely standing out."

As far as surfboards are concerned, evolutive models seem to be popular this spring. Cyril from Tamarindo states: "This year hybrid shapes, fish and twin fins are the most sought after boards in the shop." When it comes to brands, every store we spoke to says TORQ boards are this year's success story. Cyril says: "The new shapes, colours and technology that the brand offers is attracting more and more clients, especially a female clientele." Alban from Unclezaz agrees: "The brand is in high demand by surfers because it has a strong image." Other brands seem to be standing out this year too, with stores mentioning most notably Lib-Tech, Venon and Modern.

Another trend that has been standing out in the surfboard sector is an increase in the popularity of foamies. It's a trend that's been developing steadily in the US and Australia for a few years already, and softboards are starting to carve out room for themselves in France now too and will be a market reality for 2018. Julien from Au Spot in Paris tells us: "Foam boards are really becoming sexy products. Manufacturers have put time and effort into colours and designs, which has attracted more and more interest in this kind of board from clients." The team at Evasion Pro Shop in Lorient agree: "We've seen a real increase in sales of foam boards. While only a few years ago these kinds of boards were only being ridden by beginners, today more and more surfers have one in their quiver, for themselves or family members." Brands such as Softech, CatchSurf and Softjoy are performing well with retailers asked.

As for street products, while sales of longboards seem to be slightly on the decline, the SurfSkate phenomenon seems to continue its development. The trend that started last season is well and truly confirming itself this year. Alban from Unclezaz in Mimizan tells us: "When they can't get in the water, surfers are constantly searching for that feeling they can only get on a surfboard, so if the waves aren't any good, the SurfSkate is the answer they're looking for." He adds: "It's a trendy product that is really selling well in stores." The most talked about brands are Yow, Carver and FlyingWheels.

Elsewhere, while sales of longboards and cruisers seems to be slowing down, street skate sales are making a comeback. The renovation of old skate parks and the construction of new ones are contributing to the increase in sales in the sector. Cyril from Tamarindo confirms the trend: "We have a new skate park in Oléron and as a result we've had quite a rather large demand for street skate products." Core shops like Nozbone in Paris feel the same way: "As a core shop and opinion leader, we've been observing a noticeable increase in hardware sales, which is a positive sign for skateboarding in general." The brands mentioned the most often by shops are Palace, Hélas, Dickies, Thrasher and Santa Cruz. As for shoes, Vans is still the most sought after brand by clients this season. So, the results for the start of the season seem generally positive, with the back-to-back school and bank holidays playing a useful role for stores that helped them really kick off the start of the season. For the moment, stores are satisfied in general and optimistic for the 2018 season. The upward trend that started a few months ago seems to be holding solid. Now, here's hoping that the weather and the waves will cooperate and the 2018 season continues to be as successful as it has been from the start...

Benoit Brecq

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MARKET INSIGHT

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While the rest of Europe has been dominated by retail chains, Germany for the past few decades has been able to preserve a diverse and individual shopping environment in our cities. But as we speak, more and more chains and retail conglomerates are expanding on the national and international market, which sends a troubling sign to retailers. Many downtown shopping precincts have started to look almost identical and independent shops are suffering. E-commerce giant Amazon is already capturing about 50% of German online sales. So every second euro spent in Germany goes to Amazon, and the ordering frequencies among customers is rapidly increasing. And keep in mind that Amazon's employees continue to strike in protest of labour conditions! Amazon has recently surpassed Google in terms of product search volume and only one quarter of German online sales is now entirely independent of Amazon. Next to cheap prices, customer reviews are also a big factor in purchase decisions, but it turns out many of these have been unmasked as "fakes".

In order to better protect consumers in the future, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) took effect on May 25 and sets out to curb the intense data collection practices of big companies such as Apple, Google, Facebook and others. The European Union legislation sets clear standards in 99 articles regarding the collection, processing and transfer of personal customer data. Since 2016, there was a grace period for companies to meet these guidelines but on May 25, 2018, the law took full effect. Companies who fail to comply are facing fines up to €20 million or 4% of annual revenues.

This is good news for consumers, but increases the workload of proprietors of online stores and websites when it comes to act in accordance to the new data protection laws. Skateboard icon Titus used the occasion to completely relaunch the online store and is also celebrating 40 years(!) in business this year. Congrats on this note to Julius Dittmann and crew, this has been a long contribution to the action sports business. Julius took over the family business from company founder Titus in 2009 and now manages the titus.de online store and brick-and-mortar locations. Julius says: "Thank you! Forty years are quite the milestone. We are excited to have been able to stay with skateboarding in Europe and lend our support, and to still be actively involved!" How has skateboarding changed compared to four decades ago? "Skateboarding in 2018 is extremely diverse. From 'just learned how to walk' all the way to skateboarding grandpas, from DIY to the Olympics, from street skating to bowls, to skate parks and slappy curbs. And finally female skateboarding is on the rise globally (see our article on p.28). Skateboarding right now is probably more diverse and differentiated than ever before." In their fortieth year in business, the Munster-based company operates 32 retail locations and franchise stores in major cities across Germany.

Retail chain Blue Tomato also celebrates an anniversary: 30 years in business. Constantly expanding, Blue Tomato now counts 18 stores in Germany, 4 in Austria and 14 in Switzerland and recently opened doors in Passau near the Austrian border. The company has generated great revenues by implementing a newly developed algorithm in the Blue Tomato online store that is able to recognize and respond to customer demands on the site.

Going into brick-and-mortar retail, we spoke to Edge 2 Edge in Garmisch-Partenkirchen: "We have been in our new 200 square meter location for eleven years now and offer everything needed for skate and snowboarding, plus all relevant apparel. We are super happy with the current situation and are enthusiastic about the future while giving it

all we got!" They do not operate their own online store at this point but fully focus on stationary retail at this point. "Last winter is not going to save lost revenues from past years, but it definitely has paid off!" The fast weather change from super cold to warm also brought increased sales of summer items. Especially the numbers of shorts sold at Edge 2 Edge increased this year compared to past periods, which led to sales growth in the second quarter. In summer, skateboarding emerges as the clear focus. Longboards are selling at a normal clip, much like in recent years. "The big high point was definitely great but we are also thinking sustainably and also expect the longboard hype to reflect in stronger skate hardware sales over the coming years. The focus on complete set-ups in skateboard hardware is increasing and the store is reaping the benefits at the moment. Individual decks and components remain to be in demand, but there has been a notable surge in complete sales. The classic skate shoe retail environment continues to be problematic, since the big brands dominate. But we keep seeing core skateboarders who request Emerica, etnies and DC Shoes. Collabs, especially limited ones, work well for our store," said Basti Bendele. "Although they sometimes do not reach us so close to the mountains. But we are always willing to try these things in our store. Snowboard pre-order volumes for the coming winter season is up by 10%. But the risk needs to be distributed better, overall. We can't always stick our necks out and assume all the risk. The brands should also play their part, in order to provide small retailers with some sense of security and flexibility."

For a showcase on how to get kids into skateboarding successfully, look no further than Jens Gramer at 58 store in Ulm, who has been active for almost 25 years. Together with the city of Ulm and its elementary schools, the store has been running skateboarding workshops and in 2017 has brought over 1000 kids on board. Supplying rental boards, protective gear and lots of initiative has yielded amazing results. Skateboard participation in the Ulm region is on the rise and the store is reaping the benefits, especially from young customers. Sales are up an impressive 30% on last year, although cruiser and longboard sales have fallen off a bit, but still remain sufficient.

At Urban Supplies distribution, Andreas Neukirchen said: "We have sold lots of complete boards that went out to new beginners, and lots of things are happening in this area. Skateboard hardware is going well and already better than 2017. It will be interesting to see how many will get the taste for skateboarding again in 2020 when the Olympics are broadcast on television."

Stand Up Paddling remains a major summer trend in Germany, even grocery retail chain Kaufland is selling an SUP complete set for €249. In core retail, SUP boards under €1000 are selling well, while the category has somewhat stagnated above this price point, said Jens at 58 in Ulm, who has been gathering experience in the segment over the years and will premiere an SUP station directly on the Danube river this year. His store is about to move into a new location with direct water access and will act as a competence centre for Mistral, Red Paddle, Light, Indiana, F2 and other SUP brands. In line with the store's 25th anniversary this year, 58 is reinventing itself and is banking on emotions and experiences by offering workshops, team events and adventure trips. The overall store will be a bit smaller in size than before, but also feature a cafe section. "You need to have new ideas. The new generation has a completely different way of thinking and gets their stuff on the internet," said Jens who is taken a bold new path with his store.

Jochen Bauer



MARKET INSIGHT

GERMANY	UK	FRANCE	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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Let's start off by looking at the formation of our government, where it finally seems that the right winged Lega with leader Matteo Salvini and the alternative party's leader Luigi di Maio have found an agreement to form a government. As no Prime Minister could be found from their own staff, a neutral PM will be nominated. And it looks like it will be Giuseppe Conte, a well-respected jurist that will become our new Prime Minister. It will be a tough ask for the new government with many European Union contracts that need to be negotiated, but there are many Italians who have faith in this new era, as the new coalition pledges to bring GDP growth and reduce taxes to kickstart the Italian economic engine.

Boardsports business started slowly for spring 2018, which saw a lot of rain and many physical stores suffer from low turnover. This wasn't just the case for skate shops or surf stores but the bigger chain stores also reported slow sales during Q1 and the start of Q2. This being said, online stores also complained of slower numbers but the bigger online retailers seem to gain more and more market share as they offer a lot of product and give very good terms and customer assistance. When talking to retailers about online business they all agree - invest or pull out. Doing social media to attract customers to your stores is fine but if you want to sell online you have to invest in your online presence as much as you do in your physical store. Matteo Borracci from The Shop in Riva del Garda says, "kids want an experience when they make a purchase so we need to organize events, demos, video premiers etc. to motivate kids to hang out at the store and buy stuff. Of course online is also important and we will open an online store soon but the contact with the kids is even more important," and because of this he's planning a lot of events at his store this summer.

Italy's a very hype driven market right now when it comes to boardsports and if products from the skate, snow and surf world

GERMANY	UK	FRANCE	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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After a long, hard winter, the time for which many have been waiting impatiently to bask in the sun, jump on a skateboard or take off on a favourite aquatic vessel has finally arrived. The relatively good results from this winter season has given many specialized stores time to take a deep breath and head into the summer season more relaxed than usual. To top things off, the EUR - CHF exchange rate is once again working in favour of retailers because a stronger euro reduced cross border shopping tourism, be it online or in brick and mortar stores in France and Germany. Switzerland is no longer as expensive as it was a few years ago, and shopping abroad not as attractive as it used to be either. This is a good sign, which lets our domestic market catch its breath a bit.

In spite of all that, the online market continues to expand with many players already in the business for some time like Blue Tomate and Eko-sport that are continually consolidating their presence. Swiss online retailers like Galaxus and Brack are trying to grab a part of the pie, while the market giant Amazon gets ready to enter the Swiss marketplace. As a matter of fact, up until now Amazon wasn't very active in Switzerland with only a very small percentage of the products it offered available for purchase inside the country. This is about to change and it appears as if the entire range of products will go on sale to residents of Switzerland from now on. It will be interesting to see to what extent this will have an effect on the boardsport market and what it will mean for online retailers like Galaxus and Blue Tomato.

As far as equipment sales are concerned, it seems to be evident that the foil is something that is starting to attract attention. Of course, it remains a very expensive, niche product, but its use especially by kiteboarders is growing more and more. According to Thierry

appear online and are worn by big influencers and Italian Hip Hop stars then sales go through the roof and every store benefits. This is also the reason why many Italian labels that have skate or snowboarding backgrounds are now collaborating with these big names and producing collab products, for example luter with Fabri Fibra. Skateboarding clothing is still in big demand with brands such as Stussy, Thrasher, Huf or Italian streetwear labels like Doomsday, Octopus, Pas de Mer. But growth in clothing doesn't go hand in hand with hardgoods as even though many kids dress like they skate, the truth is they've never set foot on a deck in their lives. Boardsports apparel is combined with the latest shoes from Nike or Adidas, but endemic skateshoe brands are still suffering and are only sold to real skateboarders - great for the image but bad for selling large quantities.

Hardgoods sales are stable with even decent growth in some areas, which is a good sign but it doesn't come without investment. Skate teachers create very good momentum as they bring new kids to skating, but Alex Berger from F-tech (skate park builders) says city councils need to chip in and create public skate parks. Hardgoods are still very price sensitive and with boards, US brands need to adapt to European pricing because kids don't want to shell out extra dough just to pay to ride their fave pro's board. Marco Minioia from Minoia stores in Brescia says these brands need to instead adapt pricing or put more bang in the deck for the user's buck.

Surf business in general goes ok, where hardgoods and technical gear are now top performers with the surf apparel market currently in crisis. Fingers crossed for a great summer of weather and waves.

Franz Josef Holler

Wasmer at Technosurf in Grand-Saconnex near Geneva, it may well turn into an interesting market segment sooner rather than later.

With the 175 or so lakes covering this small territory, the other aquatic sport with an ever-increasing number of participants is Stand Up Paddleboarding. Today, with access to very low-cost, entry-level products whose quality leaves a lot to be desired this activity continues to gain popularity and touches a very large segment of the general public. For the obvious reasons, which are storage and travel, 90% of the SUP market in Switzerland is made up of inflatable boards and the market is overflowing with all kinds of offers and an extremely wide range of prices. All the large supermarket chains offer cheap, very low-quality products, while on the other hand retailers specialized in nautical pursuits concentrate on medium range to high-end offerings. These stores target either more experienced or well-off customers and seem to be able to maintain a solid volume of sales in this market segment. A specialist in the sector, André Simone who is the owner of the Backside shop in Morges and also the distributor of the F-ONE brand sells several hundred board per year in his store and online. According to him, there is a demand for all kinds of boards and levels of quality, but the largest market segment is for boards in the medium to good quality range that do not cost more than 700 CHF (600 Euros) for a complete set-up. Staying within this price range would seem to be the best way to keep foreign online competitors at bay and attract part of the so-called "supermarket clientele". So, it seems that the Swiss market remains a touch too expensive, but if André is to be believed a short-term drop in prices is not at all unlikely.

Fabien Grisel



MARKET INSIGHT

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According to WIFO (economic research institute), the Austrian economy expanded by 0.8% in the first quarter of 2018 compared to the previous quarter and was thus as strong as in the last year. In addition to a buoyant domestic economy, foreign trade, stimulated by a dynamic global economy, is supporting growth. The IMF (International Monetary Fund) forecasts for Austria's economy are also more optimistic than at the end of 2017: Gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow by 2.6 % in real terms in 2018.

Nini from Skateshop Hammerschmid in Gmunden is similarly positive: "The season's start has been is really great! The weather is a real boost, of course." Skateboards are particularly popular at the moment, with the trend "towards wider skateboard decks. Maybe 8.4 or 8.5 will be the new standard? December to March, finger skateboards and their ramps were in great demand." Bikinis sell great in Skateshop Hammerschmid thanks to the well-stocked ladies' department, as well as the long-running Vans Old Skool and more and more often slip on models from Vans, Emerica or Diamond. Lakai is strongly represented in the shop, and Amuse's French-influenced styles are well received by customers; according to Nini, they are perfect for the festival season.

In Vorarlberg, spring this year has unfortunately been a long time coming - according to Thomas from the Alton Premium Store in Feldkirch this year's season should be renamed "winter into summer" period. For this reason, the shop still has spring jackets and thin sweats in stock and hopes to make up for the drop with good sales in May, June and July. But, "our motivation, passion and humour are therefore not lost. :-)", Thomas reports. That's the right attitude!

Alton currently sells mainly caps, shirts, sunnies and gadgets from the surfing and lifestyle sector and "skate helmets are coming back into fashion. Outdoor products like Gore-Tex jackets from Burton are

GERMANY	UK	FRANCE	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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The indicators of the economy continue to grow, but at a slower rate than last year. In the first quarter of 2018, GDP grew at a rate similar to that of the previous two quarters: approximately 0.7%. In year-on-year terms, GDP followed a 3.1% growth rate in the last quarter of 2017, with employment following a rate of 2.9%. There are two good pieces of news regarding economic progress, which we believe will have a positive effect on the economy. The establishment of a stable government in Catalonia, and the passing of the state's general budgets. Also, the labour market indicators during the first months of the year point towards growth. Social Security affiliations continue to record high growth rates; specifically 0.8% in February. Product growth will continue to be essentially underpinned by national demand.

To this regard, Arjuna Zapatero Arratibel, manager of the surf school and store Buena Onda, in San Vicente de la Barquera, Cantabria has provided his opinion on the matter. This is one of the areas of the region that plays host to many tourists with many Europeans attracted to the surf in the area. "Sales increased last year. Both in terms of technical gear and fabrics. It's been a tough winter. It was extremely cold which slowed things down somewhat. Our big season is just starting now with a promising forecast. In our case, hardware is the best seller. We are a specialist store. Technical spring suits and accessories, such as fins, are our top sellers. Our fabric lines and anything beach-related is also selling well: flip flops, swimsuits, towels, etc. as we are a stone's throw away from the beach."

With regards to his customers and the market, Arjuna says, "our customers come in search of technology, the latest sports and fashion products that offer both comfort and quality and our customers vary greatly. The surf school side of business is predominantly made up of children and minors. In terms of the store,

definitely great! Top brands like Makia, Volcom, Captain Fin and Vans as well as Electric are on fire."

Like last summer, the Alton Premium Store relied on surf, a team passion: "Accessories from FCS, Sexwax or Swox make every surf trip better. Besides, we offer our customers technical discussions about surfboards to determine and order the perfect board for them. This is really fun!"

Surfing will also be a favourite topic again in the Vienna area in 2018: Following last year's success with 180,000 visitors and 7,500 surf lessons booked, CityWave has been running in the Shopping City South again since May 19. The 1.40-metre high wave and the 800 square metre platform will be in daily operation until mid-September.

But there is another sector that is gaining more and more momentum in Austria: Outdoor. Thomas already recognised this trend a while ago - he will undoubtedly go to the OutDoor tradeshow this year. "Outdoor is very much in vogue, we have been following this topic for years, and the OutDoor tradeshow offers a fine mix of new styles and brands." Nini & Co. from Skateshop Hammerschmid will not visit the OutDoor show, but: "We have been running Patagonia since winter. Like us, our customers are enthusiastic about the brand's function, look and story. Despite the slightly higher prices, we sell Patagonia very well."

The guys and girls from Gmunden have planned another treat for the summer: "We're again doing a skateboard video contest this year. That was a big success last year." We love such shop events and are convinced that they have a positive effect on customer loyalty.

Barbara Mayer

our main customers ranges between 25 and 40. The boardsports market is clearly still growing. Competition is tough, essentially with e-commerce and other types of businesses that sell a wide range of products without specialising. Given this situation, I believe the market will adapt in line with the businesses."

In terms of online sales, Moncho from Slap Surf & Skate Shop in the city of Donostia-San Sebastian, with over 20 years of experience, remarked, "Sales fell last year. This has been the trend over the past few years. I believe that one of the key reasons behind this fall has been online competition. Our customers can visit websites whenever they want and receive the product to their doorsteps, and even find the same product cheaper than in our store, as the brands that we sell also sell online. It's unavoidable and is the result of a lack of culture when it comes to appreciating the attention and added value a physical store has to offer. It is also down to a lack of solidarity. Companies which sell online do not pay tax in Spain and do not provide any local benefits, whereas physical stores do."

Moncho went on to say: "Online sales are here to stay. It's not looking bright for the current business model. We just cannot compete in terms of prices or products. Also, as I said, we pay taxes. They do not, so they are able to apply other margins. We are able to maintain sales essentially through hardware such as skateboards. To this regard, we have not noticed any particularly significant customer trends. They like what we have to offer right now and are essentially youths and adolescents aged between 7 and 25." These are two fine examples of how things presently stand for Spanish boardsports retailers. The summer season is around the corner and with this outlook, and if the weather is on our side, we could be in for a good season.

Jokin Arroyo

DRAGON LODGE 20TH ANNIVERSARY TIGNES BANKED SLALOM



Dragon Lodge, Tignes Spirit crew



Dragon Lodge Snowboarding's John Bassett



Dragon Lodge's manager Will Hughes



Local legend and Tignes Spirit shop owner Kieran - Hicksy - Hicks



Party Marty



Photographer Sam Mellish



TDC Snowboarding's Owain George



The Woods brothers, Kenny Craig, Schoph and Tignes Spirit's Kieran Hicks

SALTY CREW HOSSEGOR STORE LAUNCH



CJ with a watchful eye on the grill



Pro surfer Ugo Robin, CJ Hobgood and marketing intern Manon



Salty Crew Hossegor



Salty Crew's Josh, CJ Hobgood and Wave Radio presenter

VANS JOEL TUDOR DUCT TAPE INVITATIONAL ZARAUZ



Duct Tape designer Geoff Mcfetridge



The man himself Mr Joel Tudor



Vans Creative honcho Mayol Baret



Lovenskates' Stu Smith

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Filipe Toledo



Johanne Defay

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We are looking for both agents and distributions within European regions to join our dynamic team.

Our Requirements
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New Hire Announcement

Job Title: New International Business Manager

Opportunity:

Mizu is currently looking for an experienced New International Business Manager to join our team during a period of high growth. The right candidate will be a sales-driven, customer-centric, energetic, organized, personable and well-connected international sales manager with a minimum of 3 years experience recruiting and managing distributors and/or sales reps. They will have a track record of success working in the outdoor, sporting goods, housewares or related consumer goods wholesale industries and comfortable working in a fast-paced environment. A significant portion of Mizu's business is within its custom sales channel where its products are co-branded and sold directly to businesses and brands, so a strong business to business sales background would also be helpful. We seek qualified, driven, like-minded people that share our passion for business, adventure, a cleaner environment, a healthy lifestyle and a commitment to excellence.

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Sales Territory: All countries with the exception of the United States and Canada
- Manage, support and grow sales within all current international distributors, sales representatives and agencies
- Use experience and established connections to grow this distribution network, adding new sales agencies, distributors and new channels of distribution globally
- Work with Mizu's leadership team on forecasting sales goals, inventory planning, budgeting and overall strategic planning

Qualifications & Requirements:


- 3+ years direct experience in sales management within similar or relatable industries
- Proven track record of growth in sales with distributors, key mid-tier, multi-store retailers
- Experience in growing a distribution networks, creating & maintaining customer relationships
- High energy, positive and a relentless passion for success
- Team player with a passion for the outdoors & sustainability
- Ability to respectfully teach and train people with a high standard for quality of work
- Strong problem-solving skills and ability to always maintain a calm professional dialogue

About Mizu:

Attitudes are changing. Single use is out and reusable is in. From outdoor adventures to everyday life, from the moment you rise out of bed and get your coffee to the last sip of water you have before you go to bed; there are endless opportunities each day to choose reusable over single use. Founded, owned and operated by outdoor athletes and adventurers, Mizu makes premium reusable products that last a lifetime to help take advantage of these opportunities. Mizu can be found in the hands of people who squeeze every ounce of fun out of life and share a passion for protecting the oceans, mountains and cities we play in. From water bottles to cutlery, from insulated to single wall - from the coffee shop to the beach, from driving to work or hiking for first tracks, when it comes to going reusable with performance and style, Mizu always has your back.

People that are interested in applying for this role can learn more about Mizu at www.mizulife.com and should send a resume and cover letter to jobs@mizulife.com cc wouter@mizulife.com with "New International Business Manager" in the subject line.

Enjoy The Journey. Leave Nothing Behind.



EMEA EVENT MARKETING MANAGER

Location : West Sussex

ABOUT STANCE
We exist to celebrate human originality.

Our goal is to create a culture where smart, ambitious, and positive people can thrive. We value our community and want to improve our local schools, neighborhoods, and businesses. People are the most important element of our business. Our actions, words, and relationships represent what we believe and what we value. Since culture is the collective nature of the people working at Stance, we place a premium on the environment that fosters freedom and accountability across both individual and community levels.

SUMMARY OF ROLE
The Event Marketing Manager is responsible for developing and delivering the Stance Europe event marketing strategy & annual event marketing program. The role sets the standards, processes & evaluation for executing world-class events that highlight Stance as a positive and credible contributor to the European lifestyle and performance scene. They will work closely with the European marketing and content team to deliver a unique and creative events programme, connecting artists, musicians, athletes and our fans through meaningful and premium event initiatives, targeting our core audience across a spectrum of genres, topics and markets. Our content objective is to showcase the best of European subcultures and trends, across all segments and categories, where #WeAreConnected is present.

RESPONSIBILITIES	EXPERIENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create unique creative experiences, with a global reach, in response to highly-developed goals and communication objectives• Comprehensively manage all details of event production, including conceptualising, designing, pre-planning (events briefs, milestones and production schedules, venue selection, stand design, logistics partner selection, etc.) and fully executing trade, consumer, media, launch and other events.• To work in partnership with the marketing and content team to ensure that all event marketing is planned and a event marketing deployment plan is built around each event.• Negotiate and manage event-related contracts and financial agreements with partners, agencies or suppliers.• Establish event KPIs and drive comprehensive post-event analysis and reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4+ years' experience in event planning and production.• A good understanding of or experience in marketing and content development• Experience planning events both for unique and personal experiences to large scale events• A passion for live events, marketing, media and sport.• A drive for execution, getting your hands dirty and creating brand experiences from the ground up.• Impeccable organisational and time-management abilities.• Exceptional creative and logistical problem-solving skills.• Remarkable attention to detail as well as ability to understand the big picture and strategic brand plans.• Experience with event broadcast or event content in its various forms.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Apply with your CV and Covering Letter which should include why you are interested in working at Stance Europe. If available, a portfolio of content you were directly responsible for. Email your application to marketing.creative@stance.eu

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www.cool-shoe.com



EMEA CONTENT EXECUTIVE

Location : West Sussex

ABOUT STANCE
We exist to celebrate human originality.


Our goal is to create a culture where smart, ambitious, and positive people can thrive. We value our community and want to improve our local schools, neighborhoods, and businesses. People are the most important element of our business. Our actions, words, and relationships represent what we believe and what we value. Since culture is the collective nature of the people working at Stance, we place a premium on the environment that fosters freedom and accountability across both individual and community levels.

SUMMARY OF ROLE
The role of EMEA Content Executive is a varied one. Primarily, you'll be responsible for our branded content, awareness and voice used across our content platforms - on our social channels, email newsletters, catalogues and partner communications. You will be looking after all stages of the content production cycle - planning, creating, delivering and governing across the EMEA region. You will have a solid attitude for each of those stages, as well as being comfortable managing freelancers and agencies. You will need to be confident working across multiple countries and with a complex matrix of distributors and stakeholders. You will also work with the marketing team and be an enthusiastic, passionate individual with bags of tenacity and a hunger for proactivity.

RESPONSIBILITIES	EXPERIENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You must be organised - Content comes thick and fast• Strategic - Content is only as good as the distribution plan• Analytical - How did we do, let's prove that content drives commercial success.• Work with our European team and partners to identify opportunities to celebrate human originality and an creative eye on how to turn these into engaging content solutions.• A meticulous attention to detail - Our creative expectations are high, we don't do sloppy execution.• Ability to follow seasonal style guides with provided direction from senior creative team.• Distribute our unique creative experiences through our platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3+ years' experience in a content or social media related role• A good understanding of or experience in marketing and content development.• Be a creative thinker who can solve complex challenges and develop cutting-edge, compelling, content propositions that are within brand standards.• Ability to maintain resources and establish productive business relationships internally and with partners and agencies.• Excellent written and oral communication skills• Bachelor's degree• Additional languages would be a benefit

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Apply with your CV and Covering Letter which should include why you are interested in working at Stance Europe. If available, a portfolio of content you were directly responsible for. Email your application to marketing.creative@stance.eu



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You will be SINNER's ambassador and responsible for the Germany, covering optics, sports and lifestyle accounts by managing appointments with (wholesale) buyers to secure their orders. You will generate sales reports on wholesale and retail and give feedback to our Export Manager. Your close collaboration with buyers and retailers achieves high-resales and give us a clear analysis of the customer's behaviour and needs in Germany. Together with our Export Manager you will develop SINNER's visual exposure in the region.

Because of your result-oriented personality, you make an optimal sales run possible and strengthen our international goals and brand name within Germany.

WHAT WE ASK

- You are experienced in the sports and lifestyle wholesale industry and have existing relationships and contacts with key-buyers from department stores, core shops, buying groups and online platforms;
- You are a dedicated, proactive with high communicative skills;
- You can give clear presentations and communicate strong and fluently in German and English, both verbal and in writing;
- You are in possession of a valid driving license and ready to travel, visit customers and build solid relationships.

WHAT WE OFFER

- You will be a part of the SINNER international team;
- We aim for your personal and professional growth;
- Flexibility (home based if needed)and a company car are guaranteed.

WHO WE ARE

- International, ambitious and growing, always striving for the best
- Connect innovation, trends, styles and creativity
- Dare to overcome obstacles and follow our dreams

Do you meet the profile? Then we would like to receive your curriculum vitae and motivation letter.

Your application (in English) can be send by email to Paul.Stoop@sinner.eu

*Ideally would be located in region of Munich.



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JUNE

01 02	VANS PRO SKATE PARK SERIES QUALIFIER SAO PAULO - BRAZIL VANS PARKSERIES.COM		12 15	PITTI UOMO FLORENCE - ITALY PITTIMAGINE.COM		17 20	THE OUTDOOR SHOW FRIEDRICHSHAFEN - GERMANY OUTDOOR-SHOW.COM	
21	GO SKATEBOARDING DAY		28 29	ISPO DIGITIZE MUNICH - GERMANY ISPO.COM		17 20	AGENDA LONG BEACH CALIFORNIA AGENDASHOW.COM	




JULY

30	AGENDA FESTIVAL LONG BEACH - CALIFORNIA AGENDASHOW.COM		02 13	CORONA J-BAY OPEN JEFFREYS BAY - SOUTH AFRICA WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM		03 05	SEEK BERLIN SEEKEXHIBITIONS.COM	
03 05	BRIGHT BERLIN BRIGHTTRADESHOW.COM		05 08	NASS FESTIVAL SOMERSET - UK NASSFESTIVAL.COM		15 17	SURF DEMO DAYS HOSSEGOR	
13 14	VANS PRO SKATE PARK SERIES QUALIFIER VANCOUVER - CANADA VANS PARKSERIES.COM		19 22	SUMMER X GAMES MINNEAPOLIS - USA XGAMES.ESPN.COM		20 22	ITALIAN SURF EXPO SPIAGGIA DI SANTA SEVERA ITALIASURFEXPO.IT	
23 26	OUTDOOR RETAILER DENVER - CO - USA OUTDOORRETAILER.COM		25 26	JACKET REQUIRED LONDON - UK JACKET-REQUIRED.COM		28 29	AGENDA - LONG BEACH CALIFORNIA - USA AGENDASHOW.COM	

AUGUST

03 04	VANS PRO SKATE PARK SERIES QUALIFIER HUNTINGTON BEACH - USA VANS PARKSERIES.COM		08 09	CPH OPEN BERLIN - GERMANY CPHOPEN.COM		08 10	REVOLVER COPENHAGEN REVOLVER.DK	
08 12	BOARDMASTERS CORNWALL - UK BOARDMASTERS.COM	 	13 15	AGENDA LAS VEGAS - USA AGENDASHOW.COM		10 21	TAHITI PRO FRENCH POLYNESIA WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM	

SEPTEMBER

05 09	SURF RANCH OPEN CALIFORNIA - USA WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM		06 08	SURF EXPO ORLANDO - USA SURFEXPO.COM		10 11	SPORT-ACHAT LYON - FRANCE SPORTAIR.FR	
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OCTOBER

28 01	SILMO PARIS - FRANCE SILMOPARIS.COM		05 07	PADDLE EXPO NUREMBERG - GERMANY PADDLEEXPO.DE		03 14	QUIKSILVER PRO FRANCE WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM	
16 27	RIP CURL MEO PRO PENICHE PORTUGAL WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM							

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