BIG WIG NICHOLAS WALKEN ADDICTED SHOP LYON HURLEY PUSH INTO COLD WATER SURF

RIDE ON JAKE !

RETAIL'S BUYER GUIDE FW20/21 SNOWBOARD BOOTS & BINDINGS, SPLITBOARD HARDGOODS HELMETS & PROTECTION, STREETWEAR, BACKPACKS, SKATE SHOES, E-SHRED



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HELLO SOURCE#99

Jake Burton passed away on November 20, 2019. Jake was a true pioneer whose vision helped lay the path for how we slide sideways on snow today and his love for the shred - and to do so as much as possible - will be his legacy. Read our tribute to Jake on page 15.

We've seen a mixed bag in early season snowfall across Europe, with sporadic dumps serving those higher resorts well but strange weather patterns has seen warmer pockets do away with the early white gold. How the rest of the season will pan out, only the layers of an onion will tell us, but as always SOURCE Mag is here to dissect what we can.

Our Market Insight reports do the European rounds and on our British stop, the guys at Absolute Snow present an interesting snowsports retail theory arising from Brexit, or the lack there of. Founder Paul Macnamara says, "when people book holidays in late summer-early autumn, they then have at least four pay-days between booking and going. They spend this time musing what kit they may need, purchasing that kit and 'enjoying' the whole experience that leads up to their holiday. Brexit has caused people to postpone decisions - they're booking later, much later. This cuts the paydays in half, and then there's Christmas in-between, taking more money away. The disposable income available between booking and going is cut in half, and probably more." Turn to page 69 to read our annual boardsports market reports from the UK, France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland.

Elsewhere in retail we speak to Addicted Shop in Lyon, France as this issue's shop profile and

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we speak to the team at Hurley about a big push they're making into the cold weather surf apparel category. We preview all of the upcoming tradeshows and on snow demos and as our focus switches to winter, we say farewell to our former Senior Snowboard Contributor, Tom Wilson-North who's left us to transform the Nidecker Group's digital operation. However, stepping into these big boots is former Whitelines product guru, Andrew Duthie, who incidentally has size 13 (US) feet.

Driven by a love for Japanese snowboard culture and with radically striking videos to showcase the brand, KORUA Shapes have become one of snowboarding's most interesting brands in recent years. We sit down with Co-Founder Nicholas Walken to dig into the vision behind their success for our 99th issue's Big Wig.

RIDE ON. JAKE! Harry Mitchell Thompson Editorr

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boardsportsource.com



RIDE ON, JAKE !



HEKANMANA







Burton has passed away. He left us on аке November 20, 2019 in Burlington, Vermont (USA). This will forever be remembered as the date we lost one of the 20th century's greatest boardsports pioneers. Jake battled for years with cancer, which in the end is what took him away from us. Passed down to us is a responsibility, to go snowboarding as much as we possibly can because that was his credo: take your board and go into the mountains to shred and surf the snow as often as possible. His vision of happiness!

Jake was born in 1954 in New York. His first contact with boardsports came at the end of the 60s on a Snurfer, Sherman Poppen's invention. It was in the late 70s that he created Burton Boards in a Vermont In 2011, by email. Jake informed his team about the cancer. In 2015. barn. His marriage to Donna in the early 80s marked the beginning while he was in remission, he was diagnosed with Miller Fisher of the Burton Snowboards saga. Although he wasn't the sole inventor syndrome. In 2016. Donna took over presidency of the group, giving of the sport of snowboarding (we also talk about the vision of Jake the space he needed to get treatment. At the start of 2019, they Dimitrije Milovitch and Tom Sims), Jake was the first to put down came back to live in the Swiss Alps to support the European market a patent after adding edges and a P-tex (polyester textile) base to a then, in November, his cancer came back for him... snowboard. In the mid-80s he was the incarnation of snowboarding's rebel spirit, developing the first binding with a high back for soft **RIDE ON, JAKE.**



boots as opposed to plates for hard boots, which were more closely associated with the spirit of skiing.

It was in 1985 that Jake Burton would meet Hermann Kapferer at the SIA tradeshow in Las Vegas. Back in Austria where Jake and Donna had moved to, he asked Hermann to go into business with him and his wife to set up the European HQ of Burton Snowboards. Donna looked after invoicing and exports, Jake was responsible for sales and marketing while Hermann became Director General in charge of the accounts. Over the course of two years they supplied 30 different countries and sponsored top European riders like Peter Bauer, Jean Nerva, Pietro Colturi, Christine Rauter, Dieter Happ, Martin Freinademetz, Tommi Pittracher and Max Plötzender. Since then, Burton Sportartikel has employed around 100 salaried workers in 10 different countries.

What sets Burton Snowboards apart is that since day one they were focussed on the development and manufacturing of the best possible snowboard products as well as improving snowboarding as a sport. They've been 100% engaged in and impassioned by snowboarding and have never lost their soul to questionable diversification. They've won all the biggest world competitions, including the highly controversial Olympic Games and they've supported the best athletes in our history: Terje Haakonsen, Craig Kelly, Shaun White, Kelly Clark and so many others...

Jake was always the frontrunner in lots of areas of snowboarding. Innovation was crucial for him, and always had been. He kept looking for ways of breathing life into the sport ranging from the wider public, mass appeal shows to professional events.

Troubled by the deterioration of our climate and environment, the BMC (Burton Manufacturing Centre) in Vermont is driven by huge investments in eco-friendly technologies. Special products were born when they launched the GMP (Green Mountain Project).

Jake decided to cover all boardsports product categories and to position Burton as a lifestyle company that comprised snowboarding, skateboarding and surfing. With the takeovers of DNA and Channel Island, this process was complete.

The rest of the story goes that in spite of the market decline of snowboarding, Jake managed to maintain his business - and the spirit within it - to an enviably high level.

It's guite likely that the turnover accumulated by the group, which remained a family business under the control of Jake and Donna, entered into direct competition with the big guns of skiing and even dominated the little world of winter sports companies. In the middle of the 2000s, Burton was the unassailable snowboarding leader across all continents and in all segments of the market.

NEWS #99

JAKE BURTON PASSES AWAY

It's with the heaviest of hearts that we have to report Burton Snowboards founder Jake Burton has passed away. Read our tribute to Jake on page 15.

PAUL BATSCH APPOINTED SALOMON SNOWBOARD'S BRAND MANAGER

After starting as an intern with the company six years ago, Paul returns to Salomon after a stint at Scott Sports as Product Manager.

ROME SNOWBOARDS CO-FOUNDER JOSH REID LAUNCHES POWDER HUNTING TRAVEL COMPANY

Rome SDS Co-Founder Josh Reid left the business when it was acquired by the Nidecker Group last year and Josh has now launched a pow seeking travel company. The Uncommon Line Adventure Works "craft uniquely mobile, high-octane ski and snowboard tours to uncommon spots so we can session the deepest lines with a likeminded tribe."

WSL ANNOUNCES 2020 CHAMPIONSHIP TOUR SCHEDULE WITH RETURN OF G-LAND

Stop 4 returns to legendary Grajagan (G-Land), for the first time in 20 years. The CT doesn't clash with the Olympics or its qualifiers; allowing surfers and fans access to both.

SP CONNECT HIRES DOMINIK LYSSEK AS HEAD OF GLOBAL MARKETING & SPECIAL PROJECTS

Bringing years of experience with him, Dominik Lyssek joins SP Connect as their new Global Marketing and Special Projects Head. He's already presented ambitious plans for global expansion and has formed new relationships with big companies.

EIVY TEAMS UP WITH FUSION INCORPORATED FOR JAPANESE DISTRIBUTION AND DEBUTS NEW FABRIC

Making it the eleventh market the brand is represented in, Eivy has entered the far eastern region with its foray into Japan with Fusion Incorporated as its distributor.

NIKE SELLS HURLEY

Nike acquired Hurley from its founder Bob Hurley in 2002 and are now selling the brand to Bluestar Alliance LLC.

SHOP VENERO CROWNED VANS SHOP RIOT CHAMPIONS 2019

The standard was spectacularly high in Amsterdam at the Vans Shop Riot Finals 2019. 14 teams battled it out at NOORD skatepark making judging the final two teams difficult, in the end, Spain's Venero skate shop triumphed to become 2019's champions.

WSL AND IKEA ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP

The World Surf League has announced a partnership with IKEA to create a line of products catered to the surfers and ocean enthusiasts of the world! They have issued a survey to gauge just what their fans want.

VISSLA'S FUTURISTIC WETSUIT A PLOY TO COAX SURF INDUSTRY INTO CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION

Vissla drip-fed imagery and footage of a futuristic looking wetsuit on their Instagram channel in October, to later announce that they have no intention of putting the suit into production. Vissla and Surfrider Foundation created the suit – complete with LED display mask to inform the user of water pollution levels – not for production, but to "amplify attention to the urgent risks our oceans and coasts are facing".

TOM WILSON-NORTH HIRED AS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION MANAGER AT NIDECKER GROUP

From running Zero 6 shop in France, to Senior Snowboard Writer at Boardsport SOURCE, Head of ISPO Award Snowsports Jury and Key Advisor at Protect Our Winters; Tom Wilson-North boasts an impressive career history. His experience and industry knowledge lead to him being hired as the new Digital Transformation Manager at the Nidecker Group.

BURTON BECOMES 1ST SNOWBOARD COMPANY TO RECEIVE B CORP CERTIFICATION

Burton becomes first snowboarding company to receive B Corporation Certification for adhering to the highest social and environment standards. Burton's community, sustainability, empowerment of snowboarders and support for women in leadership values have all been contributing factors.

BUCHER + WALT SA ACQUIRE DAKINE EUROPE

Bucher + Walt SA, Swiss-based distributor of premium brands in the sports, electronics and yachting industries, have acquired Dakine Europe, a move that sees them take on the regional distribution of key EU markets. The move comes after a partnership that has spanned over 30 years and will be helmed from their offices in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, where they will oversee the management of the expanded distribution relationship.

RIP CURL ACQUIRED BY OUTDOOR SPECIALISTS KATHMANDU

After over 50 years of private ownership, having been founded in 1969, the iconic Australian surf brand Rip Curl has been sold to outdoor and camping specialists Kathmandu. In a deal worth up to \$350M (a combination of cash and shares), the acquisition sees Kathmandu become a \$1 billion Australasian surfing and outdoor adventure lifestyle company. Rip Curl CEO Michael Daly will continue to lead the firm and will report to Kathmandu CEO Xavier Simonet.

XHAPELAND TAKES OVER MANUFACTURING OF SIMON ANDERSON SURFBOARDS

Australian pro surfer Simon Anderson, the inventor of the iconic 3 fin thruster board, moves production of Simon Anderson Surfboards to Portuguese board manufacturer Xhapeland.

DAVID PITSCHI JOINS NIDECKER GROUP AS YES. BRAND MANAGER Snowboard industry veteran David Pitschi has linked up with the Nidecker Group to assume the role of Brand Manager of YES.

BURTON SNOWBOARDS STRENGTHENS PRESENCE IN SWITZERLAND

Burton Snowboards has strengthened its roots in Switzerland and has opened new shops that focus on fresh concepts. Additionally, a change in Country Management is on the horizon: As of October 01, 2019, Daniela Meyer will be responsible for all Burton matters in Switzerland.

CHOPPY WATER TO HANDLE TAHE OUTDOORS' DISTRIBUTION IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

Choppy Water will look after the sales and distribution of Tahe Outdoors in the regions of Germany and Austria. It's another addition to the already impressive list of brands for whom Choppy Water GmbH is the exclusive regional distributor.

JEFF KENDALL BECOMES NHS PRESIDENT AND CMO

Jeff Kendall, Vice President of NHS Inc. for the last twelve years, has been promoted to the position of President and Chief Marketing Officer (CMO). With the former professional skateboarder's appointment, the Californian skateboard company hopes to 'reach new levels' and achieve its long-term goals.G.

VOLCOM REPLACES BURTON AS US SNOWBOARD TEAM SPONSOR, ANNOUNCES WITH VID FEATURING SHAQUILLE O'NEAL

For all events – World Cups, World Championships, National events and training camps – building up to and throughout the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, the US Snowboard team will be kitted out by Volcom. The announcement was made with a video featuring US snowboarders and basketball legend, Shaquille O'Neal. Volcom replaces Burton as the official outerwear partner with Burton being the official outerwear partner for the past 4 Olympics. In a new move, Volcom will be selling replica outerwear to consumers for the first time.

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HYDRASTASH GIGI RÜF WEARS THE FIRST EVER **BUILT-IN HYDRATION SOLUTION.**

Introducing the GLCR GORE-TEX Sync Jacket featuring Hydrastash



25oz Bladder Hidden Inside an Engineered Powder Skirt

"Thousands of kgs of single use bottles and cups are thrown away by resorts every year. Be a part of the solution, not the problem."

ANUMAN

0 N SNOW DEMO PREVIEW

ROCK ON SNOW PRO

LA CLUSAZ, FRANCE, JANUARY 12-14, 2020

Retailers from across Europe will meet up at the Rock On Snow Pro in La Clusaz to test more than 50 brand's 2020/21 range of snowboard products. Though French

retailers make up the majority of visitors, last year also saw key retailers from UK. Switzerland, Benelux, Spain and Scandinavia attending. In fact Rock On Snow pro was visited last year by 458 shops and 798 people from across Europe and during the 3 days of the event 3692 tests were made. The demo is divided into two parts, an outdoor village where the exhibiting brands will have everything you want to test, no matter if you're a powder or park rider and then there is a 450m showroom tent in which visitors will find not only softgoods, boots and accessories brands but also an exhibition wall with the highlights from every brand. Inside the tent is a great place to relax between rides and grab a cup of coffee. During the day Rock On Snow Pro will have live bands, beers and fondue and some guitars all under a new Woodstock theme. Additionally the infamous Roster foodtruck will cook burgers and food on site, at the test village.

From 5pm each evening there's 'happy hour' time in the showroom tent and this is a great way to debrief on your riding day, speak with reps and exchange with retailers and press whilst checking the exhibition wall to choose which board you'll test the following day or to look at the newly introduced Art exhibition. On the evening prior to opening the Rock On Dinner will give a warm welcome to the industry, and will be held in the 4 star Beauregard hotel. This is referred to as the Rock On Base Camp, and is next to the slopes and fully equipped with swimming pool, hammam and Jacuzzi to relax after a hard working day.

SHOPS 1ST TRY

ALPBACHTAL -WILDSCHÖNA, AUSTRIA, JANUARY 19-21, 2020

For 2020, Shops 1st Try is at its regular location of Alpbachtal-Wildschöna, with its spacious test area across Alpbachtal's wide and varied terrain. The test village is at the Pöglbahn

Parking area in Inneralpbach, at the bottom of the main SkiJuwel lifts and is has been added for this year with the 2nd floor being opened up so more open Sunday, Monday and Tuesday starting at 7.45am for registration and brands can exhibit and more guests can sit down for dinner. wrapping up at 3.30pm. Whilst the indoor exhibition area is open from 4.30 to 10.30pm on the Sunday and Monday with the dinner starting on both During the evenings an art auction will take place and the Retailers Choice nights from around 6pm. Currently over 90 brands have registered to exhibit, board Design award by, ahem, Boardsport Source will be voted on. And as always this is dominated by hardgoods brands with boards, bindings and for those with stamina Method Mag is celebrating their 25th anniversary boot brands represented but also includes significant number of goggles, and will throw a party on Sunday night at Jakober Pub in with the Motels, accessories and outerwear brands. The full list is too long to publish but it's a DJ Stylewars and Freddie K. On Monday after show parties will be at both who's who of snowboard brands. New brands to the event this year include Postcafe and at Jakober Pub starting at 10pm each night. Shops 1st Try is Airhole, Aphex, Endeavor, Femi Stories, Mons Royale, Niche Snowboards, working hard to reduce its environmental impact by separating waste, using Nobile Snowboarding, Out Of, Rad Air, Shred Rack, Slash by Gigi, SnoKart, reusable cups, sourcing local produce for the dinners and a lot more. Visitors Transform and in the Micro tent Canary Cartel, Clew Bindings, Melon, are welcome to bring their own cups and a partnership with Go-Shred means Stranda, Tempelton, The Bakery Snowboards and Weston snowboards can shops can share rides. be found. This year the brand village will feature traditional local food with the Tiroler Snackhouse, great coffee supported by Korua and beer from The event is open to retailers from all over Europe. So whilst Germans and the tap by Horsefeathers. On hand as always will be the 'Shred Buddies' Austrians make up the majority of visitors, there are also good contingents (Pros, Ams and ambassadors) to ride with you and offer their views on the from Switzerland the UK, Poland, Czech Republic and Benelux. And this year products being tested. many more Italian retailers are expected. Shops should register immediately, as there might still be some of the limited spots with free lift tickets and free dinner available.

As usual there's a packed evening schedule. Proceedings kick off with Shops 1ST Try Industry Welcome Dinner by Alpbach Tourismus at the Hotel Alphof which is open to all exhibitors after a hard day of stand building on the first night. For the next two nights it's the Highlight Exhibition Dinners at the



Download the Sportair Android and IOS app onto your phone to help keep a note of all the products that you tested and to exchange files with exhibitors. All your data will be saved on a personal account, meaning you will have a personal record of everything you tested at the demo. The app works in conjunction with the simple data recording system based at the entrance to the outdoor tent park. Two people per shop are invited to the event with the invitation including 1 access badge, 1 ski pass for the La Clusaz resort, 1 Rock On Dinner ticket and 1 breakfast and 1 lunch for each person. If you are more than two persons or if you want to extend your journey, it costs 48 euros extra per person per day. For people who come from far away, the organizers provide a shuttle from Geneva to La Clusaz. The return trip and accommodation is available at special prices.

Retailers can also take the opportunity to visit the 11th edition of ASAP, Sportair's softgoods show which is held in Annecy over January 13 – 14, and is only 35 minutes drive away. This is the first European preview of the 2020/2021 winter textile collections. The fashion show will take place on Monday, January 13 in the middle of the day at the Espace Rencontre and showrooms around Annecy will be open from 8:30 to 19:30 on both days. This year around 295 stores are expected to visit the 38 brands exhibiting. Brands new to ASAP this year include: Nivose, Salomon, Devold, FW, Quiksilver, Roxy, Element and Billabong. To wrap it up the Outdoor Retailers Awards 2019 will be presented at the ASAP party organized at the Espace Rencontre.

sportair.fr

Congress Centrum Alpbach, these are evenings combining a relaxed dinner surrounded by product displays from exhibiting brands. The outerwear brands will be there in force, as this is the time of day when retailers have the time to talk about this product category after a full day of testing hardgoods. These dinners has proved such a success that additional space

shops-1st-try.com



PREVIEWS

JACKET REQUIRED

OLD TRUMAN BREWERY LONDON, JANUARY 22 - 23 2020

Jacket Required, the UK's biggest contemporary menswear and streetwear trade exhibition returns to the vibrant East End of London for the AW20 buying season. It hosts an inspiring, carefully edited international line-up of contemporary

menswear across apparel, footwear, accessories and lifestyle product. Shoreditch High Street, Liverpool Street Station, Aldgate East Station and Old Street Station are all within walking distance 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.

jacket-required.com

SLIDE TELFORD

UK JANUARY 21-23, 2020

Slide is the only opportunity for UK retailers to see so many brands under one roof, making it the key event in the UK snow industry calendar and an easy

decision for specialist retailers. The show is also the first in exhibition in Europe to exhibit the snowsports industry's products for the 20/21 winter. At time of going to press, 98% of the area from last January's show has been sold, which given the overall political uncertainties is a clear demonstration of the show's importance to the UK market. The good early season snow in Scotland, the Alps and parts of the States is helpful so retailers should be able to come to Slide and make purchasing decisions with a degree of certainty. Slide is still very much an order writing show, with brands holding back-to-back meetings, so retailers should book ahead to make best use of their time at the show. Confirmed returning boardsports brands are 2 Pure, 686, Coal, Arcade Belts, Barts, BBCO Headwear, Bolle, Cebe, Bonfire, Nikita, Sessions, Dakine, Dragon, Full Stack Supply Co, Head, Julbo, K2 Snowboard, Mervin, Never Summer, Noble Custom, Ortovox, O'Neill, Oakley, Patagonia, Picture, Protest, Red Bull Spect Evewear, Ride, Rossignol, Salomon, Saxx Underwear, Sidas, Snokart, Surfanic, Stance, Icebreaker, Capita, Deeluxe, Union, Volcom and Zeal Optics. New to show brands include Evolution Eyewear and Passenger Clothing and brands returning after a break include Helly Hansen and most significantly, Boardriders. Boardriders have booked two stands, to give themselves the space for all the brands now under their umbrella. As always the Slide Awards will take centre stage with awards

up for grabs for Hardware, Software, Accessories and the Fresh Brand Award introduced last year, for the best newcomer. This year an Eco Award is launched which will go to a product that is judged to have achieved the highest levels of sustainability. All entries will be displayed throughout the show in a dedicated display area and specialist retailers, media and opinion leaders will be voting for their favourites on the first day of the show. On the opening night from 6pm there will be drinks and informal chat at the central café and on Wednesday night the SIGB's (Snowsport Industries of GB) at its AGM will provide an update on wider UK industry activities and offer the chance to one and all to voice opinions as it's open to all. Telford is well served by the road and rail network. A free shuttle from the train station to the exhibition centre helps make the trip a seamless one and car drivers are offered free parking. Visitors can take advantage of preferential hotel rates by booking at www.slideuk.co.uk/hotels/. On-site hotels mean visitors and exhibitors can easily walk from hotel to show and back. Doors open at 9am and close at 6pm on the first two days and at 4pm on the final day and the show is free to attend for all visitors. So for all the key players in the UK snowsports market, Slide is still the place to be as the show continues to attract UK decision makers. Finally one for the calendar, The SIGB Ski and Snowboard test in Pila in Italy, which was opened up to snowboard brands last year will be held from March 2-6, 2019. See you in Telford.

slideuk.co.uk

SEEK BERLIN

GERMANY, JANUARY 14-16, 2019

Seek continues to be a major draw at Berlin fashion week and with the hall booked out solid as usual. retailers will be sure to find that exciting mix

and 10:00-17:00 on the last. Retailers should download the Premium group app to get the most out of the show. Regular shuttle buses will be running to of brands that will define the future of their businesses. This edition Seek is all the other exhibition locations to enable a quick transfer from one show to reinforcing its sustainable DNA with over 80 sustainable brands exhibiting another and tickets are valid for all the Premium events, speeding up show including players like Veja, Dedicated, Sandqvist and Kings of Indigo. Since its access. launch in 2009 SEEK has evolved from a niche trade show to become one of Europe's most relevant platforms for streetwear, with no other show offering a comparable brand roster. Brands exhibiting include Aevor, Arbor, Burton, seekexhibitions.com

THE MILL TRADE SHOW

MANCHESTER, JANUARY 12-14, 2020

Hosted by Spiv Agency in a 100 year old Manchester mill, and now in its 4th edition, The Mill Trade Show showcases the best of the UK's

skate and streetwear brands. Offering an informal atmosphere for buyers across the UK to come and preview the best in show in skateboarding

and streetwear for FW20. Showcasing brands including footwear from Es, Emerica, Lakai, apparel including Polar, Gramicci, Piilgrim, Obey, Huff, Parlez and hardware from Flip, Skateboard Cafe, Qausi and YOW plus much more. Definitely one not to miss.

Chrome, Cheapo, Eastpak, Gramicci, Herschel Supply Co, Makia and Reel

jeans to name a few. Opening times are 10:00-19:00 on the first two days

For further information please contact info@spivagency.com







RIDE **SNOWBOARD** CO.

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE BOOTS FW 20/21

Are there still people out there who don't think that boots are the most important bit of kit for any snowboarder? As retailers, it's your sacred duty to identify said misguided souls, and set them straight. It isn't hard, fortunately - just remind them that having sore feet is shit, and direct them to sample the latest offerings from brands that have been falling over each other in pursuit of 'out of the box comfort' credibility. Then there's the joy of new-boot smell, as well as clever antimicrobial tech that ensures they stay that way for longer. How are things looking in the boot world? Short answer: good. Long answer: over to Andrew Duthie.

THE ERGONOMY, STUPID For anyone who's ever woken up somewhere strange and been required to make a sharp exit in the dark, the importance of bespoke left- and right-fitting footwear is painfully obvious. These days brands appear to be pushing this as far as they can, putting an asymmetric spin on as many individual elements (tongues, lacing systems) as they can afford to. Take Nidecker, for example, who claim that the asym liner for their new high-end offering, the Falcon, delivers an unbeatable fit. While many brands still take their lead from skate shoes, football boots and mountaineering equipment, Nidecker's Margaux de Mercurio cited ankle support tech found in the medical world as an inspiration, which we take as customers will need their hand (or should that be foot?) held through some a promising sign.

There's some good news for female fans of Salomon - the 'Fit To Ride' design, introduced this year to the brand's men's range, will be extended to the Kiana and the Ivy in 2020/21. FTR features thinner, lighter elements that provide all the support you need, and is available in a variety of lacing systems. the liners of the Document, Cutback and Primacy models.

A good fit starts with the liner, and both Salomon and Rome are expanding Rossignol, meanwhile, have been mining their ski heritage as they revamp their use of Ultralon foam for 2020/21. Vans continue to apply sister brand The North Face's Flash Dry tech in their higher-end liners, but have now become the first snowboard boot brand to partner with Smartwool. The Rossignol's Arnaud Repa explains: "We're gradually bringing 50+ years of result is a new super-comfy lining that'll be found in mid-range models expertise in ski-boot liner fit and technology to snowboarding for everyone's package them up with Vans-branded Smartwool socks, and you've got a deal sake. And walk towards the fit and rebound to forward lean of a ski-boot liner that'll sell itself. mixed with the unique comfort of a snowboard boot shell.

Away from liners there have been a few advancements here and there, This may mean that you need to dedicate a bit more time to staff training although perhaps nothing you'd call revolutionary. On the sole side, Deeluxe and supervised boot fitting. Each brand has a specific approach to fit, and have toughened up the ones on the Edge and the Brainchild, and Head and



"Your sales staff will need to be on their game. Make sure they can adjust the laces and liners until they've got the kind of muscle memory that'd put a blindfolded rifle-cleaning squaddie to shame."

of it, so your sales staff will need to be on their game. Make sure they can adjust the laces and liners until they've got the kind of muscle memory that'd put a blindfolded rifle-cleaning squaddie to shame.

MATERIALS

K2 have unveiled new outsoles – the Treadlyt and Phylight, respectively - which offer additional weight savings. After its well-received debut, the Thirty Two Mullair is back for more, and now features a pow-proof gaiter over the lower part of the boot. Meanwhile Nitro have embraced the more environmentally-friendly 'Ecostep' variety of Vibram rubber, which uses 30% recycled material. That's one to flag up to any customer worried about their carbon, ahem, footprint.

LACING

Likewise there has been no Back To The Future Pt. II-style great leap forward for lacing, but technology continues to creep forward in the direction of comfort, durability and (above all) ease of use. The Boa® Fit System remains ubiquitous; the aforementioned Nidecker Falcon and new Pro version of the Ride Lasso are two models where you'll see the new H4 coiler come into play, as well as the Burton Ion, K2 Estate, Nitro Cypress Dual Boa and Salomon Ivy Boa str8ikt Boa. The refreshed system features a textile lace made out of ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene and polyester and a dial that pops off on impact, so you're less likely to properly ding it and require a repair. Once you've recovered from your spill, just re-insert it and you're good to go. Ever tripped over a Macbook's magnetic power cable? Same idea. If things go really wrong and you snap a lace or break a dial, it's covered by the Boa Guarantee. The new H4 dial release mechanism allows for easier replacement and repair.

Over at Vans, Arthur Longo gets a bright orange colourway for the Hi-Standard in 2020/21, and the slice of wisdom written on the side ("small flakes make big snow fields") is worthy of Cantona.

Looking elsewhere, Nitro are introducing new 45 degree 'Lacegliders' to their own TLS speed-lace tech, which will reduce friction and improve the overall fit. If you like a speedlace but aren't a fan of stashing the handles in those mini pockets you sometimes get on the side of the boot shells, Northwave may have the answer: they've licensed Fidlock, the smoother-than-Miles-Davis magnet system also seen in some helmet clasps. Once you've tightened your laces, just let the handles click into place automatically, and you're good to go. It'll only be available on the high-end Prophecy model at first, but we reckon this one could take off. For traditionalists. Vans' latest high-end offering has the classic lace, although as it's a pro model for Sam Taxwood. that's probably no great surprise - the pros still love a chunky lace. DC are also going old school with one of their new models, which goes by the Ronsealesque name of the 'Laced'. It's designed to have a skate-shoe feel, something that is very much in DC's wheelhouse.

CHANGES TO RANGES

Rome's line of boots was already fairly pared back, but this year the axe has swung for models like the Memphis and the Sentry. As of 2020/21, the entire line will consist of just four models: the Guide, the Libertine, the Bodega and the Stomp, all of which have been redesigned from the treads up. Before you go thinking that your options with Rome are limited, it's worth noting that all four models offer the choice of classic lace, Boa or Hybrid Boa system -"a big development for us," says Marketing & Team Manager Matt Stillman. "The freedom to choose is what's hot in lacing". It's the exact same for women, with the exception of the Guide. Just like that, gone is the need to compromise on your preferred lacing system in order to get the right boot for your style of riding - and vice versa. Conversely, Nitro are expanding their range with four new boots next year, including the backcountry-specific Incline (see our splitboard goods roundup for more on that one) and the mid-range Futura women's model. Recognising that 'expert rider' doesn't necessarily translate to 'Alaska-bound hellman', Nidecker have reshuffled their range to offer a variety of flex patterns across all price points.

STEP CHANGES

As was announced last year, the 2020/21 season will see the debut of the first licensing deal for Burton's Step On boot/binding interface. DC are the ones stepping up to the (base)plate, so those who want the tech but whose

feet don't get on with the B's boots now have another option. The first DC models to get the Step On treatment are the Control and the Lotus: as midrange, all-mountain offerings with a broad customer catchment, that's a good place to start. If you're a fan of K2's clicker system, then look out for three new models - Maysis and Boundary for men. Kinsley for women - released to complement the new Clicker X HB binders (see our binding preview for more).



TEAM COLOURS

Earth tones and black continue to dominate the range, with brands like Rome providing a few skate-inspired colourful accents to brighten things up. At the other end of the scale, we're intrigued by Burton's proposed use of "holographic materials." Will models like the 2020/21 Limelight Boa be the boot equivalent of getting a 'shiny' in a pack of football stickers? Got, got, need...

As ever, the best way to find something eye-catching to spice up your shelves is to check out the pro models. Deeluxe, for example, are keeping their limited-release Team ID Bloodline around for another year. "Our team riders are the heart of our brand, and our driving force to come up with what we believe are the best boots in the game", says Marketing Manager Florian Helm. Over at Vans, Arthur Longo gets a bright orange colourway for the Hi-Standard in 2020/21, and the slice of wisdom written on the side ("small flakes make big snow fields") is worthy of Cantona.

There are exceptions to the rule, of course - Desiree Melancon's latest daubings on her Thirty Two Lashed are fairly muted, once again drawing inspiration from nature - but in general, pro models mean popping colours. We'll leave the last word to Northwave's Davide Smaina: "We made a pro model boot for Ethan Morgan, perfectly matching with his yellow van."

CONCLUSION

We may be past the days of sea changes in tech advancements, but we're definitely seeing a wider range of flavours. There's a danger that things can get overwhelming for the inexperienced customer, but with the right guidance (and that's where clued-up staff come in) there's literally no reason

for anyone to be walking out of a snowboard shop with something that's not right for them. (S)

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category. BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM HIGHLIGHTS 1 Get fit right 2 Tech creeping, not leaping

- 3 Boa® Fit System reigns supreme 4 More step-in options 5 Team models turn heads









RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE BINDINGS FW 20/21

Binding technology tends to move forward in a similar pattern to that of Formula One cars; you might not notice much changing from one season to another, but hit the rewind button for longer - a decade, let's say - and you can clearly see how far things have come. Stronger, lighter, better fitting, better looking, and with more tech that you'll find in Batman's utility belt; the 2020/21 crop is a healthy one to say the least. Andrew Duthie breaks down what's new at the component level, as well as what to look out for trend-wise in 2020/21.



BASE PLATES & FOOTBEDS Union continue to push the longevity of their gear forward, with a brand new 'Stage 7' baseplate that they say is the toughest they've ever made. It's the foundation of the completely-redesigned Atlas binder, which now also comes in a Forged Carbon version.

In the never-ending war on foot fatigue, Salomon have a new weapon in their arsenal. The clever bods over in the running shoe department made improvements to the existing Vibe shock absorption system; expect Optivibe to find its way into the footbeds of the 2020/21 binding range. Meanwhile Bent Metal have upgraded the Solution and Cor-Pro models with extra heel protection, and a new canted footbed. Over at Jones, the Apollo (the higherend of the two in the range) has been kitted out with a triple-density EVA 'foot pillow', which should please the hard chargers.

Vimana have made improvements to the base of their flagship Scando binding, in order to achieve a step up in responsiveness. It's still leaning heavily on the urethane, with other materials added to the mix. After all, if it ain't broke... and according to boss Trond-Eirik Husvæg, it rarely is: "We have close to zero broken bindings in our six years on the market."

HIGHBACKS

Rome binders will be easy to spot next year; they've mostly moved away from cut-out designs on their highbacks, focusing instead on a line of head-turning mini-canvases. The highback on the new Cleaver features the brand's first foray into carbon injection; that, combined with the new straps (more of which later), makes it one of the most interesting new releases for 20/21.

Another one to look out for is Flux's XV, which features their new 'W PROP' tech. Carbon rods have been inserted into the highback, but there's cushioning towards the top to take the sting out of the tail. Then there's Salomon's new all-mountain offering, the Highlander, which has a highback that they're calling "a masterpiece; a new era in binding component design... the best ratio of lightness to response, with a dynamic flex". Finally, two of

Rome have applied Auxetic Shape Technology to their toe straps and thanks to a bit of Nidecker Group cross-pollination, you'll also see them coming to binders from **Jones** and **NOW**.

Burton's workhorses, the Cartel and Lexa, will feature revamped highbacks on the new 'X' versions.

BUCKLES

Fix were the first brand to offer lifetime warranties on their buckles, and have improved the system further still with a new version of their aluminium mainstays. NOW have a lot of faith in their system too, deploying across their whole range. They also acknowledge that sometimes a little TLC is essential, however, so they've been designed to be easy to service at home.

Ease of use is always more likely to hook customers than longevity, of course, so it's important to tick both boxes like the new asymmetrical design from Jones. "The buckles are slightly twisted," explains Global Marketing & Team Manager Seth Lightcap, "so your thumb fits under nicely."

STRAPS

After the successful introduction of their 'Auxetic Shape Technology' toe straps, Rome have applied the same design to the ankle straps of the highend Black Label and Katana, as well as the new Cleaver. Thanks to a bit of Nidecker Group cross-pollination, you'll also see them coming to binders from Jones and NOW. Having said that, Flow continue to go their own way, unveiling new 'ExoKush and 'ExoFrame' ankle straps that use a two-part system to deliver response and comfort.

"A firm central 'power band' transmits rider input to the board," explains Mervin's Barrett Christy Cummins, "while the larger and softer flex band enables the boot to articulate for a larger range of expression and increased comfort. Together they overlap for a uniquely tuned response and comfort level." At first you'll find it only on the Transfer, Cor-Pro, Solution and Forte, the latter of which is a new model in the women's line.

There's not been much movement in the toe strap side of things, but hats off to Nitro for adopting Vibram EcoStep recycled rubber in theirs, as well as in their boot range.

MID-RANGE MODELS

There's still no shortage of top-end binders on the market, but this year a few brands are taking a closer look at the mid-range market. While Head's 'NX' series already did a pretty good job of covering the whole gamut of rider needs, now there's the 'FX' too. Available for both men and women. this simpler design is an attractive option for the budget-conscious. The new B-Line from NOW targets the same demographic, and marks the first appearance of the brand's Skate-Tech at a lower price point. "At €199. [the B-Line] is allowing the technology to be available to more riders", says founder IF Pelchat

Nitro, meanwhile, have released a new hire-shop-specific model, the Rental Pro - one that "combines the adjustability and durability required to withstand the daily abuse in a rental environment with the look, performance and fit & feel of an inline product."

A STEP UP FOR STEP-INS?

There's now the option to pair Burton's Step On bindings with DC boots (see boot trend report for more), but changes to the system itself in 2020/21 will be minimal. K2's Clicker system, on the other hand, will once again feature highbacks. "K2 has a long history in step-in technology," says the brands' Sebastian Schmitz. "[We combined this experience] with new ideas, and have a bombproof system we are pretty proud of!"

Plucky upstart brand Clew will be hoping that their two-part system, as featured on the German version of Dragon's Den, can make an impact when it launches in October 2020. The ankle strap and highback remain attached to your boot, joining with the baseplate and toes strap as you step onto your

There's still no shortage of top-end binders on the market, but this year a few brands are taking a closer look at the mid-range market.

board. Perhaps the presence of adjustable straps, as well as the fact that it can work with any boot, will give them some traction in this re-emerging

Other options, as ever, include Flow's SpeedEntry (now with three new models in an upgraded entry-level range), and SP's rear-entry binding. Look out for re-shaped highbacks - designed to make the in-out process smoother than ever - on the Core and Private models in 2020/21. Stablemates Northwave and Drake appear to be cooking something up together, but for now most of the industry seems to agree with Chris Siebrecht, Arbor's marketing man in Europe: "We believe that the traditional two-strap design offers the best possible power transmission".

NONE MORE BLACK

The bindings world continues to turn the Spinal Tap aesthetic up to 11, as customers tend to go for something that works with any topsheet. We're talking, of course, about black (or, if you're Vimana, "Scandanavian Dark Noir").

To be filed under 'slightly more adventurous', both NOW and Union are embracing mustard yellow in 2020/21. There's also the usual co-ordination of binders and the snowboards they're best suited for - see Rome's Artifact and Vice, for example, and the Bent Metal Cor-Pro's new Nicolas Müller colourway to match his Gnu Müllair deck. Jones' 'Surf Series' edition of the Mercury comes in a tie-dyed colourway, but as you'd expect from a brand that takes its design cues from wood rather than Woodstock, the effect is a subtle one.

As for which model names you can expect to see scrawled on the highbacks and baseplates, brands seem to be operating on the understanding, once suggested by Bender from Futurama, that an 'X' can make anything sound cool. Look out for the XV, XF, NX, FX, Axtion, Kaon-X, and so on...

ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

By the time this goes to print, Union will have set up shop in 'The Box', their brand new office/production facility in Italy. Marketing Director George Kleckner keeps his reasoning brief and to the point: "Design, engineering, tooling, injection, assembly and shipping all happening in one place." Fix made a similar move last summer, and are hopefully still enjoying that newfacility smell as they take care of everything from engineering to warehousing. There's also a well-stocked R&D department, including a 3D printer.

Meanwhile Nidecker bindings are now made and assembled at the same factory as sister brand Flow, which has allowed the former to co-opt some of the tech used by the latter. For the first time in a while, all of Rome's binders are being made at the same location. "This has helped us to achieve the goal of making almost all highbacks, straps and chassis interchangeable," says Marketing & Team Manager Matt Stillman.

CONCLUSION

There are plenty of new bells and whistles to shout about in the binding world this year, as well as reasons to be cheerful about what's to come in the future. Frankly there's a lot more happening than we've got space to go through here, so be sure to scour the trade shows and testing events (and our branded previews online) to see what else is new. You'll be faced with

the agony of choice when deciding exactly what to stock across all price points - but there are worse problems to have. (S)

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category. BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Better underfoot tech 2 Fresh performance highbacks
- 3 Mid-range market matters 4 Step-ins spreading
- 5 Faith in factories



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SKATEBOARD FOOTWEAR FW 20/21 Cold season is here, but the skate shoe business is anything but hibernating. See all the hot trends in our Skateboard Footwear Retail Buyer's Guide for FW20/21 by SOURCE Skateboard Editor Dirk Vogel.

& PRICING MARKET & PRICING The skate footwear game has changed over the past decade.

and chunkier looks to become more relevant Just visit a skate shop nowadays and the writing is all over the (shoe) wall. "Globalization plays into the hands of the big, non-heritage skate brands. The again." Brent Phelps, DVS rich get richer," said Brent Phelps, DVS Product Director and Brand President, adding: "We're trying to carve our niche, but we need help in the form of a trend swing. We need skate and chunkier looks to become more relevant again." Behind the scenes, several independent footwear brands have made adjustments to stay profitable - cutting down on teams, advertising, SKU Here are the 7 Skate Footwear Trends retailers need to watch in FW20/21: counts - while some have gone out of business altogether.

"Generally, the European skate shoes market isn't the healthiest. Small brands **1. SEASON TREND: PREMIUM SIGNATURE PRO SKATE** are struggling and dying out. Fallen finds itself in a position of opportunity, offering a strong line of product to core customers who remember and love the brand." said Fallen Footwear's General Manager Ronnie Mazzie. Along the same lines, Lakai's Head of International Sales, Scott Sentianin makes a point for the diversity offered by core brands: "The health of the independent skate shoe market could be much better if retailers pushed these independent brands onto the incoming market. They would see their overall revenue increase in the footwear department."

From a price point perspective, independent brands offer something for every budget. Entry level models deliver skate-proof constructions for as low as €39.90, from brands like C1RCA. Beyond that, the rule is: customers get what they pay for. Don Brown at éS Footwear sums it up: "As a premium technical footwear brand within skateboarding, our key price points range from €85 to €120, depending on material executions as well." Vans dropped prices for key models like AVE Pro, Berle Pro, Slip-On Pro and Old Skool Pro going into the season and their full-spec pro line now sells between €70-€110. Across all brands, the main price point window is now around €79, for technically advanced core skate models, signature pro shoes with higher tech (see Season Trend) now land at €119 in retail for styles like the DC Kalis Shoe or Nike SB Air Max Janoski 2.

Fall/Holiday 2020 Collection Available Through Authorized Osiris Dealers In The **European Region** WWW.OSIRISSHOES.COM WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/OSIRISSHOES

OSIRIS



"We're trying to carve our niche, but we need help in the form of a trend swing. We need skate

SHOES

The year 2019 marked the 30th anniversary of the first signature pro skate shoes, the Etnies Natas Kaupas and Vans Caballero Pro. On that note, make sure to pick up the 10-year anniversary edition of the Made For Skate book (Gingko Press) with 220 new pages dedicated to pro shoe history. Going into FW20/21, the tradition of pro-endorsed shoes is alive and well, but where the mid-1990s saw an inflationary influx of signature kicks, today only the best and brightest pro skaters earn the right to put their name on a shoe. While most pros have to settle with endorsing a pro colourway (see 5.), pro shoes in FW20/21 are a badge of honour - and loaded with the pinnacle of performance technology to justify top-shelf price points.

"Our AVE Pro launch was probably the biggest departure from classic Vans style to date and one of our most successful launches ever," said David Atkinson, Product Manager Pro Skate at Vans. For FW20/21, the brand is pushing the Kyle Walker Pro 2, a progressive slip-on loaded with DuraCAP, PopCush, Luxliner, Wafflecup, and SickStick tech. Vans also releases the Rowan Pro for Baker team rider Rowan Zorilla, while New Balance Numeric launched the 306 model for Jamie Foy. At Fallen, the "highest level model is the Chris Cole Trooper," a durable cup sole that can take a beating. C1RCA includes pinnacle tech in the AL50 for Adrian Lopez with a lightweight insole.

etnies is premiering brand-new tech in the Joslin Vulc model, featuring the first-ever vulcanized outsole in the ongoing partnership with Michelin: "They had never 'cooked' their compound in the vulcanized process, but after some testing, they were able to deliver." said Rick Marmoliio. Design Director at etnies

2. PROGRESSIVE TECH

Athletic brands have the advantage of tapping into well-funded R&D departments for the latest tech, but core skate brands also continue to innovate. Leading the charge, etnies is continuing the indestructible Michelin rubber line with "different designs, silhouettes and fits with the Joslin, Joslin 2. Veer, and Score." As the first skate shoe company ever to offer air cushions, éS continues evolving with STI Energy foam, "high energy foam that disburses impact and elevates overall comfort without sacrificing board feel." Fresh out the oven at Vans is the SickStick, a new skate-specific, grippier and more durable rubber that pairs well with improved PopCush footbeds. Scott at Lakai is hyped on the Paramount outsole, a "dual-density vulcanized construction with a crated outsole for performance and comfort and the XLK outsole, an advanced cup sole with a drop-in soft EVA midsole." Fallen raises the bar with the Phoenix model – blending vulcanized construction with an abrasion-resistant outsole and an impact foam insole. OSIRIS updated the Kort VLC and Bentley VLC with new footbeds, insoles, redesigned toe boxes and air bag variations.

"It's important for stores to merchandize brands with a point of difference. Since éS owned the '90s puffy silhouettes, that's where we are having most success." Don Brown, éS

3. CHUNKIER SILHOUETTES

The 1990s 'puffy shoe' trend remains blazing hot - and that's great news for core skate retailers. "It's important for stores to merchandize brands with a point of difference. Since éS owned the '90s puffy silhouettes, that's where we are having most success." said Don Brown at éS while pointing out the re-released Scheme and Symbol models and new Tribo and Quattro styles. Brent at DVS confirmed, an "uptick in chunkier looks" with bestsellers including Comanche 2.0 and Devious. Another brand that took bulky tech shoes to new heights is OSIRIS, where General Manager Brian Barber highlights. "the D3. Protocol. Clone and the NYC 83." etnies keeps the dream of the Nineties alive with the Calli-cut, Locut II LS, and MC Rap, while Globe found an evergreen in the CT-IV.

4. WEATHERIZATION 2.0

Core skate brands are taking the bad weather season seriously. "Being from Europe, we understand the harsh winters better than most American brands." said Don Brown at éS, pointing out the newly evolved ACCEL Explorer that features melded rubber wrap and gusseted tongues to add warmth, water proofing, and overall insulation. Vans is doubling down on weatherized styles with this season's SK8-HI MTE 2.0 DX, loaded with MTE 360 technology, water-resistant leather and suede uppers, warm linings, and a heat retention layer in the sock liner. OSIRIS offers certain styles with shearling lining, while Emerica has the weather-friendly Romero Laced high as a sturdy hiking boot - designed specifically for the European Market. etnies braves the cold with the Marana MTW, a mid-top boasting PU tongue gussets, Thinsulate for warmth and insulation, and a water-resistant Repel post application. These features also fortify the Jameson Mid, Agron, and Jefferson MTW. At DVS, Brent Phelps announced heavy leathers for Fall season, plus "cold weather liners in action/outdoor styles as well as gusseted tongues and Cold Grip Tech."

5. RIDER-APPROVED COLOURWAYS

When it comes to selecting the colourways for next season, more and more brands enlist their pro riders. Vans goes into FW20/21 with pro colourways for team riders Kader Sylla and women's skate pioneer Lizzie Armanto. On BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

that note, David at Vans announced: "Girls skating is continuing to boom! To help cater to this, all of our full spec skate shoes now go down to a US3.5 and up to a 13." adidas pro Nora Vasconcellos styles shoes in signature lavender, while Emerica drops the Wino G6 skateable slip-on in an Oxblood colourway for team pro Dakota Servold (considering the Vans Kyle Walker 2, skateable slip-ons may be the season's sleeper trend). Lakai spins the colour wheel with the Mike Carroll Pro on light blue suede, the Atlantic in Burgundy Suede, plus the Owen VLK in mint suede as a Travis Millard artist collab. éS Footwear injects reflective accents into the Silver Anniversary Pack. Who said skate shoes only come in black?



6. TRENDY MID-TOPS

The Vans Caballero Pro celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019, but its impact is overshadowed by the early 1990s mid-top offshoot known as the Half Cab. For FW20/21, mid-tops in classic vulc style – but with performance tech under the hood - are adding diversity to shoe walls. Emerica designer Paul Kwon confirms: "We are seeing a lot of requests for mid-tops from our younger riders as well as a desire for brighter colours." In response, Emerica releases the Pillar model featuring double-wrap vulcanized construction, rubber reinforced ollie guard, G6 Foam polyurethane insole, and Lycra strap tongue wings for a secure fit. etnies unveils the Marana MTW, while Don at éS Footwear is stoked on the new high-top ACCEL Explorer that can "challenge the concrete jungles of the world." adidas Skateboarding pushes the Tyshawn Jones mid-top, built on basketball heritage styles.

7. THE OLYMPIC EFFECT

Although the European skate footwear market remains in a difficult spot, brands have high hopes for skateboarding's debut as an official discipline at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. "It's falling, but we are very confident for the Olympic Games," said Alessandro Urso, Marketing Manager at C1RCA, adding: "We have an apparel collection with some artists and a special model for the Olympic Games." At Vans, David Atkinson expects, "more growth coming for this season as it aligns with skateboarding in the Olympics." On a product level, Nike will provide the official Olympic uniforms for Team USA skateboarders, while endemic footwear brands also have special activations

lined up. Don Brown at éS Footwear announced the Podium Pack, "inspired by the energy and colours coming from the Olympics." With that said, cheers to an action-filled year in skate footwear. S

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category

HIGHLIGHTS

1 Low entry-level prices 2 Premium tech pro shoes 3 Chunky heritage looks 4 Insulated winter styles 5 Boom in girls' sizes 6 Half Cab clones galore 7 Sleeper trend: Skateable slip-ons









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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE BACKPACKS FW 20/21

Dubbed the 'backcountry boom', the touring industry is growing and it's growing guickly. Tourers therefore need technical backpacks that can keep up with the rigorous demands this side of snowboarding entails, and brands are having to step up or risk being forgotten in the busy market. By Ruth Cutts.



increasing desire for a close affinity with nature, the athletic benefits of touring (bikers, swimmers and runners have been known to use ski touring as a recreational sport in winter), model is designed for long tours and technical objectives that demand a full kit. The vertical board carry straps plus side ski-carry straps allow multiple options for carrying your board and a back-panel zipper to the main pocket the increasing cost of lift passes, the influx of touring companies, the provides access to your gear even with the board attached. improvement (and availability) of safety equipment and simply the desire to try something new can all be attributed to this apparent surge of interest DESIGN in backcountry snowsports. Touring is no longer reserved for a select few, The main trend in FW20/21 leans towards multi-use wintersports backpacks a sentiment that is echoed by brands such as EVOC who are "covering all that are both reliable and functional on the mountain but sleek in aesthetic aspects of All Mountain Touring - from the valley to the mountain to the for everyday use. Picture's Johanne Berthou explains that "if the bag does not peak - delivering a completely redeveloped backpack for every use" in their crossover and is only for freeride use then doors are automatically closed." upcoming FW 20/21 range. Many of their FW20/21 designs therefore feature an elongated rectangular shape, which gives their backpacks an ergonomic and versatile design that feels at home in the city as well as the slopes.

TECHNICAL FEATURES

"With the market becoming increasingly competitive, consumers are looking to brands who are authentic in this space and offer products which meet the Technical snow backpacks can have all the bells and whistles, but the needs of modern snowboarders and freeskiers," explains Dave Trenholm, consumer rarely (if ever) will need to use them all at the same time. Stowing Product Line Manager for Snow Packs at Dakine. But what does the modern away or minimising unused features like helmet, pole and other webbings tourer need? when they're not in use is essential.

Protection is paramount in the backcountry and brands need to work to These design trends are echoed in the colour choices for many brands; address the safety concerns of their consumers. Ascents are also physically Amplifi are sticking to their popular stealth black with the inclusion of some demanding so tourers seek a product that allows them to do this without any tonal melange for a tough urban touch. Ortovox are deviating from previous unnecessary weight on their back. "Weight will always be at the forefront of colourful palettes and heading more towards monochrome for a clear, the conversation," explains Patagonia's Austin Robbs (Product Line Director minimalist yet functional design. All of Jones' packs continue to be black for - Equipment & Accessories) which is why they've kept their Descensionist "universal appeal" and Dakine are looking at key solids next season with a model light and simple whilst also keeping a larger size range at 40L and 32L focus on caramel, deep red, dark rose and dark olive. for big mountain touring.

Removable lightweight back protectors are featured in many of the FW20/21 The search for ever-more sustainable solutions and environmentally friendly models. Ortovox, for instance, are introducing the new Haute Route series manufacturing processes continues to grow year-on-year so expect to see an which features an ergonomic back system for enhanced protection and comfort. Amplifi have also responded to this demand by introducing a super influx of bluesign approved, recycled polyester (Dakine, Jones, Patagonia), lightweight back protector into their collection from their partners at Sas-PVC free nylons (Ortovox, Jones) and regenerated nylon made from recycled fishing nets, plastic bottles and other nylon waste from our oceans and Tec which weighs a mere 230g and doesn't sacrifice on safety or quality. It's landscape (Pacsafe's Vibe, Citysafe and Venturesafe models) in FW20/21. no secret that touring also requires a fair bit of equipment and backcountry enthusiasts need a backpack that can accommodate a plethora of tools to be Patagonia have gone as far as removing the DWR coating from the liner of stored safely and methodically. Dakine's snowpack offering is spearheaded by their popular Heli Series. In FW20/21, their most compelling tech their Snowdrifter packs since it's a non-critical element for HIGHLIGHTS advancement in this range is the improved snow safety tool carry features, keeping water out. 🕥 the reinforced abrasion areas for carrying skis/boards, an elevated quick dry 1 Backcountry touring on the up mesh padded back panel, and an improved fit.

"Riders expect packs to be purpose built to efficiently hold the technical gear they use and to stand up to serious use and abuse in the mountains," explains Seth Lightcap, Jones' Global Marketing and Team Manager. Their DSCNT 32L

MATERIALS

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category. BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

- 2 Sleek designs continue to reign
- 3 Lightweight back protection is key
- 4 Authenticity integral in a busy market

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE MEN'S STREETWEAR FW 20/21

What's happening on these mean streets? Catch all the key trends, colourways, and silhouettes in our FW20/21 Men's Streetwear Retail Buyer's Guide by Dirk Vogel.



Street wear is in a strange place right now. On the high end, major designer labels are looking to rejuvenate their collections by injecting some 'street' style, reflected in the appointment of trend maven Virgil Abloh as Louis Vuitton Design Director. On the lower end, streetwear has been commoditised at rock bottom price points by the likes of H&M and Uniglo, not to forget Walmart's recently launched streetwear label No Boundaries slinging cargo pants, fleece hoodies, and bomber jackets at price points below \$19.99(!) per piece.

Whether consumers are shelling out \$1,500 or \$15 for streetwear pieces, sell out season is fully here. Endemic brands are watching closely while remaining confident in their unique position as style leaders. "After the sneaker hype and all brands that came with it, people don't know what's 'cool' anymore. In times like these, all eves are on the skaters, because they always know what they want to wear and they always look 'different' than the others," said Julian Wolf, Marketing Manager at Homeboy, adding: "So if retailers start to pick up the new looks that skaters created in the last couple of seasons, the situation will get better very soon."

Specialty retailers hold the power to change consumer trends, said Palle Bruun Rasmussen. Owner and Design Director at RVLT: "We see retailers placing a higher focus on what they are selling, who's behind the brand and what's behind the product. We very much welcome a more informed and selective marketplace focused on value over cheap prices." Super-low price points are coming to an end for several reasons, said Irie Daily's Head of Design and Product Patrick Kressner: "The ongoing low interest rate policy of the European Central Bank and governments is leading to a higher inflation rate. This results in more expensive consumer goods. Additionally, many brands want to act more sustainably, which will also affect prices." Patrick also sees a mind change among costumers, with "not everybody on the search for the cheapest prices anymore."

"After the sneaker hype and all brands that came with it, people don't know what's 'cool' anymore. In times like these, all eyes are on the skaters, because they always know what they want to wear and they always look 'different' than the others." Julian Wolf, Homeboy

PRICING & MARKET

Speaking of price points, next season presents a slight increase across product segments. Graphic tees retail around €34.99, hoodies and sweats between €64.99 to €89.99, knits and flannel shirts above €69.99, quality denim around €84.99, and jackets between €109.99–199.99. Consumers also reach for highend pieces, like Unbreakable denim from upcoming brand SA1NT for €399 or their rugged Works denim for €139. "We're a premium brand that crosses over from core moto to core workwear but being picked up by the skate and BMX kids because of not only an Unbreakable fabric but also unbreakable spirit," said Eden Palm, European Sales at SA1NT.

As a positive sign for the health of the European streetwear biz, a wave of new brands – several included in this guide – is here to change the status guo. Protest is about to launch a new street label named NXG: "It will represent a revolution in streetwear, with superior quality fabrics and luxury details, like thick laces and big collars," said Ingrid Kalmar, Head of Menswear Design at Protest, pointing to a FW20/21 launch with early delivery dates for retailers.

FITS & SILHOUETTES

First things first, we need to talk about fits for FW20/21. That's because fit Kendrick is everything in streetwear right now. Today's well-dressed street stylists Organics. Brands across the board are increasing their use of organic fabrics. choose a silhouette first, then worry about colours, materials, graphics and including IrieDaily, Protest, and Piilgrim. "All our clothes are 100% vegan. We all that jazz later. So while next season still has a kaleidoscope of themes and don't use any animal products throughout our lines," said Mark at Piilgrim. stylistics in play – from 1990s athletic gear to classic menswear influences – Nathaniel at Santa Cruz is proud that. "this is the second season we've run a fit is what makes or breaks a men's streetwear outfit. Summing up the key fully organic line made in Portugal with eco-friendly inks and dyes." silhouette for next season, Nathaniel Jones, Senior Designer at Santa Cruz Sleeper trend: Classic men's jackets. Time-proven men's overcoats receive Skateboards, said: "Boxy fits on jackets. Bottoms are getting more relaxed. the streetwear treatment, reimagined in on-trend silhouettes by brands like elasticated waists and wider cuts." Brands across the board are going into the Globe and Wemoto next season. Dickies is pushing the Insulated Eisenhower season with boxier tops and jackets together with pants featuring wider legs Jacket, inspired by the legendary WWII general and known for its classic good but shorter crops as key ingredients for nailing that on-trend fit. looks, rugged durability and lightweight warmth.

SEASON TREND: WORKWEAR

Move over, 1990' athletics! A new season trend is taking over. "Workwear is a constant inspiration to us as it's all about functionality. You'll see the influence of workwear in the details, like the pockets and patches," said Ingrid at Protest. Get ready for rugged materials, heavy zippers, functional pockets, and timeless styling across FW20/21 collections. Plus, how about some 3M reflective panels and neon accents for 'high visibility'? As Kevin Penney, EMEA Brand Marketing Manager at Dickies Life said: "Dickies is Workwear at its core and 'Hi Vis' items have recently been adopted by the streetwear scene so celebrate this with bringing the story into our core styles." Viewed from a sustainability angle, indestructible workwear also boasts the added effect of being more sustainable by lasting longer.

"We see retailers placing a higher focus on what they are selling, who's behind the brand and what's behind the product. We very much welcome a more informed and selective marketplace focused on value over cheap prices." Palle Bruun Rasmussen, RVLT

Men's streetwear in FW20/21 is doubling down on earth tones. "The colour theme is very much influenced by nature and the earth and brown colours we have so much of in Scandinavia this season," said Palle at RVLT. Ingrid at Protest is on the same page: "The colours for men this season have hints of **KEY MEN'S STREETWEAR PIECES FOR FW20/21** retro as brown makes a comeback. Pair the brown with deep orange and a Sleeveless vests. Perhaps in homage to Thrasher magazine's late editor Jake dark yellow for an awesome colour combination." This style of pairing earth Phelps (R.I.P.), sleeveless workwear vests by the likes of Carhartt and Dickies tones with bright accents also aligns with the 'high-visibility' trend realized in are the streetwear staple for FW20/21. The style also appears in sleeveless workwear via reflective and glow-in-the-dark panelling. Then again, wearing puffer down vests and Piilgrim's rugged 1984 vest featuring trippy interior black on black is a classic streetwear look - just be careful when crossing liner graphics. the streets at night or add a reflective work vest - seen across collections in monochromatic outfits and tonal prints. Eden at SA1NT confirmed: "Black 1990s athleisure. Brands like SUPREME and Palace are keeping 1990s is our strongest selling colour. It seems to be popular amongst bikers, most 'freshness' alive. At Primitive Skateboarding. Sales Manager Peter Artiga likely because of the fact that bikes get a bit messy at times!"

said: "We are seeing a huge trend on 90s-inspired athleisure wear similar to Tommy Hilfiger and Polo Sports." Key pieces include hooded windbreakers with 1990s-style colour-blocking like Primitive's Dash jacket and IrieDaily's pant and models by IrieDaily and DC Shoes, to name but a few.

The jeans offering from boardsports labels has contracted over the past Rewind Jacket. Also 'swishy' athletic pants like Primitive's Aztec crepe nylon seasons, but the remaining brands are the ones seriously invested in the category. The biggest season trend is longevity. Palle at RVLT is "using thicker and more durable fabrics, so the end consumers by touch and feeling know Next-gen cargo pants. A military and streetwear classic returns, as cargo that this is a lasting product which they can wear for many years to come." pants figure prominently in FW20/21 collections, also in camo patterns. SA1NT prides itself in offering the world's strongest single-layer denim, called IrieDaily has the Cargonia Jogger and at Gramicci, Brand Manager Stevie Unbreakable, that is, "500% stronger than your standard jeans currently on Gildea pushes the Original G Pant with, "gusseted crotch paired with a highthe market." Julian at Homeboy announced, "loose-fit washed blue jeans in action relaxed fit, flex-fit adjustable waistband and built-in nylon belt." a vintage look are a must-have in every wardrobe" with season highlights including their X-Tra Baggy jeans in a Moon finish. At Gramicci, Stevie Gildea

Flossing in fleeces. Don't leave home without a fleece top this season. Brands like IrieDaily, Homeboy, and Protest keep riders warm in teddy fleeces. Santa Cruz peppers fleece with colour splash patterns, while Peter at Primitive points out the Midweight Polar fleece guarter zip jacket: "Using different textures such as polar fleece on jackets is working."

Corduroy pants and jackets. The guintessential cold season material shines across collections from brands like IrieDaily and Homeboy. For Manchesterbased label Piilgrim, it's part of tradition: "Corduroy in the 19th century was actually called 'Manchester fabric' due to the large production form the cotton mills, which introduced it to Europe," said Piilgrim's Director Mark



COLOUR PALETTE

DENIM

is focused on variety: "We stay true to our styles and use different denim washes. This means once the customer understands which is the best fit. they have plenty of choices."

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category. BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Strong workwear influences
- 2 Focus on silhouettes
- 3 Earth tones, neon splashes
- 4 Sleeveless vests
- 5 Classic men's overcoats
- 6 Rugged denim



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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE WOMEN'S STREETWEAR FW 20/21

Women's apparel for cold weather season mixes on-trend styling with solid boardsports roots. Find all the latest looks for FW20/21 in our Retail Buyer's Guide on Women's Streetwear by Dirk Vogel.



Booya! Patterns turn up the volume next season. Eunjoo Kim at Brixton predicts: "Plaid, plaid, and more plaid," and also sees houndstooth making an impact. Prints also figure prominently in FW20/21, including Nikita's decade is ending, a new season is on the horizon, and apparel for Madrona One Piece suit as part of the 20th anniversary capsule, as well as girls who shred is in a good place. "The women's streetwear market in Europe is very inspirational right now as it blends fashion with their Smore Jogger in head-to-toe camo. Bleed makes a statement with the sport and skate with a big feminine twist in between it all," said Eunjoo Kim, 'Act now' knitted jumper, while Ines Schwitzky, Category Manager Women's Brixton Women's Apparel Design Director. At German brand Wemoto, Head at Berlin-based IrieDaily is banking on "crazy '80s and '90s inspired patterns of Women's Design Julia Klein-Klute said: "After streetwear influences made prints in knit and jersey," plus "ethno tapes and ethno patterns for the perfect their way up to the High Fashion houses and runways, European streetwear vintage look." Protest comes in strong with, "printed fleeces with patterns like now generally will have to reposition, reset and reclaim the streets." leopard skin, stripes, tie-dye and the statement 'P' print."

Here are the 7 Key Women's Streetwear Trends popping off in FW20/21:

1. THE FIT: BOXY TOPS. TIGHT PANTS

Much like in men's streetwear, it's all about nailing that on-trend silhouette next season. Trousers are fitted with a trend towards high-waist fits. exemplified in Brixton's Victory trouser pant and Wemoto's Nelli high-waist pants. Tops are getting longer and boxier with a tendency towards dropshoulder, low armhole fits. Nikita's Hazel Po sleeveless vest makes its mark in hyper-soft high pile fleece and hand warmer pockets, while IrieDaily pushes the Gini Knit Norwegian winter sweater and WAWWA updates the Jonah 7. SUSTAINABLE THREADS Rugby sweatshirt in organic cotton and rust colour.

According to Julia at Wemoto, "recycling, fair-fashion, sustainability and ecofriendliness will become even more important and hopefully unavoidable for 2. WORKWEAR GETS BUSY everyone in the industry." Organic cotton is becoming the norm, for instance "Workwear and utilitarian looks are prominent for AW20." said Ella. WAWWA now a staple in IrieDaily's graphic tees. Artificial wool is trending, while Womenswear Designer, pointing to the brand's organic ripstop boiler suit Bleed stays committed to never using animal-based materials. Nikita first and trousers. Across the board, workwear's rugged aesthetic informs colour introduced blueign approved recycled theremore eco down in winter jackets palettes, cuts, and material choices; the latter leaning towards resilient three years ago and has expanded eco fabrics into streetwear collections. fabrics. Category leaders Dickies are rolling out Tartan material in core WAWWA implements recycled materials throughout the value chain and silhouettes as part of the global Urban Utility campaign, while implementing supports social outreach in the 1+1 Collection, with over 3000 hats donated high-visibility accents like reflective panels and neon stripes in key pieces. to people in need since 2014.

3. KEEP WARM IN STYLE

est 1994

iniedaila

Women are facing harsh weather in style, for instance in Wemoto's Ingrid seersucker puffer jacket and Flask parka. Nikita is keeping women toasty in the high pile fleece Bushwhack jacket, available in a popping camouflage colourway. IrieDaily braves the elements in the Wander Jacket from recycled nylon and the comfy Hopi Fleece. Forvert's Martin Hautzel is big on "functional materials especially for winter jackets and accessories." Bleed Organic Clothing unveils the Sympatex Active Coat and PowerAir Polartec of this category. coat with a 3D-structure. At Protest, Ingrid Kalmar, Head of Womenswear

Design, is stoked on their new, "gorgeous velvet that has 10K water resistance and 10g breathability."

4. COLOUR EXPLOSION

Black continues to trend for that sophisticated overall look, but women also enjoy plenty of colour choices next season. WAWWA is inspired by natural colours of the tundra, including oat, sage, rust, and petrol blue. Julia at Wemoto embraces a "neutral palette, plus colours of contrast and highlights, like Red and Stone Blue with Ochre and Olive shades blending in." According to Lena Hoffmann, Women's Designer at Bleed, "deep browns find their way into boardsports again after grey and black was very present in the last seasons"

5. LOUD PATTERNS

6. CASUAL. LIGHT JEANS

Jeans are trending towards relaxed fits and light washes next season. WAWWA is, "introducing a new recycled denim range for AW20." The recycled denim is produced in Italy from recycled materials and features in jackets and pants replete with Corozo nut buttons and recycled YKK zips. Brixton nails the colourway of the season with "coloured bull denim has a great enzyme stone wash on it that makes it feel so soft and really breaks down the fabric to look vintage."

On that note, clothing with a clean conscience is more than a trend in women's streetwear, but here to stay as we welcome the next decade. (S)

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 High-waist pants
- 2 Resilient fabrics
- 3 Fleeces and winter-ready coats
- 4 Rust and earth tones
- 5 Head-to-toe pattern prints
- 6 Light-washed denim
- 7 Vegan and sustainable materials



BIG WIG INTERVIEW KORUA'S NICHOLAS WOLKEN

It's been a huge four years since we first profiled Korua in our 78th issue, which makes their rise to power - and position as Big Wig in our 99th issue - extremely impressive. We speak to the brand's Co-Founder Nicholas Wolken who grew up in the Swiss village of Küblis to see how finding snowboarding changed his life, leading to a pro career and then ultimately conceiving the brand while him and the other founders had "too much time at hand to dream and brainstorm." The brand has become synonymous with their radical shapes and clean designs and capitalised on revolutionary snowboard filming (gimbal) and editing technology and style to capture and promote the essence of the brand - the love for the turn. Interview by SOURCE Editor Harry Mitchell Thompson.

Nicholas, please tell us about your background in snowsports - how you came to starting Korua.

I grew up in a small village called Küblis – one of the longest ski slopes in the Alps ends up right in front of our house, so skiing and later snowboarding was part of my life early on. My dad used to work in a sport shop on the mountain; that's were at age seven I saw my first snowboard - a 1983 swallow-tailed, super heavy, shiny, no flex, all fiberglass board called "Snowfish". It just looked alien to me, really flashy, fun and fast which was very appealing. After bugging my old man, he let me have a go on it after he was done with work. That was the starting point, but I had to wait for two more seasons until Santa brought me Nidecker's first kids board. After that, I remember seeing a billboard on the local hill - I think it was Peter Bauer laying down a super low, full body toe side carve in a bright neon outfit, which blew my nine year old mind and really set me off trying to carve my turns on the edge, rather than drifting them. I remember looking back up the slope to check my tracks and be sure I was only using the edges of the board. I spent a few years just cruising our local resort, when one day my godfather took me to the ISF World Finals in Davos. Fadri Mosca

and Martin Freinademez were tearing by us, risking it all. It got me interested in racing. So eventually I started riding alpine boards and competing, however I always enjoyed freeriding, so I took those boards into the backcountry and powder, I even rode the Davos pipe before and after gates training. At some point I ended up in sports school where I became friends with and looked up to (Markus) Keller and (Stephan) Maurer, Lalso noticed that Lwasn't really enjoying the pressure and vibe of FIS competitions and it seemed like there was more fun to be had on the other side of snowboarding. So I ditched the hard boots, finished school and jobbed all summer on the building site to save up for a season in Breckenridge and Mammoth, where I rode almost every day. After a few seasons of working summer jobs and riding all winter, I felt it was time to build some sort of future which would allow me to shred a lot. So I took the advice of my friend Alvaro Vogel and enrolled in the University of Innsbruck where we dreamt of being real pros and filmed for Truecolor films. Those days were some of the most fun to date. Life was pretty much obligation- and carefree, and we managed to ride lines in AK and Japan, which I will never forget. Then came Korua.

The edits were and still are short, relatable and strait up just capturing average resort days with the boys, and the occasional Japan week we get to do because we need to be over there at the trade shows.

timeline of ideological inception of the brand to current day?

Inspired by the snow surf movement we witnessed in Japan, it started with the idea of creating a European mini brand focused on powderspecific shapes. I guess we were just really lucky to have the right group of individuals (Stephan Maurer, Alvaro Vogel, Jerry Niedermeier, Bobby Selig and friends) in touch at that time, who were all really into snowboarding, but to some degree, couldn't relate to it anymore. Also, having too much time at hand to dream and brainstorm helped a lot. there was definitely an energy in the air that we were on to something. We got the first prototypes in early autumn, so due to the lack of better options, we tried our no edge pow boards on bullet proof glacier hard pack. I remember how the boards felt similar to my old race boards and carved great. The following winter, we filmed a big part of the season in our home resorts, and at the same time Christoph Weber (now Thorensen) was experimenting with handheld gimbals on snow. I think having steady follow images and Stephan's unique editing played a big part in transporting the actual feelings to the viewer. The carving wasn't really a conscious idea or decision, but it grew naturally - I think to some part because of my background as a racer and because the wider boards just made it easier. Also, we just didn't always have bottomless pow to ride, so it just so happened that we filmed on groomers. We have since been focusing on staving true to the initial ideas and have been steadily growing to where we are now.

Who's been responsible for the creative direction of the brand?

In the very beginning, a lot of ideas came out of discussions within the core group as there weren't clear responsibilities or roles at that time, but many of the ideas that came to play were thrown in or refined by Stephan, so eventually he took over the lead. Later on, Aaron Schwartz

marketing the brand.

Well I am not sure if I have enough of an understanding of the industry joined the team and they worked together. At the moment, Aaron is to properly answer the threat question, but I will give it a shot. I do handling it and adding his signature twist. worry about and see risk in the constant need for growth. The 'bigger is better' philosophy isn't sustainable in my eyes - be it jumps, tricks, Talk us through how pivotal your series of videos have been in industry or company size. To be honest, I don't worry too much whether the industry is at risk because the smaller it gets, the more soul will be I think they were and still are absolutely crucial for us. The edits made in it. That makes me believe it's going to stick around and develop in the it all possible, they allowed us to reach out to the whole world and direction it's meant to. Very small companies or one man shows tend transport the idea and vibe of Korua. Personally, and I think the rest of to be more focused on their personal need, which has been overlooked the team would agree, that being able to get out and be creative is a big by the big players in the industry who are focusing on numbers. Take drive and source of energy in snowboarding. The edits were and still are Phantom bindings as an example. Snowboarding is just too much fun short, relatable and strait up just capturing average resort days with the and versatile to die, so I think innovative products will keep coming and boys, and the occasional Japan week we get to do because we need to keep the spirit alive. be over there at the trade shows.

And Japanese snowboard culture was a big inspiration in general for the brand... please talk us through that.

Powder-specific shapes, like swallowtails, have always been around in snowboarding, even in Europe. I mean Dupraz has been building sick boards for ages and even the bigger brands had one in the very back corner of the catalogue. So it wasn't like we had never seen boards like that, but what really inspired us in Japan was the scene and community which had grown around a different mind-set and approach build a community.

Well I guess early on we were lucky to have tapped into our own to snowboarding. We owe it to Japanese brands like Moss and Gentem's unfulfilled needs in snowboarding, which happened to be the need of Taro Tamai, who added a lot of style to it, started to spread the idea and many snowboarders. I know this is true for myself but I think we made it possible for many snowboarders, not just to be in awe of snowboarding, How are you working with retailers in harmony with a D2C strategy? but actually feel part of it again. As a small company we can react fast Of course, we are open about the fact that we are aiming to sell via and it's easier to implement new ideas. Also listening to the opinions our own web shop, but I guess the most important part is to make sure of riders who are very passionate, but not part of or dependent on the we all sell at the same price point. The shops have a local advantage, industry, helped us lot. (5)

It's been a huge 4 years since you founded the brand. Can you give us a which is fine for us as they are crucial in offering personal advice and real product. I guess you will always have those customers who walk in the shop and buy online later, but it also goes the other way around. Often our shops profit when we have demo requests or we are out of a certain model. We then forward international customers' requests to them. In the end it's all about building good relationships.

> It wasn't like we had never seen boards like that. but what really inspired us in Japan was the scene and community which had grown around a different mind-set and approach to snowboarding. We owe it to Japanese brands like Moss and Gentem's Taro Tamai, who added a lot of style to it, started to spread the idea and build a community.

Are you doing anything else innovative to aid retailers?

I think the fact that our product can be carried over from one season to the next by not changing the graphics and minimizing changes in build on existing models is pretty innovative. It prevents price dumping at the end of the season, and we also offer reorder possibilities throughout the season to reduce pressure on the shops.

Please tell us what you view as the threats and opportunities the snowboard industry faces at present.

Any plans to diversify your category assortment?

We have some new models coming out adding to the range and some new ideas in the pipeline, but I don't want to offer a new shape just for the sake of it. It should fill a gap or offer some performance aspect the other boards don't. We are also planning to build more lengths of specific shapes.

Why has Korua been so successful?



RIDER: Chris Rasman PHOTO: @manboys



ADDICTED SNOW & LIFE LYON, FRANCE

With two of Europe's finest riders on their roster in Victor Daviet and Thomas Delfino and big respect from the industry for the work they do in stoking out the snow community, Addicted Snow & Life Shop in Lyon (France) have deservedly earned the rep as one of Europe's finest snowboard retailers. We sat down with Co-Founder Jean-Charles Beau to talk shop.

Please give a brief history of your store including when it was started, who started it, who the owners and key players are.

After studying at the European Business School in Paris, and various work experiences (including 2 years at Burton headquarters in Innsbruck), I created Addicted in October 2002 with a partner who left the company in 2014. As true snowboard addicts, we also used to be reps for ROME SDS in France. We then focused 100% on Addicted, because it became too hard to do everything correctly. I also run a Picture Store and a Volcom Store, which are next door to Addicted.

How do you give back to snowboarding?

At the beginning of the season we organise the Addicted Snowboard Bus to bring our consumers to test new gear on snow in Val-Thorens. We organize several events in the shop (movies, photo expos, etc...) and we also organize the Addicted Splitboard Camp in March to allow more people to discover how great splitboarding is. I'm super proud of the Addicted rider team, which is made up of two fantastic French riders, Victor Daviet and Thomas Delfino; each of them not only has a great talent for riding, but also a lot of creativity. I try to support them as much as I can for their own events like the "Safety Shred Days" (created by Victor), or crazy splitboard expeditions (imagined by Thomas).

How has the snowboard retail game changed in recent years and what are you doing to keep up?

It's needless to say that the internet has deeply modified the business. Our competitors very often fight mainly on price, and also most of the major brands sell direct to consumer now. So we need more than ever to offer our customers a real experience during their visit in store, with real advice by true and passionate staff, and we need to create a community around the shop (through our own events in store or on snow).

Our everyday challenge is to prove that snowboarders still have a great interest in visiting a true brick and mortar shop.

What are five products you couldn't live without right now? Fjällräven bags (Kanken) Burton boots and bindings (Step On)

Dakine bags & accessories (Heli Pro & Heli Pack)



Oakley goggles & sunglasses (Flight Deck and Holbrook) Picture Organic Clothing outerwear (Expedition & Friends)

Are you doing anything innovative to embrace technology in-store? We'll soon have iPads connected to our sales and stock system so that the staff can save time and enrich the consumer experience during their visit to Addicted.

What are the biggest threats and opportunities facing the snowboard industry at present?

I think the number of brands is simply too big: Personally, I'm always stoked by the number of snowboard brands that exist on the market. But on one side it's great because it pushes creativity and innovation, while at the same time it keeps many brands simply too small to survive. Overstocking is a danger for the market too, because prices move too fast and the consumer becomes confused about the value of the product. So carry-over products are a good tool to maintain prices and margins.

Bringing newcomers (kids or adults, males or females) to a snowboard with innovative material (eg. Burton Step On) or accessible events (like banked slaloms) is key!

Global warming is of course a big threat for the snow industry in general, but this forces manufacturers to use new materials, reduce waste and save energy in their whole industrial process. So let's be optimistic.

Any views on how current trade shows could adapt to suit the industry better?

The main problem is the order deadlines (especially in outerwear) which are earlier each year (in December, just when we face the peak of our sales in our stores!), so the trade shows happen often too late (ISPO). The on-snow demos (like Rock On Snow Pro) are much more useful in my point of view because they happen at the right time of the buying process, in mid-January. (S)

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SNOW HELMETS FW 20/21

Disrupted weather cycles are making it harder than ever before to predict conditions and with bluebird mornings turning into whiteouts after lunch, improved safety equipment is more important than ever to keep those on the slopes safe.



Climate change is threatening winter as we know it and seasons are becoming shorter, more "We also put a lot of energy into the perfect fit. Heads are different, which is why we also extreme, and less reliable. Resorts are therefore having to offer different helmet models for different head look for creative ways to stay open in the summer months in shapes." TSG CEO Ruedi Herger order to subsidise shortened ski seasons. Many snow helmet brands are cashing in on these new summer businesses by creating crossover helmets that can be adapted to suit mountain biking, skateboarding or wakeboarding. Pro-Tec is Manager, Gillon Hunter. Making sure consumers are wearing a brand that has been big with the skateboard/snowboard a helmet is not necessarily the challenge in today's industry crossover consumer for many years due to their affinity with but making sure it is the right fit can be. Many people are the skateboard market. "Skate consumers are familiar with satisfied with a badly fitting helmet because they don't know the brand and like our products," explains R.P. Bess, Director any better. A safe construction method and the fulfilment of Brand Management. The 'Old School Snow' is a new Proof all legally required standards is a factor of course but, as Tec model for FW20/21 which is based off the skate model TSG's CEO Ruedi Herger explains, "we also put a lot of energy of the same name but built with MIPS for added rotational into the perfect fit. Heads are different, which is why we also protection. offer different helmet models for different head shapes."

Each year more and more people are investing in helmets and protection. They want to boost their confidence and have more fun and recognise that helmets and body protection play an essential role in this. With the increasing media focus on full head protection, Dirty Dog noticed an incline in the number of people wanting full head protection including solid ear covering. As a solution to this they developed the SEP liner for products like their Pulsar Helmet providing complete comfort, alongside wind protection for the ears and side of head.

Snow protection gear is constantly improving and with social media being flooded with awesome videos it inevitably Head's Marketing Manager of Snowboard & Protection Max inspires people to dare to do more things. With better Thurner describes how the brand, with regards to shapes and technology comes greater confidence and, in many cases, more colours, is going through a process of "democratized design" risk-taking. "Although people are more aware of the risks, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are more risk adverse. with dark, settled colours and a slim and low-profile shape In fact, it could be the opposite," states Koroyd's Marketing proving popular with all consumers. And Triple 8 are also

COLOUR AND DESIGN

When it comes to trends in design, there is an apparent tendency towards solid-coloured helmets that has emerged over the past few seasons. This is not simply referring to black and white as consumers are more open to a variation of colours (usually of the muted variety mind). TSG have seen great success with an offering of nature tones in the past and for FW20/21 they are introducing deeper colours such as dragon green and grape red.

pushing muted tones with the classic black, white and greys helping maintain the clean and simple look that many riders are going for. When looking for a point of difference for their FW20/21 collections some brands are seeking inspiration from the most innovative of sources. Sandbox are collaborating with street artists SheOne and Mr. Jago to produce some amazing prints which stand out in a market of solid colours and TSG are working with Kathi Macheiner from the adhocrates collective in Austria (also the mum of The Snowboarding Family (@thesnowboardingfamily)) making her the perfect match for their kids helmets.

BREATHABILITY

Long days on the mountain inevitably require optimum breathability, something which is a primary focus for many brands in FW20/21. By utilising their adjustable VaporFit[™] fit system for an ideal fit and their XT2[®] antibacterial performance lining, Smith's Level and Liberty models each provide complete comfort when carving the big lines that inspire the sleek, sweeping design language of the compact, high performance helmets.

Rossignol's new ALTA Impacts model is the best compromise between comfort, weight, and protection for their consumers, with the durable design featuring their IMPACTS technology and EPP multi-impact foam for enhanced all-around durability. The Fit System adjustment setup allows the user to dial in a precise, custom fit, while the adjustable vents let you manage your temperature as needed.

Sinner's Moostone is fitted with an extra ventilation slider which allows the user to be extremely precise as to where they want to have ventilation and TSG's Konik 2.0 is a new helmet added to the line for slope racers and freeriders with a clever, active ventilation system which ensures draught-free ventilation and gives complete vent control in all conditions.



TECHNOLOGY

"I think the more radical market shift has come from the introduction of advanced technologies which further push safety" explains Oakley's Mike Turner (Global Category Manager Goggles & Helmets). Helmets have been around for a long time but only recently are consumers really pushing brands to challenge the conventional approach to the helmet and design better helmets, with improved safety and functionality. "Rotational protection is perfect example of this. The adoption of this technology was slow to start, especially in the snow space, but has rapidly increased in the past two years," Turner says. Dainese is back with a maximum safety helmet for high-performing riders, the NUCLEO MIPS. Available in star white and black, it's a lightweight, aerodynamic helmet with BOA fit system for exceptional precision all around the head. In-mould lightens is combined with ABS protection Armoring - the ABS ring provides evolved protection on the most vulnarable areas of the head

Now, more than ever, consumers want helmets with technology that addresses both linear and rotational forces—and they want technology that is free of gimmicks and does not add to a helmet's weight, volume, or bulk. Now, more than ever, consumers want helmets with technology that addresses both linear and rotational forces—and they want technology that is free of gimmicks and does not add to a helmet's weight, volume, or bulk. As part of this, riders are seeking out technology that has been strategically designed to address rotational and linear forces in tandem rather than in isolation.

As part of this, riders are seeking out technology that has been strategically designed to address rotational and linear forces in tandem rather than in isolation. MIPS technology therefore holds a prominent place within the design of many FW20/21 helmet designs providing exceptional rotational protection and brain protection. K2 have added MIPS to four models in their helmet line in FW20/21; two women's and two men's helmet models in different price categories. Their top model will be the Diversion MIPS in black, orange and gunmetal. Bike certificated and packed with the baseline audio system, dual active Matrix ventilation system and the 360 K2Diald[™] fit system this helmet is ready for every terrain and keeps the head cool and warm – whatever is needed. "We are convinced by MIPS technology and want to expand it in our future helmet lines" says K2's Marketing Coordinator Sebastian Schmitz.

Pro-Tec are introducing a new helmet called the Apex. It carries some traditional Pro-Tec lines, but has been updated to suit today's contemporary market. It will be the top of their product range and comes with MIPS, Fidlock and a superior fit system. Shred's Notion NoShock pairs their innovative ROTATIONAL ENERGY SYSTEM[™] (RES) - a super lightweight and thin solution for addressing rotational forces—with the helmet's integrated honeycomb-cone-structured SLYTECH[™] SHOCK ABSORPTION to create an exception synergy for combating linear and multi-directional forces. Koroyd's welded tubes crumple instantly and consistently on impact, absorbing maximum force in a controlled manner, minimising energy transferred to your head. Helmets featuring this technology offer improved impact protection, reduced weight and improved breathability all without compromise.

LIGHTWEIGHT DESIGNS

Consumers want to have it all when it comes to their snow helmet; they want the technology to provide unparalleled protection, but they don't want to be able to 'feel' this protection. Maintaining a reduced weight is paramount for brands with many opting for stripped back designs to achieve this. Shred have launched a Park helmet which takes their inline product but strips back the features to achieve a lower price point and slick looking helmet for someone who wants the protection of a helmet but not the bells and whistles.

Giro's new lightweight backcountry helmet, the Grid, is "the lightest helmet in the game" according to Category Manager Darius Heristchian. Featuring MIPS Spherical technology and an innovative ear pad/ facemask interface, it's aimed at those riders who like to earn their turns hiking up, thanks to its lightweight design, but delivers the essentials for the way down.

FW20/21 will be the second year for Oakley's MOD1 helmet, a clean freeride design with an exceptional 360 fit system. Popular with all mountain-goers, from big mountain skiers to freestyle riders, the simplicity of the low-profile design, comfort and security delivered from the BOA fit system and the

overall weight and balance of the helmet make this a key model in their range. (5)

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category. BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM HIGHLIGHTS 1 Low profile silhouettes key

- 2 Muted, solid colours proving popular
- 3 Crossover helmets have longevity
- 4 Unpredictable weather patterns require premium equipment
- 5 Consumers more aware but less risk-averse



JACKSON HELMET





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Impact protection designed by stunt professionals

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE **BODY PROTECTION FW 20/21**

Body protection is slowly finding its way from the pros to the mainstream and, as riders get more capable of higher speeds and more technical manoeuvres, this is no longer an optional piece of kit for many.



Consumers are not necessarily more risk averse in recent times but are increasingly more risk aware when AMPLIFI's back protection comes in the form of their MKX Top. Based on 3D body-scanning and sport-specific musculoskeletal analysis, the ergonomic cut, flatlock seams, sweat-wicking Miharo 6+, zipper placement and highpushing boundaries in snowboarding. "It's all about spending time on the tech comb protector combine for a killer fit and total freedom of movement hill, and if you're injured - you're not going to be able to do that!" explains in any conditions. Tom Howells, Head of Product Design at AMPLIFI. If correctly designed, you won't even notice that you're wearing protective products until they OTHER PROTECTION "step in" to protect you from injury. Nowadays consumers do various types Protective shorts and kneepads are popular with park riders and certain of riding in one day; from relaxed turns on groomed (but icy slopes) in (more padded) models are also popular with beginners. Gone are the the morning followed by a couple of laps through the park - and maybe days however of bulky knee pads or restrictive padded shorts with brands even some off-piste in the afternoon. EVOC are continuing their legacy now seeking solutions that are incredibly supportive and protective, but of providing premium products by "developing completely new concepts" barely noticeable to the user when riding. Triple 8's Undercover knee pads and products to make snow sports safer and more comfortable and to deliver top-notch protection, flexibility and comfort, and are slim enough guarantee maximum fun when touring or freeriding." Look out for their completely redeveloped line launching at ISPO.

BACK PROTECTION

Back protection has undoubtedly been the most popular investment for the mainstream-user providing that insurance policy, without being restrictive, for those that want to try new things. "I expect a naturalness (if not an obligation) in the use of back-protection for snow sports within a couple of years" states Simon van Lammeren, Founder and CEO of XION® Protective Gear. Dainese introduces a new back protection line for the entry-level: The Auxagon. It's extremely lightweight, yet unrivalled protection for its class. Its Crash Absorb memory foam auxectic structure follows the shape of the spine for ultimate comfort. Riders want protection that they can forget they're wearing and in response to this there's a growing demand for back protectors that are especially thin, light, and flexible whilst also offering thorough protection. Simply put, if riders can protect their backs without compromising mobility and comfort, they're far more likely to ride with protection. Shred's Flexi collection is so thin, light, and comfortable that riders forget they're wearing it. "This has enabled us to overcome the historic barriers to adoption," explains Co-Founder and CEO Carlo Salmini.

The team at Forcefield noticed a growing trend of customers using body armour built into high performance base layers, rather than the traditional style back protection. Products such as their Winter Pro Shirt X-V 2 features a CE2 'free fitting' back insert and chest part as well as CE2 Isolator 2 shoulder and elbow armour. It has a super lightweight construction and the BeCool[™] 4-channel, base layer technology provides increased breathability and wicking for long days on the mountain. XION® originally designed body protection for film industry stunt professionals but expanded their product line over recent years by providing dedicated protection for extreme sports such as their 'Freeride Range' for snowsport athletes. Part of this collection is their comfortable long-sleeved jacket that includes a CE Certified -EN1621-2 D30 [®] back protector, extended protection at the lower back area and removable D30[®] pads cover the shoulders, elbows and back.

to be worn under any first layer or shell and their breathable, neoprene Undercover wrist guards give you the highest level of protection while being slim enough to fit under your snowboard gloves for low-key added protection. AMPLIFI's MXK knee and elbow protectors have utilised the latest in 3D knitting tech to create products that mould perfectly to your body meaning you'll feel its awesome flex and breathability, but not the bumps. XION's Bermuda crash-shorts cover the hips and tailbone and offer additional protection without adding bulk thanks to their second skin design. The integrated D30[®] pads provide protection for the waist, coccyx, hips, thighs and knees, and the comfortable 4-way stretch base layer fabric prevents any restrictions in flex.

Forcefield's all new Winter Pro Shorts X-V 2 are constructed using breathable BeCool[™] base layer fabrics and ergonomically shaped CE2 Isolator 2 armour pieces that have been designed to provide maximum protection, while offering huge unrestricted movement and breathability. The 3-piece armour set covers hips and buttocks/coccyx and is removable quickly and easily. Their new production techniques have resulted in a super strong open mesh that is even more breathable, yet super soft and strong. These innovations in the body protection market have started to appeal to the mainstream market and, as snowboarding's demographics shift and riders age, there has been a lot of experienced riders using protection for the first

time having turned to a body protection after sustaining serious injuries in the past. (5)

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews

of this category.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Body protection as base layers
- 2 Back protection for mainstream demographic
- 3 4-way stretch fabric integral
- 4 Older snowboarders embracing body protection
- 5 Padded shorts popular with beginners



Brand UPDATE

Hurley)(

Hurley is duck diving face first into the cold weather surf category for FA20 with a slew of innovations in tech and sustainability from wetsuits to apparel. We check in to see the reasons and rationale behind the move.

What are the reasons for moving into the Cold Weather sector?

Hurley is a Californian brand that is extremely successful in Summer. We identified a big opportunity to step up our game in the cold weather sector, especially in Europe. Due to the time period we are serving, this is a need from the consumer and marketplace.

How will the new collection differ from current collections?

Our two focuses are clear: technology and sustainability. Firstly, in technology, the FA20 collection will include more jackets and fleece; equipping more than 50% of our jackets and fleece line with technology- providing added value to the consumer and separating us from the competition. The technologies we're using are Primaloft branded synthetic micro-fibre thermal insulation, Phantom technology, Nike Therma-FIT, Nike Dri-FIT and the Nike Shield water and wind resistant fabric. We are also improving a lot in sustainability. In addition to using the Phantom material in our boardshorts, jackets, pants and walkshorts, we will now be using the upcycling material Recovertex on our tees and wovens. We'll also have recycled paper hangtags on pants, walkshorts and boardshorts. No more plastic. And the season after the whole line will benefit from this.

Are you renewing your wetsuits line?

For FA20 we are introducing a brand-new range of wetsuits with a new sustainable construction, new thicknesses, new backzip construction, new everything. We're introducing limestone-based



neoprene, replacing petrochemicals. Our wetsuit liners and stretch tape will be dyed using a special process that saves water, reduces energy consumption and avoids excess water pollution. A key ingredient in neoprene, carbon black, will now be created from scrapped car tires limiting CO2 emission by 200 grams per wetsuit. We'll also be using a non-toxic water-based glue, which doesn't pollute.

Regarding thickness, we're introducing '+'. Based on research collected by our partners at California State University San Marcos, we have updated neoprene distribution on the body for maximum warmth and paddle efficiency. Our new Hurley Advantage Max material is more flexible than ever. The infrared interior traps the heat to keep you warm, while the material on the chest and arms is built to last and block the wind, and the seams keep the water out.

Our insulation keeps you warm and dries quickly. We added stretch to the fabric and the chest-zip entry makes it easy to get on and off. The taped seams keep the water out and make the suit more durable. For FA20, we'll be introducing our thickest wetsuit ever, the Hurley Advantage Plus 6/4mm.

Which athletes are you using to market the new collection?

Hurley notoriously has the best surf team: John John Florence, Filipe Toledo, Carissa Moore, Lakey Peterson, Nic Von Rupp, Kolohe Andino, Sam Piter, Julian Wilson, Michel Bourez... They all surf general releases colourways, at the time the products hit the market. There'll be no more team-only colours anymore.

We'll work with key stories in partnerships with our athletes including the Team Pro Series collection; support your favourite surfers with tees, boardshorts and surf jackets inspired by vintage band merch. We'll have packs for John John Florence, Filipe Toledo, Carissa Moore, Lakey Peterson, Kolohe Andino and Julian Wilson. Right in time for the Olympics. We'll also have collections for Rob Machado and JJF. Rob's passion for sustainability guides his signature Hurley collection designs and we looked through 1000+ vintage Hawaiian prints dating back to the 1950s, with John John picking his favourite for his collection. Hurley's the official partner of the Olympic USA surf team. So Team USA surfers will surf in the world's best boardshorts and swimwear.

How are you working with the wholesale channel to promote the collection?

With retail assets for in-store and online. We also organize wetsuits tests with key partners.

Who's been the lead designer on the collection and what was their brief?

At a global level, we had Bruce Moore in charge of wetsuits and innovation; Brie Kandarian, Global Woman Design Director and Andrew Atkinson, Global Design Director for Men.

At the EMEA level, the changes are the results of thorough research lead by Manon Jouanine, Hurley EMEA Product Coordinator. Identifying market opportunities, consumer needs, trends, and working on product construction and technologies, Manon has been key in developing the Cold Weather and Wetsuit lines in Europe. This collection is the result of great teamwork between the Global and EMEA Team around cold weather products and wetsuits as Europe is the best-selling region for these categories in Fall.

How has the Carhartt collection been received?

Since 1889, Carhartt has defined the worker's wardrobe. Since 1999, Hurley has made gear to help others have more fun in the water. The Hurley x Carhartt collection brought our two brands together to celebrate innovations built to outwork the water. With revisited iconic pieces such as the Carhartt Jacket or the Hurley Phantom Boardshorts, this year-long collaboration was well received. Stores and online both sold out quickly. (\$



E-SHRED

IS E-MOBILITY DISRUPTING ACTION SPORTS?

E-bikes. e-skateboards. and artificial wave gardens : Welcome to the electrified future of action sports! Analysis by Dirk Vogel.

Sometimes the future arrives in ways that disrupt, or downright destroy the existing order. Consider the rampant rise of e-scooter mobility platforms in major cities across the globe. Despite the fact that every municipality wants them gone! In Europe, five major e-scooter companies have emerged and raised over \$150 million in capital since 2018. By 2030, the global



electric scooters market is expected to reach \$41.98 billion (Grand View Research) while personal e-mobility is hailed as the next urban mega trend.

Urban sports like mountain biking have already undergone e-transformation. In 2018, customers in Germany bought over 980,000 e-bikes, and the number while Mellow has motor kits (Drive S) starting at €999. of e-bikes surpassed mechanical bikes for the first time in the Netherlands (ECF). This trend has had a major impact on retail: "Electric mountain bikes **E-SKATE: BARRIERS & OPPORTUNITIES** have transformed the fortunes of independent bike shops, and the bike Looking ahead, the category still faces potential roadblocks, including: side of our business has bounced back hard after slowing down because of consumer-direct brands," said Martin Green, Owner of Zero G shop in 1. Legislation. Although several countries have recently adopted legislation Chamonix, adding: "Now we're thriving winter and summer!"

Surfing is another sport on the cusp of e-disruption. Inventions like e-SUPs are still not traffic-legal in the EU. "Hopefully regulators will be enlightened from Onean or Red Dot Design Award-winning electric surfboards by Awake enough to see the value of electric boards as a method of combating foreshadow the shape of things to come. But with price points still at €18.000 congestion and traffic," said Pablo at Loaded. per board (Awake), hardware is not going to be the catalyst. Artificial wave parks will! be the disrupter: More than 30 surf parks and pools - featuring 2. Riding skills. Are mainstream consumers ready to go 40 kph without a technology by Spanish firm Wavegarden, Kelly Slater Wave Company, handlebar? "From a strictly practical viewpoint, riding an e-scooter sure is American Wave Machines and Surf Lakes – are going up across the world. As faster to learn. Getting on an e-skateboard without a skate background is not the disruption continues, surfing will not only become a stadium spectacle recommendable. It's going to hurt a whole lot," said Jörg Ludewig at Urban but a year-round sport even in landlocked areas. Supplies distribution.

E-SKATEBOARDS: NEXT IN LINE?

3. Price. The majority of quality e-boards from core brands still command Is skateboarding next in line for electric disruption? E-skateboards are four-digit price points, but e-boards are still at the bleeding edge of trending on social media and hardware has evolved over the past three innovation. "The high costs are justified by the ability to use them as efficient years. Premium brands such as Loaded, Mellow, Elwing, Boosted, and Evolve and compact transportation devices. As with all electronics we are seeing offer quality completes featuring maple or composite decks, legit trucks the costs steadily decreasing and the performance improving," said Pablo at and wheels, powerful battery packs, and Bluetooth remote controls with different drive modes for top speeds up to 45 kph. But quality comes at a Loaded. price (see Barriers) and electric cruisers by Elwing start at €500, while serious Despite these challenges, the aforementioned use of e-skateboards for e-powered longboards retail for no less than €1.299.

commuting holds tremendous potential. "We are addressing not only an Sure, customers can blow €400 on Amazon for budget e-skates by E-GO 2. insiders' community but all individuals who are interested in electric mobility Hiboy, RazorX, Blitzart, Teamgee, Backfire, Skatebolt, Alouette, Vokul, and and wish to change the way they commute," said the team at Elwing. At Mellow Boards, Sanna is on the same page: "Europe's main cities attempt their ilk. Sure, customers can blow €400 on Amazon for budget e-skates by me-too brands with suspect skate hardware and dubious IP. But who are they to green up their inner cities by banning cars for example." With that said, kidding? "There are a number of price point products on the market already, e-skateboarding presents not radical disruption, but just another way to get however, poor quality leads to poor experiences and may impact long term around. "For seasoned skateboarders, e-skateboards are a wicked fun way to adoption," said Pablo Castro at Loaded Boards, who just joined forces with get from point A to B," said Jörg Ludewig. (5)

Unlimited × Loape

electric drive experts Unlimited. The Unlimited x Loaded collab has just spawned three completes pairing state-of-the-art motors and lithium-ion battery packs with premium Loaded bamboo composite decks, Orangatang Wheels and Paris Trucks. Loaded also sells three upgrade drivetrain kits (Solo, Race and Cruiser) from €829 upwards to transform any board into an e-skate,

for e-scooters - now requiring licence plates in Germany and insurance plus helmets in the UK - so-called 'self-balancing vehicles' like e-skateboards

NORTHWAVE DRAKE 2019/2020 COLLECTION

RIDE YOUR WAY.

Photo TROY TANKER

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SPLITBOARD HARDGOODS FW 20/21

More so than in any other category, we received absolute screeds of text from brands wanting to shout passionately about their new splitboard gear. Faced with an imposing mountain of information, Andrew Duthie flips his highbacks to touring mode and goes in search of the view from the top.



NEXT WAVE Surfing has been part of snowboarding's DNA since time immemorial - and in the current era of board design, its paternity claim is undoubtedly stronger than skateboarding's. For 2020/21, we're seeing that influence more than ever in the splitboard market. Yes, perhaps wanting to go out of bounds doesn't necessarily equate to a fetish for carbon-infused bases and no-fall zones. Some people just want to find a nice open field for a soulful shred, far from the madding crowd - and next year's offerings will leave them beaming like they've just been barrelled.

We'll start with Jones' revamped Solution; both the men's and rockered nose "that adds surf feeling to the board, and delivers women's models now feature the brand's surf-inspired 3D contoured ultimate floatability on soft powder", while Plum have been working base. Of course, when the mood strikes you can still absolutely razz on improvements to their Transition splitboard. A collaboration with on this thing, but the new design will really come into its own when surf heavyweights Rip Curl that promises to "bring the surf to the you take the foot off the gas on gentler pitches. "This development snow," prospective upgrades include new nose and tail hooks and has been three years in the making," explains an understandably a lighter core. Burton's Family Tree line of backcountry boards is chuffed Seth Lightcap, Marketing Manager for Jones, "and we're getting a pretty major overhaul next year. "Working with our team thrilled to finally offer this amazing performance feature for riders and designers, and being inspired by surfboard design, we backcountry shredding." With Amplid's latest, the clue's in the name. created a collection that is unlike anything before." While we can't The Surf Shuttle is a new version of the more conventionally-shaped yet be certain if it'll appear on any of the four new splitboards that Tour Operator, featuring a swallowtail outline. Big news also coming are due to drop, we live in hope. from the wizards at Amplid have invented some new magic that'll prevent snow from melting and then sticking to your splitboard, BOOTS, BINDINGS, ETC saving weight and effort. No more stopping after 10 kick turns to Nitro have teamed up with Spark R&D on a brand new splitboard binding, the Vertical. Spark's T1 system serves as the foundation, scrape ice, you'll be first up and first down, and this proprietary

WE MADE IT BETTER. AGAIN.

This year we have made huge progress in regards to technological nents in our products. Completely reinvented constructions for our boots which offer an even better fit through the use of premium materials. Our bindings have taken big upgrades also and are now available with composite carbon hi-backs and double-insection moulded straps. You can expect our boards to have light and poppy wood cores you can count on coupled with high quality graphics for every taste. Check them out!

Board, FEAM /boot: PROPHECY dark brawn /binding, IIADAR Grey







TRAM

Find out more at northwave.com



"Dedicated snowboard shops which have the passion to talk a customer into what he really needs, not which team rider he knows." Peter Bauer, Amplid

tech is also perfectly dialed to allow their boards' graphics to stay clear to see for all. Win win. Meanwhile some brands have tweaked their existing fodder; Gara's Ranger model has been given a new

but the highbacks, cable-reinforced ratchets and minimalist Vibram toestraps are 100% Nitro. They're also one of the only brands to have made much movement on the splitboard-specific boots front; the new Nitro Incline is very touring-friendly in its light-yet-tough construction, and the Vibram sole is crampon-compatible for those extra-gnar days. Elsewhere in boots, the long-serving Thirty Two Jones MTB remains a go-to model, and it'll receive a few upgrades to the gator, sole and lacing harness for 2020/21. Alongside the aforementioned collab, Spark are also debuting a new splitboard clip system in 2020/21. The simple-but-effective 'Fixie' clips are made of lightweight aluminium, and can be fine-tuned to get a hassle-free fit on just about any board. For hardboot fans, they've also made some improvements to the overall performance of their Tech Toes. Fellow split specialists Karakoram are offering a new binder for women, recognising the increased demand for something that works with smaller boots sizes and lighter frames. Their high-end Prime-X and Prime-X Carbon models (for both men and women) will also see some improvements.

If you like the Union Expedition, you'll welcome the return of the lighter, stronger Forged Carbon edition next year. What's more, Union's splitboard binders now come with crampons as standard, as



well as discs for mounting them onto a solid board. That's not all; for all your other splitting needs, from poles and skins to touring gloves, Union now does the lot.

ACCESS GRANTED

Buying all the kit for the first time can be daunting, so any brand that's looking to make it more accessible is alright by us. Nitro now offer a complete setup that should be attractive to the novice. Alongside the new Incline boots and Vertical bindings, they've also knocked heads with Kohla to create custom-fitted, hole-and-hookmounted skins for each of their splitboards. Those will be available in two levels of tech, so customers can buy to match their budget. As for boards, they still offer something for every price point in the sector. Their high-end Doppleganger will come in three new sizes next year, right down to a titchy 148cm. They're by no means the only ones casting the net wider in 2020/21; quite a few brands are either bringing out new products aimed at new markets, or expanding the size range on existing models. Swedish brand Stranda's new split, the Descender Backcounty, will stretch from a lowly 152 up to 166, so just about anyone looking for something a bit more traditionallyshaped can check that one out. Their bestselling Shorty model was somewhat ironically only available in size 164cm and up, but next year you'll be able to get your hands on a 153 or 159.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

What we've talked about so far is just the tip of the iceberg, so here's a quickfire list of some other new and exciting stuff for 2020/21. A few brands are bringing out split versions of dependable solid decks; the Rossignol XV Sashimi, Borealis Koi, Salomon HPS Taka and Slash Straight, to name a few. Gnu have a new one dropping next year, with a predictably off-kilter name and paint job. The Gorp features all the Mervin magic you'd expect, such as Magne-traction edges

"We're 13 years deep into making splitboard bindings: some people are on their third, or maybe even fourth set. That customer may be more comfortable purchasing online. There's a need and room for both brick and mortar operations as well as online shops." Dan Ventura, Spark R&D

and C3 camber, secured with Karakoram clips. The base graphic owes more to Jackson Pollock than Jackson Hole, making it one of the few exceptions to the long-standing rule of earth-toned splitboard aesthetics.

Other brands straying from the nature trail include Sandy Shapes, who use some truly popping colours on their hand-crafted topsheets. West have taken things further still, going fully against the (wood) grain in favour of an urban/skate-inspired collaboration with Japan's DAYZE. "As a small company, we always try to think further with innovation in graphics," says brand chief David Lambert.

TALKING SHOP

With the possible exception of boots, splitboard gear is the area in which shop staff can have the biggest impact. Even some highly experienced 100-day-a-year snowboarders still find the splitboard world utterly baffling, and there's only so much about mounting systems, Z-poles and skin savers that can be learned online. More often than not, demystifying the process in the shop environment can lead to instant sales, and a long-term relationship with the customer. The vast majority of brands we spoke to agree with this. "I think specialty retail is key," says Korua's Nicholas Wolken, "we need quality shops who can explain the details to the customers, because piecing together a good splitboard setup is complicated." Amplid's Peter Bauer also highlights the need for "dedicated snowboard shops which have the passion to talk a customer into what he really needs, not which team rider he knows."

It's also a great way to reinforce the fundamentals of mountain safety - something that Nitro founder Tommy Delgado sees as an essential responsibility of snowboard stores. "Fundamental education about splitboarding and backcountry safety and equipment is absolutely necessary, and cannot be done online," he explains. "We have retailers who will not sell any sort of backcountry equipment to an inexperienced customer without having them attend an alpine safety course, and I believe this is the right way of approaching this kind of business." All that being said, Spark's Marketing Manager Dan Ventura raises an important point about why one particular type of customer is more likely to open their laptop than head to a store: "We're 13 years deep into making splitboard bindings; some people are on their third, or maybe even fourth set. That customer may be more comfortable purchasing online. There's a need and room for both brick and mortar operations as well as online shops."

CONCLUSION

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in depth brand previews

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of this category.

If we look at where the splitboard market is right now, it's clear that retailers need to adopt a two-pronged attack - look after the informed, discerning customers, but have gateway options available for those looking to develop a split personality. If you bring them in correctly, then there's a potentially long, fruitful relationship there for the taking. If you sell online, high-end items are definitely where your focus should be.

Both markets will no doubt be well served by the 2020/21 fleet, especially with all these new surf-flavoured options and expanded size ranges. This relatively small corner of snowboarding was already packed with enough enthusiasm to power a chairlift (one for all you irony fans out there), but the smart money says that there'll be plenty more where that came from. 🔊

HIGHLIGHTS

1 Surf's up 2 Size range matters

- 3 Shops are key
- 4 Don't overlook online

ANOTHER BEST DAY



XV SPLIT BINDINGS





XV SASHIMI 159/163/167/164W

XV SUSHI 144/145W



xv

8



XAVIER DE LE RUE SIGNATURE SPLIT SERIES EXPAND

XV FOR FREERIDE SUPREMACY. XV SASHIMI FOR CARVING & POWDER. XV SUSHI FOR TREE LINES & DEEP POWDER.

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REMIND INSOLES

Created using a complex mix of biomechanics and biomedicine, John Maken saw a gap in the market for durable, specifically designed insoles that support action sports athletes' feet. In 2008, John Makens started Remind Insoles to improve comfort and reduce injury and has since accrued an impressive lineup of brand ambassadors.

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

Remind Insoles was inspired from needing a solution for riding all day long and not feeling like you got thrown down a flight of stairs at the end of the day. I've been skating and snowboarding for over 30 years now and about 12 years ago I noticed a large void in the quality of insoles that come in our footwear and boots. The crappy stock 10 cent insole just didn't ever cut it for me. I started playing around with many different concepts and products. I ended up developing a product, alongside of a bio-mechanical engineer and bio-medical engineer, specifically designed for the massive amounts of abuse that we endure while skateboarding and snowboarding.

I gave the insoles out to all my shred buddies for testing like Travis Rice, Bryan Iguchi, Chico Brenes and Walker Ryan and the response was nothing but amazing feedback! So, things just kinda escalated from there. Orthotics have been around for many years, but I felt like we needed something that catered to snowboarders and skateboarders and the abuse we do to ourselves. There wasn't any other insole company around that was doing this yet or one that sold in the skate and snow shops. It all just came together, and all the signs pointed to yes and that's when Remind Insoles was birthed.



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

I am still hands-on with most all aspects of the brand and logistics... I come from a multidimensional background of skateboarding, snowboarding, shop retail, semi-professional rider, construction worker, illustration and design major, and a visionary for progressing what I love doing. I work alongside a great crew who used to run and manage all the Black Box brands back in the day. So together we make an awesome team and keep this machine greased.

What sets you apart from your competitors? The Remind Insoles shape and the durability of

our materials is an unmatched combination. Our materials mould and hold shape to your specific foot so you get your very own customized shape. It is the perfect amount of support. I've found the competition insoles are either too stiff, which locks up the foot, too soft, which isn't enough support, too flat, which has no support, or, too thick, which adds way too much pressure in the shoe. Remind Insoles are designed and engineered to improve body alignment, improve foot and joint function, prevent injury, protect our joints and body, reduce pain, and distribute weight and shock impacts. We have the perfect amount of support and stiffness for all types of feet and arch heights.

What do you find important about the European market? How are you operating here? Europe is one of my favourite places... All the times I've been to Europe I get this great sense of passion behind snowboarding and skateboarding and it's super rad to see it thriving well! It seems that science and technology in products is a high priority and I would love to make a contribution to it all. We have an EU warehouse set up to make it easy for distributors, shops, and consumers to get Remind under their feet.







What marketing are you running?

We are involved in some of the awesome onsnow demos and trade shows around Europe as well as contributing to some other core events through our distributors and reps. Showing presence and giving back to the snowboard and skateboard community is the type of marketing we like to do most.

Why should retailers sell your brand?

75% of people have foot problems caused from bad footwear. Everyone has different feet with different needs. Remind Insoles is not only a great add on sale for retailers but will solve most people's foot issues and make their lives much more comfortable.

Where are you currently distributed and what are the plans for future growth?

We are sprinkled across most areas in the EU already... Switzerland, UK, Germany, Austria, Italy, France, Belgium, Spain. The plan is to keep growing where we are already located and spread into the areas where we are needed. We have a lot of new products and plans for the future that we will be rolling out as well. S





WEEDO

WeeDo facilitate a child's imagination, while helping parents get their kids out the door faster to go riding! With a key focus on the environment, all of their products are made using recycled PET bottles and the polybag packaging is compostable within months.

What was the idea behind launching the brand?

We wanted to make functional clothing that was child-friendly and exciting: to develop highly-technical, durable apparel that kids find fun to wear, and which allows parents to quickly and efficiently dress them, come rain or shine! Additionally, fantasy plays a big role in our brand. Our vision is to facilitate a child's imagination, which is so key to their development. We have our own fond childhood memories of playing dress up – which inspired us to make fantasy a central principle of WeeDo, along with quality, sustainability and fun.

Please tell us about the people behind the brand...

Antje is the founder and 'Mother of Funwear.' She oversees management, production and design, while Anastasia covers logistics and finance, and Rina takes care of marketing. Antje's background in fashion and her passion for parenting makes her the ideal ambassador for WeeDo and its brand of adventure. With a rather energetic childhood behind her, she knows what it takes to entertain vivacious kids and satisfy quality-conscious consumers.

Where are you distributing the brand and how are you doing so?

We have retailers across Europe and Asia. International shipping is available through our online shop. Our new collection will be available to view in January 2020, and will be officially launched in September 2020. In terms of trade shows, we will be attending



Shops1sttry in Austria, ISPO Munich and Outdoor Retailer in the USA. We are always proud to present WeeDo to new people.

Why and how are you marketing to the kids market?

Essentially, baby and children's attire is a growing sector. It has grown by well over 10% since 2011 as consumers are more willing than ever to equip their families. Fashion allows parents to express themselves through their children and vice versa. In a "sea of baby and kids products", it is vital to consolidate any aspect that's unique to your brand. In our case, this includes the characters, illustrations, comics, product quality and brand personality. We use social media marketing, influencer marketing and have got a growing moms community, where we are able to interact directly with the consumer online.

What makes your brand different from other kids brands?

We like to put the 'fun' in 'functional'. Not only do we provide high quality active wear, but an entire alternate universe for your child to immerse themselves in – one fuelled by playful transformation. We are proud to facilitate a child's imagination, which is so important to their development and happiness. WeeDo's style and energy is unique and un-missable.

Why should retailers sell your brand?

Retailers might be drawn to our brand for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the brand has a mythology beyond the function and innovative design of the product – kids can embody various characters and enter the 'WeeDoniverse'. Parents on the other hand, will be convinced by the high quality, durability and sustainability of the product. This makes it an attractive purchase for both precautious buyers and their boisterous children, and therefore a worthwhile investment for retailers.



How are you being kind to the environment?

Our products have an incredible lifespan, which in itself, is the route to a sustainable brand. This is due to the precision and care that goes into production, on both an ethical and technical level. Moreover, ecological duty lies at the very heart of our enterprise.

WeeDo products are manufactured in factories that use solar energy or hydropower. The fabrics used in the overalls, are made from recycled PET bottles and we use fabrics obtained from overproduction – which in turn come from manufacturers in water treatment plants, with fair working conditions to BSCI standards.

Our fabrics are bluesign-approved and our sustainability pledge is maintained when it comes to packaging and shipping. Our snowsuits are packed into compostable plastic bags made from corn starch. The polybags are made of lactic acid and are thus 100% compostable within months.

Our long-term objective is to be completely recycled – creating new polyester from old textiles. We will progressively move away from the use of fossil fuels at any stage in our production cycle. In our view, the best playground a child can have is the natural world. (5)





DEWERSTONE

Dewerstone is an outdoor brand based in Dartmoor, England with a view to producing sustainable products for those who can't tolerate 'profit before product' brands.

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

The 'dewerstone' is a large rock within Dewerstone Woods, which is just inside Dartmoor National Park in the South West of the UK. The dewerstone is a little mecca for the outdoors, the rock itself is where so many people are introduced to outdoor climbing. The woods are a gateway to exploring the national park and the River Plym flows right through the middle of it all, offering technical class 5 river running.

The company started out in the dining room of a shared house just a stone's throw from dewerstone rock. We were screen printing t-shirts out of the garage for the first couple years, we then had a stint in a local warehouse and now we can be found in Princetown, right in the heart of Dartmoor National Park.

Our office, warehouse and flagship retail store are right where the outdoors and adventure happens - from the doors of our flagship store you can run, bike and hike, and within minutes you can be climbing or paddling down the river. To be based where adventure happens has always been our goal – we started dewerstone to be a part of the outdoors community and our unique location embeds us within that.

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

We're a tight knit team of outdoor enthusiasts that care passionately about what we do, where we do it and the experiences that being a part of dewerstone brings. Rory Atton, Founder & Director: Skier, kayaker, self-taught Shopify guru and entrepreneur. Ewart Aylward, Wholesale Account Manager: Lifelong outdoor enthusiast with a love for surfing, skateboarding and



kayaking. 20 years in board and paddle sports retail. Stuart Watson, Events & Digital Marketing Manager: Kayaker, mountain biker and allthings-outdoor lover. Curating content through adventure and friendship is at the heart of what we do. At the end of the day, we're friends that want to be involved in the outdoors, dewerstone brings us together and allows us to work, live and play in an environment we are passionate about. What is the company ethos?We're all about authentic adventure and sharing experiences that bring people together in the outdoors. As a business we are committed to protecting the place and environments in which we play, and our partnership with 1% for The Planet holds us to these values. Being a part of 1% for The Planet

is a real commitment to making change, we give 1% of sales (not 1% of profit) to environmental non-profits, including Save Our Rivers and the Gili Eco Trust.

Please explain your distribution strategy.

We have a B2B online platform and predominantly distribute direct to retailers throughout the UK and Europe from our Princetown HQ. In France we work with OPS Distribution and are currently in the process of finalizing a US distribution for 2020/2021. We are open to distribution enquiries for both Europe and the Southern Hemisphere. Our B2B platform allows for both pre-season and in season ordering, with fast shipping and reliability.

Please tell us about your two most successful product categories.

We started out printing t-shirts in the garage and we still screen print everything in-house by hand. However, it's our partnership with ZEISS optics in our Wooden Sunglasses and innovative Life Shorts that have gained traction within paddle and boardsports. Our Wooden Sunglasses and the Life Shorts 2.0 are at the heart of the brand and will continue to dominate both sales and marketing throughout 2020.



How are you marketing the brand?

Our partnership with 1% for The Planet brings both global promotion and accreditation. Supporting the environment is at the core of our ethos and our messaging. We want to promote the message of good choices and achievable changes as much as product that we sell. We are actively attending and hosting our own events in the UK, supporting events throughout Europe and working with athletes and collaborative brands globally.

Why should retailers stock your brand?

The industry needs to change, and that change is coming from the new-to-market, smaller brands that have the ability to adapt, change and make decisions that put planet before profit and quality of product before shareholder dividends.

Our Life Shorts 2.0 are one of the most technical shorts you can find. Designed by people that love water and the outdoors they are at the forefront of product design, materials and features but without the price tag of the big brands.

As a brand we are not perfect, no business is, but we do make the best choices where we can concerning materials, practices and ethos. The consumer mindset is changing, they want to buy products from brands that put planet and product before profit, they can only do that if retailers buy those brands. (S)







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GOGGLE SOC

Snowboarders have become accustomed to coughing up serious amounts of dosh for the best goggle lens on the market - making gogglesoc's invention a sight for sore eyes. Designed with sustainability in mind, gogglesoc have poured over 150K recycled plastic bottles into their products, penning collabs with initiatives such as POW, photographers including Scott Serfas, Whistler Mountain and more. gogglesoc have tapped into the last unclaimed piece of real estate in the snowboarder's attire.

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

Born in 2016, gogglesoc is a Whistler BC based company whose flagship products are protective goggle covers made from recycled plastic bottles. Our products merge function with personality and do so in a sustainable way. What started as an idea among three friends to protect pricev goggle lenses from the scuffs and scratches they can be subjected to, has since sold over half a million gogglesocs, recycled over 150,000 plastic bottles and created a new product category in the process (and even encountered some copycats, but hey, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery).

After testing the product concept in Whistler BC, we officially launched into the North American market and have since grown globally. Most recently, we launched into the European market at ISPO 2019.

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

gogglesoc was started by three friends originally from London, UK. Josh leads the brand team, while Andy takes care of sales and Rich heads up finance and operations. Supporting us is a team of superstars who bring their own passion for problem solving, creativity and the outdoors. Although we come from a variety of professional



backgrounds, all three co-founders had the common goal of starting our own brand, and what better industry to do it in?

What is the company ethos?

Our creative nature drives us to keep things fresh, fun and to never be behind the curve. In a short time, we've accomplished a lot. We've officially created a product category, sold half a million units, repurposed 165,000 water bottles, expanded sales to 21 countries, across thousands of retail partners. We've created a practical solution to a common problem and our priorities remain the same now as they did when we started the company: to create products with simple and functional design at an approachable price point that keeps the planet in mind.

Having a limited product offering pushes us to stay relevant as a brand and ensure we are a valued retail partner, meaning great sell-through and providing a reliable experience.

One way of keeping our brand relevant is by way of meaningful collaborations. We've been partnered with Protect Our Winters since 2017, having donated over \$25K towards their cause.

What sets you apart from your competitors?

When we started the company, we had no competitors. Since then, however, a number of copycat brands have emerged. Nevertheless we remain the global leader in our product category, and see the competition as something positive, drawing attention to the product category we created

Having said that, none of our competitors have built a brand as strong as ours or considered their impact on the environment like we have. We remain the original and market leader – there's only one gogglesoc.

Tell us more about your environmental commitments.

At gogglesoc, we think it's cool to be kind and this extends beyond our charity work, to considering the impact we have on the environment. Our products are made using rPET: post-consumer





recycled plastic bottles. They are packaged on minimal recycled card and our hangers are designed to be reusable. Beyond this, we recently developed new retail display racks that are made from recycled chopsticks, collected from restaurants around Vancouver.

Although we recognise we won't solve global warming one gogglesoc at a time, we do think that any new company has a responsibility to consider its impact on the environment.

What do you find important about the European market?

Aside from being Europeans ourselves, we've always seen Europe as a key winter sports market for obvious reasons. It's the jewel in the global crown, and although it took us a bit of time to make it across the pond, we have launched now and feel we've done so in the right way and with the right partners.

Please tell us about the collaborations you're

working on and have under the belt already. Tonnes. From our flagship global collaboration with Protect Our Winters, to our recent artist series with pro-photographers Scott Serfas and Ming Poon. From working with Sherry on the Shane McConkey Foundation custom socs, to donating thousands of units to adaptive charities around the world. It's hard to keep track! Keep an eye on our website and social media feeds for more collab news. S



SLASH

After taking complete control of his snowboard brand Slash one year ago Gigi Rüf's seen a spike in orders, renewed the company's focus in sustainable growth and adopted a fresh approach to business. We've spoken to snowboard legend Gigi to see what's shaking.

How are things with Slash?

I now have the first year of 100% owning and operating Slash under my belt and my distributors increased their orders by 22%.

Please tell us about the ending of your relationships with Nidecker and Spacecraft. The Nidecker Family - alongside Ivan Zwahlen, who did agent work for me in the past - helped me launch Slash in 2012, allowing me to use their factories and facilities to independently shape custom moulds. I also had complete control of anything related to marketing, global strategy, and brand image of Slash by Gigi. In 2016 when speaking with Henry Nidecker about our business standing he told me that Slash was not profitable to the Nidecker Group. We agreed that he'd transfer the business to me in November 2016 complete with snowboard moulds, shapes, designs and trademarks related to the Slash brand. At the same time a rider developer role with the Capita Mothership was in discussion but it didn't come to fruition because I couldn't let go of Slash.

While still in a rider's mind-set where selfrealization is done through the action of riding not selling, I didn't feel like I could keep momentum going with distributors until Chad Perrin (Spacecraft) called. He was willing to provide his sales services, if I was to continue creating the boards. That was when I realized there was a certain dependency and support in the brand from my distributors. I got behind the figures preparing a two-year licensing agreement that put me into the driver's seat. Then Chad left Spacecraft and after six years of Slash and the previous 10 years being involved in creating board lines for Burton Snowboards. I knew it was time to take control of my own fate.



Have you employed anyone since we last spoke to help with the business side of things? No employees as of yet; I have my brother as the engineer who gives help providing the blueprint of my ideas to the manufacturing site and Typegorilla out of Innsbruck does all the design work for Slash, handling deliverables and preparing production files from artwork that I collect

Which products sold well for you during the buy-in season last winter and are there any early noticeable high performing boards for you this winter?

Freestyle and All Mountain models carry the character of the brand and are working well with good margins and the value based price point attached to them.

Can you tell us about the graphics on the boards. Kate Zessel designed the Freeride models with original artwork. A brand new model called the Portal was shaped and designed by Slash Triberider Jay Hergert. I also reintroduced the Spectrum as requested by Triberider Andy Glader, returning with a soft camber and specifically designed graphic for him. Also both of my son's artwork - which was actually the concept for my Dragon pro model goggle - was also used to create their own Splash kids board. The other riders involved in this year's Ride and Play collection were Manuel Diaz, who did the catalogue cover art and stickers that comes with

Who does art direction for the brand?

The brand ID was created by Tokyo based designer Mr. Papriko, who created the logo and pictographs, you'll find listed as our ingredient symbols. Art direction and daily deliverables are accomplished with long time friend Mathias Egle. who is Typegorilla in Innsbruck and also works closely with Pirate Movie Production.

Any plans to branch out into other categories any time soon?

Obviously other artists or my sponsors' influence goes hand in hand with the debate of forming collaborations to uplift each other. Plans are always there while working in such a creative field of likeminded people.

Could you talk to us about your relationship with Meditec in Tunisia? Meditec is where it all started from and I can be proud to have maintained a trusting relationship with owner Stéphane Querinjean. We started out with quite a standard program and then added

GOGGLESOC.COM







some top tier models where it was compelling to hit price points and deliver good options for retailers to fill voids.

What makes Meditec better than other manufacturers?

Meditec is not far off the southern coast of Europe and the free-trade agreement between Tunisia and the EU, USA and other countries makes exporting directly efficient and simple connecting sea freight without detours to the key markets.

Which trade show / on snow demos will the brand show at?

Shops 1st Try in Austria, Outdoor Retailer Show in Colorado, Interstyle in Japan.

What are you doing differently with snowboard shapes for 20/21?

This year I've started to work with NBL Sport in Poland as a second manufacturer outlet and I'm using this investment to create new shapes and fine-tune the collection to where I want to be. After a long extended business-learning period I can finally immerse myself in innovative thinking to create Slash's new baseline.

What do you see for the future of snowboarding? Opportunities and threats?

Threats and opportunities always go hand in hand. We push for what only a few are actually willing to grasp, but those who are driven enough to find meaning in these challenges are sensitive enough to be guided by their own taste and intuition. The future for snowboarding is like in any other boardsport; to provide an outlet for those who crave self-expression. (S)

NEW PRODUCTS

01 / THE DAKINE MAVERICK GLOVE

Workwear-inspired, this glove features a custom BWF (Brvan William Fox) label that pays homage to Mt Hood. The Maverick is made with a combination of durable water repellent leather and a nylon/poly blend that's DWR treated. The result is a premium look and feel and a hardwearing construction that can take a beating. The out-seamed leather palm gives you a more comfortable fit and adds to the rugged look. The hook and loop cuff closure gives you a snug and secure fit and, with built-in nose wipe thumb panels and touchscreen compatibility, you can put it on and keep it on. DAKINE.EU

02 / THE SOLITE 8MM CUSTOM FIRE BOOTIE

When the norm is ice on your wetsuit hood and wind-chills below zero, the 8mm Custom Fire delivers tropical warmth and barefoot feel. The Fire starts with Solite's new patented round-toe Thermo-Form sole which is 8mm thick in the toes, heel and underfoot and 7mm on the sides and top of the foot. The seamless sole is heat mouldable for a custom fit and sized slightly large to accommodate our 1mm neoprene Heat Booster Socks, which are included. The heat moulding process is easy and simple and can be done with nothing more than boiling water. The Fire offers 9mm insulation on the toes/underfoot/heel and 8mm on the sides and top of the foot. SOLITEBOOTS.COM

03 / STANCE THE VOODOO CHILD SNOW SOCK

Stance recently launched the Jimi Hendrix collection which spans the entire range snow, hike, training, run and casual socks. The Voodoo Child is the snow sock within the collection. Stance leads the way with comfort and the snow sock is further improved with; Feel360, flat toe seam, which reduces abrasion, engineered arch support to provide support and reduce foot fatigue and Y-Gore seams which provide the perfect fit around the heel. Hit the slopes with Hendrix Snow and bring the Jimi fire to your next alpine descent. STANCE.EU.COM

04 / POW KB PRO MITT

Kevin Backstrom is a man of individual style and finesse and his KB pro mitt is as distinctive as his riding. The Mitt has a recycled Poly W/ DWR 15K / 10K shell and leather palm, and is insulated with 3M™ Thinsulate™ 150c / 100c. Features include Waterproof HIPORA® Insert, goggle wipe, a wrist leash and under wrist cinch for stealth adjustment. You will be as amped with it as Kevin. POWGLOVES.COM

05 / DEELUXE SPARK XV BOOT When it's time to explore, the Spark XV is

right with you. Designed by Xavier de Le Rue, it offers exceptional support, lively board feel, and precise control for hiking, skinning, and riding. And while it craves the backcountry, it excels everywhere. Make your escape with the Spark XV. DEELUXE.COM

06 / THE BATALEON THUNDER This may very well be the first men's board inspired by a women's board. Based on the award winning Storm, the Thunder is a men's directional freeride board built to handle it all. Delivering unparalleled edge-to-edge action, this board is a samurai sword in a world of bread knives. BATALEON.COM







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MARKET INSIGHT

I ended my last article with the words "... now to Brexit." Little did I know just how much Brexit we would be getting. I also said that I could not wait for there to be a General Electio... I got that wish, and now we will see exactly what damage the whole Brexit saga has done to the political establishment. Quite a lot I imagine!

I'm not really sure that the election is going to solve anything – I just hope that it unseats a few of the rather unpleasant politicians that we have in power today. (I will not name them but those of you in the UK can probably take a wild guess).

As for boardsports in the UK, 2019 has been a strange year - at least from a distributor perspective. Winter order books generally came in strong and there was plenty of optimism about. Then we saw the O&CC CVA (including Snow & Rock) – that sent shudders through the boardsports spine. Coupled with a general demise of the high street and retailers who had their credit limits withdrawn. Freestyle Xtreme went to the wall (or rather seemed to escape over the wall with all the stock) and here we are at the start of the winter season and everyone on the brand/distributor side is a little jittery. This is not what we expected. In between time the summer was lacklustre – "OK" being the most commonly used description... "just... OK".

Turning to retail, I spoke to Angelo from S2AS (Surface 2 Air Sports) and then to Chris from Poole Harbour Watersports – these two retailers are not a million miles apart, and whilst there were some commonalities, there was also some stark differences. First talking to Angelo: "It's been a good year – boat wakeboarding was particularly good, cable was down a little – I think mainly due to aquaparks. Kite was steady but it's not firing properly – I put that down to lack of innovation and the 2nd hand market being too cheap." What about foiling – surely that's helping? "There's lots of talk and lots of hype but personally I don't see it lasting. I don't think it's captured the imagination. Similarly with the 'wind wing' – I just think it's a gimmick and that it will pass. I may be wrong. Been wrong before!"

So how is SUP? "Worst year ever – too windy for SUP and sales have just not been there. It's also getting cheaper and cheaper and there's just no need for it."

Looking forward, how do you feel? "Next year will be better – I know it. I'm not worrying about Brexit, although I feel that the concern is starting to filter down from brands to stores. I've got great vibes for wakeboarding for 2020 and SUP has just got to be better. I'm optimistic." Meanwhile down the road, in stark contrast, Chris was optimistic about the 'wind wing' and "anything foiling. It's bringing people back into windsurfing although not attracting any new people. The only newcomers to windsurfing we get are people wanting to do a weekend course – nowadays they don't tend to buy after the course, they just hire."

"SUP has reached a peak – it's still going but we have ended this season with stock which is unusual. It's certainly not the expansion that we hoped for and that's almost entirely down to the weather."

What about looking forward? "I am really optimistic for 2020. Foiling sports are going to flourish (as long as we have a better supply). The same goes for 'wind wing' – given a decent summer we will have a great year." No mention of Brexit? "It is what it is – we just need to get through it." You'll have to draw your own conclusions from those discussions and take a guess as to who is right and who is wrong.

What of snow? In September 2004 Paul Macnamara set up a small online business called 'Bargain Boards.' Today it has grown into Absolute Snow and is recognised as one of the most successful independent, privately-owned stores in the UK. From online only to a walk in store with a large online presence, Paul (and now Matt), have navigated the business through thick and thin. I caught up with Paul when he was taking a coffee break from his regular

UK

PORTUGAL GERMANY AUSTRIA FRANCE SWISS ITALY

bike ride. "Brexit uncertainty is causing issues – I am convinced of it." And he has a theory behind this: "When people book holidays in late summer-early autumn, they then have at least four pay-days between booking at going. They spend this time musing what kit they may need, purchasing that kit and 'enjoying' the whole experience that leads up to their holiday. Brexit has caused people to postpone decisions – they're booking later, much later. This cuts the paydays in half, and then there's Christmas in-between, taking more money away. The disposable income available between booking and going is cut in half, and probably more."

So does this mean the season is not off to a good start? "No. It's slow and it's not just Absolute. I think it's going to be a tough season for everyone."

For Absolute, last year ended well and Paul is optimistic about the future: "Looking one year ahead, I think there will be a catapult impact – there will hopefully be pent-up demand for kit and holidays, although we may lose some winter sports enthusiasts along the way. I hope not." During my phone round, it became very apparent that retailers were still very busy – it is always hard getting hold of people to talk to – they have businesses to run and customers to serve (at least I hope so).

Serving those customers is shifting – and online continues apace, increasing from 5% in 2008 to 18% in 2018 (Office Of National Statistics). Of course this still leaves 82% of retail sales in stores, but when you consider that food is included in these figures, then you really start to wonder what % of our boardsports sales are being done online.

Not everyone saw this coming and some of the best people get things wrong. Getting things wrong can put you in good company. In 1998, USA Economist Paul Krugman, a Nobel laureate, predicted: "The growth of the internet will slow drastically, by 2005 or so. It will become clear that the internet's impact on the economy has been no greater than fax machines."

By the time you get to read this the fat lady will be singing and the General Election will be over. Winter will be well and truly upon us. Board-types will be scanning the weather forecasts getting excited about their upcoming winter breaks. Whatever the political stage, whatever the weather – our brethren will always try to find a way to get their 'fix.' Thank goodness the sports we sell are addictive.

The biggest threat to our sports, and indeed to us all, must be global warming – let's hope that any newcomers to the political scene have some sense of the urgency that seems to pass so many by. Have a good one.

GORDON WAY

MARKET INSIGHT

FRANCE

PORTUGAL GERMANY AUSTRIA SWISS ITALY UK The end of 2018 was heavily marred by the 'gilets jaunes' (yellow jackets) movement, which had a negative impact on the economy and consumption in France. This movement emerged at a critical time for consumerism, coinciding with the end of year festivities, and contributing to a drop in visitation numbers and direct sales in shops. A proportion of consumers preferred to just buy online, so shops with a web presence did manage to benefit from this.

At the start of 2019, reports from resort-based shops in the Alps and the Pyrenees diverged somewhat. For the Alps, visitation numbers were quite consistent with 2018. The early snowfalls certainly encouraged customers to book Christmas holidays, even though the snow didn't really live up to the hype. The big snowfalls and cold weather of January urged the more athletic, last-minute customers to boot. In contrast, February was warm and sunny, and sales of accessories, equipment and technical clothing dropped dramatically. In the Pyrenees, the start of the season was tough, if not worrying, but the months of February and March fared a bit better.

As for product ranges, customers in shops were mostly looking for highquality, technical products. More specifically, they were turning towards newer stuff, whether in terms of design, shape or technical innovations, and were fronting the money as well.

In terms of brands, it was the same story in the Alps as in the Pyrenees. The notion of differentiation was increasingly appealing for consumers, as much from a technical standpoint, with technologies like Gore-Tex for their "core" characteristics or their environmental considerations, driving a certain spark within the customer base.

The winter season is often a bit more complicated for shops a bit further away from the pistes and the socio-economic climate, with the slow, drawn-out end to the gilets jaunes movement in France, did nothing to help the situation.

The surf conditions, on the other hand, were rather good between January and March 2019 and that provided coastal shops with pretty good numbers in neoprene and surf accessory sales. The water sports world in 2019 was characterised by the growing craze for the foil. Whether featuring in windsurf, surf or SUP, the discipline is more than just talk now, and more and more people are coming into shops for information and equipment.

In the urban environment, street skating is still providing the majority of sales in shops, yet there is significant demand for longboard type decks, especially within the cruiser or surf/carver categories.

What is clear is that not everyone had the same experience for the start of 2019: tough for some, decent for others. But it was nothing that great, even for the shops in resorts that did get through successfully.

In spring 2019, all the shops we spoke to were pretty much in agreement: the Easter holidays were good in terms of visitation numbers as well as sales in shop. The month of April combined holidays, tourism, nice waves and good weather – the perfect mix for generating traffic and sales in shops. The month of May was a bit calmer unfortunately; with all the bank holidays falling in the middle of the week, it didn't really cater for people taking those traditional long-weekend breaks in May.

For coastal shops, the fantastic conditions in the spring and early summer seem to have translated into sales instore. The isothermal section worked well, and customers equipped themselves with neoprene so that they were able to surf earlier on in the season. Furthermore, the water stayed cold long into the season this year, which was also favourable for these isothermal ranges, for wetsuits or any other appropriate accessories: booties, gloves and hoods. After a pretty well-stocked winter for swell and big waves, the return of more mellow spring conditions also urged customers to swing open the shop door in search of their new board for the summer. Mostly it was easy to paddle, comfortable boards that people came looking for – longboards, big fish and hybrid type boards. There was a little comeback from retro-type twin fins – these boards are both comfortable and cool to surf, fitting well with current trends.

When it comes to more street-orientated shops, the skateboard market seems to have completed its comeback. Skateboarding is in full expansion in terms of participation and demand in 2019, and that's being felt in sales and visitation numbers in shops. The sport's success is growing and these days all types of people are getting (back) into it. There is also quite a lot of product rejuvenation, which makes the market quite dynamic. In pure street skate, fairly wide, retro shapes are being selected by skaters for their stable, reassuring nature. Surfskate is an additional aspect to the discipline and it has worked well for shops. This appeals to skaters and surfers alike, as well as to the wider boardsports public in general.

So Spring 2019 turned out to be pretty encouraging: national economic signs related to pleasant weather seem to have translated into sales and good visitor numbers in shops.

As for summer, overall it was pretty decent for shop sales and visitor numbers. Even though results differ slightly shop-to-shop, region-to-region – the widespread feeling is quite positive. In general, shops had good numbers coming in on all the weekends in June. The weather is an undeniable factor for visitor numbers – the sun remains the best source of entertainment and we were quite lucky with it this year! The month of June was really good, with superb weather conditions. The feeling for the 2019 season is really upbeat on the whole, and the good weather and really high temperatures seem to have played a big part in this. When it comes to equipment, the pleasant skies combined with nice little waves meant good rates of sale throughout most of the product categories in each respective region:

Amazing wind conditions led to good sales in the wind and kite sections. The craze for foils, already felt in 2018 and early 2019, has taken hold a bit more this season, especially in all things wind and kite, even though their use in SUP and surfing is more limited. Speaking of Stand Up Paddle surfing, the market now seems to have, more or less, stabilised. The SUP market seems to have centred around inflatables with people looking for entry-level, single-layer technology this summer.

In surfing and, more specifically in boards, the season with its weather seems to have favoured foam boards and progressive boards, or ones with more volume for small waves. Thanks to the strong heat and particularly high water temperature this year, sales from the classic neoprene family were a little bit slow this summer. This meant lycra, tops and shorties made up the majority of sales in shops.

On the clothing and accessories front, summer products obviously enjoyed the best rates of sale. The high temperatures we enjoyed guided customers towards holiday-type products like t-shirts and swimmers or sunglasses, caps and sandals. Souvenir surf caps and t-shirts were once again some of the best sellers in shops. The late season was also pretty good for shops, with consistent sales and visitor numbers during the back-to-school and Autumn periods.

On the whole we can say that the year 2019 was a pretty good crop for the boardsports world – we saw the confirmation of certain trends and the appearance of others. At the time of writing these lines, it was still too early to see how the end of year festivities and the winter 2019-2020 season is shaping up. The gilets jaunes movement that disrupted the endof-year sales in 2018 seems to have run its course, all there is to do now is hope that the weather plays ball to set up a successful winter. Stay tuned...

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MARKET INSIGHT

GERMANY

PORTUGAL FRANCE AUSTRIA SWISS ITALY UK

The German council of economic experts just released its forecast for 2020. The verdict: Economic growth is about to slow down significantly. Whereas the council predicted 0.5 percent growth for the German economy in 2019 - as opposed to the German government's 1 percent estimate - the year 2020 will only mark a 0.9 percent increase. While this may sound like more growth.

we need to keep in mind the so-called 'calendar effect': The year 2020 has significantly more workdays!

It didn't take ecommerce giants Alibaba many workdays, just their Singles Day sales event, to break records: Within one minute and eight seconds, the Chinese company raked in its first billion in revenue and clocked in \$38.4 billion that day, 25 percent more than the previous year. Intersport is restructuring its ecommerce business and expects three-figure million sales in the near future. Decathlon, the French sports discount chain is expanding its physical footprint into Germany with more stores and house brands.

One segment that has felt the brunt of cheap products flooding the market is SUP. although overall trends are positive. SUP has become a mainstream sport in Germany, while skateboarding has picked up significantly in 2019 with notable sales growth.

"Skateboard sales have seen a boost over the last few months," said Martin Propfe at Pivot Distribution. "The real standout was sales of complete boards, which probably indicates that more beginners are getting on board. And we have received more orders for decks, wheels, bearings etc. Sales of surf skates are also up. Pre-orders for spring 2020 were solid, so we are confident about 2020."

"The hardware business was great across categories, and complete boards were a real standout," said Jörg Ludewig at Urban Supplies in Wiesbaden. "Although business picked up rather slowly because of the long winter, summer really took off. It was on! Complete boards were flying off the shelves, but softgoods are still miserable." The reason may be that skate brands from abroad still have trouble offering adequate margins to retailers. And many U.S. brands are far behind German or European streetwear labels in terms of quality. The only exception may be the Thrasher print Gildian T-shirt that had a smashing 2019 season.

"Business is great at skate shops in larger cities, but small-town retailers can have it tough and are under pressure. Shop owners need to keep an eve on completes and all components for a decent set-up. And not sleep on trends. The scene has become more diverse, shaped decks are going well, completes extremely well while longboards are still collecting dust," said Jörg Ludewig.

"Skateboarding is developing nicely, and I would advise retailers to take advantage of pre-order discounts. Looking at pre-orders, levels are above Spring 2019, so 2020 promises to be a great year. And perhaps the Olympics may also have a positive impact on the market." Mosaic sales agency also had a great 2019. Philipp Schmidt also confirmed a positive sales trend in skate hardware: "Softgoods are stable, t-shirts, backpacks, and beanies worked well, while hoodies and caps had less demand here than last year. Shoe sales are better than one or two years ago, so we may be seeing the end of a negative trend. The skate scene has grown in 2019 and girls are making moves. Shops can't afford to sleep on things in this day and age, keep an eye on everything! Overall, fewer shops are closing. Those who are good, remain good. The operating term is retail experience."

As mastermind behind Boarders Project, Roland Kluge has been on a journey to serve customers with attractive online initiatives. At www.boarders-project.com customers can interact with a mixture of online store and showroom. The platform is also highly engaged across social media channels while offering direct customer service digitally. "I think that with the variety of shapes and flexes out there, regular customers are having an increasingly hard time choosing a board. This is where we come in as advisors and product experts. I think there is a growing demand for an honest and fact-based service and the number of boards purchased as a second or third in the guiver - or boards for specific uses - is still on the rise. We have been seeing rapid sell-through of snowboard gear since early September. And we're noticing that last season, with its abundance of powder days, has increased demand for boards with great powfloat characteristics. Plus, 'euro carving' is back and demand for boards with solid contracting is up. Camber boards are also in high demand. And among people who like to ride often, interest in hybrid camber or double camber rocker profiles is diminishing."

When K2 Sales Manager Andreas Threimer asked about the launch of winter season among reps and retailers, he received positive feedback. Everyone seemed content and sales were up over last year, so everyone has positive expectations for the 19/20 snowboard season. Follow-up orders are also coming in, and it's looking like a perfect start, unless we're in for an unseasonal warm period in November/December.

According to Nitro's Bavaria rep Stefan Thaler, demand in stores increases significantly once the first cold and snow arrive. Although October proved rather mild, November kicked off winter in style. On a positive note, price point battles among retailers with hefty discounts are far and few, especially compared to 2018.

Nevertheless, competition remains tough, as online purchases are on the rise, while Amazon and large-sized retailers tend to dominate. But the new generation is also changing its tune and more and more are viewing Amazon in a critical light, which benefits local specialty retailers. Snow shops need to continue offering a solid selection and specialist service to pick up these customers. Aside from Stand Up Paddling, skateboarding was on the rise in 2019. Even surfing in Germany - especially river surfing - is a hot trend. Munich remains a hot spot, while November 22 marked the opening of Wellenwerk Berlin river surfing park. Additionally, a number of river waves are in planning and construction stages across the country. While October proved much too warm, a cold November brought heavy snow into the Alpine region. More and more customers are (re)discovering snowboarding and demand for powder, carving and split boards is trending up. Here's to a wonderful snow season in Germany!

JOCHEN BAUER



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MARKET INSIGHT

ITALY

PORTUGAL GERMANY AUSTRIA FRANCE SWISS UK

As usual, we start with an economic and political update and review for 2019, and there are two words that describe it well: chaotic and flat. Chaotic, as we don't have a stable government and flat, as our economy still struggles to see good growth numbers. The government between Lega and Movimento 5 stelle is a collaboration of the past, and we now have a non-elected government between Movimento 5 stelle and the Partito democratico PD. A government which now has to seek a way through as there is not a clear majority in the

parliament, which makes it hard to implement new laws or any other action. This is nothing new for Italy as we have been dealing with changing governments for many years, and our political landscape is a constant up and down. 2019 was no exception at all, and people seem bored and angry that the government is more busy wasting time with elections rather than acting and solving serious problems, such us unemployment of the youth, tax pressure, immigration (which is a EU problem overall) or infrastructure renovation for schools, retirement homes and hospitals to name a few.

Boardsport business sees skate hardgoods stable, with some growth numbers with skateboarding trending, whilst sales in clothing and shoes have become slower as competition grows. When talking to retailers, such as Lukas Höller from Sub Skateshop, we notice a clear trend: Kids are dressing more sport and fashion-driven than ever before which makes it harder for skate brands to compete, and the hottest skate brands are often selling B2C which makes the life of a core skate shop harder than ever - they're now having to compete against sport, fashion and outdoor brands wanting a slice of the cake.

SWISS

PORTUGAL GERMANY AUSTRIA FRANCE ITALY UK

The time has come for our rundown of 2019 - a mixed, but pretty positive year for the Swiss boardsports market. The start of the year was marked by a winter that reached every corner of the country, and this provided good trade and decent visitor numbers to ski resorts in early Spring, thanks to the large snowfall. With April and May's cold and unsettled weather, the most dedicated splitboarders were able to live out their passion

well into June, which is really not that common at all. On the whole, you could say that the winter was a success, with some rather encouraging signs for the future: the highlights saw growth in splitboard sales on one side, with increases in rental equipment for kids and high visitation numbers in the resorts on the other.

Even though the market reaches well beyond the confines of summer, skateboarding remains somewhat stable throughout the year - as soon as the warm days arrived, people came into shops looking for skate product. Sure, it's a trend that we've seen for several years now and this year was no exception, with shops regarding this market as an important, if not the major source of revenue for their business in summer. So the trend is continuing, teenagers, kids, boys and girls are all rolling around more - more frequently and in all sorts of different ways. From simply getting around, to little flatland sessions behind the house, impressive tricks in the latest bowl dug out from the dirt, or having boards glued under the arm to show off in the playground - skateboarding seems to be everywhere these days, to the great delight of our skate shops. Obviously, this trend brings in growth related sales such as skate shoes, Snowboarding saw a loss of many retailers over the last year, which resulted in the remaining ones getting a little boost while staying strong, but online competition, low margins and overstock on certain categories doesn't mean easy business overall. When talking to Alex Berger from Fakiestores and Snowpark construction company F-Tech, he sees a big lack of youth work, which would need to be remedied to get the kids more attracted to snowboarding again, especially in the very north where Freestyle and Alpine skiing has become popular again. Youth programs would be necessary to bring the kids on board again as alpine skiing and freestyle skiing are way more active with teachers, schools, races etc. This is something countries like Austria and Switzerland already do but is lacking in Italy at present. A good and positive example is a project called "The Garden" which is a snowboard school from Madonna di Campiglio that brings hundreds of kids to the slopes with snowboarding camps, events etc. We need more of these!

Good growth numbers in snowboarding are seen in the rental section as Nitro rep Ettore Rusina confirms and splitboards from Jones are stronger than ever with older customer audiences, says rep Alex Ricci Picciloni. Surf business seems stable with good growth numbers in soft boards which are easy to use and a big trend overall, also stand up paddling keeps growing. A milestone for surfing in Italy is the first artificial wave in Milan, which was inaugurated this summer. Alex Ricci Picciloni from ActionSport Agency confirms, they're seeing a growth in numbers in the surf business especially on mid price range boards as well as boards that are good for beginners. Overall, we are now hoping for a cold and snowy winter before Christmas as selling on full margin is crucial for many stores in this period of a constantly changing marketplace. See you out there on the slopes and I will be back in 2020.

FRANZ JOSEF HOLLER

a sector mainly dominated by Vans because of their fame beyond the skate world, as well as Nike SB and Adidas (for actual skaters this time) both boasting huge volumes too.

In other flagship products in 2019, accessories of all kinds have flown off the shelves. Baseball caps and hip bags are the two items, which alone provide a significant proportion of our shops' tailoring turnover. These are bought in all shapes and colourways so that they match with the extensive wardrobes everyone already has.

With the previous winter finishing on such a high note, winter sports fans are going into the new season with this lovely memory fresh in mind. So you can feel that there is a certain eagerness to see, touch and get informed about winter products - demand is strong, even though it's quite early in the season. It's likely that some people have noticed that certain products will not have infinite stock and would rather get them early than miss out on that highly prized item. Of course, demand is hugely varied in the gigantic window display that the internet provides, and this does nothing to help the life of the shop retailers whose assortment is limited to the point that they can't meet all demands under the sun. This brings frustration, as much for the seller as is for the customer, who can't find what they want after making the effort to go to the shop rather that ordering online. That said, as we know, the product can be quickly delivered to the retailer in order to solve this problem and this still seems to work these days, although it's difficult to know for how much longer. Technological progress, digitalisation of what's on offer and changes to how we consume are happening so quickly that we could lose grip faster that we'd have thought possible.

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- Produktion in Sequim, USA. Gegründet 1977 von den Boardsport Enthusiasten Mike Olson und Pete Saari, gehört die Mervin Manufacturing Inc. zu den weltweit führenden Snowboard-, Skateboard-, Ski- und Surfboard-Herstellern und ist Vorreiter in umweltfreundlicher Produktion.
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(centre right))







04 - Vans crew- Fridge, Mayol, Bruno and Method Mag's Chriso (centre right)

EUROSIMA SURF SUMMIT





Jean-Louis Rodrigues

02 - EuroSIMA's





04 - Full house

of ceremonies

01 - Dave Mailman master

LONDON SURF FILM FESTIVAL



01 - Ben Sooprayen VANS

in the box

02 - Festival Director Chris Nelson and Surfers Search Director Kevin Steen



03 - Francois Applagnat of Bayonne CCI

03 - Lyndsay McLaren and Megan Hemsworth



04 - Matty Snelling and Mike Lay

PADDLEEXPO GERMANY



01 - Around the show.







03 - NSP booth Nuno Amado from Surfcloud and CTL's Sander Blauw



04 - Starboard booth Ian Varderi, Flo Brunnerand Eliane Droemer

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SURF OUT PORTUGAL





01 - Inside the expo

02 - Lighning Bolt's Paula Santos, Maria Joao and Danyella Vilca

STANCE 2ND LONDON STORE OPENING





01 - In-house printer Matt and STANCE's Rich Philip

02 - Snow & Rock's Sam Clark and his better half, Cool By The Pool's Matt Rumble & Chris Allso

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01 - Arthur and Blue

02 - Arthur, Perly, Niels

VOLCOM OUTERWEAR 20 YEAR PARTY, LONDON





01 - Dragon/Arcade/Stance's Sam Nelson and Volcom's Edd Martin

02 - Greenhill and Schoph

ONE-EYED MONSTER



03 - Organisers Salavador and Patrick Stilwell



04 - Semente's Nick Uricchio



03 - STANCE Carnaby crew



04 - Worn Out Creative's Tony Arthy and STANCE's Nathan Hill



03 - Mark Dangler and Blue Montgomery



04 - Riley, Joni and Jonathan.



03 - Volcom's Bucko and Noel Reynolds



04 - Volcom's UK PR Agent Lucy Stephens, Volcom's Edd Martin and sneakergrammer Nick Glackin (AKA @glackster) with a miniature Bryan Iguchi



LAST MONTH: 37,400,000 VIDEO VIEWS 6,400,000 ENGAGEMENTS 46,600,000 MEDIA REACH

EXTREME CONTENT UNREEL VIEWS

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