

#100 FEBRUARY  
MARCH 2020 €5



**RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDES FW20/21**

SNOWBOARDS, OUTERWEAR, GOGGLES, WETSUITS,  
CRUISERS, SNOW SAFETY, BEANIES & FACE MASKS

**BIG WIG ROXY'S EMILIE SOUVRAS**  
**EVOLUTION OF THE SNOWBOARD**  
**REFLECTION OUR 100 COVER STARS**  
**BRAND VOTED RETAILER OF YEAR AWARD**





100



SIGNATURE SERIES



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BY ALA SANDHU FOR THE LINE AMPHIB







FUCK  
YEAH  
NEW  
SNOWBOARD  
BINDINGS

HALL B4/210



# HELLO SOURCE#100

SOURCE was launched in 2002, three months after answering a phone call while lying on the beach in Southern Spain. It’s been a wild ride getting to 100 issues, with massive changes in media technology and the gyrations in demand for boardsport products, but we’re still delivering in both print and digital formats. We continue to be the go-to network for all things industry for the European boardsports business and despite the financial crisis and “consolidation” of the industry, we remain firm believers in the European solution delivering in French, German and English to brands, distributors and retailers across Europe. With our editorial team spread across the continent we have many ears to the ground bringing a balanced view to a complex business environment. As brands have come and gone, SOURCE has remained in business bringing a dependability to the boardsports market as a key part of the plumbing that keeps our industry moving forward.

To celebrate 100 issues, we’ve had a commemorative logo designed by Aaron Schwartz. Aaron’s a supremely talented designer, photographer and filmmaker, known largely for his work as Creative Director for Korua Shapes and we’re extremely honoured to have such a special creation to mark a century of SOURCE issues. Look our for some limited edition engraved Mizu bottles and Stance patches at ISPO.

Inside the front cover we’ve taken a trip down memory lane, revisiting (almost) all of our previous front covers. I think 87% is a fair haul spanning six plus art directors and many more external hard drives! Our front covers are something we’re still incredibly proud of here at SOURCE; it gives our industry’s employees the recognition they deserve and I’m proud to say that since starting as Editor six years ago, the quality of cover submissions has gone from strength to strength and is now healthier than ever.

Female Big Wigs in our industry are few and far between and we thought it only fitting that we feature one of action sports’ finest leading ladies – Roxy GM Emilie Souvras - as our 100th

Big Wig Interviewee. We also take a look back at just what’s influenced the evolution of the snowboard since its inception, with an article by Tristan Kennedy.

Keeping our ear to the ground for outstanding performing retailers is usually sufficient, however for our 100th issue we put the vote out to the brands. And the winners of our 100th issue, your 2020 Snowboard Retailer of the Year is S’Brett from Mannheim in Germany.

As a B2B magazine, working with sensitive content not meant for consumers, we’ve (thankfully) never had to compete with the world of Instagram influencers and Facebook algorithms; we send an email newsletter regularly to a core, engaged readership and we send our printed magazines to the European boardsport industry’s most important influencers; retailers and industry employees.

Here’s to the next 100 issues! See you at ISPO 2040?

**Forever Sideways**  
**Harry Mitchell Thompson & Clive Ripley**  
**Editor & Publisher**

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On the cover SP United's Dominik Lyssek + logo by Aaron Schwartz



# NEWS

## #100

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### REEF ENTERS INTO MULTIPLE AGREEMENTS TO TRANSITION ITS EMEA BUSINESS TO DISTRIBUTORS

REEF has entered into several new distribution agreements with leading footwear distributor partners across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), including the following: Brandfusion Holland, BV (Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg), Quality Brands GmbH (Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France), A. Georgoudas OE (Greece), Audes Group S.R.L. (Italy), I.A. IL Ltd. (Israel), ALBION 1879 SL (Spain and Portugal) and Unify Brand Partnerships, Ltd. (United Kingdom and Ireland).

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### STANCE FORMS PARTNERSHIP WITH UK HOMELESS CHARITY CENTREPOINT

Performance and lifestyle sock (and underwear + apparel) brand, Stance, has partnered up with Centrepoint. Centrepoint is a charity that supports and provides accommodation for homeless adolescents in the UK, for which Prince William has been a patron since 2005. In the run up to Christmas, Stance donated a pair of socks for every pair sold.

-

### SEASPORT IMPORT NEW DISTRIBUTION PARTNER FOR VISION SURFBOARDS IN NORWAY

Seasport Import is the new distribution partner for Vision Softboards. The partnership covers distribution in Norway – land of dedicated surfers, even with the ice-cold seas – and supplies surf schools with Vision’s Take Off range.

-

### PICTURE ORGANIC CLOTHING AWARDED B CORP CERTIFICATION

Scoring 85.4 points, Picture Organic Clothing has been awarded B Corp Certification. Picture aims to use the B Corp assessment to continue to improve, and ultimately, rid the company and their business chain of fossil fuel usage. Picture joins fellow action sports companies, Burton, Finisterre and Patagonia with the rating.

-

### RVCA OPENS NEW SHOWROOM IN SAINT JEAN DE LUZ

RVCA celebrated the opening of their new showroom in France in December; as well as the showroom, they celebrated with drinks, a DJ and live painting and tattooing.

-

### TREE ARE SOLE DISTRIBUTORS FOR PRETTY GREAT EU

Pretty Great Company has broadened its’ partnership with TREE Distribution so that TREE are their exclusive distributor within Europe; the aim of this is to “ensure this business philosophy, and guarantee PG Brands (Nikita Clothing, Bonfire Outerwear and Sessions Mfg) a solid background and a sustainable future.”

-

### WORLD SURF LEAGUE PARTNERS WITH BRAZILIAN BRAND HAVAIANAS

World Surf League forms a 2-year partnership with Havaianas, a Brazilian flip-flop brand. The popularity boom of surfing in Brazil resulted in the Saquarema WSL Championship Tour stop draw in record breaking crowds; with Havaianas fully supporting surfing and sponsoring Tataiana Weston-Webb, the partnership looks set for success.

-

### BLACK DIAMOND OPENS FIRST EUROPEAN STORE IN INNSBRUCK

Black Diamond has opened its first brick and mortar shop in Innsbruck, Austria. As well as selling products from all of Black Diamond’s ranges, the shop allows customers to test out equipment before purchasing, attend workshops and events and, meet other outdoor enthusiasts.

-

### TEAHUPO’O SELECTED AS HOST FOR SURFING AT PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES

The Paris 2024 Olympic organisers have selected Teahupo’o (Tahiti) as the venue for surfing. The French colony provides a world class wave alternative to the man-made wave options being touted as potential venues. The move is subject to validation from the International Olympic Committee.

-

### CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON A WAVEGARDEN COVE IN SWISS ALPS

Set to open in early 2021 in Sion, Valais (Swiss Alps), Wavegarden Cove will bring surfing to an area already well known for its boardsports. The opening of a Wavegarden will increase the draw of tourism to the area.

-

### AMPLIFI BRINGS ON NEW SALES TEAM

Taking over distribution for AW20/21, AMPLIFI have brought in a new sales team to aid them in their rapid brand growth. The new team will take over from GROFA Action Sports GmbH at the end of June this year.

-

### BURTON EUROPE DONATES €92,793 TO PROTECT OUR WINTERS

The crew at Burton Europe raised €92,793 for POW over the Black Friday sales period. Instead of offering discounts on products, they decided to raise money and donate it to the NGO Protect Our Winters (POW). From November 28 – December 2, 15% of sales from burton.com and selected Burton stores went to POW, and €5 on each Burton newsletter subscription was donated. The brand also ran several #doitforPOW events in their stores in Innsbruck, Munich, Zurich, Helsinki and Milan promoting the protection of climate instead of consuming.

-

### SHINER TAKES OVER GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION OF ARBOR SKATEBOARDS

Shiner expands from European to global management of The Arbor Collective skateboard program. Shiner aims to use the partnership with Arbor Skateboards to begin a US based direct distribution, using their tried and tested infrastructure. The Arbor Collective CEO, Bob Carlson, and Charlie Allen, Managing Director of Shiner all look forward to the opportunities presented by the partnership.

-

### INDUSTRY VET PHILIPPE GOUZE JOINS AWAYCO AS EMEA HEAD OF SALES & DEVELOPMENT

AWAYCO have appointed Philippe Gouzes as EMEA head of Sales & Development, bringing 20+ years of leadership experience in the action sports industry for the likes of Rossignol, Burton, Nixon & Boardrider. Philippe will be driving AWAYCO’s next phase of growth in EMEA. He will be based in France and will report to Marshal S Olson, the company’s Global COO.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ONLINE: [UNIONBINDINGCOMPANY.COM](http://UNIONBINDINGCOMPANY.COM)  
SOCIAL: [@UNIONBINDINGCO](https://www.instagram.com/unionbindingco)

# UNION BINDING COMPANY

RIDER

## JOHNNY O'CONNOR

RIDING

## STRATA

YR. 15



PHOTO

DANIEL BERNSTAL







# TRADE SHOWS

## PREVIEWS

### ISPO MUNICH GERMANY, JANUARY 26-29, 2020

professionals attended the show. With international exhibitors accounting for 89 per cent of all exhibitors - with the largest numbers from China, France, Great Britain, Italy, Taiwan and the United States - the world's largest trade fair for the sporting goods industry became an even more global affair. This is where an event the scale of ISPO offers real value. ISPO is still the biggest sports show on the planet; even North America doesn't have a single show to rival it. With all these different sports communities and nationalities congregated in one place, ISPO uniquely offers opportunities and connections to develop your retail and brand business and for retailers to find the products and brands of the future. For 2020 the show has moved forward a week starting on January 26, whilst staying with its traditional Sunday to Wednesday schedule. The trade fair is spread over 18 halls covering 200,000 square metres with the hall layouts now standardized with wider central aisles focusing visitor traffic flows and an increased use of public spaces.

Markus Hefter, Exhibition Director for ISPO Munich says: "ISPO celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2020. Since the first ISPO Munich in 1970, the world's leading sports trade fair has been providing an overview of the innovative products to emerge from the sports world, generating fresh and important impetus and driving the development of the industry. Our goal is to create enthusiasm for sport in each of us and at the same time to create awareness for a sustainable approach to nature." This approach is expressed in this year's motto Be responsible. Be active. Be creative. Be responsible – Act consciously, visit the Sustainability Hub in Hall A2 where, for the first time ever, a concise overview of sustainably produced sports products will be provided in a separate, dedicated exhibition area. Be active – Experiencing the world of sport, visitors can find out how passion for sports can be raised and how the global lack of physical activity can be actively countered within the topic "Health, exercise and sport". Numerous activities are planned, including both presentations and live demonstrations on stage. As its name suggests, the Outdoor Snow & Safety Summit in Hall A3 will be all about responsible, careful approaches to outdoor activities whereby experts will be providing attendees with useful information regarding safety both on and off the slopes. Be creative –Visit The ISPO Brandnew Village, the world's largest competition for sports start-ups, in Hall B4, to see the up-and-coming trends

### SPORT ACHAT EUREXPO, LYON, FRANCE MARCH 9-11, 2019

geteilt: Ski, Snow, Outdoor und Lifestyle. Für die Branche in Frankreich bewährt sich Sport-Achat weiterhin als Pflichttermin im Messekalender und zeigt die neuesten Produkte in Sachen Snowboarding, Outdoor und Alpinski vor einem Fachpublikum von Händlern aus dem ganzen Land. Die Atmosphäre ist familiär und unkompliziert und es wird viel Networking betrieben. Vom Konzept her ist Sport-Achat als Ergänzung zu den weiteren, im Vorfeld stattfindenden Messen von Sport Air gedacht, darunter Business-to-Business-Events wie ASAP (eine Bekleidungsmesse in Annecy) und die Testveranstaltung Rock On Snow Pro. Nach Besuch der beiden anderen Messen können Händler auf der Sport-Achat ihre Ordern zu Ende schreiben.

Zu den bereits als Aussteller bestätigten Brands für 2020 zählen ABS, Arva, Black Diamond, Bolle, Briko, Cebe, Columbia, Dainese, Dakine, Douchebags,

ISPO continues to be the pre-eminent winter sports show globally with significantly more visitors than any of the other major continental sports shows. In 2019 a record 2,943 exhibitors and around 80,000 industry

expected to take the start-up scene by storm this year. Whilst the standout innovative products are showcased as part of the ISPO Award in Hall B1. In Hall C6, the ISPO Academy will be taking audiences on a journey into the sports business of tomorrow with an extensive program of speeches and presentations held across all four days of the trade fair

The snowsports halls introduced the year before last to replace the separate ski and snowboard halls, remain at the centre of the show, with the snowboard hardgood brands congregated in Hall B4. Brands from the boardsports industry in B4 at the time of print include: Arbor, Arcade, Amplifi, Blackhole, Capita, Coal, Dakine, Deeluxe, Eivy, Jones, Nidecker, Nitro, Northwave, Phunkshun, Polartec, POW Gloves, Recco, Ride, Rojo, Thirtytwo, Union, Vimana, Shred, SP, Spark R&D, Stance and YES. A separate area called "Snowboard and Freeski Media Landscape" will give an overview of all the special interest print and online mags, whilst Bakery Snowboards will be producing boards on site, which will be raffled for a good cause during the show. For helmets and goggles, B6 is the hall: all big names including Alpina, Cebe, Bolle, Dragon, Giro, Kask, Koo, Mips, Oakley, Poc, Smith and Uvex are located here. This year Boardriders has returned with its Quiksilver, Roxy, Billabong, Element and DC brands Following their new outdoor oriented and broader business model and they are located in the Outdoor segment of ISPO Munich, Hall A4 sat alongside O'Neill and Helinox and diagonally opposite Primaloft. Hall A3 sees Patagonia alongside Arc'teryx with Ortovox, Picture, Black Diamond, Pieps and Arva as well. Note, K2 and Head will be located in Hall B5 and Holden continue to mix it with the high-end fashion brands in Hall B1.

The Longboard Embassy in hall A5 with its myriad of small brands will remain a central focus of skate at the show whilst the Watersports village in A4 had a full schedule of activities from brands based around its pool. With the ISPO Munich App, all information about the trade fair is already available in advance and enables industry participants to stay in touch before, during and after the trade fair

ISPO is still Europe's one opportunity to see all that's new in winter sports. All other trade events are either niche focused offering opportunity only for the already converted or are predominantly national in scope. So action sports retailers - no matter what their specialization - should make the trip to Munich to keep themselves at the forefront of market developments.

[ispo.com](https://ispo.com)

Dragon, Drake, Giro, Goodboards, Head, Icebreaker, Jones, Julbo, K2, Level, Mons Royal, Niche Snowboards, Nidecker, Nitro, Northwave, Oakley, Ortovox, Picture Organic Clothing, Pieps, Plum Splitboard, POC, Red Bull Spect, Ride, Salomon, Smith, Spy, Stance, Sweet Protection and The North Face. Ebenso wie in den vergangenen Jahren zeigt die gesonderte Fläche für aufstrebende Brands, Creme Fraiche, die Highlights der Startup-Szene. Nebenan werden Produkte „Made in France“ vorgestellt, darunter viele Preisträger auf internationalen Messen. Weiterhin erwartet die Besucher ein voller Tageskalender an Konferenzen, die den aktuellen Stand der Branche und Meinungen von Experten beleuchten (das Programm wird bald auf der Website bekanntgegeben). Im letzten Jahr besuchten rund 3324 Besucher von 1400 Shops die Messe, was ihren Stellenwert für die Snowsportbranche in Frankreich erneut hervorhebt. Die Messe ist am Montag und Dienstag jeweils von 9–19 Uhr und am letzten Tag von 9–18 Uhr geöffnet. Wir sehen uns dort!

[sport-achat.com](https://sport-achat.com)



## RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SNOWBOARDS FW20/21

For obvious reasons, it's a lot easier to shift snowboards than boots or bindings. Be careful, though; customers might be lured in by the siren call of a pretty topsheet or eye-catching shape, only to have their dreams of epic shred days dashed on the rocks of disappointment. What can retailers do to steer them towards safe harbour? Andrew Duthie looks at what's coming, and separates the myths from the facts.



NITRO

### XX-CITING TIMES

Paying lip service to the women's market is something many brands have been guilty of in recent years, but 2020/21 is looking like a strong year for female-specific snowboards. For example, Salomon are focusing a lot of their marketing on team riders like Annie Boulanger and Desiree Melancon. Annie's getting her own model in the Hillside Project series of pow boards, while Desiree lends her expertise and distinctive artwork to the new Gypsy Pro.

After another year of Freeride World Tour dominance, Marion Haerty gets a fresh deck from Rossignol that's fine-tuned for backcountry freestyle. She's not the only pow-focused pro getting the treatment, though; over at Arbor, Marie-France Roy has helped bring the Veda – a new, tapered, high-end freeride design – to life. If the pipe's more your speed, there's Play Snowboards' upcoming pro model for Spanish veteran Queralt Castallet.

At the request of their team riders, Roxy have ditched the hybrid profile on the long-serving XOXO and replaced it with parent company Mervin's more aggressive C3 camber. Barrett Christy reckons that the new, improved XOXO "strikes the perfect balance between a casual park lapper and a pro performance influencer." You'll also find C3 camber on the Ryme, the latest addition to Lib Tech's relatively new women's range, and one that's similarly freestyle-focused.

2020/21 is looking like a strong year for female-specific snowboards.

Women's versions of some modern classics are also popping up, such as Rome's all-terrain vehicle, the Ravine. Nitro are also releasing a sister board for their high-end true twin, the Beast. It's called (you guessed it) the Beauty, and shares the same top tech. It's also worth noting that the Bataleon Storm, a modern classic of women's snowboarding, has inspired a new addition to the brand's men's range, the Thunder. "We believe this is the first time a snowboard brand has designed and built a men's board based on a women's board, as opposed to the other way around," says Marketing Manager Ryan Scardigli.

### PARK LIFE

There are a few twin-shaped weapons in the above list - and looking at the bigger picture, lots of brands are stepping up their freestyle offerings this year. After so many years of backcountry and carving dominance, we're seeing a swing back towards the booters-and-butters market.

A few old favourites have been tweaked, such as the Nidecker Sensor (now available in a higher-spec 'Plus' flavour) and the Rossignol

**HILLSIDE PROJECT**  
*WOLLE NYVELT*

ÄSMO X SALOMON

**WOLLE NYVELT DREAM QUIVER**

For the third installment of the Hillside Project Wolle looked inward, considering everything he has come to know and love about riding and shaping boards, to create the three board quiver of his dreams.

First an all-terrain powder freestyle masterpiece, taking design cues from all of his favorite Salomon boards over the last 20 years. Second, a true powder gun combining characteristics of an Äsmo Powsurf and traditional snowboard construction; and then of course the Powsurf itself to complete the line-up.

**SALOMON**



Juggernaut (an evolution of the Jigsaw). Despite some big changes at Rome (more of which later), the Artifact remains, with new ‘Double Kick’ nose and tail for extra pressability.

There are quite a few newbies, too. “We have sat down with a group of our team riders who ride a lot of half pipe and discussed their specific needs for shape, flex and construction,” explains Nitro boss Tommy Delgado. The resultant deck, dubbed the T3, will definitely be one to wave under the nose of stunt-ditch fans. At the other end of the scale is the Lowrider from Canary Cartel, an Innsbruck-based outfit that will be dropping their first line of boards next year. It’s been especially designed for butters and other flatland tricks - an area of snowboarding that’s surely due a renaissance.

Surprisingly, French brand Borealis are also getting in on the act. “Since its birth in 2013, Borealis has traditionally focused on the freeride and backcountry side of snowboarding, explains founder Ben Hall. “With the new Taiga, we show that true freestyle also runs in our veins.” West, too, are better known for freeride boards like the Six Carro - but now there’s the Nation, a new true twin. And if that’s not all, even Capita’s famously off-the-wall Spring Break collab range will revisit the twin shape (although with the name ‘Powder Twin’, don’t expect this one to only show its face in the park).

DON'T FORGET FREERIDE

Of course, the need for directional boards isn’t going away any time soon, and there’s still much to draw in fans of powder or honest-to-goodness carving. The guys from Lib Tech raise a good point; given how often the average rider spends in their switch stance (that is to say, not very often), maybe we’re looking at this all wrong, and it is in fact the popsicle-stick twin that is the true ‘specialty shape’?

Burton remain tight-lipped about what exactly their 2020/21 line will look like, but they did make one thing clear; “it’s all about freeride”. The Family Tree line is going fully unisex, with each board built for terrain rather than gender, and they’re also taking cues from the surf world by applying hydrodynamic shaping to the range. The result, according to the B, is “a collection that is unlike anything before.”

What’s absolutely nailed on is the fact that unorthodox shapes will still be easy to find across the industry. “One of the reasons why snowboard sales went down in the early 2000s was because all the brands were only focusing on freestyle and street riding,” remembers Nidecker’s Thierry Kunz, and with collections like their Snowsurf Series, we aren’t likely to see such a detrimentally narrow focus again any time soon (see also: the equally head-turning Amplid Future Shapes Series, Dupraz’s evergreen line of pointy carvers, or 2-metre-plus models like the Rad Air Tanker and Good Longboard). While they work across backcountry, freestyle and race, Nobile are focusing on the former for 2021, with three distinct tail designs available on some of their models.

There really is a size and shape for anyone these days, but overall we’re seeing less of a ‘suck it and see’ approach to shaping. Seemingly wild designs that have worked in the past are getting carried over; Bataleon, for example are expanding the size range of their Surfer, laying to rest any idea that this chip-fork-shaped weapon was a flash in the pan. Elevated Surfcraft, too, continue to bring an ocean mentality to the mountains, with board lengths in feet and inches, and shapes for every possible ‘wave’ you might encounter.

For the most part, however, new releases are fairly conservative by modern standards. Take Borealis, who have made a premium version of their popular Koi board. The Dark Koi uses better tech that will suit the more aggressive, demanding rider, but shape-wise it’s a case of ‘ain’t broke, don’t fix’.

UNDER THE HOOD

Indeed, most innovation for 2020/21 is about what you can’t see, rather than what you can. K2’s tech guys have clearly had a busy time



After so many years of backcountry and carving dominance, we're seeing a swing back towards the booters-and-butters market.

of late; as well as sporting improved versions of the brand’s bamboo core and fibreglass, the new Alchemist freeride board is the first to feature the same Carbon Spectral Braid that recently made its debut in K2 Mindbender skis. The angle of the fibres can be varied along the length of the board, so the nose and tail are more torsionally stiff than the waist.

Verdad have revamped their wood cores and carbon inlays for next year - and to celebrate hitting the 10-year milestone, they’re also making every model in the range available either as a camber or a hybrid. Over at Bataleon ,Triple Base Tech still reigns supreme, and now features polyurethane placed along the “crease points” of the base to further reduce chatter.

German brand Templeton are also adding PU – in their case, under the inserts of their rocker boards to add strength. On those same boards, the nose and tail have been kitted out with a honeycomb structure to reduce weight, while their camber boards will feature additional carbon stringers to better fit that profile.

Jones are embracing 3D base tech more than ever in 2020/21, with the new versions of the Mountain Twin (for both men and women) featuring the brand’s new ‘3D Contour Base 2.0’. Korua are also venturing into the third dimension with their upcoming Pocket



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20/21 Proto Ultra  
Rider: Chris Corning

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C.Patty Learmond photo



Today's consumer is more conscious of their indirect carbon footprint than ever.

Rocket, designed for mellower cruising at lower speeds (and with a narrower stance).

At their own factory in Colorado, Never Summer have been fine-tuning their signature hybrid camber profiles. It'll still be 'camber at the feet, rocker in between', but the camber sections have been lengthened. This now delivers what they're saying is "more camber per square cm than any other snowboard", and presumably delivers all the benefits in pop and power that that entails. Look out for it on the new Proto Synthesis, an updated version of their classic all-rounder, and the park-friendly Proto-Slinger. Their factory mates Academy are firm believers in the classic bend too, which given the pedigree of the folk involved (Co-Founder Chad Otterstrom, team rider Chris Roach, who lends his design eye to the Master model) is perhaps to be expected.

Endeavor have added pre-tensioned carbon rods to their cores, a step up from the standard strips they've used in the past. Rome were already down that path, and will be debuting their poppier 'Omega Hotrods' in 20/21. That's just one part of a major tech overhaul that's affecting the whole range of boards. "We feel this is our cleanest and most understandable board line in years", says Marketing Manager Matt Stillman.

Head continue to reduce weight wherever they can. "Lighter products help everybody from beginner to pro to perform better and have more fun on snow – for longer," says Max Thurner, International Marketing Manager. "This is why we use a mix of ingredients which bring down the board weight by up to 25%, resulting in a super light product line." Already present in a few of their models, the 'LYT' construction will be applied to the Day in 2020/21, making what was already a great value pow board even better.

Be sure to also keep an eye out for two revamped Slash boards, the ATV and the Straight. While the rest of the line will continue to be produced in the Meditec factory in Tunisia, Gigi Rüf has moved those two to the NBL facility in Poland. Says he: "it's part of a longed-for wish to update these two models".

GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

With so many brands pushing higher-end models, and seemingly ploughing plenty of cash into R&D, it's to be expected that the price points seeing the most action are creeping north. It's simple, says YES' David Pitschi: "People are willing to pay more for a better product". As of next year they'll be overbuilding their boards and then breaking them in with a process they're calling "Future Flex" which will add longevity to each deck. The more you can relay this information to customers, the more likely they'll see higher-priced gear as the sound investment that it so often is.

Despite focusing almost exclusively on that slice of the market for their entire existence, next year Amplid will be unveiling their first entry-level board, the Argument. Sensibly enough, they've taken a tried-and-tested all-mountain model - in this case, the Paradigma - and stripped back the tech to bring the price down. For female riders, there's the new K2 Dreamsicle; with its extruded base, biax glass and directional rocker profile, it'll serve as a reliable progression weapon that leaves more in the wallet for lessons and liftpasses.

GREEN SHOOTS OF PROGRESS

Rule number 1: expect to be asked about a snowboard's eco-credentials, and do your homework. Today's consumer is more conscious of their indirect carbon footprint than ever. Rule number 2: manage expectations. As with all things, manufacturing processes

and supply chains for snowboards still have a lot of room for improvement. There have been some positive developments worth highlighting, though, as long as you don't get carried away. Steven Daemen from Niche snowboards says it best: "We're certainly not perfect, and there is always an unavoidable footprint when making any product, but we firmly believe that even small steps lead to big differences, and we continually seek out more eco-friendly construction materials."

Let's start with factories; as of spring 2020, brands like Amplid who use Taiwan's Playmaker facility will get bonus green points from the new solar panel array. Meanwhile Capita's Mothership - also home to DC - remains the gold standard of sustainable manufacturing, with 98% of materials sourced either from within Austria, or one of its neighbouring countries.

"Sustainability is our red line," says BuddyBuddy's Rainer Soelch, and the brand continues to crank out high-performance decks at their own facility in Germany. Their unique manufacturing process means no need for carbon and such like, so only recyclable materials get used. Both Easy Snowboards and Fjell are also using greener resins and topsheets next year. Finally, Rossignol deserve a fist-bump or two for recycling their factory seconds into NoK skateboards.

TOPSHEET TALES

Brands like Bataleon, Nidecker, Jones, Gnu and YES have evolved their graphics over time without losing what makes them instantly recognisable. That approach is a no-brainer, argues Salomon's Baptiste Chaussinand: "If you like Peaky Blinders, you'll expect season 5 to build on season 4, telling you a new story but with a consistent art direction and personality. For example, our Assassin



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graphic direction is consistent year after year, building a narrative around deadly nature, animals and men, with a modern gothic aesthetic and a bright modern colour. The Assassin riders like it and recognize it, the retailers as well, everybody is happy..."

Vimana has a loyal following, so it's no surprise to see them retain the services of artist Peter-John de Velliers, aka The Shallowtree. "He always adds Easter eggs in the artwork," says boss Trond-Eirik Husvæg. "We discover new things in our graphics years after they were launched". If you're intrigued by that, be sure to check out his subtle scribbles for 2020/21 (and revisit some old ones too). If you want to keep things really simple and clean, however, then Fjell and Korua remain the go-to brands.

There really is a size and shape for anyone these days, but overall we're seeing less of a 'suck it and see' approach to shaping.

A couple of standout designs coming up include Drake's wise decision to collaborate with the Rusty Toothbrush crew on the Battle, and DC's new EMB ('Every Man's Board') which features a gallery of stills from skate photographer Tobin Yelland. They've dug through his archive of the famous Embarcadero plaza (also known as EMB - see what they did there?) in San Francisco - and the new Pure Liquid Technology topsheet promises to deliver a superior image quality.

There are also a couple of nice tribute models worth seeking out. Telos will be releasing veteran rider Mike Ranquet's 'Mystory Air', to mark thirty years since his buddy Craig Kelly put out the iconic Mystery Air after joining Burton. Last but certainly not least is the newest iteration of the Ride Burnout, which celebrates the memory of the late Dillon Ojo.

FREE YOUR FEET

There's a lot to digest there, so we'll finish with a quick look at the bindingless market, where things tend to be a bit more constant. Not that there aren't some interesting developments happening, of course, and it's still where you'll find the boldest takes on base design.

Jones' Mountain Surfer now has a 152cm version joining the long-serving 142cm. Given how fat it is, that range has pretty much all shapes and sizes of rider covered. Konvoi has their asymmetrical Escal, and Grassroots are leading the charge on split versions. Over in the Ziller Valley, Wolle Nyvelt continues to tinker with his Asmo range, adding new topsheets and fibreglass.

In short, there's plenty of options capable of grabbing customers' attention in 2020/21. For a more in-depth look on this year's models, visit our website.

CONCLUSION

The sheer breadth and depth of what's on offer means that there's something for everyone - especially for your female customers. Brands are banking on the educated guess that customers aren't afraid of coughing up a bit more for the right product, and just about every manufacturer is moving in the right direction when it comes to sustainability (albeit some more quickly than others).

But if the market truly moves in cycles, then from what we've seen, the immediate priority is clear; the future is freestyle. Will this also mean a return of tall beanies, basketball jerseys, MC Hammer-esque pants, and stances wider than the Bering Strait? We wait with baited breath. ☺

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Women at the forefront
- 2 Back to the park
- 3 Increasing greenery - within limits
- 4 Customers coughing up
- 5 Fewer crazy shapes

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# STALE COLLECTION



STALEFISH



STALE CREWZER



STALE MOD



STALE CLEAVER

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DESIGNED BY STÅLE SANDBECH





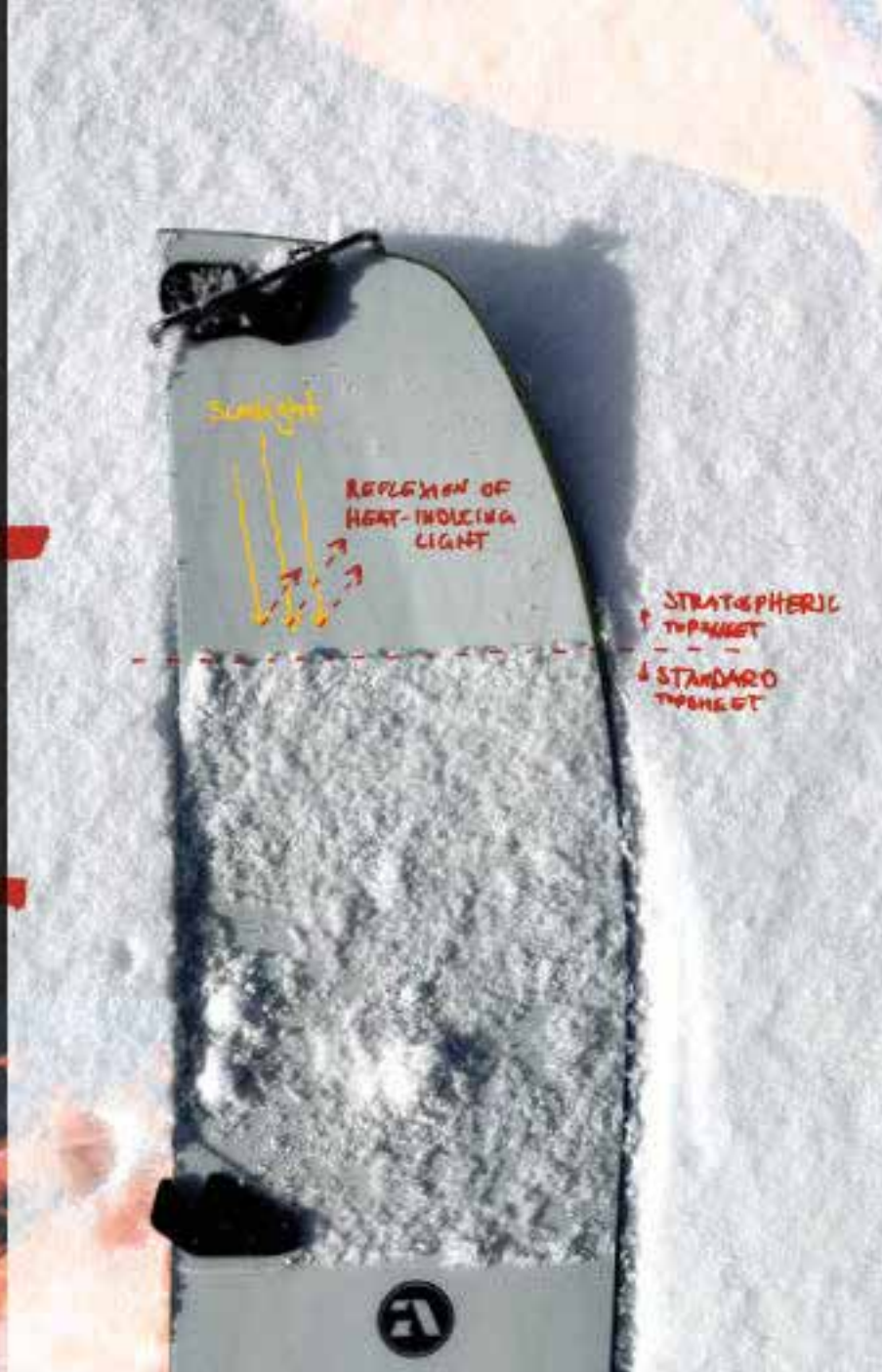


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The 164 Leviathan. This mid-sized swallowtail deck is far more versatile than one may think.  
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## 2020 SNOW RETAILER OF THE YEAR AWARD

**VANS**  
"OFF THE WALL"

Keeping our ear to the ground for outstanding performing retailers is usually sufficient, however for our 100th issue we put the vote out to the brands. And the winners of our 100th issue, your 2020 Snowboard Retailer of the Year is S'Brett from Mannheim in Germany.

### Tell us about S'Brett.

S'Brett owner Simon has been in the industry for years but had the idea to create a family-like core shop in 2011. Roughly a year later at the start of the 2012/2013 season, with his wife Karolina (mamma and economic backbone of the store), he opened the doors of the industrial-looking store in the centre of Mannheim. With some luck and coincidence the shop family grew and over time Mirko, Nina, Andi, Kyran and Tobi joined, as well as Nico and Tommy. Some started while studying, some because of their pure passion for the sport and some because of the shop vibe. Even though some of them have a full-time job, family is family and you stick together.

### Congratulations on winning our 100th retailer profile, voted for by European snowboarding brands. Why do you think you won?

We just do our thing – nothing more, nothing less. We love what we do, and we do it with passion and know-how and don't take ourselves too seriously. The fact that we have friendship-like relationships with customers, as well as with our partners in the industry, gives us the chance to give the most honest and reliable feedback. We also love taking risks and giving smaller and more independent brands a chance. Everything you find in the shop is a fine selection of goods that every staff member is able to identify with. That's what we try to transfer to our customers' minds. And if that doesn't work in the first place, we always have a filled liquor-dispenser snowboard, which really opens minds.

### How do you give back to snowboarding?

Each person needs to be treated the same way and everybody needs to be welcome. We love having the old-schoolers around because they need their hardboot parts. They bring their kids who want to get a core-brand snowboard and hike the park all day. In high season, you'll find fresh waffles in the store, waxing workshops are provided for free and once a year, we have the S'Brett-Games, an event with now 800-1000 people, which we host along with Ingo and our friends from the Ski Hütte Maxdorf and the local ice hockey arena.

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

We try to keep it transparent and honest, with our customers and brands. S'Brett is 100% offline and we don't do tonnes of work on social media. Sure, there are often better prices online nowadays, but as a store with a door you need to be creative, open-minded and there are some great concepts. We just try to live up to our vibe, drink some booze with the customer, have a little nerd-talk on the side, and we get huge support from

our brands. We also have a lot of friends outside the industry who support us to make us unique. For example, our collab skate decks with Jim Beam, which are limited and only available in our store.

### Doing anything innovative to embrace technology in-store?

The key is that we don't sell something we wouldn't ride or use ourselves. This season we have snowboards from 16 different brands in store. Every board in the store is tested by as at least someone from our team. All the key players here are tech-nerds and there are no snow trips without testing gear. That's our way of keeping up with the new trends and innovations and it keeps things interesting for us.

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

The industry needs to keep an eye on price development, overproduction and big players. If prices and margins are screwed up it will be impossible for us small independent stores to keep up the vibe and the scene, because no online store and big player will provide that for the future of snowboarding. And we all need to keep an eye on our planet.

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

Trade shows and brands need to show more face again. Not just for retailers and shops, for the public away from the slopes. Here in Mannheim - the middle of Germany, we have to drive for hours to get to the mountains and we still have enough snowboard enthusiasts travelling a long way to our store to satisfy their thirst. If we can all make snowboarding more visible for people outside resorts and the core scene, we are able to spread snowboarding, acquire new customers and mainstream sport businesses may well consider selling more snowboarding products. Retailers don't go to ISPO for some hip marketing party. Turn it around and do cool events for the public, spread the vibe and keep the trade shows for the serious business.

### What more could brands do to help snowboard retailers?

Keep your word, don't do sale deals with the big shops in October. Don't overproduce your product. If it's good and sold out, people will come next year for it. Sometimes less is more. On the positive side; keep up the innovation, there is a tonne of great product around, and quality wise, we are still seeing big improvements from most brands over the last few years. ☺

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# ALL WAYS DOWN



# DOWN ALL WAYS



RENE  
RINIERA  
RINIERA

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T.S.

MICHAEL  
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## THE EVOLUTION OF THE SNOWBOARD.

BY TRISTAN KENNEDY.

How's this for a headfuck: According to recent studies, the average smartphone user touches their device 2,617 times every single day. If you're particularly active (you've just posted a shit-hot 'gram, say, and you're watching the likes roll in) this can rise to over 5,000 clicks, taps and swipes. In total, we spend three to four hours each day glued to our smartphones. Such is the pace of technological change that a device which didn't exist twenty years ago now monopolises more than a quarter of our waking life.

Cast your mind back further, to when snowboard manufacturing started, and the differences are even more stark. If you were to travel back to 1977 for example, the year when the late, great Jake Carpenter started putting out boards under his middle name, you may not have been able to read this article at all. Sure, you might have been able to find something like it in print but there's no way you'd peruse it on a computer, let alone a phone. Microsoft (founded in 1975) was only two years old, Apple (1976) had just begun flogging those early beige PCs, and Mark Zuckerberg was still four years from being born. The world of boardsports was similarly unrecognisable. In 1977, the Dogtown boys were just kicking off their urethane-fuelled, pool skating revolution, and a small Australian surf brand was starting to attract attention in the U.S., not least thanks to a new logo which combined a cresting wave and a mountain. Two years later, a young elementary pupil would earn an A+ for a school report entitled "The Roots of Skateboarding." His name was Tony Hawk.

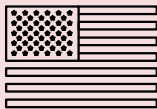
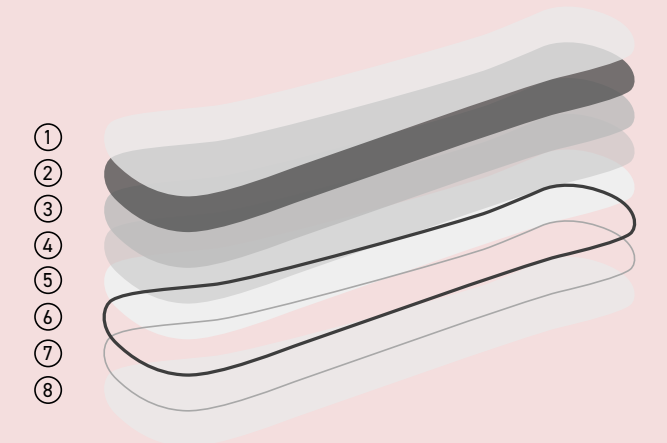
For all these seismic changes in design and tech, if you were to take a look at next season's crop of new snowboards you'd be forgiven for thinking that the last 40 years had changed very little.

Yet, for all these seismic changes in design and tech, if you were to take a look at next season's crop of new snowboards you'd be forgiven for thinking that the last 40 years had changed very little.

The manufacturing processes are largely the same, for starters. As Mark Dangler of Capita snowboards puts it, "the baseline act of how you build a snowboard hasn't changed drastically" down the years. All snowboards are still built, at least in part, by hand. The basic materials are essentially the same too. "It's still just fibreglass, resin, and wood squished together," says Alex Warburton, designer for Yes Snowboards, and the man behind the 420, one of the most innovative models of recent years. The most striking similarity, however, is the way today's boards look next to the models that Jake, Tom Sims and Mike Olsen of Mervin were putting out in the late 70s and early 80s. Pointed noses, surf-inspired outlines and cutaway tails – things that were last considered cutting edge around the same time as Phil Collins' mullet – are back, and in a big way.

As Warburton says, "the most interesting stuff people are riding today is closer to the designs of the 80s, certainly than anything happening 10 years ago." Even a lot of the graphics are throwbacks. It's comparable to Apple issuing their latest iPhone in an attractive shade of beige, with that original rainbow-striped logo on the front.

The story of how we got here, and why designers are going back to the future for inspiration, is a fascinating one, involving all three of snowboarding's main geographical centres – North America, Europe and Japan. As each region has taken its turn at the cutting edge, it's brought a unique cultural contribution to the design process.



### SURFIN' USA

Thierry Kunz has had a ringside seat for many of these developments. Now Chief Marketing Officer at Nidecker, and the man behind their Snow.Surf collection, he's worked in the industry for decades, including stints for DC and Quiksilver. He started snowboarding in 1982, when the first generation of boards began appearing on his home slopes in Switzerland.

"At the time, Sims was definitely more advanced than Burton," he says, remembering an '82 Burton performer, and then two years later, a Sims Blade. It was "one of the first with edges," and the board finally convinced him this new sport could replace skiing. It was still pretty basic however: "There was no highback on the bindings," and "the fibreglass was not what it is today."

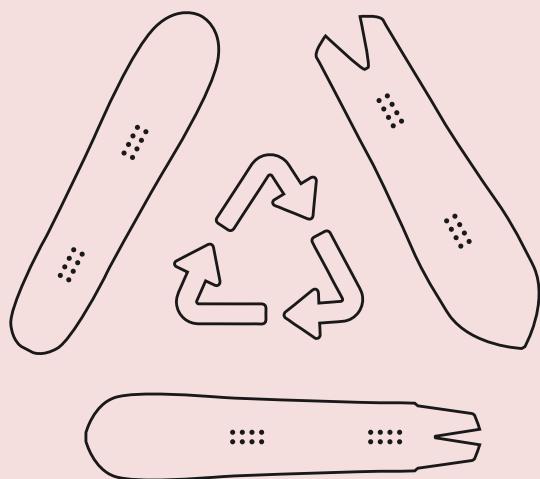
In that early era, as brands battled to push R&D boundaries, many of their 'new' design ideas were straight from surfing. Thierry even remembers a Burton Cruiser he owned in the 80s, where "you had a metal piece with an angle that was like a fin on the bottom." The feature was mercifully short-lived, but it indicates just how much those early pioneers looked up to their surfing forefathers. This was an era, after all, where Dimitrije Milovich, Founder of Winterstick, referred to his products as "Snow surfboards", and the first ever US Open, held in the same year Thierry started riding, was known as the "National Snow Surfing Championships."



“When those guys started out, they wanted to surf the mountain,” he says. They were more likely to have referred to it as “snow surfing, or snurfing,” instead of snowboarding. “It was all more surf-orientated.”

This began to change towards the mid 80s, when Tom and the Sims team that included Terry Kidwell started bringing skateboard tricks to the snow. Sims built his first kicktail board – designed to make switch riding easier – in 1985. That same year in Calgary, an oft-overlooked design pioneer called Neil Daffern, designed the first true twin board (which he released under the Barfoot name).

As freestyle spread, the pointed noses and fish-like tails that characterised early, surf-inspired board designs began to disappear, replaced by models that took their design cues directly from skateboards. By 1993, Sims had gone the whole hog, releasing the celebrated Noah Salasnek pro-model, with a base-graphic that featured trucks and wheels.



By 1993, Sims had gone the whole hog, releasing the celebrated Noah Salasnek pro-model, with a base-graphic that featured trucks and wheels.

A few key figures really drove things forward – Dupraz, a former skier who’d also learned how to shape surfboards on Hawaii’s North Shore, had a particularly unique skillset. It was he who first pioneered features like the asymmetric sidecut, which has enjoyed a renaissance of late, at Hot Snowboards.

It helped that in Europe, as on the East Coast of the US, snowboard racing remained popular throughout the 80s and well into the 90s. “It’s hard to imagine,” remembers Thierry of the era, “but in the early-90s to mid-90s in France, about 70 percent of the market was hard boots. In Germany, it was 80 percent.” There was a clear market incentive to make dramatic improvements to shave vital seconds off race times. The average weight of boards plummeted, and flex patterns became more sophisticated.

Learning lessons from the ski industry helped push the envelope in terms of build quality too. Previously, Thierry remembers, “bindings, they were like a gryere, you know like a cheese. Holes everywhere!”

“Only the adaption of methods and materials [from] the ski industry [that] made it possible for snowboarding to migrate from powder to hard-packed slopes.” Tommy Delago, Nitro Snowboards

Cross-pollination with the ski industry would open up new frontiers for snowboarders everywhere. As Nitro Snowboards’ Co-Founder Tommy Delago explains, unequivocally, it was “only the adaption of methods and materials [from] the ski industry [that] made it possible for snowboarding to migrate from powder to hard-packed slopes.” But it was Europe that really drove this forwards. By the mid-80s, even Burton had started building boards in Austria, recognising that the old continent could bring something new to the table.

### THE SKATE TAKEOVER

Despite their impressive innovations however, the racers’ days were numbered. Snowboarding was booming by the end of the 90s, but the growth was all in freestyle, and while new brands were entering the market each winter, this didn’t necessarily translate into more creativity. If anything, it was the opposite.

Many of these new kids on the block were mass market sports brands, who saw snowboarding solely as a way to cater to a ‘youth’ demographic. “For them, snowboards were only for kids between the ages of 15 and 18 years old,” says Thierry. Prices needed to be kept low, so that kids could afford the product, and it quickly became apparent that the right graffiti-inspired graphic would shift more units than expensive R&D anyway.

It didn’t help either that Burton had enjoyed astronomical success with the Custom. To this day, it’s the best-selling snowboard of all time, and a brilliant piece of kit. But just as The Strokes had a part to play in inflicting The Kooks on the world, the Custom’s brilliance unfortunately inspired a whole host of average imitators. In helping popularise the ‘quiver of one’ – the idea that one board could do everything equally well – it convinced some lesser brands not to bother trying anything different.

1985, in Calgary, an oft-overlooked design pioneer called Neil Daffern, designed the first true twin board (which he released under the Barfoot name).



### EUROCARVING, SKI TECH AND THE NEED FOR SPEED

But if the U.S. was embracing skate style, across the pond in Europe, a different set of influences was coming into play. Hooger Booger, a brand established by Swiss riders José Fernandès and Antoine Massy, was the first company to start building boards in Europe, in 1983. But others including Hot Snowboards, founded by French legend Serge Dupraz, and Nidecker, a venerable family-owned sports gear manufacturer that had been in business since 1887, swiftly followed suit. What set these companies apart from their U.S. counterparts was their exposure to ski manufacturing techniques and materials, and their willingness to borrow them. “Things like kevlar, composite fibres, and 360-degree edges – it was the ski factories that had the knowledge of using all those materials,” explains Thierry, “and it was the Europeans who really took those ski manufacturing processes into snowboarding.”

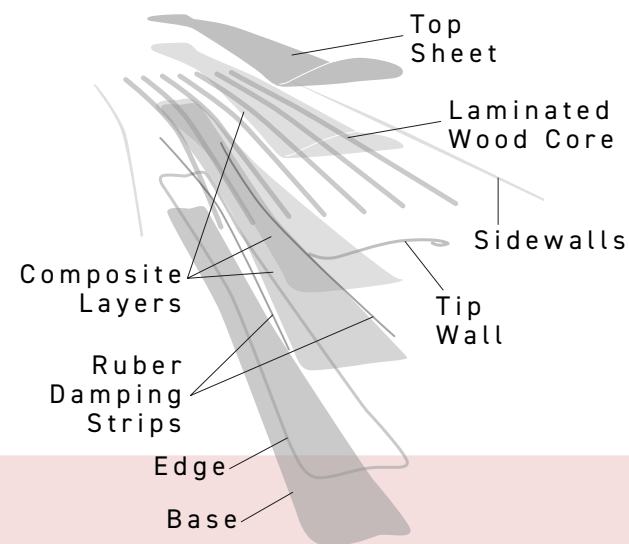


# RELIGION

Unlimited Paths - One Future

Rider / Harry Gunz Picture / Fabian Gunz Location / Hoch-Ybrig Switzerland





These were boards that your average older rider, whose knees were no longer up to knuckling kickers, could appreciate. Led by early adopters like Korua Snowboards, and Jeremy Jones, whose iconic Hovercraft model owes an obvious debt to Gentemstick, western brands began producing a whole new wave of Japanese-inspired surf shapes.

“It’s really funny to see how it’s moved from the U.S., to Europe, to Japan, in terms of the influence of things,” says Thierry. “That new spirit they brought was definitely the thing that influenced a lot of people.”

“You couldn’t even deviate from a rounded nose and tail shape for 10 years, let alone mess with construction techniques. I think that was our dark age – not for riding, that part was going off – but just a complete dead zone for creative design thinking, right when the sport was at its peak popularity.” Alex Warburton, YES. Snowboards

### FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

What’s next for snowboard designers? Well, answering the existential threat of climate change presents a huge challenge. According to Antoine Floquet, the designer behind the Apo board that Sage Kotsenberg rode to Olympic glory, the holy grail is “a fully recyclable snowboard,” but that’s still “about five to ten years away”. There have been steps in the right direction however.

Mervin Manufacturing, the people behind Lib Tech and Gnu boards, have spent years developing more environmentally friendly materials, and since acquiring the old Elan Snowboards Factory in Austria (which they’ve rebranded as The Mothership) Capita have transformed the facility, allowing it to run on 100% renewable energy. As Mark Dangler explains, “we believe we all need to take steps to protect the health and longevity of our winters.”

Assuming the snow lasts however, the future is looking brighter than it has in a long while. Thierry remembers “a golden age of snowboarding creativity” from the mid-80s to the mid-90s. “Every brand had a raceboard, boardercross board, freestyle board, an all round board,” and it was that variety that made the sport – and the job of designing gear for it – special.

The one-size-fits-all model that followed 10 years later was, he believes, a huge mistake. “It’s like asking Hamilton in Formula 1 to take a fucking Twingo, and see if he can win the Grand Prix, you know?” The point isn’t even that ‘quiver of one’ all mountain boards were bad, just that the lack of variety was restrictive. Or as he puts it, “the Twingo is fine, but for one thing. The Formula 1 car is for another. You can’t ask your mum and dad to do the shopping in a Formula 1 car.”

But as variety returns to the halls of ISPO, designers channel influences from North America, Europe and Japan, and manufacturers draw on the best traditions of skate, ski and surfboard making, snowboard manufacturing is, Thierry believes, “coming into a new golden age”.

These boards might look as retro as a beige iPhone with a rainbow-striped logo, but underneath, they’re the product of 40 years of design development. Just make sure, when you get your hands on one, that you don’t start touching it more than 2,000 times in a day. Because then you really would have a problem. ©

Around the same time, manufacturing processes were becoming standardised, and board makers began outsourcing production to third parties. This lowered the barrier for entry, allowing everyone, from skate brands like Airwalk and World Industries, to ski companies like Atomic, to churn out the identikit twin-tips that flooded the bottom-end of the market.

Design progression stalled. As Alex Warburton remembers: “You couldn’t even deviate from a rounded nose and tail shape for 10 years, let alone mess with construction techniques. I think that was our dark age – not for riding, that part was going off – but just a complete dead zone for creative design thinking, right when the sport was at its peak popularity.”

**JAPAN TO THE RESCUE**  
There are many reasons behind the snowboard industry’s dramatic tail-off in growth around 2010. The economic crash of 2008 obviously played a part, as did the growing popularity of freestyle skis (which meant fewer kids switching over to single-planks when they hit puberty). But as snowboard brands disappeared down a freestyle, twin-tip cul de sac, the part played by bad design can’t be discounted either.

Snowboards had become, quite frankly, boring. Aside from the spurt of innovation sparked by Mervin bringing back reverse camber and introducing Magnetraxion and Bataleon coining the triple base, there was very little that was new or exciting. And with the snowboarding population as a whole getting older, the brash, trashy graphics weren’t cutting it any more.

The renaissance, when it arrived, came from an unexpected source. Japan had long been a big market for U.S. and European snowboard companies, but Japanese brands had never really made the leap the other way. Homegrown companies like Moss Snowstick, founded in 1979, and later, Gentemstick, had been making handmade boards for their more discerning domestic customers for decades.

Partly as a result of the consistently epic snowfall on Hokkaido, these board builders tended to favour designs that suited powder – long, pointed noses, cutaway tails and the sorts of shapes seen on those early, surf-inspired American models. Not only that, they were brilliant for carving, and boasted more muted, mature graphics.

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## BIG WIG INTERVIEW ROXY'S EMILIE SOUVRAS

Female Big Wigs in our industry are few and far between and we thought it only fitting that we feature one of action sports' finest leading women as our 100th Big Wig Interviewee. Emilie Souvras is ROXY General Manager and we speak with her about the brand's recent shift in target demographic, where they now pinpoint the 25 year old female as their “bulls-eye” customer. Emilie also talks about her experiences around inequality in action sports and we touch on Quiksilver's re-launch into women's and how this will fit alongside ROXY's strategy. **by Harry Mitchell Thompson**

**Emilie, please can you tell us about your background. What led you to working for Roxy, and how have you progressed through the company.**

I've always worked in retail and fashion but I joined the action sports industry when I started with ROXY in 2008. I grew up, studied and started my career in Lille, France, and ended up moving to the Basque country when my husband, who's a passionate surfer, got a job opportunity in the area. So, I quit my job, we moved, and when I started to search for a job ROXY was of course my target. This was – and still is – such an iconic brand to me and it was a dream to work for them. Thanks to a friend of mine, who I worked with in Lille and was by this point working at Quiksilver, I heard about a job opportunity with ROXY. I was super motivated, I applied, and I got the role. I started my career with ROXY in September 2008 as EMEA Product Manager for Woman's Apparel & Swim categories. Four years later, I was appointed EMEA Head of ROXY Product, and two years after that, when we centralised a big chunk of our product activities out of the EMEA HQ, I was appointed Global Head of ROXY Product. And in 2015 I got the amazing opportunity to become the GM for the brand.

I've always felt supported and encouraged by the men I've worked for or with and I'm also surrounded by many talented women who hold key functions in the industry. That being said, Europe is maybe slightly behind other territories in terms of gender equality, but I wouldn't say this is specific to our industry.

**As a senior manager in an industry predominantly managed by males, have you battled with inequality? Are there things we as an industry should be doing to better promote equality in the workplace?**

No, I've never really had to battle with inequality. I've always felt supported and encouraged by the men I've worked for or with and I'm also surrounded by many talented women who hold key functions in the industry. That being said, Europe is maybe slightly behind

The other category that's been performing well is the footwear category, with very good momentum in the Americas region – we're hoping to leverage that more globally moving forward.

other territories in terms of gender equality, but I wouldn't say this is specific to our industry. So, to answer your question regarding what should be done to better promote equality, I think we need to give confidence to women so they are aware they are talented enough to apply for strategic positions.

**What have been the biggest challenges you've had to overcome with the Roxy brand in recent years?**

As many brands in the industry we face challenges, but the brand equity is really strong and nothing really ever hurt the desirability level of ROXY in the consumer's mind. The main challenges were linked to the increased competitiveness in the marketplace, mainly coming from fast fashion and private labels. That has impacted consumer purchasing habits, especially young women. We saw the closures of some accounts in different areas and faced - on our side - some retail traffic challenges and increased rents that resulted in some unprofitable store closures. I would also say that as a portion of our sales are done with seasonal categories (snow, swim), our business can also be negatively impacted by bad weather conditions like late snow falls in winter or rainy summers.

**Can you talk to us about the performance of the Roxy brand in recent years. Which categories are performing well?**

The key categories for us have been Snow and Swim. Snow has been a great category for us for years now across pretty much all regions. In recent seasons our swim category also performed very well globally, and we have opened new distribution in key territories like in the US and Australia. The other category that's been performing well is the footwear category, with very good momentum in the Americas region – we're hoping to leverage that more globally moving forward. We haven't dropped any categories but we consolidated our kids apparel offering around one size range instead of two.

Quiksilver is going after a more urban, edgy and also slightly younger consumer with their new women's line, their focus is really lifestyle. And this is well reflected in their campaigns which are very different to what you can see in a ROXY campaign.

**Can you talk to us about the different regions in Europe, where Roxy performs well and where you see the biggest opportunities for development.**

In general, the brand's performance has been strong in the Northern and Eastern countries. Especially in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The UK, France and Spain have been slower but remained strong for us with our snow category. What's very exciting is to realise that the opportunities exist in many countries in Europe for ROXY, across various channels of distribution. Ecommerce of course is a great growth opportunity whether it is through our ROXY.com website or thru key e-tailer platforms like Zalando, Blue Tomato or ASOS, just to name a few. Expanding our presence in sport outdoor distribution in the key countries is also a development opportunity for us.

**Could you talk about the evolving retail landscape and what you - and the brand in general - have done to stay relevant and ahead of the curve?**

To stay relevant, we're staying true to who we are, rooted in our DNA, while always looking for new ways to engage with our consumers, whether it's on the beaches, on the mountains, in stores or online.

In today's craziness, consumers are looking for more than price, quality and convenience. They, of course, want value for their money

but they also want values and experiences. ROXY is a brand that can provide them with great values and experiences, so our focus is really to emphasise that – through product attributes (sustainability, style, comfort etc.) and through events with our Make Waves Move Mountains tour.

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And I would add that by supporting amazing athletes around the world as well as by creating products and campaigns that strike the balance between style, performance and femininity we continue to defy the status quo and to empower women, which allows us to stay ahead of the curve

**Can you talk about how the resurrection of Quiksilver Women will shape Roxy's offering and segmentation?**

The re-launch of Quiksilver Women doesn't impact ROXY's product offering and segmentation. Quiksilver is going after a more urban, edgy and also slightly younger consumer with their new women's line, their focus is really lifestyle. And this is well reflected in their campaigns which are very different to what you can see in a ROXY campaign.

**When we last spoke in 2016, you told me about Roxy's change in target demographic from 15-25 to 18-24. How has this benefited the company's sales and marketing efforts since then?**

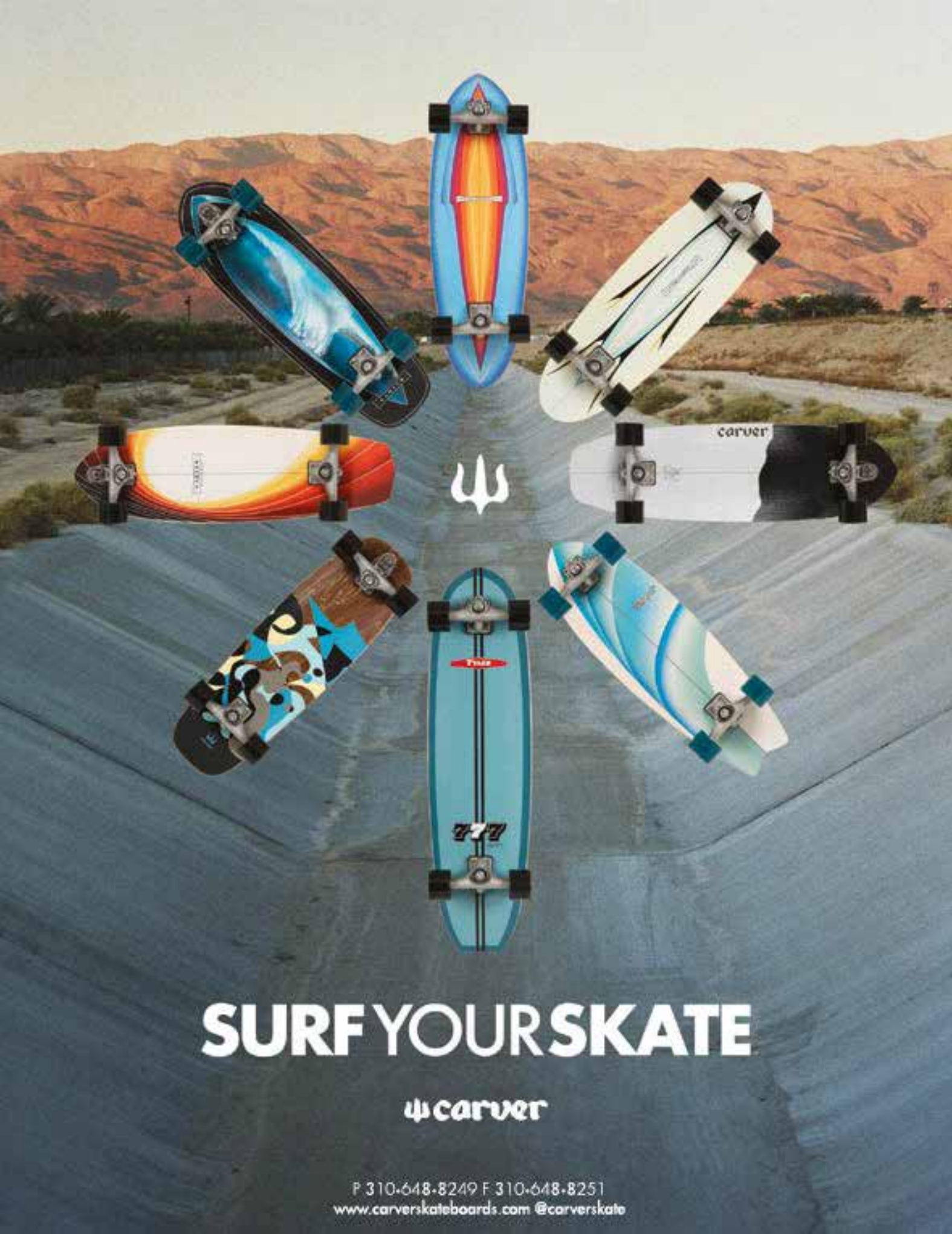
We did a broad consumer survey in the final months of 2016 which helped us to refine our brand positioning. So, since we last spoke, we've refined our target demographic even further based it on the results of this survey. Our target consumer is now a bull's-eye age of 25. We aligned our marketing strategy to this target and it's been pretty successful considering our recent sales performance.

We carefully considered all the outputs of the survey to launch our latest brand campaign, Make Waves Move Mountains. From a product standpoint, gathering user insights, including those of athletes, has really helped us to develop great product innovation like our Hydrosmart “skincare you wear” range or our ROXY Snow Premiere Jacket featuring Warmlink technology, which won a 2019 ISPO award.

**Finally, what are the current opportunities and threats facing the action sports industry?**

Being exposed to a wider audience is, to me, the main current opportunity for the industry. We are seeing more and more core practitioners (surfers, skiers, snowboarders) globally and the exposure that surf will get from the 2020 Summer Olympics will also be a great opportunity for the industry to reach even more consumers, the non-core practitioners inspired by our brand's lifestyle. And the main threat for me is a shift in consumer purchasing habits, spending less in fashion and more in travel and leisure. ☺





## RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# SKATE CRUISERS 2020

Skateboarding will soar to new athletic heights at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, but customers still want to cruise and enjoy a good time. Skate Cruisers Retail Buyer's Guide 2020 by SOURCE Skateboard Editor **Dirk Vogel**.



Can you hear it? Big things will shake up skateboarding in 2020. From footwear to hardgoods, insiders are talking about the 'Olympics Effect', a significant boost in sales and participation from skateboarding's debut as an official discipline at the 2020 Tokyo Summer Games.

"The cruiser market is definitely heating up in Europe, as it is across the world. Skateboarding has seen a positive growth globally and we are stoked to see how the Olympics will affect the future of skateboarding," said Andreas Maurmeir, European Marketing Manager at Sector 9. First indicators of a resurgence are already here, according to endemic brands. "On average our European distributors are pre-booking 20 per cent up from last year for Spring 2020," said Dave Price, International Accounts Manager at Landyachtz Longboards. At Carver Skateboards, VP of Sales Eben Woodall said: "The market seems to be stabilising and growing. There are a lot of brands popping up right now that may cause saturation but it's a sign of a healthier market."

New to the cruiser segment, but not to manufacturing quality skateboards, Loaded Boards usually specializes in premium longboard completes above €350. For 2020, Loaded launched its first cruiser, the Coyote, at €219 retail "and results have been good so far," said Marketing Manager Pablo Castro. In major industry news, The Arbor Collective has named UK-based Shiner Ltd. as the new Exclusive Global Distributor for the Arbor Skateboards Program. With so much popping in the cruiser segment, let's have a look at what's trending in 2020.

### THE 7 HOT CRUISER TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2020

#### 1. SEASON TREND: 1980S RETRO BOARDS

It's back to the future in 2020, as classic boards with round noses and widths around ten inches are trending hard: "We are rereleasing many of our iconic 1980s pool shapes, but set up as cruisers. The wide shapes

"The cruiser market is definitely heating up in Europe, as it is across the world. Skateboarding has seen a positive growth globally and we are stoked to see how the Olympics will affect the future of skateboarding." Andreas Maurmeir, Sector 9

are easy to ride, and the older market remembers our graphics from the past and wants to own them again," said Shane Maloney, Brand Manager at Madrid Skateboards. The brand struck gold a few seasons ago with a retro board featured in the Stranger Things TV series, and charges into 2020 with highlights like the Madrid Explosion board, handcrafted in California. Retailers, make sure to stock 1980s-style cruisers from brands like Globe (Cult of Freedom series), Sector 9 (Babylon System), Flying Wheels (Apocalypse), Landyachtz (ATV Ditch Life Fox model), Mindless (Core Mini Cruiser), OB Five (Hyper), Carver (Lost Rad Ripper), Z-Flex (Shadow Lurker), and DB Longboards (Dad Bod).

#### 2. SHAPES: SHORT 'N' STUBBY

Today's cruisers come in all shapes and sizes, from Penny-style plastic rockets to mini drop-throughs, but here's a general rule in terms of current trends: "For sure the tendency goes towards short longboard skates. Our new shapes are short and wider in order to be easy and fun to ride," said Benoit Brecq at Flying Wheels. The width is particularly crucial, said Javier Cantera, Global Brand Manager at Miller Division Miller: "Our decks go upward from 9 inches wide to cover the area of the front foot and most of the back foot. Since turns are made so close, it's quite convenient to have enough surface to support the feet and find



a better grip.” At Arbor, Mike Hellier sees movement in “stubby, short nose cruisers under 30 inches,” and adds that, “hybrid cruisers, like the Arbor Axel Serrat Pro Model are really picking up momentum.” Globe offers a hybrid mix of shredding and cruising in the Trooper and Outsider models, while the Loaded Boards Coyote cruiser is as versatile as it gets. Bucking the short board trend, Sector 9 is hyped on the new 36-inch Sweeper shape, inspired by the local pump track.

3. SURF SKATE: THE WAVE IS HERE

Last season’s surf skate trend has gone fully mainstream. At Globe, Global Hardgoods Product Manager Dave Gitlin said: “Our Onshore series of surf skates featuring Revenge trucks have maintained a high level of demand.” Flying Wheels meets demand with, “three different surfing technologies and around 25 different models,” including the excellent Abstract and Villa Bella completes mounted with surf-style front trucks. Flying Wheels also offers the Lombard Street baseplate that converts any skateboard into a surf skate. Asked to identify the core customers for surf skate, Javier at Miller Division said: “Surfers and snowboarders definitely found their perfect ride in our surf skates.” And if you ever wondered what a surf skate would look like rendered as a monochromatic Penny plastic cruiser, your wait is over in 2020: “The Penny High-Line Surf skate replicates the feeling of surfing in the streets. This board is developed for skills progression and all-time stoke by utilising Warterborne patented technology and the same quality components you love from Penny Skateboards,” said Mike Hellier.

For sure the tendency goes towards short longboard skates. Our new shapes are short and wider in order to be easy and fun to ride,” Benoit Brecq, Flying Wheels.

4. STYLING: ALL BLACK VS. COLOUR EXPLOSION

Much like in streetwear, there’s no escaping the all-black everything trend next season. Carver launches the Black Tip cruiser, featuring a Durafusion embossed thermo bottom layer and killer black wheels. OB Five has the Blacker Cruiser, with Founder Kris O'Brien saying: “We in no way claim this as our own idea as many brands have this clean black offering. It’s stealthy, clean and easy to buy for the average non-logo driven guy.” Other major trends include mandala graphics, including the Mindless Mandala board in three colourways and Solstice collection by Arbor. Sector 9 is continuing its art collabs, including DKNY and El Gran Tocayo, and launching the Teak Veneer raised print cruiser series. Carver is running gorgeous airbrush graphics, while Flying Wheels serves Abstract artwork in a 32-inch cruiser of the same name, equipped with Lombard baseplate technology. Globe presents a new featured artist series from German illustrator Max Loeffler and Melbourne-based Sam Chirnside, and also spins the colour wheel with the elaborate Dye-wash Veneer Series. At Penny, the choice of colours does the talking in lieu of graphics, with a palette “curated to flow from dark and ominous colours, to earthy tones, through to high-impact brightness, and finishing with soft tonal contrasts of washed out palettes.”

5. CONSTRUCTIONS: HIGHER TECH

Innovation is peaking next season, as every brand introduces new technologies ranging from wood alternatives in decks to new wheel formulas and truck geometries. Sector 9 implements vertically-laminated bamboo in the Striker model slated for Spring 2020. Dave at Globe is proud to announce the new Surf Glass modern fiberglass cruisers. “Building that new wood-less construction from the ground-up, modernising a nostalgic era of surfboard shapers making skateboards out of leftover glass and roller skate trucks is a really fun and fulfilling accomplishment.” Landyachtz will launch brand-new Gen 6 cast trucks. At Mindless, Brand Ambassador Andy King said: “Our new truck coming out in summer 2020 will allow us to really increase our mini cruiser range performance.” Arbor expands the Sucrose Initiative urethane wheel line and Carver will launch, “proprietary Roundhouse Eco-Thane formula wheels that feature soy-based alternatives allowing for 81A durometer that are fast and grippy.” Speaking of eco, it’s a full-on commitment for Origin Distribution (DB Longboards, Rayne Longboards, Atlas trucks, Cloudride Wheels) according to Tim Mackey: “We continue to use maple,

bamboo, and water-based glue. We also recycle our scraps.” At Loaded Boards, Pablo is stoked that, “over the past year we’ve moved almost all of our epoxy over to bio-based epoxy.”

6. SPECIALIZATION: BUILD THAT QUIVER

Cruisers are a broad church these days, full of sub-genres and specialised hardware. At Sector 9, International Sales Manager Nick Sacks surmised: “Growth sections that we see for cruisers are numerous and across the board – commuting, pump track, park, downhill, women, and more.” So, what should shops order? According to Pablo at Loaded, retailers need



to prioritise “performance, performance, performance. A cruiser can be functional for commuting while still being tons of fun to ride and also usable for tricks.” On that note, urban transportation is a huge trend in 2020: “Commuting and getting around university campuses are the main usages of our cruiser boards. A skateboard with soft wheels combined with a good public transportation system is one of the fastest and best ways to get around a big city,” said Dave at Landyachtz, pointing out the 33-inch Drop Cat model. Dave Gitlin at Globe also confirmed: “There’s been a spike recently in people getting out of the car and traveling to work by board, bike, or electrics.”

7. WOMEN’S SKATE: HANDLE WITH CARE

Every brand confirmed a spike in female participation, while some cautioned retailers to approach the category with care. Maui at Sector 9 revealed that, “more gender-neutral graphics have been chosen on recent board lines by us to appeal to the increase in female riders.” Dave Gitlin at Globe is on the same page: “I’m not convinced that adding pink wheels to pink hearts on a board is the way to go about providing for female skate enthusiasts.” For Arbor, the female-specific Solstice line has become a permanent fixture. “We set out to make skateboards designed specifically for women,” said Rachael Fritz at ArborGirls. “From shape selection to construction, to material selection and graphic development, to content creation and overall presentation, to how Arbor gives back; the Solstice endeavour is run by Arbor women for women who skate.” For Kris at OB Five, female participation has been a constant in Australia: “There are girls everywhere on the Gold Coast surfing all types of boards and looking for skateboards for a bit of flat day fun.” Javier at Miller Division said: “We believe that 25 per cent of our skates end up in the hands of a girl. Female riders are rapidly improving and increasing, and we love it that way.”

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

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Expected Olympics boost
- 2 Wide 1980s-style shapes
- 3 Short decks
- 4 Strength in surf skate
- 5 Wood alternatives
- 6 Urban transportation
- 7 Gender-neutral designs





RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# FACEMASKS FW 20/21

When it comes to snow accessories, the face continues to be the last area that many riders think to cover. Gloves are a staple item in many snowboarders' arsenal, and most would never choose to ride without gloves, so it's baffling why so many continue to expose their face to the elements. Brands want to keep customers having a good time on the mountain and part of that is keeping warm on the colder days... as well as looking good in the mirror. Facemasks are just as much a fashion item as they are a technical piece of gear, with many design influences coming from the fashion and streetwear spheres. **By Ruth Cutts.**



SHAPES

For many brands, the hooded category continues to be the focal point going into FW 20/21, especially with the capacity to wear them over the helmet. Airhole's hooded facemasks have a built-in balaclava to provide much-needed warmth, Brethren's infamous Thug Rug is still their most popular model, working well with a helmet, and Phunkshun's Helmetclava, with its DWR exterior and fleecy lining, repels moisture whilst retaining warmth. Tubes are continuing to see significant growth in the market too, with Phunkshun bringing an adult model (the Double Tube) and kid's models (Youth Double and Thermal Tube) to their collection. As CEO Jason Badgley explains, "kids spend as much if not more time on the hill than adults and deserve the same level of performance and quality." For PAG Neckwear it's all about adaptability.

The retractable hood in their Adapt collection gives the wearer the opportunity to amend the accessory to suit the conditions. Wear it as a tube during warmer days, then pull the hood up when the clouds come in with minimal effort required. Airhole and Brethren are expanding their collections to include technical hats. The Airhole Technical Hat uses outer ripstop fabric with a 10,000mm membrane, and lets the rider refine the fit with elastic at the back. They're offering 5 panel, bucket hat, and trapper hat shapes with a built-in neck protectors and facemasks to keep the elements at bay. The Brethren Patrol Cap has been inspired by Swiss military caps and

features a flexible peak, quilted liner, fully waterproof outer with an anti-gap panel to give you a full seal from goggles to cap.

COLOURS & DESIGN

PAG – founded by pro rider Victor Daviet - are using blue, grey, beige and dark green colours within their collection. They use mainly block colours for the neckwear with the hoods featuring a different colour and, in some cases, varying fabric as a point of difference. Airhole have expanded their colour palettes, offering more earthy tones and interesting shades of staple colours. The result is a refined collection of visually striking graphics that are distinctly on brand. For FW20/21 they've introduced snow camo, a pattern from mid-1960s German military, consisting of needle-like patches of dark green with blurred edges on a white base.

MANUFACTURING & MATERIALS

CEO of PAG, Paul Obermosser explains how the brand's core value "has always been to bring accessories to the same standard of quality and technicity as the rest of the entire outfit. In our mind, accessories are too often dispossessed of technical nature and the brand objective is to address this issue by creating high-quality accessories textile for the global market." For PAG, this means the creation of a new technical material in partnership with 37.5 Technology which dries "five times faster" than any other product in the market. Airhole are using laser welding, membrane bonding, DWR treatments, and direct injection techniques alongside 10,000mm waterproof fabric to provide the ultimate protection against the elements. This protection extends to the warmer days too, with their use of a lightweight perforated polyester called Drylite, which offers UPF 50 protection. They've also introduced a new fabric called Milk Fleece in multiple styles for FW20/21 which is luxurious, warm, and soft with a comfortable stretch finish. It's hydrophobic in nature, so minimises moisture absorption, keeping you warm and dry. Brethren are introducing a Storm Hood that's made from a softshell fabric that condenses the material down to one waterproof layer with an 8k/8k rating. "We're excited to offer our customers a more technical fabric that people have been asking for, still within our affordable price range," explains Director Chris Kyte. Phunkshun are expanding their use of Polartec® and Hardface® in their FW20/21 catalogue. "There's a strong demand for durable gear, above and beyond general use applications," states Jason Badgley, and these fabrics provide exceptional durability and impressive water repellence. The brand is also working exclusively with Repreve® recycled fibres for all the products. 5

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

- 1 Hooded shapes hot
- 2 Tech hats
- 3 Adaptability is key
- 4 Kids accessories
- 5 Accessorise with apparel

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# BEANIES FW 20/21

Worn for après, under your helmet or in the streets, the humble beanie has been transformed in recent times – from a mere afterthought to an in-demand accessory for snow enthusiasts and city dwellers alike. **By Ruth Cutts.**



SHAPE & DESIGN

The traditional medium fit beanie with rolled cuff continues, rather unsurprisingly, to be the most popular shape, but what alternative silhouettes are also making headway in the beanie market?

BBCo, Barts and Earebel all identified that fisherman-style rustic beanies remain king for male buyers, feeding into wider workwear apparel trends. Earebel's Street Beanie is fisherman-style with a cuff and is slightly longer cut, meanwhile their Dock Beanie is cut shorter – perfect for smaller adult heads and kids.

Barts' urban line is suitable for in-between weather conditions and is perfect to wear both on the slopes and in the city. Their Janiya model can be worn as a longer slouchy beanie, it can be folded once for a classic cuff, or it can be folded again for the fisherman's look.

The slouchy fit beanie, however, is far stronger within the female market, often thinner in construction compared to their traditional cuffed cousins, these beanies can usually be worn under helmets and work well aesthetically with longer hair (hence their popularity in the women's market).

In FW20/21 BBCo is reaching into another segment and releasing its first range of kids' headwear. As Owner Annie Richmond explains, "it's important that the kids range also reflects our brand values of sustainability and quality... ..parents are educating their children on the importance of protecting our environment, so to dress this new generation in fast fashion and unsustainable product doesn't seem the right direction."

COLOURS & DESIGN

Many brands are going to back to nature to influence their colour palettes. For Coal Headwear, new colours this season range from rich, earthy colours like nutmeg, golden mustards and deep greens, to a vibrant mint and grey lilac. Barts are looking at burgundy, bottle green, red, cherry, and purple, and for Dakine it's all about dark rose, red earth, spice and crabapple, alongside workwear-inspired colours such as dark olive, caramel and stone. Almost as the antithesis, however, to these muted shades is the inclusion of statement tones and bold graphics within collections as a point of difference. Barts have identified that contrasting colours could a huge trend for FW20/21 using combinations such light blue with red, mint with yellow and orchid with camilia, whilst also including bright fuchsia pink as a statement tone. When it comes to standout graphics there'll be sportive stripes, coloured

checks and abstract animal prints in their collection, including tiger, zebra and even Dalmatian prints! Coal are introducing exclusive new custom camo patterns and a saturated Shibori pattern, and Dakine are cleverly using a knit interpretation of the Quest prints found in their neckwear, gloves, socks and lifestyle pack ranges.

For beanie/headphone hybrid brand Earebel, "Black is the new Black!" Their innovative 'Sound by JBL' headphones are also black, so they match best with their black beanies and headbands.

MATERIALS & MANUFACTURING

"I think the headwear trends still carry over from last season which is the demand for more sustainability and transparency when it comes to manufacturing and materials," states BBCo Owner Annie Richmond. A statement echoed across many brands in the market, as they choose to branch out into more sustainable processes and materials. BBCo, Coal and Dakine have introduced Poly lana into their collections which is made from a mixture of virgin and recycled materials to create a low-impact alternative to 100% acrylic fibre with less energy, water, waste, CO2 and microfiber release. There has been a rise in the want for vegan products, so brands need to balance using non-animal fibre materials whilst minimising the pollutive plastic alternatives. "Every season the pursuit is how to build better headwear, from sourcing new fabrics that increase the comfort and performance of the style, to new materials that reduce environmental impact," explains Coal Design Director Jennifer Nelson.

For those that continue to use wool, they're looking to localised sources to offset their carbon footprint. Swiss brand hä? are testing and producing special yarns such as alpaca, cashmere, merino, recycled cotton from jeans and, new for FW20/21, they're using wool from the local Black Nose Sheep of Valais, Switzerland. BBCo are also using ethical yarns such as non-mulesed Merino and British wools working closely with more British manufacturers to reduce their carbon emissions during freight. 5

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

- 1 Fisherman style for men
- 2 Slouchy beanies for women
- 3 Bold patterns
- 4 Vegan-friendly
- 5 Nature-inspired colours





**THERE IS A  
SINNER IN  
ALL OF US**

**SINNER WINTER COLLECTION**  
SINNER.EU

**SINNER** AS I AM

## RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE GOOGLES FW 20/21

Having a hard time keeping up with all the new brands, models and innovations in the goggle segment? Here's a clear overview in our Snow Goggles Retail Buyer's Guide for FW20/21 by Dirk Vogel.



### MARKET & PRICE POINTS

Snow goggles count among the most trusted pieces of gear for snowsports enthusiasts. Goggles offer protection from UV rays, cold wind, slush, and tree branches. They will cushion a harsh blow to the face. Goggles provide fog-free, crisp vision under a variety of lighting conditions. Basically, proper goggles directly translate into a longer, safer, and more enjoyable day out on the slopes, which makes them a timeless, fundamental product category. "The market in Europe is quite mature, and I believe less susceptible to trends. But there is a strong appetite for new product innovations, especially those that enhance the on-mountain experience either in terms of safety or functionality," said Mike Turner, Global Category Manager at Oakley. With that said, not every company in today's rapidly growing goggle landscape is able to offer added value and innovation. As Neil Slinger, International Sales Manager at Melon Optics noted: "We see that the market is being flooded with many online-only, off-the-rack brands. These brands are launching mainly via Kickstarter with open-mould goggles straight from the factory, just with a logo added and their strap design." Nevertheless, an influx of new brands, including eyewear label Komono launching their first goggle in 2020, also indicates a healthy market. Putting things in perspective, Mike Lewis, Director of Marketing at Zeal Optics said: "At the end of the day, we're snow farmers, and the health of the market is a direct function of how much snow we're getting – not just this season, but for the last couple – to drive inventory."

"The market in Europe is quite mature, and I believe less susceptible to trends. But there is a strong appetite for new product innovations, especially those that enhance the on-mountain experience either in terms of safety or functionality," said Mike Turner, Global Category Manager at Oakley.

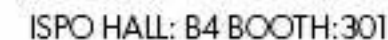
Looking at the last two seasons, winters in Europe have not been great, but actually downright amazing! So, it's no surprise that customers are ready to upgrade their goggles for FW20/21. Speaking on current consumer behaviour, Shay Williams, Product Development Specialist at Dragon, noted an important trend: "A lot of the consumer base is bifurcating to either the higher-end premium goggles with more functionality, or the cheaper but well-designed goggles that offer great value. A lot of the middle tiers – at all brands – are decreasing due to the effect of this consumer split." Accordingly, value-oriented customers can find fixed-lens models and even interchangeable lenses between €29.00 and €119.00 with a lot of action around €89.00 to €99.00. Prices for high-end models will drop slightly next season. The hot price point for premium goggles is now €239 instead of €279.



The speed of progress in lens optics is breath-taking, as every brand presents state-of-the-art tech next season. Attaining a big-picture perspective is hard, but Boukje Bontenbal at Sinner offered that “the Toric lens is the newest trend,” pointing to their Panotech toric lens featured in the PXV2 model. Shay at Dragon confirmed that, “spherical lenses continue to shrink in market share, while cylindrical and popular toric lenses are on the rise.” Giro teamed up with Carl Zeiss to develop injected toric lenses, while Melon, POC, Rossignol, Spektrum, Quiksilver, and Roxy also trust German-engineered Zeiss lenses. Anon worked with athlete Anna Gasser on new WM3 goggles and unveil new Perceive Lens Technology for true visual clarity. At Shred, Co-Founder and CEO Carlo Salmini is proud to say: “We continue to work with MIT - one of the world’s leading research universities - to refine our Contrast Boosting Lens technology, which maximizes contrast and image definition. It’s a true flat light killer and we offer it in a diverse range of lens tints.” Oakley continues



Judging by what today's hottest snow athletes like freeskiier Henrik Harlaut are wearing, the must-have look this season (aside from XXL Wu-Tang hoodies) is: Blacked-out goggle lenses! Henrik's goggle sponsor Oakley introduces a new lens this season, Prizm Dark Grey. "This comes from the request of our athletes for a flat black, non-Iridium coated lens. This is will be great in bright light conditions," said Mike Turner at Oakley. Dragon serves the trend with the new Lumalens Midnight, "perfect for spring or summer days, especially in the high alpine. It clocks in at 6% VLT and is a category S4 lens." Bollé has the cool Northstar style, Komono serves their Anton model in Black, while Robert Olsson at Spektrum is hyped on the Black Line, featuring "a Zeiss dark smoke-tinted lens, aimed at glacier riding with really bright light and high UV exposure." Then again, FW20/21 lens tints also spin the colour wheel with Neil at Melon pushing, "pink chrome lenses which seem to be a hype right now – we'll see if the hype will continue into next year." Across collections, bronze and gold lenses continue to be eyecatchers, much like the alpine blue and neon red tints. Also don't miss this season's sleeper trend that could be hot next year: white sonar lenses by the likes of Spektrum and Rossignol.







#### 4. BUILT FOR KIDS AND WOMEN

The XXL goggle trend is not the only new game in town next season. Brands are doubling down on their commitment to ladies and kids – in other words, smaller faces – with specific goggle designs. Nadja at TSG explained: “To give kids quality eye protection on the mountain we made a mini version of the Expect goggle. It features the same scratch-resistant, anti-fogging and distortion free, surround vision of a cylindrical dual-lens, with a helmet compatible hybrid frame, frameless construction, triple-layer face foam and a non-slip strap.” For added flair, TSG features cool designs both on helmets and goggles, like the Yeti graphic by Kathi Macheiner on the Expect Mini 2.0 goggle. Spy created a downsized classic with the Legacy SE. Spektrum launches the Templet Jr. model to fit small faces (and helmets), Aphex has the slim Oxia cylindric frame. Boukje at Sinner is proud to announce the Sin Valley model: “Our magnetic goggle is now available in a lady’s version, so better suitable for people with small faces. It has a very thin frame that gives it a slick look.” Head serves petite wearers with the Solar FMR, “a slim-line, lightweight goggle with a frame-free construction.”

#### 5. RE-ENGINEERED QUICK-CHANGE FRAMES

Exchangeable lenses still represent a strong value proposition, especially for all-terrain riders dealing with fluctuating lighting conditions. For FW20/21, several brands have updated their proprietary quick-change systems. Dragon launches the one-sided Swiftlock 2.0 mechanism in the RVX OTG model, featuring an injection-moulded cylindrical lens and over-the-glasses compatibility. At Spy, Snow Category Manager Casey Pavlosky announced a new, patent-pending system: “Deadbolt’s magnets securely guide the lens into place while the locking levers bolt it down. No searching for connection points, no worry of losing a lens.” Head has confidence in the magnetic lens exchange system featured in the new Magnify model, because “the lenses are also sealed into the main frame, so no wind and water can enter the goggle.” Oakley boasts Ridgeloek EV Technology, “improved with extended field of view for unobstructed visibility throughout the lens.” Quiksilver brings to market the new Switchback magnet speed connect exchangeable lens frame, sold with bonus spare lenses. Further tech updates include Bliz Nano Switch Optics, Dirty Dog’s Mutant Magnetic interchangeable goggles, and Sinner’s Avon model with Sintrast technology in Cat 1 and Cat 3 lenses. Red Bull Spect continues to bank on the Magnetron one-click system, featuring Zeiss lenses and plant-based plastics.

#### 6. HEADBAND FLAIR

“We see that the market is being flooded with many online-only, off-the-rack brands. Neil Slinger, International Sales Manager at **Melon Optics**

Lens tints may be blacking out, but riders still like to party in the back with vivid graphics on lens straps. Cairn is adding flair with a light blue lens strap called Ice Blue for women and gold strap details for men. Giro is playing with neon and slime green, Spy ups the ante with mushrooms and galaxy designs, plus airbrushed wildlife with artist Dmasso Sanchez. Speaking of collabs, Melon and Horsefeathers got together for flavourful goggles like the Parker and Chief models. TSG implements sown-on logo emblems, checker patterns and stripes, also mirrored in the helmet collection (see Season Trend). For Tom Lazarus at Dirty Dog, it’s all about contrasts: “We are enjoying playing Darks and Lights off against each other, for example, Black Frames with a pop of Merlot Purple on our strap.” Quiksilver keeps goggle graphics in sync with their apparel and outerwear collections, while Dragon makes “a concerted effort to cross-pollinate between our product lines of goggles, sunglasses and optical frames” and works with UK artist Schoph. Newcomers to the goggle segment Komono introduce a cool concept in the Anton model: “Referencing the practice of personalising your board, every pair will come with replaceable patches that can be added or removed according to your state of mind,” said founder Anton Janssens.

“spherical lenses continue to shrink in market share, while cylindrical and popular toric lenses are on the rise.”  
Shay Williams, Product Development Specialist at **Dragon**

#### 7. FRAMELESS LOOKS

Smartphones have been trending towards models that are all screen, no visible boundaries. Next season’s goggles are similar: “We see the frameless look trending which we’ve capitalised on in our new Marauder goggle,” said Casey at Spy. Boukje at Sinner recommends the Avon model with a “frameless look with spherical double lens and outriggers to fit nicely underneath your helmet.” Oakley achieves a sleek look in the Flight Path XL: “A semi-rimmed design maintains the top and side coverage of a fully rimmed goggle and integrates with helmets, while the semi-rim bottom enhances field of view.” If panoramic vision without visible boundaries is your thing, also look out for the Hatchet model (Zeal), Explorer (Aphex), Goggle Four (TSG), Tranxformer (Spect), Simplify (Shred), Nevada (Bollé), Blaze (Vertical Unit), and Airis (Rossignol) to name a few options.

So, there you have it: Next season’s goggles are advanced, stylish, and available at multiple price points. But no matter how much customers spend, everyone wants their goggles to last a lifetime. This is where a new add-on product comes in: gogglesocs are stretchy microfibre covers crafted from recycled plastic bottles with fun and hysterical graphics. The Canadian brand made its official European debut at ISPO 2019 and has sold over half a million gogglesocs, saving over 165,000 plastic bottles. They also support initiatives like Protect Our Winters to ensure a safe future for winter sports. Here’s cheers to a banging 2020 snow season! ☺

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

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Influx of new DTC brands
- 2 Decline in mid-price segment
- 3 Lower prices for premium models
- 4 Helmet compatibility
- 5 Max peripheral vision
- 6 Black and pink tints
- 7 Personal flair on straps



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## VIVA LA VIVID

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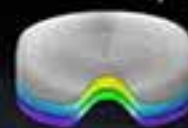
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Apex - XRP



Apex - Styx



Apex - Oxia



Bliz - Rave



Bliz - Split



Bliz - Switch



Cairn - Magnitude



Cairn - Mercury



Cairn - Pearl



Cebe - Falcon OTG



Cebe - Reference



Cebe - silhouette



Dirty Dog - Mutant



Dirty Dog - Mutant Prophecy



Dirty Dog - Streif



Dragon - PXV



Dragon - PXV 2



Dragon - RVX OTG  
(Over The Glass)



Giro - Axis



Giro - Ella



Giro - Millie



Head - Horizon



Head - Magnify



Head - Solar



Melon - Chief



Melon - Tomorrowland



Melon - Parker



Oakley - Flight Path XL



Oakley - Flight Tracker XL



Oakley - Flight Tracker XM



O'Neill - Core



O'Neill - Photo





O'Neill - Pro



Quiksilver - Ebrody



Quiksilver - Browdy



Quiksilver - QSRC



Red Bull Spect - Magnetron



Red Bull Spect - Park



Red Bull Spect - Tranxformer



Rossignol - Airis



Rossignol - Maverick



Rossignol - Spiral



Shred - Amazify



Shred - Rarify



Shred - Simplify



Sinner - Avon



Sinner - Olympia



Sinner - Sin Valley



Smith - IO



Smith - Skyline



Smith - Squad



Spektrum - Ostra



Spektrum - Skutan



Spektrum - Template



Spy - Legacy



Spy - Legacy SE



Spy - Marauder



TSG - Expect mini



TSG - Four



TSG - Two



Vertical - Blaze



Vertical - Craze Lite



Vertical - Craze Pro



Von Zipper - ALT



Von Zipper - Capsule



Von Zipper - Jet Pack



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# RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

## WETSUITS FW 20/21

Obsessed by ecological concerns and ruffled by the arrival of new pure players, the neoprene sector is undergoing a profound change that is revitalising the market. These factors have crystallised around the most technical product in the category: the winter wetsuit. Check out the brands' responses in this very chilly Buyer's Guide written in mittens by **David Bianic**. Brr...



Helped along by unprecedented mediatisation of “exotic” surf trips to cold water, winter surfing is no longer seen as an ordeal to put yourself through, but more like a new “cool” side to surfing. The proof is how we talk about cold water surfing in the same way as we talk about big wave surfing: it has become a genre. Yes but a genre very much associated with the most committed fringes of hardcore surfers. Cliché or undeniable fact? We asked the brands what their winter wetsuit customers are looking like and for Mathieu Desaphie, Founder of the small French brand Sen No Sen, cold water surfing “affects the whole surfing population because nowadays you can see surf schools working during winter with very motivated beginners happy to enjoy cold water sessions.” And if this is the case, the reason behind it is linked in a big way to improvements that the entry-level wetsuit models have benefitted from, reckons John Westlake from Alder. His British compatriot from C-Skins, Mark Brown, confirms this remarkable growth in entry-level wetsuits in northern Europe, “where it is cold all year round”. But

“Today, wetsuit sales for very cold weather are truly dedicated to a market of sharp and diligent surfers who live the practice.”  
**Julien Durant, Picture Organic Clothing**

make sure you put this rise to the ‘beginner’ market into perspective as purchases made by the “core” clientele in the winter are much greater proportionally as confirmed by Julien Durant, Director of Picture Organic Clothing: “Today, wetsuit sales for very cold weather are truly dedicated to a market of sharp and diligent surfers who live the practice.” Their best winter sales are carried out on the most technical models, a trend also shared at Xcel: “Core surfers are not influenced by marketing, colours, fashion, or team riders. In this group, product is everything!” assures Design Director Lance Varon. He also really neatly sums up the requirements of these hardy surfers who: “don’t let the environment affect their commitment.” These results have also been levered by





the success of neoprene accessories like the Solite thermo-mouldable booties: "Our 8mm Fire was a huge hit this year even at USD\$109.95. So we are going to expand our offer in the super-cold-water range with a lower-priced 8mm Custom (USD \$89.95)," reveals Adrian Kippling, Commercial/Marketing Manager Europe.

"The wetsuit market has gone too far in the direction of performance and stretch to the detriment of other factors" **Dakine**

#### HERE COME THE DISRUPTORS

This ever-growing demand for the most expensive and technical wetsuits on the market would be the Holy Grail for retailers but these sales are not necessarily going through them... "Some small brands are seeking to break the classic distribution network by selling directly through their own websites and offering a more affordable price to the surfer", explains Benoît Brecq from MDNS (previously Madness). Pedro Towers, Head of Product Development at Onda Wetsuits notes that "these strategies start to affect those bigger brands (they're answering by going online as well and by opening brand stores)" before concluding that: "what we're dealing with here is the killing of the traditional concept of the surf shop, the ones who gave them everything in the beginning."

O'Neill Wetsuits Product Manager Tom Copsey shares this view and because these small brands are manufactured in the same factories as the big brands and benefit from all

their expertise, it makes it hard to offer an original product, unless you are like O'Neill who use their own R&D factory and dedicated team of engineers for their wetsuits.

The 'disruption' doesn't always come from where you might expect. Dakine is going whole hog investing in the wetsuit market. There's no doubt that the action sports accessory brand's expertise will be crucial in this ambitious launch: "We had a very clear brief when developing our neoprene range. The wetsuit market has gone too far in the direction of performance and stretch to the detriment of other factors", explains the brand, "We need to recalibrate the balance – as well as stretch, fit and warmth, durability should be a key factor of performance."

#### RANGES: FROM THE MOST SIMPLE TO MOST COMPLEX

These new players on the wetsuit market - small independent brands selling directly - have drawn a segment of the surfing population away from the big brands by their pricing, their 'indy' added-value as well as their easy to read, often singular ranges. Contrary to this, brands known as 'endemic' brands are rolling out much more rich, complex ranges that are testament to their expertise but that can also cause some potential confusion for the customer. As many as seven ranges from Quiksilver, six at Gul, Alder and Soörüz, four for Rip Curl, Excel and ION, three (C-Skins, Hurley, MDNS, O'Neill) or two collections (Dakine, Onda, Picture, Sen No Sen), or one single one at Patagonia. Some of these collections are then divided into sub-ranges... a real mindbender! The bigger the range, the higher quality the communication has to be, firstly from the brands themselves and then from the retailer, hence the importance of their training.

## GREEN LINE

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#### INNOVATION: "MARGINAL GAINS"

The pseudo-scientific concept of marginal gains gathers together all these little improvements that end up having a decisive impact on the performance of a person or object. This seems to characterise innovation in the world of surf neoprene: small details that, once combined, are no longer so little. Let's start for example with the development of the Dark Matter coating for FW 20/21 from C-Skins. Launched last year, this panel on the torso/back replaces the traditional

"Biöprene neoprene uses calcium from oyster shells to replace the limestone and we mix it with hevea, sugar cane and seeds..."

Yann Dalibot, **Soörus**

smoothskin on top-of-the-range models: a stretchier hatched panel that's more wind and water-resistant. You can see pretty much the same idea on the Lava Flow neoprene on the 2020/21 Viper models from GUL, grooved for more flexibility without compromising solidity. At Hurley, one innovation plays on the distribution of the thicknesses with a "+" concept as Manon Jouanine, EMEA Product Coordinator explains: "for example, the 3/2+ Max will have 2mm on arms, 3mm from the chest down to the thighs and 4mm on the lower legs." This development is the result of collaborative studies carried out with the University of San Marcos in California who showed that the extremities were the most affected by the cold. But instead of adding thickness to the arms that would affect your paddle, the brand has added a smooth wind stop material made of silicone on the upper body. Another marginal gain is again at O'Neill, they have

abandoned recycled polyester on their jerseys to develop a recycled nylon that responds better to the lamination process. At Picture, innovation resides in the system for donning/removing the wetsuit. While all their models are designed with a frontal zip, a half-moon opening was devised to stop water entry as well as making it easier to get on and off, which is sometimes tricky with thicker wetsuits. "Less restrictions" is also the order of the day for the new Hoghline Lite range at Quiksilver as Maël Armellini (Global Merchant Boardshorts & Wetsuits) explains: "The pattern is based on the HIGHLINE PRO, which features only nine panels." Rip Curl are pushing the envelope further still on their Ultimate E7 Limited Edition E-Bomb model, "designed with a unique 'one piece' upper body panel without seams", reveals Dylan Andre (Wetsuits and Watches Product Coordinator). Fit is also the niche at ION who set themselves apart by offering two different silhouettes: Onyx (slimmer) and Strike (wider), a welcomed piece of customisation. Their Head of Neoprene Product, Marc Burhans, also adds that in 2021 ION will use liners incorporating graphene, just like Billabong since last season. Faithful to the brief above, Dakine have worked on the solidity of their two first ranges (Mission and Mission Plus) with Quad Lock seams (stitch-glued and gusseted), anti abrasion Resist panels, a zip-free system and numerous details (oversize knee protection, Lycra at the extremities, wrist closures...).

#### THE ECHO OF ECO

Like the reverberation of an echo, the environmental approach is spreading throughout the neoprene sector. Limestone neoprene is expanding amongst brands and while this raw material is more eco-friendly than traditional rubbers from the petrochemical industry, it doesn't warrant a sustainable label. This also counts as a non-renewable fossil fuel and the extraction/transformation processes

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are extremely energy intensive. “Hey, we get it. Wetsuits aren’t the most sustainable products on this planet,” admits Jorn Thoes, Marketing Manager at Mystic, as the brand incorporates Yamamoto limestone neoprene into its High Range wetsuits (“for those rubber geeks out there, it’s the #39”), which “waste energy is used to power local eel farms”. But let’s not stigmatise the first steps that brands are taking towards more environmentally friendly wetsuits. “There is a long road ahead in making a truly sustainable wetsuit and no-one is there yet”, asserts Mark from C-Skins whose 100% of models are now made of limestone with carbon black additive (from recycled tyres). It’s the same recipe at Picture (EicoPrene) and Hurley whose entire range is also limestone + carbon black. At Onda it’s the Pro Series Ace that inherits limestone neoprene while O’Neill remind us that the use of limestone dates back to 1998 with them. Quiksilver, Dakine, Sen No Sen, Soörüz and Xcel are also offering limestone within their ranges. All undergo the dying procedure called dope-dyed for its reduction in water consumption and reduced CO2 emissions, and the same goes for the glues they use, which are water based and therefore solvent-free.

As for the use of Yulex neoprene, a rubber made from responsibly sourced hevea sap, Gabe Davies from Patagonia says regretfully that “I still don’t see any large-scale uptake”, nothing more than a Fair Trade certificate. But there are a few who have taken a punt on Yulex such as Sen No Sen and Gul, one of the oldest brands on the market (1967): “We will launch our first Yulex suit in September (2020)”, reveals James Richards (Graphic Designer) and Jack Knowles (Commercial Director) about their Recore collection before adding that from this date on, all the brand’s packaging will be biodegradable. MDNS are also going for this hevea latex on their premium PURE range, models that are lined with recycled fleece: “this construction means we need less thickness for the same warmth”, assures Brand Manager Benoît.

One brand is showcasing an original alternative: Soörüz and their Biöprene. This new neoprene will be on the shelves in summer 2020 within the Green Line collection. “It uses calcium from oyster shells to replace the limestone and we mix it with hevea, sugar cane and seeds...This new undertaking is USDA certified”, explains CEO Yann Dalibot. The icing on the cake is a price tag under €300.

Soörüz (2nd Life Program) and a handful of others are now including a recycling aspect to their operations. In addition to a lifetime repairs service based in Landes, Sen No Sen are dealing with used wetsuit recycling through associations “or take it back to recycle it into a new product such as keyrings or bags handmade in Bordeaux and Hossegor,” explains Mathieu Desaphie. Better still, Picture want to be able to reuse the fabrics to produce new wetsuits, a ‘work in progress’ that the brand cannot talk too much about yet. Patagonia have also been working with a partner for recycling used models for four years now and are offering a lifetime Ironclad guarantee if there’s a fault. Let’s not forget the success of their Worn Wear Surf Tour, a nomadic workshop that carried out repairs on clothes and wetsuits across Europe last autumn “repairing over 400 wetsuits of all brands”, recalls Gabe Davies. At O’Neill, used wetsuits find a second life through a South African association, Surfers Not Street Children while the most deteriorated ones are transformed into carpet underlay. As for ION, for every wetsuit purchased, the brand donates a percentage of the sum to ClimatePartner, a German agency specialising in carbon offsetting. ⑤

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

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#### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Growth of entry-level
- 2 Improved fit
- 3 “zero bullshit” marketing
- 4 Spread of limestone use
- 5 Less energy intensive processes
- 6 Durability and recycling

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Yulex natural rubber is tapped from hevea trees; the process replaces conventional, nonrenewable neoprene. The raw natural rubber comes from sources that are FSC® certified by the Rainforest Alliance. By replacing neoprene with natural rubber, we’re reducing CO2 emissions by up to - 80% in the manufacturing process.

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Carbon Black, one of the key ingredients of neoprene, can now be pyrolyzed from scrap rubber tires. This significantly reduces energy consumption and cuts CO2 emission by 200g per wetsuit.

**GUL.COM**



# EICOPRENE

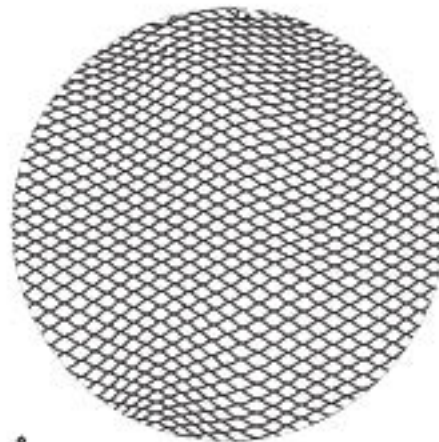
## SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES

NON ALLERGENIC : NON-USE OF NEOPRENE OR SOLVENTS

EICOPRENE IS A FOAM MATERIAL THAT HAS THE SAME TECHNICAL FEATURES AND PROFILE AS CONVENTIONAL NEOPRENE. HOWEVER, THERE IS NOTHING CONVENTIONAL ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF THIS NEW MATERIAL. WHEREAS NEOPRENE IS PETROLEUM-BASED, EICOPRENE IS MADE FROM A MIX OF LIMESTONE (70%) AND RECYCLED TIRES (30%)



ALL CARBON BLACK MADE FROM RECYCLED TIRES AND LIMESTONE



POLYAMIDE LININGS MADE FROM RECYCLED FISHING NETS



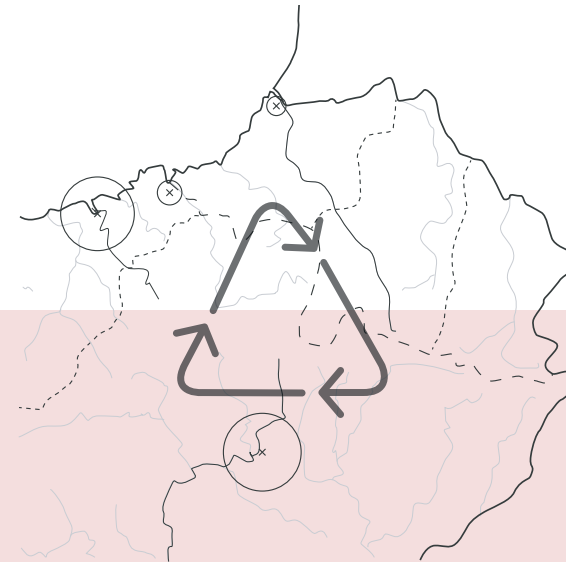
AQUA $\alpha$

ECO-FRIENDLY WATER BASED AQUAGLU

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY

### BASQUE COUNTRY

### FRANCE



Invest Basque Country help businesses setup in Basque Country France and this last year they've placed a real focus on the circular economy. Read on to see case studies and to find out how Invest Basque Country can help your business thrive in the Basque Country.

#### Please talk to us about the circular economy you are promoting in SW France.

In recent years we have seen strong urgency towards ecological and social awareness from players within the action sports and textiles/fashion supply chain. What started off as a way to stand out from the competition, has quickly become an unassailable sales argument to appeal to a public who want clothes that are more environmentally friendly. There are three strong trends that present three different market opportunities: Eco-designing items of clothing that have as little impact on the environment as possible using bio sourced or recycled materials. The second, life of clothes having been bought from new and then finding a new owner. The third is clothing rental, a timid but fast-growing trend for those who scoff at the thought of possessing their own clothes.

When it comes to eco-design, certain precursors spring to mind as examples, notably Patagonia in the United States and Picture in France. Many young companies have taken up this challenge and are looking to go even further than the big guns since their textiles are produced locally and for a local clientele. We have identified the need to create a value chain that covers all the manufacturing links, from weaving and tailoring through to logistics and sales. Decisions had to be made to bring back the first links in the chain that had all gone to China, Turkey or Portugal.

#### What territorial scale are you working on?

We are assuming responsibility and sharing common values applied throughout a territory like Europe. But we chose to devise this on a Basque Country scale by launching a cross-border cooperative project between the Basque Country in Spain and France. We have identified the different players present and have observed the shortcomings in this value chain. We now deal with businesses in wider southwest France, convincing them to come and complete the chain here.

#### What are the benefits to the brands involved?

The brands involved in this re-localisation process stick closely to customer expectations, safeguard local supplies and are more flexible in innovating products by forming local partnerships.

#### Please give us some examples of successful implementation.

Some brands were either born in the Basque Country or have come to settle here to find a favourable eco system. LASTAGE <http://www.lastage-concept.com/>) is a brand born in Biarritz in 2012. They eco-design products, closely following principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). They will release a new product that will take this even further and are innovating sales models, meetings carried out by ambassadors/sales agents and have created the first surf shop focussed on the circular economy. Business leaders regularly share their experiences with other young entrepreneurs, like the people behind Hopaal.

Hopaal (<https://hopaal.com/>), who we helped set up in the Basque Country three years ago, also have this approach to creating clothes that are bio or from production offcuts, like their latest merino jumper for example. The first items were made from bio cotton recycling in India and nowadays the entire manufacturing process has relocated to the south of France. They innovated by selling their first products on crowdfunding sites in order to optimise the company's cash flow and to launch production with guaranteed orders.

Patatam.com made a real breakthrough in the world of reused clothing within the children's niche and now they cater for women.

Modames (<https://www.modames.com/>) is a young company that set up two years ago in the Basque Country. They offer wardrobes to women who are subscribed to their site and, inspired by requests from their customers and businesses such as Patatam, could quickly offer a Vinted(Lithuanian online marketplace and community)-type alternative, 100% customised ethical fashion.

#### How else can Invest Basque country help brands set up in SW?

Our goal is to meet up with businesses throughout the world and to put them in touch so that they can mutually inspire one another. We put at their disposal the means to collaborate with and source as locally as possible from ethical companies. We also put localised skills at their disposal, covering fields including design, patronage, cut, prototyping, production and sales

#### What have been the most interesting developments in the SW economy in the past 12 months?

Although the majors are experiencing a lot of upheaval, they have scattered skills throughout the Basque Country and we are here to help to convince those people to create start-ups and become entrepreneurs. These business leaders have incredible experience and new ideas on how to gel with the market better.

#### What opportunities and threats do you foresee in the coming 12 months?

We're seeing real development in a more honourable development model that has as much consideration for the environment as it does for human beings. It's up to us to find the financial means to best accompany them and above all to help them find their market in France and in Europe, and even the United States. ☺

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# RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

## WOMEN'S OUTERWEAR FW20/21

Outerwear brands have a wide choice of garments serving fashion as well as functional demands on offer next winter, serving up something for all the discerning ladies out there. **Anna Langer** has a closer look at the trends for FW20/21.



HORSEFEATHERS

As in the Men's Outerwear collections for FW20/21, sustainability plays a major role in the Women's ranges as well. Besides the approaches of Burton, Horsefeathers, Picture Organic Clothing, Protest and O'Neill, (see the article directly after this one for details), also smaller players like FW focus on their environmental impact. "We see that sustainability is a big trend, but we strive to keep this at the core of our brand – informing our product design and our business decisions" explains FW's Anna Smoothy, Global Marketing Manager. Black Diamond have also been "working intensely on expanding on green technologies and expanding the BD internal technologies such as BD.dry and PFC free solutions." Roxy are also working with "earth-friendly materials and processes," says Global Product Manager, Marion Bertrand. "We challenge ourselves every day to set tracks to a better future. Our Pop Snow capsule has been designed utilizing sustainable practices and environmentally conscious fabrication and materials."

"The world's only proven oxo-biodegradable plastic additive. P-Life oxo-biodegradable technology is an effective way to accelerate plastic degradation." **Tomas Koudela, Horsefeathers**

Swedish base layer brand Eivy take their eco approach one step further by replacing plastic packaging with multifunctional bags in the same prints as their base layers. Horsefeathers will introduce P-life to package their FW20/21 collection: "The world's only proven oxo-biodegradable plastic additive. P-Life oxo-biodegradable technology is an effective way to accelerate plastic degradation," explains Tomas Koudela, Head of Sales and Marketing.

Volcom's collection includes more versatile and technical products than ever before, "focusing on 3-in-1 and 4-in-1 jackets as well as superior stretch fabrics in Gore-Tex for touring, following the trend of splitboarding with our team rider extraordinaire Elena Hight," says French Sales Rep Melanie Foulon. "Dakine has built its reputation on building gear you can rely on to perform when you need it. The theme of 'TRUSTED' is the inspiration behind our outerwear range for next season. We don't focus on trends as much as we rely on rider feedback and product performance," says Michael Fox, Brand Director, Dakine Apparel.

Holden also continue to move toward more technical fashion apparel, "as customers look to increasingly engage with the elements not only in the mountains but also within urban landscapes as well. Having that versatility, depth of technical knowledge and desire to make truly innovative creations will be crucial for any outerwear brand looking to succeed in the marketplace of the future," says Scott Zergebel, Design Director / Co Founder. "Retro looks are still on trend" says Marion Bertrand, Global Product Manager at Roxy, highlighting the Torah Bright Capsule Collection as the perfect retro silhouette. "Classic styles from various time periods clash and style together to form an unusual harmony of slope-street and high-

"Dakine has built its reputation on building gear you can rely on to perform when you need it. The theme of 'TRUSTED' is the inspiration behind our outerwear range for next season. We don't focus on trends as much as we rely on rider feedback and product performance." **Michael Fox, Dakine Apparel**

low dressing. The organic feel of hand spun Americana heritage is made new with solid pops reminiscent of 90s retro sport and street influences favoured by ROJO in the 90s," elaborates Robyn Carter, Design. Nikita go even further back to the 80s: "We have taken on a 20th year anniversary of Nikita bringing back past prints and colours, adapting it to the new and fresh look," says Natalie Sullivan, Head of Design.

Volcom pay tribute to the X-Wing jacket from their very first outerwear line with No-Hood Unisex jackets, tapping into the next trend that is also big for Burton: unisex. Bonfire feature "XXS sizing in key pieces that use our unisex colourway. This is to offer our men's styles for women, as this has been a request from our female patrons," says Bonfire Outerwear Developer Shasta Metcalfe. DC continue to focus on their design philosophy of "his is hers. This direction has resonated well with the DC consumer," states Erik Leines, Global Snow Sr. Merchandizing Manager. 686 agree that they received a lot of amazing positive feedback for their borderless collection of unisex fits. Picture Organic Clothing also develop unisex products with the same fit for men and women in a "no gender" approach.

### KEY PRODUCTS & LOOKS - JACKETS

In general, women can find a whole range of fits to "cover every need and taste from skinny to loose/baggy silhouettes", as Volcom sum it up, in most of the collections. 686 have refined all of their fits according to feedback from their Women's Roundtable, consisting of 27 women from across the industry which was held this past summer. Oversized pieces are a definite trend though, like the "boyfriend hoody style, with products that are slightly oversized but



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Black Diamond



Black Diamond



Brethren



Columbia



Columbia



Dakine



Dakine



DC

still feminine” as Picture show, “oversized proportions and boxy fits” by Holden or L1's Genesse Fleece Jacket “made from 100% recycled high pile fleece with PFC free DWR in an oversized type of silhouette that reflects street inspired culture in snowboarding”, as Creative Director Jon Kooley explains.

Anoraks and pullovers are especially strong and mentioned in most brands' key looks. Examples include Horsefeathers' high-end fully packed 10K anorak jacket, Rojo's Bailey Anorak with microfleece lining, Protest's workwear inspired anorak, Picture's Season Jacket in a boyfriend hoody style with kangaroo

“As customers look to increasingly engage with the elements not only in the mountains but also within urban landscapes as well. Having that versatility, depth of technical knowledge and desire to make truly innovative creations will be crucial for any outerwear brand looking to succeed in the marketplace of the future.” Scott Zergebel, **Holden**

pocket, Nikita's Eco Black Anorack and the Hemlock Jacket, L1's Theorem Atlas Jacket that is “inspired by pure performance and was built to accommodate the needs of women from a functionality and fit standpoint” as well as Columbia's Dust on Crust. Volcom mention pullovers as “2nd top sellers thanks to the 90s trend,” and offer them in Gore-Tex (Fern GT Insulated Jkt) as well as in “15K for a price sensitive version.” Tailored fits are still important as well, as DC state. Rojo's fits“are flattering without being restrictive as well as multi functional.” Dakine combine a longer fit with stretch materials and a unique side split hem for freedom of movement and Columbia add a parka, which is a new style for them and attracting a different consumer.

A segment that is gaining ground is technical high-end gear for female freeriders. “Last year, when a freeride athlete wanted to join the team, we had to decline because we don't make three-layer jackets for women. We have therefore done our best to integrate a high-performance three-layer product for women and here it is: the Aeron Jacket,” presents Picture CEO Julien Durant. Horsefeathers agree, they “love to see girls in full send mode, so we made Larra. A fully loaded and great looking backcountry jacket.” Dakine combine a refined fit with a new Gore-Tex 2L stretch plain weave and Dainese offer a removable level 2 Flexagon Back protector in their S+ Jacket. FW feature high quality materials in their W MANIFEST 2L Jacket-WPS, ROOT 3L Jackets and ROOT Down Jackets and Black Diamond introduce the Dawn Patrol Jacket and Pants with double weave.

“We have taken on a 20th year anniversary of Nikita bringing back past prints and colours, adapting it to the new and fresh look.” Natalie Sullivan, **Nikita**

Last but not least “overalls are on fire and we offer a full range of colours and prints, technicality levels and prices. Our overalls in Gore-Tex features our 'drop seat' system, which is very much appreciated by Women” says Melanie from Volcom, and Nikita bring their Mondrana One Piece back for their 20YR Anniversary: “better than ever with the addition of a drop seat in the back, to make those bathroom breaks go smoother.” DC agree that “jumpsuits are back”, serving this trend with their Vanguard Jumpsuit and Protest offer the “boiler suit.”

#### KEY PRODUCTS & LOOKS - PANTS

Pants are staying relatively slim at Picture, DC introduce a new fit, “slim fit that hugs the legs just right in softshell, providing an incredibly comfortable stretch

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LIFESTYLE



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FW



Horsefeathers



L1



L1



Nikita



Nikita



O'Neill



O'Neill



Picture



Picture

"Last year, when a freeride athlete wanted to join the team, we had to decline because we don't make three-layer jackets for women. We have therefore done our best to integrate a high-performance three-layer product for women and here it is: the Aeron Jacket." Julien Durant, **Picture Organic Clothing**

fit" while Holden continue their popular performance fit, as well as a skinny fit. With slim, relaxed pants and classic bibs Nikita offer something for all the different styles and preferences. The Ruben Bib is a flattering stretchy slim line softshell made for comfort and curves by Rojo, while L1 add a functional variation with superior performance attributes and a smart and sleek silhouette with their Theorem SOA Bib. FW combine high quality materials and uncompromising design in their W Manifest 2L Bib and Roxy highlight their POP SNOW Summit Bib Pant.

#### FABRICS

Protest introduce a functional velvet fabric for next season, which is water resistant, warm and breathable. O'Neill keep the ladies warm with their Firewall Magma in conjunction with 3m Thinsulate, Primaloft or down. Holden meld the technologies of Polartec Alpha and Alpha Direct into their fashion-forward styling and DC introduce a proprietary insulation called Profill that varies from 40g up to 300g.

Volcom focus on mobility with superior stretch fabrics at new price points and Roxy "take on a new challenge: keeping women warm in freezing conditions while keeping the gear light and flexible. To respond to this need, we partnered with IWARMTM and created ROXY WARMLINK, an advanced heating panel built into the fabric and engineered to keep you warm." Rojo add a stretch corduroy fabric that brings a great retro vibe. L1 also work with a new 20K/20K 4-way stretch 3-layer Cordura fabric that is especially abrasion resistant and durable. FW offer a dual-surface knit construction: "Polartec Power Stretch Pro. This unique build gives the material enough tensile strength and abrasion resistance for durable shape recovery. Performance wicking abilities mean it keeps up with any activity, removing moisture from the skin's surface." Dakine highlight the new Gore-Tex 2L mechanical Stretch plain weave: "It has a beautiful soft hand and matte finish with a unique look while elevating the outerwear's performance."

In line with the big focus on sustainability, more eco-friendly fabrics and approaches also play a major role for FW20/21. As in their Men's collections, Horsefeathers introduce Primaloft Bio and the 2nd generation of Ultratech Recycled, O'Neill feature Gore-Tex Infinium from recycled PES fabrics with PFC free DWR coating and Picture Organic Clothing use bio-sourced sugar cane fabric next to the new 100% PFC Free Xpore membrane.

Rojo introduce recycled polyester plain dye throughout the range, 60% PET recycled ottoman in key styles, 100% recycled polyester sherpa in mid layer garments as well as a recycled yarn, Polyana: "For every yard used we are diverting approximately 9-10 PET bottles from landfill" says Robyn. Their second addition is a Sarona profile fabric: "37% of the polymer is made using annually renewable plant-based ingredients and the production uses 30% less energy than regular nylon fabrics." Nikita aim to save water through a Solution dye process: "The dyeing is done during the manufacturing of the actual fibre before it is woven into a yarn" and use bluesign approved Recycled Eco down created by Thermore for their insulated jackets. Holden also feature select materials that are either GRS or blue-sign certified and made in Italy, Japan or Switzerland. Eivy make all their fleece from recycled fabric.

RIDE FOR IFUTURE



WIPE OUT  
FOSSIL FUELS

T O D A Y ,  
T H E F I G H T  
A G A I N S T  
C L I M A T E  
C H A N G E  
R E Q U I R E S  
W I P I N G O U T  
O U R D E P E N D E N C E

PICTURE  
ORGANIC CLOTHING





Rojo



Rojo



Roxy



Roxy



Volcom



Volcom



Supernatural



Supernatural



Eivy



Eivy

## COLOURS & PRINTS

Colour palettes are earthy and tonal, with a certain focus on purple by Protest, Picture Organic Clothing and FW. "A more tonal colour stays relevant for longer and also enables the rider to wear the garment off slope, meaning they may only buy one jacket for the season therefore reducing their wardrobe's environmental footprint" argue Rojo. Dakine agree that they do well with earth tones, which for FW20/21 "are feminized with a rich Dark Rose and brighter Crabapple pink" says Melle Sansalone, Designer. Eivy combine Rust with toned down Turquoise and Black Diamond show a strong range of Bordeaux and continue their Mulberry styles.

As usual, this is complemented by brights, like Neon Pink alongside Bright Pink and Cobalt Blue at Protest, bright colours in combination with fluorescent neon from Horsefeathers, very bright colours for technical vibes at Volcom and "bold solid retro summer colours that make a statement when styled with traditional, authentic winter natural tones" by Rojo. 686 mix subtle brights with jewel tones. No real surprises or novelties in store on the print side either, with animal prints, camo and florals in all kinds of variations as trusted classics. Dakine combine a fun abstract floral / animal pattern on a black background for femininity with a bit of an edge. Nikita bring back a retro print from 2009 in Red / Grey and Black as well as bright popping prints in the 80s generation: Blue Jaguar, and Black and White Zig Zag and also Rojo sport retro logos and artwork, 90s sophisticated mini stripes and plaids paired with ethnic prints. Eivy count on "intricate prints with details that are symbolic to us like mountains, waves, the ivy flower and snow."

"Polartec Power Stretch Pro. This unique build gives the material enough tensile strength and abrasion resistance for durable shape recovery. Performance wicking abilities mean it keeps up with any activity, removing moisture from the skin's surface." FW

## BASE LAYERS

Nikita are looking at this expanding category in a whole new direction: "there are so many activities we do in our day to day life that we can use the base layers when designed with this in mind." Super.natural call their products "the perfect companion, whether for daily life, travelling, outdoor adventures, winter sports, fitness or yoga." Picture Organic Clothing equip their layers with high collars to better protect and provide a neck warmer effect, as do Eivy, who have worked a UPF40 into all of their pieces. Roxy "worked on a strong monochromatic palette mixed with a high quality definition water inspired print to emphasize the importance of water in our industry, the respect we must have about its usage."

With materials needing to be "lightweight, breathable and insulating," Polartec is a favourite choice that many brands feature in their line. Volcom work with them for polars, sherpas, hoods and neck gators, Picture feature them in their Expedition range, and Black Diamond bring back their Coefficient Fleece Hoodie with grid back Polartec Powergrid fleece. They also use patented Nuyarn stretch merino wool, a fabric that dries 5x faster than regular wool and is 35% stretchier. Holden's layers are extra comfy due to the WHOLEGARMENT knitting process that eliminates cutting or sewing and creates 30% less waste. Rojo offer a "fun, luxe and cosy" choice with their new Velvet Skivvy. DC see "tremendous growth in the mid-layering categories with Veneer Hoodie and the Snow Star hoodie. ☺

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

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Sustainability & Eco-friendly Fabrics
- 2 High End Freeride Gear
- 3 Bibs & Overalls
- 4 Animal & Camouflage patterns
- 5 Multi Purpose Layers



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## RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# MEN'S OUTERWEAR FW20/21

As we enter the 2020s snowboarders no longer have to pick between functional or stylish outerwear. Modern technologies allow supreme styling to go hand-in-hand with high-end fabrics – many of which are becoming more and more environmentally sustainable. **Anna Langer** reports on the trends for Men's FW20/21 Outerwear.



“Sustainability is a major focus” for Quiksilver who use sustainable components in 95% of their range, aiming to reach 100% in coming years. O'Neill utilizes recycled materials in all components, from the zipper right down to the trims in their Blue line and Protest fuse evolving trends with a focus on sustainability: “Functional fabrics are represented in colours and prints that reflect looks you see on the street, while we concentrate on doing this in the most earth-friendly way possible.” Burton also focus on sustainability and Picture Organic Clothing continue their quest to “Wipe Out Fossil Fuels” by mixing recycled and bio-sourced materials. “Downsizing is our way of denouncing the fact that today, polluting elements are taking precedence over man and how we are now able to fight against this in order to reduce the pace,” explains CEO Julien Durant.

“New scientific discoveries come at a fast pace, but not all are proven to perform as expected in time. That is why we strive to do our best in choosing tested solutions that come from renowned manufacturers.” **Tomas Koudela, Horsefeathers**

Horsefeathers' Tomas Koudela, Head of Sales and Marketing states that “the big ‘corporate social responsibility’ or ‘sustainability’ theme of today, we always considered as the basis of our attitude. Long before this topic became popular, we were interested in our influence on the environment, on the people we work with and where and how our products were made.” Yet it's vital to make the right steps at the right time. “New scientific discoveries come at a fast pace, but not all are proven to perform as expected in time.

25 years of rider driven snowboarding with signature series outerwear including Nicolas Müller, Scott Stevens, Chris Grenier, JP Walker and Cory Smith's The Spring Break collection, “a full head to toe collection that simply offers everything. Style, function and tech.” **Thirtytwo**

That is why we strive to do our best in choosing tested solutions that come from renowned manufacturers.” FW's Anna Smoothy, Global Marketing Manager agrees that “quality is sustainability”, implementing less impactful fabrics where they have proven to be both functional and durable, striving to make long lasting products.

Since snowboarding is a sport that's intricately connected with its participants, functionality and rider-driven or approved designs have always played a major role for all involved brands. Thirtytwo celebrate “25 years of rider driven snowboarding” with signature series outerwear including Nicolas Müller, Scott Stevens, Chris Grenier, JP Walker and Cory Smith's The Spring Break collection, “a full head to toe collection that simply offers everything. Style, function and tech.” Volcom's 20th anniversary sees their innovative proprietary technologies paired with great partnerships and Team Rider signature collections.

Black Diamond's collection is “inspired by the needs of hard-charging mountain athletes that look to us for comfort, safety, durability, and protection from the elements.” Bonfire share a “strong focus towards purposeful design”, working with Great Northern Powder Guides while Brethren follow their own mantra “If we wouldn't wear it, we won't sell it”, resulting in technical, but relaxed gear. Horsefeathers work closely with their team riders and the office crew to achieve the highest performance across diverse conditions and riding styles. For Dainese “safety and ergonomic shapes” are key, which they cater for by integrating safety in their garments. Ride Snowboards have improved the fit in all three lines from 20K/10K, 15K/10K and 10K/5K to “offer the best selection you need to be best prepared for on hill or the streets.”

Continuing on from previous seasons, the FW20/21 collections still offer a strong heritage vibe with lots of style references to the 90s. Columbia have “reached deep into our own archives and heritage to capitalize on a trend to bring an urban aesthetic with archive styling. Something fresh that will capture the tastes of generation Y and Z while renewing an offer that stays true to our core consumers from the 2000s”. With their new capsule collection inspired by mid-90s trends, a perfect blend of modern streetwear and brand heritage, Quiksilver aim to “reach a younger, edgier consumer that is really aware of urban trends and wants to embrace a more vintage and unique look.” L1 expand their focus on aesthetic and functionality found in workwear and military styles to incorporate more of a 90s influence “in a brand relevant way”. O'Neill use their “strong and unique heritage to create a modern, high-quality snow collection that blends the latest fashion trends with the newest technical innovations” and Templeton “celebrate the 90s with colours that

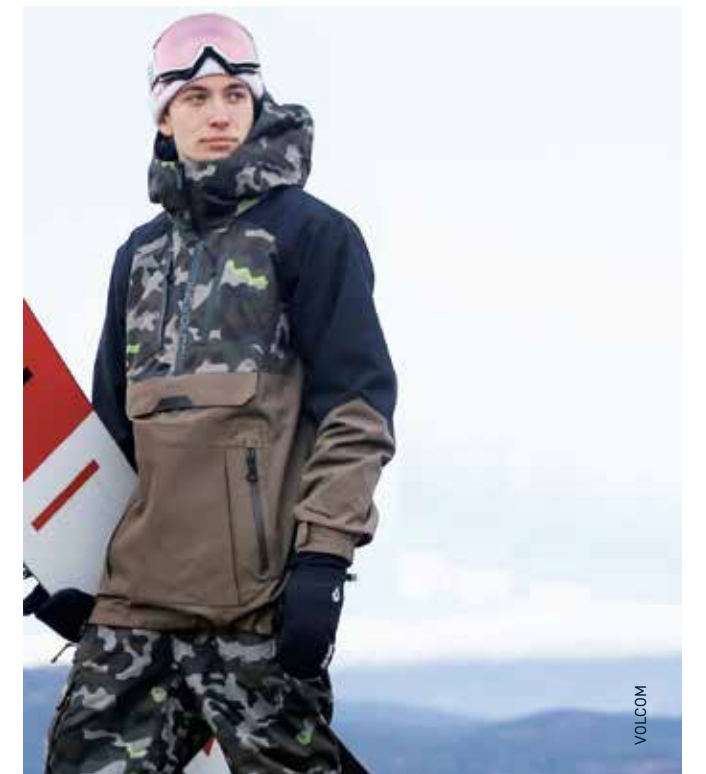
Grandpa rocked on the mountain combined with hints to ski patrol uniforms. But also HipHop artists designer brands from that time play a role,” says Brand Owner Marinus Schuster.

For their second outerwear collection to date, Endeavor focus on “timeless items that are not necessarily trend based so that they can be worn for multiple seasons without going out of style”. Holden deliver “contemporary performance outerwear with cold weather versatility” inspired by a combination of unique garment proportions, urban streetwear and modern performance materials, states Scott Zergebel, Design Director / Co Founder. 686 reinvigorates best selling styles to support current retail while pushing the edge of features and technologies on select new SKUs. 686 reinvigorates best selling styles to support current retail while pushing the edge of features and technologies on select new SKUs.

### KEY PRODUCTS & LOOKS - JACKETS

In line with the 90s vibe, anoraks play a big role in FW20/21, such as the DC ASAP Anorak SE, the Horsefeathers atrip anorak in a “new looser and shorter 'back in the days' fit” or the Columbia Park Run Shell Anorak that has been super successful also outside classic wintersports.

Dakine combine a longer fit with a late 90s design influence in their Legion Jacket and a longer fit with classic outdoor design and modern updates in the Vapor. DC blend on-snow function with features and street styling in their Operative Jacket and the Servo, which features a vintage military design. Sweet Protection updated their Crusader Down Jacket with a longer fit for added weather protection, Horsefeathers offer regular long cuts and Black Diamond offer various new styles including parkas.







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Dakine use a “3D panelling style construction in the body to help create a fit that mirrors the body's natural three-dimensional shape. With the addition of a lightweight Gore face fabric and the fluid-like flexibility of the C-Knit backing, it moves with the body, not restricting it. Of all my designs, this is the piece I'm most proud of.” Peter Line, **Dakine**

For a bit of something else on the shelf, Brethren highlight their Coach Jackets, “that have been super popular last year with the Audi Nines guys getting their own as well as PLSR mag,” Templeton refer to classic leather jackets with their HeavyMetal Jacket and Dainese offer a removable and adjustable back protector in their HP DIAMOND S+ jacket.

#### KEY PRODUCTS & LOOKS - PANTS

The 90s are also strong on the lower half of the body, with “tracksuit steeze, straight 00s, taped side seams, matching pants and jackets, just like when we were teenagers” from Brethren, the Ventura Pant (and jacket) by L1, or the “upgraded tracksuit inspired fully packed snowboard pants” from Horsefeathers. Bonfire and Sessions are also “moving away from the slimmer fit silhouettes in favour of a looser look and feel throughout the line” that has been a team favourite, says Shasta Metcalfe, Outerwear Developer.

Holden work with oversized proportions and boxy fits but also continue to offer their popular performance fit while Columbia reworked the fit on their pants “to make them slightly less baggy and more wearable at the bar after the lifts close.” Horsefeathers also offer slim fit pants and Black Diamond's fit varies from on-body to looser styles.

Bib pants on the other hand are becoming increasingly important throughout collections and brands. Highlights include Session's Bleach Bib in a new 4-way stretch textured fabric, Quiksilver's Highline Pro Touring Bib with a new vest construction made with stretch mesh for ultimate mobility, FW's MANIFEST 3L Tour Bib Pant with Cordura side panels, Bonfire's Master Bib with full 2-way zip and outseam ventilation, L1's Theorem Heron Bib “in a smart and sleek silhouette” and 686's new GLCR Hydrastash Quantum bib and Hydrastash vest, “both with Hydrastash now in the low back area and even closer to the body than the previous jackets. The vest is unique as it also snaps into any pant to create a bib feel as well,” states Brent Sandor, VP of Marketing.

#### FABRICS

Supporting the eco-theme, a lot of the fabric innovations for FW20/21 aim to reduce the environmental impact of our beloved sport. Horsefeathers introduce Primaloft Bio, “the first-ever 100% recycled, biodegradable synthetic fibre, as well as the 2nd generation of Ultratech Recycled with 25K waterproofness and 20K breathability.” They also upgrade the insulation on their high end models to Clo Vivo Eco, which is made up of 93% recycled fibres that are extruded from recycled plastic bottles. 686 updated all of the insulation in the GLCR range to more sustainable, eco-friendly recycled materials: Clo and Primaloft with a minimum of 70% PCR recycled fibers made from plastic waterbottles.

Picture Organic Clothing work with bio-sourced sugar cane fabric and the brand new Xpore membrane that is 100% PFC Free and completely recyclable, allowing them to reach consumers on a very high-end target and on jackets equivalent to Gore-Tex Pro Shell. Black Diamond is also continuously broadening the selection



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Black Diamond



Black Diamond



Bonfire



Bonfire



Brethren



Columbia

Horsefeathers

STOKED ON SNOWBOARDING  
SINCE 1989.



Tyler Overton  
Signature jacket

We feel that responsibility is the keyword regarding nature and the playgrounds we all love. Long before sustainability became a popular subject, we were interested in our influence on the environment and on the people we work with. Responsibility goes deeper and means not should think and learn before acting. We believe that our bulletproof quality and the right steps taken at the right time are a major step towards not wasting the finite Earth resources. Be responsible.



WWW.HORSEFEATHERS.EU

#HFSNOWBOARDING





Columbia



Dakine



Dakine



DC



DC



Endeavor



FW



FW



Holden



Holden

of PFC-free DWR solutions: “A major initiative is the use of GTT Empel Breathable Water Protection, a DWR which uses no water in its production and won’t wash off,” explains Christian Lehmann, Head of Marketing Europe. Protest use recycled fabrics, like nylon, polyester and TPU as well as wadding made from bamboo as insulation and a biodegradable PFC-free finish for their PVRE Green series and O’Neill work with a 100% recyclable and climate neutral membrane fabric made with Bionic yarn and trims made from ocean and marine waste, as well as Gore-Tex Infinium for men and women made from recycled PES fabrics. Templeton contribute to an environmentally friendlier product by implementing Sympatex, which is 100% recycled and recyclable, next to 100% Hemp Canvas items, that are water resistant, highly breathable, antibacterial and very tear-proof.

In order to be functional, outdoor gear obviously has to keep the wearer warm and toasty, which Columbia ensure with their new Omni-Heat 3D lining and Omni-Heat Black Dot, “which is the industry’s first external thermal shield. Specially designed black dots trap warmth and capture solar heat. It thus enhances thermal efficiency and reduces heat loss.” O’Neill strategically place their Firewall Magma lining at the back of your jacket, keeping you 25% warmer than a normal.

I find it amazing that retailers are willing to sell gear that you could climb Everest in to customers that go on holiday for a week a year. We strive to keep snowboarding affordable, it’s an elite sport already and there is no need to make it more expensive.” Chris Kyte, Brethren

Yet comfort has to come without limiting mobility, which is why Bonfire mention Zone Mapped Technology as their biggest story for the upcoming season. “We mixed shell fabrics, and lining materials to create products that offer strength and added mobility through the shoulders and upper arms, combined with our lightweight 2 Layer Vertex fabric to keep the rider comfortable while saving bulk and weight.” Dakine use a “3D panelling style construction in the body to help create a fit that mirrors the body’s natural three-dimensional shape. With the addition of a lightweight Gore face fabric and the fluid-like flexibility of the C-Knit backing, it moves with the body, not restricting it. Of all my designs, this is the piece I’m most proud of,” says Peter Line, Dakine Outerwear Designer.

Of course stretch fabrics are quite helpful with this as well. Volcom offer 3-in-1 Jackets with 3-Way Stretch, Bonfire introduce 30k stretch Cordura, L1 offer a new a 20k/20k 4-way stretch 3-layer Cordura fabric in the high-end Theorem line and Sessions add technical performance with a 4-way Pinnical Stretch performance fabric and a 4-way light stretch Textured fabric. Holden continue to partner with Polartec in a variety of ways utilizing their Power Stretch Pro, Alpha Direct insulation and synthetic shearling materials.

A not entirely new but increasingly important fabric story is softshell. Brethren's entire line is made from this soft and comfy material, as the brand “noticed an over-technicality of products, there’s loads of 30k gear hitting the market. I find it amazing that retailers are willing to sell gear that you could climb Everest in to customers that go on holiday for a week a year. We strive to keep snowboarding affordable, it’s an elite sport already and there is no need to make it more expensive.” Sessions highlight their melange Athletic Grey 10k & 3k softshell and Ride Snowboards have a wide offer of fully rideable softshell jackets.







Horsefeathers



Horsefeathers



L1



L1



O'Neill



O'Neill



Picture



Picture



Protest



Protest

## COLOURS

Colour palettes won't hold any major surprises next season, ranging from earthy and muted at Holden, Protest, Sweet Protection, Templeton, Picture Organic Clothing, Bonfire and FW to an "overall softer tone" at L1, including Lime and Lavender. Other new combinations include Picture Organic Clothing's mix of Purple with Saffron, Protest pair it with Deep Orange and Navy Blue, as well as Dusty Pink alongside Olive Green and Grey, or FW'S shades of Alpine Lake, Pale Leaf, Light Stone and Pastel Canyon.

Horsefeathers keep the bright colours in the line and "combine fluorescent neon with colours you normally wouldn't expect to go together." Other brights include "High Risk Red, Dark Sapphire, and Acid Lime" from Dainese, "Cypress; Azurite, Port and Crimson" from Black Diamond and a "killer throwback yellow that is being well received by our team. Also featuring a bold blue and a fun orange this season which will add pop" at Sessions. Protest also continue their successful blue group, with Blues, White and Dark Navy combined with Red.

686 are moving away from replacing too many colours and silhouettes year after year in order to be more consistent for their retail partners. They've kept the best selling colours and added a few new colors inspired by their athletes, like Gigi Rüf's pro model jacket in Clay.

"In 2018 Polartec developed and launched Power Air. It sheds at least five times fewer microfibres than other high-performance fleece fabrics through a revolutionary knitting process which encapsulates the microfibres in small pockets. Lightweight Power Air takes this one step further as it not only reduces microfibre shedding but is also completely recyclable and is made from 73% recycled plastic waste." **Polartec**

## PRINTS & PATTERNS

When it comes to prints, Bonfire state that they're moving away from this trend a bit, as they see a greater response to colour blocked products. "All in all, the blocked items bring more of a high technical feel to the line than prints" and also fit the retro 90s theme. Dainese use colour blocking to make their jackets match with several colours of pants, adding that "this type of design satisfies a broad range of consumers, in particular a young target," as Nicola Bragagnolo, Product Manager Multisports says. Black Diamond also bring colour blocking back in certain styles, adding variety and new combinations, while Protest "use colour blocking as an intense method of creating contrast on the slopes." Picture Organic Clothing on the other hand have "completely moved away from fluorescents and mixes such as colour blocks with major sharp contrasts."

Camouflage continues to be a proven classic print and can be found at Bonfire, in a "natural woodland style" at Brethren, as an oversized large-scale pattern at Holden, Tiger Camo that pairs perfectly to the more de-saturated palette at L1, combined with Browns at Protest, Standard Camo at Sessions, and a very special Japanese inspired Koi Camo at Templeton. Other print highlights include Session's bold and eye-catching Splatter Print, Volcom's Magma Smoke Print, a Lava Print by Bonfire and Tie-Dyed Nylon at Holden, who also show new distressed oil washed Italian materials to add texture. Horsefeathers introduce four new prints, amongst them Birch and Azteca, while Columbia jumble up the brand name in their new all over Typo print.



Columbia

# ALWAYS COME IN HOT.



ALEX FERREIRA  
HALFPIPE WORLD CHAMPION



**OMNI-HEAT™ 3D**  
NEXT-DIMENSION WARMTH. SMALL PODS OF SOFT FIBERS CREATE AN AIR GAP BETWEEN BODY AND FABRIC FOR NEXT-TO-SKIN COMFORT AND INSULATING FUNCTION.





Quiksilver



Quiksilver



Ride



Ride



Sessions



Sessions



Volcom



Volcom



Super.natural



Super.natural

A special mention goes to Sessions for their collab with Led Zeppelin, whose music has consistently been a driving force in skateboarding and snowboarding. “As a skater of the late 1970s and 1980s era, it was common to hear Led Zeppelin blasting out of a boombox when carving an empty backyard pool. Jimmy Page’s guitar riffs and John Bonham’s drumming would always push me to challenge the boundaries,” says Sessions Founder Joel Gomez.

#### BASE LAYERS

The layers segment has been growing for some seasons and is not scaling down. Picture Organic Clothing have expanded to a wide selection and a more hybrid range with mixes of Power Stretch on areas that need to breathe, and Primaloft on areas that need to be isolated. DC agree that this category is “growing rapidly” and expand the offer in their mid-layer program. Adrian Rief, Marketing at super.natural add that their “products’ timeless design makes them suitable for every age group, any occasion and all types of people.”

Burton expand their seasonality with Multipath, “a year-round, active versatile collection to keep us on the mountains to experience the unbound freedom of snowboarding as well as other outdoor pursuits.” Black Diamond also state that their “new fleece collection is built to be versatile and address the needs of the consumer both on-mountain and off.”

When it comes to layer material, Polartech is a sought after supplier as well as stand-alone producer, who have noticed and are serving the consumers search for environmental credentials. “In 2018 Polartec developed and launched Power Air. It sheds at least five times fewer microfibrs than other high-performance fleece fabrics through a revolutionary knitting process which encapsulates the microfibrs in small pockets. Lightweight Power Air takes this one step further as it not only reduces microfibre shedding but is also completely recyclable and is made from 73% recycled plastic waste.”

Due to its moisture wicking and odour repelling qualities, Merino wool is also a popular fabric for layering, like in FW’s Raw Collection. Super.natural combine it with synthetic fibres, creating a tightly-knit connection between the materials for an “extremely soft surface that doesn’t scratch and offers incredible natural comfort.”

Holden use a WHOLEGARMENT knitting process for their base layers, where each garment is knit to completion in a machine, without cutting or sewing. Dainese use Dryarn, “a mix of Polypropylene and Polyamide fibre which makes it one of the best in the market for basel ayers in contact with the skin.”

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

[BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM](https://boardsportsource.com)

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Sustainability & Eco-friendly Fabrics
- 2 Anorak Jackets
- 3 Bib Pants
- 4 Camouflage patterns
- 5 90s styling
- 6 Niche Market: Layers

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## Dawn Patrol Hybrid Shell

Our backcountry shell engineered to provide protection from the storm while remaining breathable on the uphill skin, the Dawn Patrol Hybrid Shell features a breathable softshell fabric in key placements for thermal regulation, while the chest, shoulders and hood remain impenetrable thanks to our propriety BD.dry™ waterproof/breathable solution. Coming in fall 2020 in men's and women's versions.

EMPAL

[Elevate performance. End pollution.]

The GTT Empal Breathable Water Protection Technology is a revolutionary PFC free DWR that's superior in performance and substantially more durable than other DWR solutions. Using no water or palm oil in its production it is a green solution to performance outerwear.

BD dry™

Built for skiers, climbers and backcountry adventurers, BD.dry™ is Black Diamond's innovative waterproof/breathable/windproof technology designed to shield you from whatever the weather holds.

## RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# SNOW SAFETY FW 20/21

As freeriding becomes increasingly more accessible to the masses the need for safety equipment to work quickly, simply and effectively under stress is vital. The intention of touring is to experience the positive side of nature whilst having a fun (and hopefully long) day on the mountain with friends. Therefore, the less distraction customers suffer from having to carry heavy products, the better. Brands are navigating that fine line between creating lightweight products that perform in the harshest of environments.



The growth of touring has meant that brands are having to provide reasonable price options within their collections. "We want to make avalanche safety affordable for everybody in the wild" explains ABS' Sales Director Michael Vogt, a sentiment echoed by BCA whose two main segments are 'recreational' and 'professional', with recreational users making up at least 80 per cent of their market. Since there is a broad customer base out there that doesn't use their safety equipment on a regular basis, the team at Black Diamond and PIEPS have addressed the issue through the PIEPS app which provides training modules to help customers prepare and train with their safety products in their own time.

### Trends

"Digitalization will be more relevant in the future, not only for planning but also for safety reasons too" explains Vogt. Technology such as that used in the Resero wearable devices works when other more common communication signals such as a phone or satellite might fail. The enhanced radio channel ensures that any distress messaging will reach a rescue crew even if you're stuck somewhere with no connectivity – helicopter crews can fly and get your location up to 25 km away! Other technology such as their SMS emergency notification system and peer-to-peer communications which allows you to monitor the team you ride with within a 1km range is revolutionising the way tourers can maximise their safety on the slopes. The ongoing roll out of the RECCO SAR Helicopter Detector, which evolves the RECCO rescue system from avalanche rescue to year-round search and rescue for missing people in the outdoors can be used by helicopters to search vast areas quickly - 2km can be searched within six minutes.

### BACKPACKS

Most powder-hungry riders have accepted that a lightweight and durable backpack is indispensable for freeriding. "They expect it to be light and well-fitting but more importantly to be durable, versatile and very practical. Practical in terms of organization and pocket management but also intuitively usable," explains EVOC's Head of Marketing Jan Sallawitz. EVOC's new LINE R.A.S. PROTECTOR is the first ever pack that's ready for a Mammut R.A.S. avalanche airbag unit and steps it up with a level 1 back protector (available in 22l and 30l). The Jones DSCNT 32L RAS is one of the only avalanche airbags

built with robust snowboard carry straps and ergonomic pockets for carrying splitboard gear. It also features the Mammut RAS 3.0 system which allows you to travel with the air canister empty and remove the system if you want to use the bag without the airbag unit. Ortovox's AVABAGs have been developed with core users and feature intricate details to improve the user's experience such as the main access zipper of the ASCENT line that offers quick access to your equipment, map compartment, hydration system or the construction of the safety pockets that can be adjusted to the shape of the shovel blades for the perfect form fit.

Black Diamond's line of JetForce Packs consists of three different models; the JetForce Ultralight, JetForce Tour 26 and the JetForce Pro which features the latest cutting-edge technologies; developed with PIEPS and has Bluetooth connectivity to your smart phone. Avalanche Equipment BCA's new Tracker4 avalanche transceiver combines the ruggedness and fast/loud LED display of their Tracker2 with the no-nonsense multiple-burial features of their Tracker3 and Tracker S—including Signal Suppression and Big Picture modes for ultimate avalanche safety. Jones have produced two avalanche shovels and two probes. Their shovels are segmented based on weight. The standard shovel is made with an aluminium handle and the lightweight shovel is made with carbon handle. The probes are segmented based on length with the standard probe being 280cm with a narrower diameter, and the 320cm probe having a thicker diameter for more durability using in deeper snowpacks.

### Additional Devices

Providing additional safety, Black Diamond's snow saw, binding buddy tool and knee pads complement their product range and BCA's BC Link 2.0 radio is extremely popular not only to maximise lines, but for preventing accidents too (now offered in European frequencies).

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.  
[BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM](https://boardsportsource.com)

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Massive advancements in digital tech
- 2 Apps to enhance technology
- 3 Reasonable price points appeal to the masses
- 4 Products for recreational customers



## Brand UPDATE



Hot off the back of their 10 year anniversary celebrations, EVOC talk to us about the position their brand holds on the market. Although bike is their biggest segment, snow is where they come from and Head of Marketing, Jan Sallawitz talks us through their current wholesale offering.

### How has the EVOC brand developed over the last 3 years?

EVOC is constantly growing and still privately owned by its founders. In the meantime, the bike category represents the biggest segment. Snow products, however, is where we come from originally. In 2019 we started with a new photo collection and launched bike packing as a new category concept for 2020. So far, both look very promising.

### Tell us about the 10 year celebrations.

Party all year around! Just kidding! We organised some amazing events that represent our brand's spirit including an already legendary Eurobike party. We took the celebrations across the ocean and started an amazing 10 years ride in Whistler, followed by a great party afterwards. Our internal highlight was definitely our team trip with the entire staff to Hong Kong, where the history of EVOC started, and to Vietnam to visit the top-notch factories, where our products are produced. Of course, both cities had some fantastic trails to offer. In a nutshell: we celebrated our sports travelling DNA to the fullest.

### For 20/21 you are completely overhauling your protection and backpack lines - please tell us all about this and the technologies involved.

Fall/Winter 2020/21 brings a complete rework and a change of perspectives. We've asked ourselves "what defines a good winter and



its products," and concluded that it's mostly versatility. This manifests itself in our holistic approach to cover all aspects of all mountain touring – from the valley, to the mountain, to the peak – and the delivery of a suitable backpack for every use. We have developed completely new concepts and products to make snowsports safer, and more comfortable, and to guarantee maximum fun when touring or freeriding.

EVOC will go the next logical step and combines all our know-how and experience with different forms of protection products in one new backpack: The LINE R.A.S. Protector – the first avalanche backpack that is Mammüt R.A.S.-ready and contains a back protector. We've reworked our entire LINE touring backpack series and our protection wear, introducing our brand-new back protector, the LITESHIELD PLUS. A comfy to wear, in-house designed level 2 back protector that is super light, temperature insensitive and adapts perfectly to movements thanks to its cross pattern. In general, we heavily focus on our EVOC Big 5: Ergonomy, ventilation, organisation, carry systems and quality.

### Which markets have you seen the biggest growth/changes in over recent years?

The North American markets – the USA & Canada are growing and have great potential, but on this end, we are facing challenges caused by tariffs and unforeseeable developments like everyone else. Germany is continuously strong and the UK is very good – let's see if Brexit comes and what happens.

### And which categories have you seen grow the best.

Let's put it this way: the effort we invested in the photo category with its brand-new products pays off. We also expect big potential in our travel category.

EVOCSPORTS.COM

### Any new partnerships or collaborations to talk of?

We work with new distributors for our photo category in selected countries – they are absolute experts in that field.

### How are you straddling the wholesale/D2C channel tightrope?

We rely on our distribution model and the successful partnerships we have developed for many years. Global online key accounts are handled directly by EVOC.

### How are you evolving generally to keep up with changing consumer habits and trends?

We trust in quality. We continue to offer premium products and premium services. Clients appreciate the longevity of EVOC products, which also has a lot to do with sustainability, and that is becoming more important. Our motivation to produce the products we do is authentic and credible and we rely on transporting the passion for what we do to the client. That's why we also believe in strong bricks and mortar, and we try to convey our spirit through the EVOC Program Stores at the POE. That, of course, is accompanied by multi-channel campaigns that answer contemporary consumer needs.

### Please talk us through your thoughts on how the brand works across the globe with sales agents / distributors and how you see this changing.

We trust in brand. People want more than replaceable products. Products with the experience and passion factor. Authenticity! Reliability! That's what we ask from our sales support partners. We focus on training and educating our sales partners to enable them to transport our messages consistently across all channels. Consumers appreciate that. ☺



# ICONIC SHAPE

DUPRAZ-SNOW.COM







NAMUK

Remember Swiss snowboard  
outerwear brand Eleven? After  
shuttering the business in 2011 to  
work and consult for other brands,  
Franz Bittmann has now been running  
passion project-cum-vocation namuk  
for four years. Started to answer the  
problem of poor quality kids clothes,  
Franz is seeing double-digit growth  
year on year and here we profile the  
brand.

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

I started the company in 1998, right after  
school. The brand I created was called “Eleven”  
– Swiss technical snowboard clothing. Maybe  
you remember the brand. It was a great time,  
and in its ‘golden era’, Eleven was present in  
17 countries and in more than 300 stores. In  
2011, just before the big ‘snowboard crash’,  
we stopped the brand and I started to work for  
others – designing, producing and consulting in  
the textile business.

During this time, we welcomed our first child  
and found out that there is a lack for high-  
quality, sustainable kid’s outdoor clothes. Levi,  
our oldest son, was able to destroy all goods  
within one to two weeks. The margin on kid’s  
clothes is poor, so many brands try to save  
money by using cheap fabrics and minimise all  
features.

With our experience from Eleven, we wanted  
to change that. That’s why we founded namuk  
– the first Swiss outdoor clothing brand for  
children. We believe that kids are outside much  
more than adults and need clothes that facilitate  
endless outings in nature. They actually need  
more technical and functional clothes than their  
mums and dads.



We started doing a small collection for us and  
our friends. At namuk, we use high quality  
fabrics and add all the features and details that  
make kid’s lives easier (such as the integrated  
toilet zipper, integrated suspenders, fully taped  
seams and so on).

First, namuk was a hobby, while I was still  
working for other big brands. Four years ago, I  
decided to go all in. Our sales double every year  
and we have customers worldwide.

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

I lead a small, passionate and very experienced  
team of product designers, designers, and online  
marketeers. Each person at namuk has at least  
15 years’ experience in the outdoor apparel  
industry.

**You’re targeting a very specific niche; what is  
the reasoning behind this?**

We don’t think that we are a very specific niche.  
Parents are more aware that kids should spend  
us much time as possible outdoors, we enable  
them with our clothes. Clothes that don’t limit  
the time kids stay outdoors. And if kids like the  
clothes, it’s so much easier to motivate them to  
go outside.

**What sets you apart from your competitors?**

A combination of functionality, sustainability and  
design. Our clothes are made to last.  
Also, we have built in many innovative features  
that make life easier.

**Could you tell us about the way in which you  
use local resources in your products?**

Design, development and testing take place in  
Switzerland. Switzerland, with its beautiful and  
challenging nature, is our best ‘laboratory’ – if it  
works here, then it works worldwide. Of course,  
we use local materials when they’re available –



we work with waterproof organic cotton fabric  
produced in Switzerland for some jackets, for  
example.

**What other marketing are you running?**

We use a marketing strategy that combines  
digital and personal interactions with namuk.  
We try to interact on a very personal level with  
our customers – our office is open and we have  
a showroom/shop integrated into it. And we  
organise a ‘namuk discovery day’ for our fans – a  
truly special day in nature for the whole family. It  
was packed this year!

**Why should retailers sell your brand?**

Because we are in the age where many  
snowboarders of the nineties have kids who  
enjoy being outside. They’re looking for quality  
kids clothes, which keeps their kids dry and safe.  
If the kids are alright and dry, you can motivate  
them for another powder run – a classical win-  
win situation. We select our partners carefully  
and grow together.

**What do you see for the future of the industry?**

Our whole industry lives on nature, our products  
are made to spend time in nature, and I hope  
that the industry will become more committed  
to nature. ☺



KANOA

KANOA Surfboards came to being  
while founder Thilo von Osterhausen  
was developing a new composite  
technology in his master’s degree that  
lead him to believe he could improve  
the construction of surfboards. Coming  
from a windsurfing family business,  
Thilo has created a brand that is both  
innovative and strives to protect the  
environment at every step.

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

The idea of building a surf brand was in my  
head for quite a while. I grew up in the family  
windsurfing company and was involved in  
professional snowboarding for several years.  
So, apart from being a passionate surfer, I  
had insight into various perspectives of the  
boardsports industry. Through that I saw a  
certain potential for a new holistic approach to a  
surfboard brand, especially in Germany with so  
many new surfpools in the making. Additionally,  
I was developing a new composite technology  
within my master’s degree and saw plenty of  
improvements that could be made in surfboard  
construction by using this technology.

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

We are a small and passionate team, not only  
working together but also being friends from a  
young age. Tobias Degel is a very talented  
designer who is responsible for the unique  
KANOA look. Jannik Jost, is an engineer and skilled  
craftsman who contributes to our development,  
and myself being a business engineer from TU  
Munich. Additionally, we rely on the experience  
and distribution infrastructure of our family  
company – developing and successfully selling  
windsurfing gear for 33 years.



**Please explain your production methods and  
equipment.**

We currently offer two different construction  
types. One being classic PU Surfboards shaped by  
the magic hands of South African shaping legend,  
Spider Murphy. The second is our performance  
soft-top range, the KANOA Foamy. They are  
built in A\V-ST construction with an EPS core,  
aluminium stringer and a vinyl skin.

Our third and latest construction “HRT – Honey  
Roots Technology” was just selected by ISPO  
Brand New, and not only does it stand out  
through its durability and sustainability, but it  
also shows a unique approach to the definition  
of a board’s flex properties. Instead of changing  
the fibre layout or reinforcing with carbon tapes,  
we precisely define the flex with a variable 3D  
honeycomb structure. A small and limited series  
of HRT boards will be available by the end of 2020  
season, and pre-order will start in January. First  
come, first surf.

**Please explain the eco considerations being  
made.**

Our new HRT Construction is one of the most eco-  
friendly constructions out there, with the highest  
amount of recycled content in a surfboard. We  
use recycled EPS foam, recycled carbon and  
recycled fibreglass in combination with upcycled  
sawdust and cork. It’s all put together with bio  
resin and a layer of special flax fabric. Apart from  
that, we reduce wastage and try to avoid plastic  
where we can. We just switched to recycled  
cardboard packaging as a replacement for bubble  
wrap. Also, the KANOA Foamy range is built with  
Eco-Con Technology, resulting in less wastage and  
less toxins. Within 2020 we will also be launching  
a new traction pad line made out of algae foam.

**How do you support athletes and boardsports?**

We have a small but selected group of  
ambassadors and team riders who carry the  
values of our brand. We are aiming to create a pro  
team around our new technology in the upcoming  
years. We also have been offering marketing and  
branding consulting to other boardsports related  
companies.



**What other marketing are you running?**

We collaborate with several artificial river waves.  
The latest example is our new partner the  
Wellenwerk in Berlin. We also work with some  
surf camps, including the Janga Wonderland in  
Figueira da Foz, it’s a KANOA test centre. We are  
also part of the Cine Mar Tour, a watersports  
movie night, that’s touring through Europe.

**Why should retailers sell your brand?**

Not only do we offer high quality products and  
reliability in all business aspects, we also offer a  
drop ship option for retailers. The customer can  
order and pay in the shop and get their board  
straight to their doorstep within the three days.  
This reduces the amount of purchasing cost and  
eliminates the hazard of boards being damaged  
en route to shops.

**What do you see for the future of the surfboard  
industry?**

With countless wave pools ready to go and more  
and more people getting caught by the passion  
of surfing, the market is destined to change.  
However, for us as a new brand, that’s very hard  
to anticipate. The only thing we are very confident  
about is that it is time to rethink surfboard  
construction as we know it today and allow the  
composite innovation of the 21st century to make  
its way into the industry. ☺





## ELEVATED SURFCRAFT

Elevated SurfCraft are making small batches of boards at GP87 Factory to surf the frozen wave as you'd expect to surf an ocean one. Based in Mammoth Mountain and with European growth in mind, we speak with the team to see how European snowboard shops can get collaborate with Elevated SurfCraft.

### What's the idea and ethos behind the brand?

High Altitude Surfing - venturing beyond snowboarding into high performance surfing the frozen waves. Each snowboard in our quiver is shaped from direct inspiration of its surfboard counterpart. The design theory is to emulate how each particular shape approaches the wave - the drop, bottom turn, top turn, trim, and cutback. The riders' goal is to attune to the characteristics of the board and analyse the terrain in order to execute the appropriate manoeuvre, finding flow in the pocket of the moment while riding the edge of skill and uncertainty. This is high performance riding.

Every mountain slope has unique pitch angles which hold similar patterns to waves, combined with the conditions of the snow and the rider's style - opens unlimited possibilities for creativity in sliding down the mountain. It's this creativity which inspires active participation of the rider as an artist painting on canvas - or in this realm, a surfer upon the frozen wave.

### Where is your HQ and where are you manufacturing your boards?

Mammoth Mountain - all prototypes are hand shaped in the garage shop. After rigorous R&D underfoot of many riders including the Shapers Summit, garnishing a Rated Radical seal of approval, we send the final design to be produced in small batches at GP87 Factory.



We have been working with them since 2016 and they are creative, innovative, and excited about weird shapes. They offer the highest of quality in terms of materials and construction manufacturing. It also helps they are stoked with where we are venturing with what they build.

### Do you make surfboards as well?

We are cultivating the Elevated SurfCraft Shapers Union to hand shape each board from our snow quiver into surfboards with a variety of local shapers. This is an interesting process as each shaper applies their unique interpretation to the design and we explore the concept of the shape into the future together.

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

Just one dude, a great team of hometown riders and an Instagram account. Aaron Sababba has shifted from the "do everything all under one roof" single-minded dude, into a roll as a visionary and producer of that vision. There are many aspects of the snowboard industry to be accounted for in order to enact financial sustainability and thus continue from one season to the next. So now we break it down into R&D, Factory Production, and Media Coordination, working with a variety of creatives to create something unique and independent of mega-industry forces.

### Please explain your distribution strategy.

We have spent the last few seasons rolling around to a variety of resorts in North America and Japan offering free test rides to locals. If they dig the board, they can purchase it directly from the website. We focus our marketing through social media and sell directly to the community. Our goal is to partner with shops around the world to provide demos, as it is the best way to understand the unique qualities of each board of the quiver and then offer sales directly from the shop.



### What do you find important about the European market?

There is an abundance of world-class resorts in Europe and we have yet to connect with them. Snowboarding has seemed to have lost some of its market to skiers in recent years due to mundane shapes and marketing gimmicks. Elevated Surfcraft is here to open the minds of experienced riders and bring life back into the "sport". Plus the groomers are spectacular.

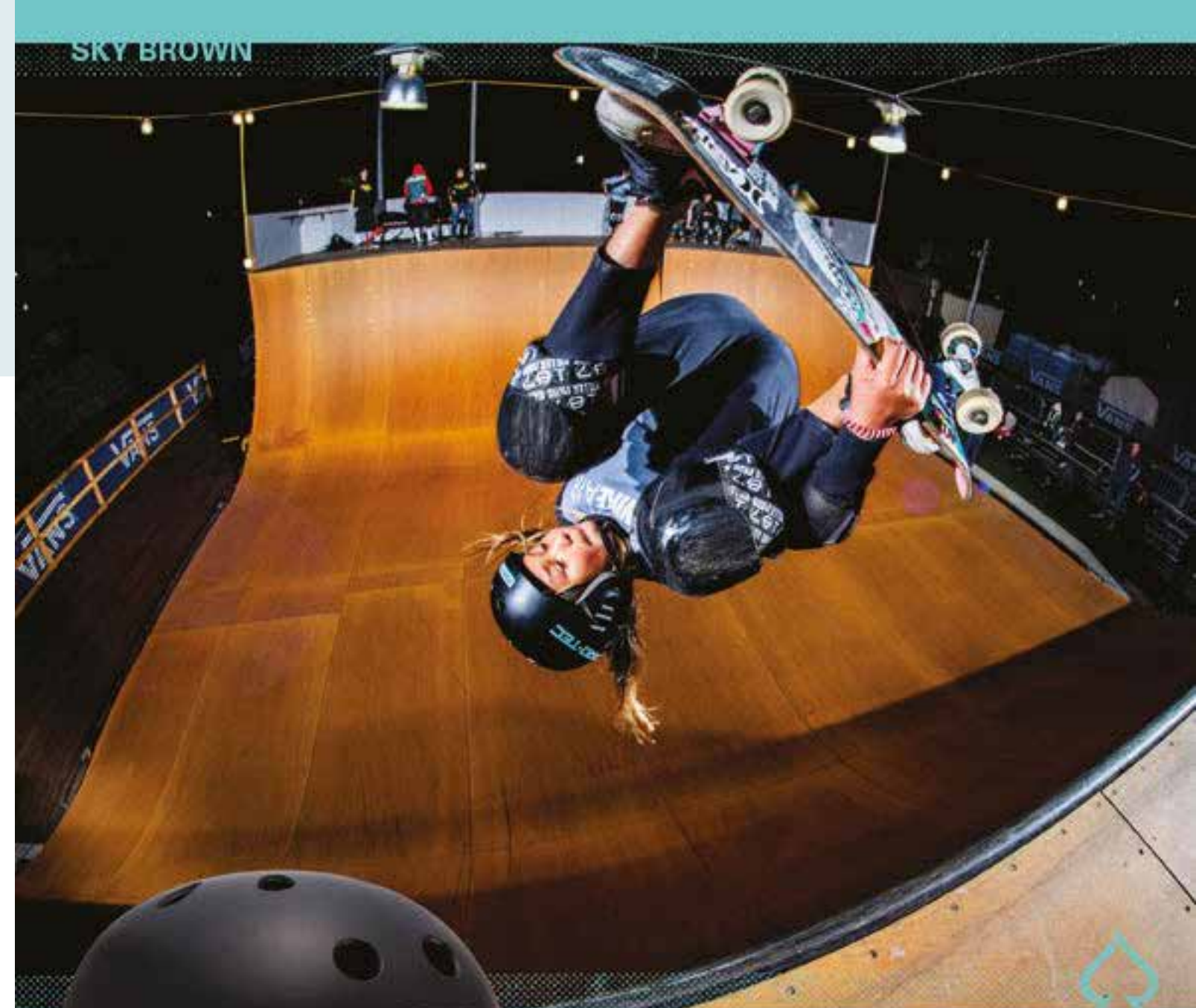
Are you supporting athletes in boardsports? Elevated SurfCraft creates boards for our nationwide community of friends. We support these dedicated riders and look forward to what they create with the boards.

### What do you see for the future of the industry?

The future of snow sliding will return to its roots - powder, carving, and enjoying the mountain with friends. Micro-brands and shapers will be carrying in the future of shapes through experimentation and style. We hope to connect directly with our customers to build more than a brand, grow a community.

### Where can we check out stuff?

Currently most of our media is on Instagram and the website. We will be creating a Youtube series for each board this season.



**PRO-TEC**  
THE ORIGINAL

SKY BROWN SIGNATURE HELMET  
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Industry-leading bindings tuned up with premium parts. sparkrandd.com/pro-tech

ISPO  
HALL B4 #116

## NEW PRODUCTS

### 01 / NOW SELECT PRO BINDING

The Select Pro is the ultimate choice when it comes to on the fly customization, it's the most versatile weapon in their binding arsenal. With it's Skatetech, Kingpin Tool-less, three densities of bushings offered and extra highcup for total freedom and surfy style, the Select Pro is the only binding you need. New for the Select Pro is a Canted 2.0 footbed and new buckles. [NOW-SNOWBOARDING.COM](http://NOW-SNOWBOARDING.COM)

### 02 / THIRTYTWO JONES MTB BOOT

The ThirtyTwo Jones MTB introduced the walk-mode collar to the industry and has remained the pinnacle splitboarding boot. For 20/21, Jeremy Jones worked with the ThirtyTwo design team to update the Walk-Mode Collar to add a gaiter, and anchor it with the Boa TX3 lace. ThirtyTwo also updated this boot with an easy entry Full Zip Gaiter, and lightweight aggressive Vibram outsole that is compatible with both semi-automatic and strap crampons. [THIRTYTWO.COM/EU](http://THIRTYTWO.COM/EU)

### 03 / PAG HOODED ADAPT PROOF

This garm been specially created to adapt to people's needs in hostile environments. This is the most innovative product in PAG's collection thanks to its retractable hood made of waterproof and ultra-breathable fabrics and its lower part composed of water-repellent fleece. Tested at the 4 corners of the world by their team of athletes, it brings comfort, style and technicity to protect its users from any harsh weather. The Hooded Adapt Proof won the innovation award at the 2019 Village Des Créateurs talent fashion contest in Lyon. [PAG-NKW.COM](http://PAG-NKW.COM)

### 04 / PACSAFE VIBE 25L ECONYL<sup>®</sup> BACKPACK

Protect your valuables and our planet with this spacious and sporty Vibe 25L anti-theft backpack made from ECONYL<sup>®</sup> regenerated nylon fibre. With enough room to fit your gym kit plus a 13-inch laptop, the adjustable sternum strap and hip belt add extra carrying comfort, while lockable zips and more secure your gear. [PACSAFE.COM](http://PACSAFE.COM)

### 05 / BATALEON GETAWAY BAG

The Getaway Bag is a one size fits all adjustable snowboard bag designed for short trips or riders looking to pack light. It's based on waterproof exhibition bags and is perfect for keeping your board dry during travel or storage. [BATALEON.COM](http://BATALEON.COM)

### 06 / DRAKE SUPERSPORT BINDINGS

Boosted with the easy entry system. A mechanical component allows you to overthrow the ankle strap's connector out of the base in a locked position, guaranteed by the steel spring, this simplifies the entrance of the boot into the bindings baseplate without falling on the board. Alex Stewart enthusiastically added, "in over 10 years of snowboarding these are the best damn bindings I've ever had locked around my ankles, what an honour to fly the Rusty Toothbrush flag on such an incredible binding with such an iconic brand!" [NORTHWAVE.COM](http://NORTHWAVE.COM)

01



02



03



04



05



06





# NEW PRODUCTS

**07 / COAL'S SQUAD BEANIE**  
Created with 6 team riders who worked closely together to develop a new beanie style in a super comfortable rib construction. Knit in soft Polylna yarn this collab has a reduced environmental impact compared to conventional wool and acrylic yarns. In 6 custom colours inspired by and created for each rider. [COALHEADWEAR.COM](http://COALHEADWEAR.COM)

**08 / SPARK R&D FIXIE CLIP**  
Spark introduce a new splitboard clip for 20/21 that is simple yet improves on what is currently available in the market. The Spark Fixie Clip comes in a sleek, lightweight aluminium design (62g per set) that features no moving parts, creates an extremely rigid connection between board halves, and self adjusts for a perfect fit. [SPARKRANDD.COM](http://SPARKRANDD.COM)

**09 / HEAD TWO LYT BOA BOOT**  
The Cuff Cut construction offers comfort and a snug fit without bulging out. The Treadlyt sole is super light, still offers plenty of grip as it has added rubber inserts for more traction. The liner is packed with features, from the new Easy Entry construction to Perfect Fit heat mouldability. The organic S.Cafe® lining prevents the development of bad odour and the Boa® Fit System makes it easy to lace the boot without the usual hassle with laces in the cold. This is one of lightest boots on the market. [HEAD.COM](http://HEAD.COM)

**10 / PACSAFE VENTURES SAFE EXP45 ECONYL® CARRY-ON TRAVEL PACK**  
Protect your valuables and our planet with this versatile, carry-on anti-theft backpack made from ECONYL® regenerated nylon fibre – recycled fishing nets and other discarded nylon. Tailored for intrepid travellers, it features a roomy main compartment, organization to make packing easy, plus lockable zips and other anti-theft technology to keep your trip essentials secure. [PACSAFE.COM](http://PACSAFE.COM)

**11 / STANCE INFIKNIT**  
Their most significant product innovation ever arrives in January 2020. Available in both casual and performance styles Socks with Infiknit start at £12.99 and are guaranteed for life. Already best in class for durability, but with Infiknit™ they will last 5x longer and all socks with Infiknit™ have a lifetime guarantee against holes, rips and tears. The full product range will also be on show at ISPO 2020 Stand 204 Hall B4 with special guest Randy Sheckler. [EURO.STANCE.EU.COM](http://EURO.STANCE.EU.COM)



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RECLINING HIBACK

DUAL-ENTRY

ENERGY TRANSFER

POWERSTRAP ACTIVATION

## FLowsystem

Flow bindings have stood the test of time. It all began with the original Reclining HiBack. Since then we've gone on to innovate in every aspect of snowboard binding design with features like our ActiveStrap technology, Reclining HiBack, PowerTiltangle and Locking Strap Ratchets, as well as our newest innovation for this season, EXO-PowerStraps. We're also excited to be introducing the Nexus, Juno and Micron-Youth models on the Axis-Series platform this season.

# FLOW

SNB BINDING CO.  
[www.flow-bindings.com](http://www.flow-bindings.com)



# NEW PRODUCTS

## 12 / DAKINE BRYAN FOX'S TEAM HELI PRO 20L BACKPACK

The people's pack for the people's champ. Workwear inspired, this pack features a custom BWF (Bryan William Fox) label that pays homage to Mt. Hood. Part of the Heli Series - which is built on 25 years of rider driven design and trusted performance, it comes this winter updated with an arsenal of new backcountry features, a recalibrated fit, increased durability and recycled materials.  
[EU.DAKINE.COM](http://EU.DAKINE.COM)

12



## 13 / PRO-TEC OLD SCHOOL HELMET

The Pro-Tec Old School is a tried and true silhouette from the brand's heritage. Its classic lines, deep profile and retro branding take you back to the early days of skate, where it was first worn on the decks of the backyard ramps and 80s skate parks. Although retro in style it's been updated with EPS for snow certification, full coverage padded comfort liner placed on top of a custom MIPS solution making it even safer and more comfortable. It also comes with newly designed ear pads with audio accepting pockets deep enough to fit the speakers of your choice and a neck curtain for added warmth and protection from the elements.  
[PROTECBRAND.COM](http://PROTECBRAND.COM)

13



## 14 / RIDE'S NEW A10 ALUMINIUM BINDING

Ride have started from scratch and completely rebuilt their binding offering this season. Two lines have been developed one using composite and the other aluminium, allowing you to choose the technology that best suites your riding. The A10 features an Aluminum Chassis, Carbon Slimeback™ Highback, Three-Piece Ankle Strap, Minimalist Toe Strap with Overmold, TPU Basepad, Canted Footbed with PODS, Aluminum and Plastic Discs and Linkage Ratchet.  
[RIDESNOWBOARDS.COM](http://RIDESNOWBOARDS.COM)

14



## 15 / NORTHWAVE DOMAIN BOOT

The Domain now comes with ergonomically shaped Fidlock Magnets which means applying tension to your laces is easy and comfortable. Their magnetic component allows them to clip quickly back into position and can then be rotated to wrap up any additional lace you have left over. They have been designed to release in one specific position so as to not fall off while snowboarding or walking.  
[NORTHWAVE.COM](http://NORTHWAVE.COM)

15



## 16 / GIRO GRID & ENVI MIPS SPHERICAL HELMET

At 400 grams, the new Grid & Envi have been made to lighten the load whether you're riding backcountry, rallying through groomers in resort, or adding to your bag of tricks in the park. It is noticeably lightweight. The new ear pad interface is boast-worthy and has been developed into the line for increased fit, comfort, and enhanced auditory experience. Featuring a warm and quick-drying Polartec® liner as well as their innovative MIPS Spherical technology, available in a wide variety of colours.  
[GIRO.COM](http://GIRO.COM)

16



COMING IN FALL 2020, THE VERY FIRST VULCANIZED MICHELIN SOLE, CONTACT YOUR REP NOW!



NEW PRODUCTS

17 / RIDE NEW C10 COMPOSITE BINDING

Ride have started from scratch and completely rebuilt their binding offering this season. Two lines have been developed one using composite and the other aluminium, allowing you to choose the technology that best suites your riding. The C10 features C-Series Performance Chassis, Carbon Slimeback™ Highback, Three-Piece Ankle Strap– Minimalist Toe Strap with Overmold, EVA Basepad, Canted Footbed with PODS, Aluminum and Plastic Discs and Linkage Ratchet

**RIDESNOWBOARDS.COM**

17



18 / COAL'S UNIFORM LOW BEANIE

A new addition to the line this year is the Uniform Low. The tall fitting Uniform beanie has been a staple style for many years. Offered in a range of 20 colours, the Uniform has continued to be the go-to style/fit for many seasons. The Uniform Low is a new alternative for those who love the yarn, fit and aesthetic of the Uniform but in a trend right low-profile fit. The Uniform Low is rolling out in 8 top selling colours.

**COALHEADWEAR.COM**

18



19 / BRETHREN PATROL CAP

Hunt out pow turns and hand rails in the all new Patrol Cap, ideal for the seeker snowboarder. Featuring a 10k waterproof outer layer, quilted cotton interior with size adjustable back strap, and snap fastening chin strap. Seal up your money maker and head to the steep, deep and dangerous. Available in 4 colourways.

**brethren-apparel.com**

19



20 / UNION ATLAS BINDING

The 20/21 Union Atlas has been redesigned and rebuilt from the ground up. Combine Union's strongest baseplate ever built with all-new Vaporlite High Density bushings, a stiff Duralflex CB highback, the rapid response of Exoframe 3.0 ankle straps and you've got your self the #1 choice of professional snowboarders like Kazu Kokubo and Arthur Longo. Designed, tested, and trusted by the best snowboarders in the world, Welcome to the future of Union Bindings.

**UNIONBINDINGCOMPANY.COM**

20

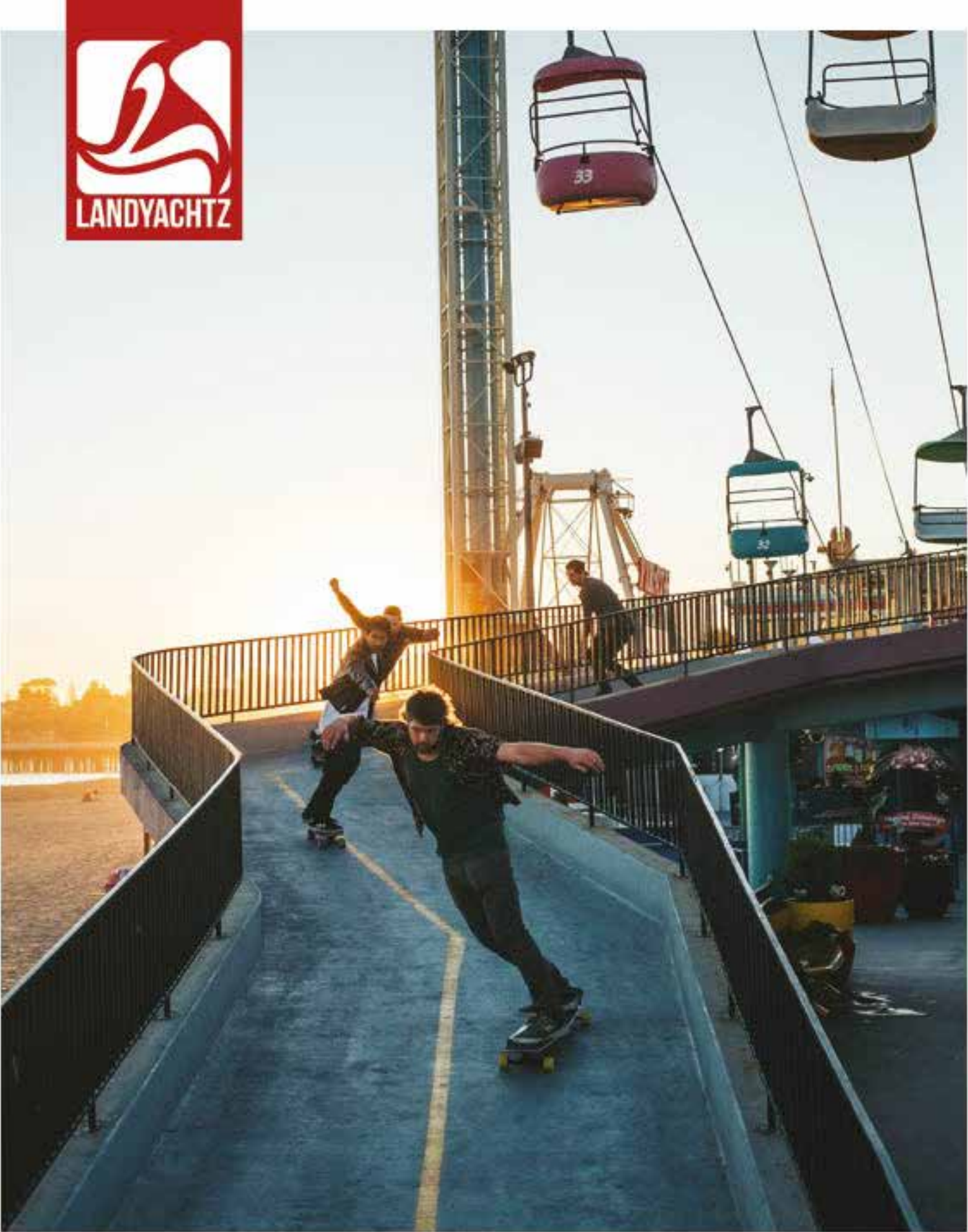


21 / POW STEALTH GTX GLOVE

One of POW's tried and tested legacy gloves within the line and a favourite amongst their Team Riders. Featuring "Grade A" Goatskin leather, GORE-TEX® + Gore Warm Technology, Primaloft® Gold insulation, Fur lined inner cuff, an Ultra Magic® no snag Velcro closure and Touch compatible leather index finger and thumb. Whether you're bombing pow lines in the resort or venturing out in the backcountry this glove will have you covered in the harshest conditions that mother throws at you. Wrap your paws in these leather pillows and you'll thank them later...!

**POWGLOVES.COM**

21



Landyachtz.com  
@landyachtzlongboards

Riders: Alex Hannigan, Steven Vera, Dillon Stephens and Stephen Veugn  
Location: Santa Barbara, California Photographer: Jacob Lambert





MARKET INSIGHT

The General Election brought some people an early Christmas Present – and for others an unwelcome present. With the dawning of 2020 it appears that the UK really is going to leave the EU. For me I cannot pretend that the vote was not a huge surprise and disappointment but at least the decision is taken - and it was a pretty definitive vote. There is no doubt that there was a real enthusiasm for Brexit, Boris and the Blue party. Now the real negotiations start and I only hope that our PM is better than I think he is. One thing he never seems to lack is enthusiasm.

Perhaps we can put all things Brexit aside and focus on other matters. The winter season is in full swing and early indications are that sales are heading in the right direction. Holiday bookings appear to be buoyant with snowboarders happy to put all things Brexit behind them and make some tracks.

TSA celebrated its 30th Birthday in November. Jeremy Sladen was there at the birth and has run the TSA division for 25 years. “It all seems to be going alright. We had a storming November, up in December and it’s all going well.” Of course I had to ask, why? “There’s no logic. There’s no way to say why things are going one way or another – you just have to look at the election results to see that you cannot predict or find rhyme-nor-reason for anything anymore.”

So what about snowboarding - is there any one part of snowboarding that’s going particularly well? “Yeah – boots. They’re flying which is a really good sign. Boards are up a little. People still want to buy kit although female sales are on the floor.” Again I asked Jeremy if he had an explanation? “No... not really. I think that perhaps when the economy is on the floor, when people worry for their jobs and their income, when the squeeze is on then women are perhaps more cautious – perhaps more sensible. Men still want to get their kit-fix but women perhaps have a more sensible head. I don’t know. But I do know that women’s kit isn’t selling.” And soft goods “Yeah – good – it’s going well. Outerwear especially good.”

What about new store openings – anything on the horizon? “Nothing at the moment – we’re all waiting to see what happens with the Swindon Snowdome – that seems to have ground to a halt which is hardly surprising given the state of the country. But we’re all keen for it to get off the ground.” So what is it that drives the TSA success and stability? “Basics – return to basics. Do it right. People want to be treated like customers, they want a good shop and they want dedicated boardsports areas, they want solid and good advice and they want to talk to like-minded people. We also need to get back to events and promotions – remember how it used to be and rekindle that spirit.”

So is Jeremy optimistic about the future? “Sure. I can retire in three years.” Is he serious? Is Jeremy that old? I had a little side bet that there is no way in hell that he will retire in three years. “A nice B&B in Aviemore will be just fine.” He may be talking about it but I am pretty confident that he’ll still be where he is in three years time – and I think he knows it! So much for snow – what about surf. I headed North and spoke to Kieran at Secret Spot in Scarborough. The store was

founded in 1989 and is one of the longest established core surf stores in the UK. Open 52 weeks of the year so when you call on January 2nd... you get an answer, not all surf shops are made the same!

Kieran is a long time surfer, who, in his own words, left the rat-race behind when he walked in to Secret Spot a couple of years back, spoke to Tomo (the owner) about getting a job, any job, just to get out of the rat race. It seemed to be a perfect fit and Kieran is now well and truly part of the team. “I would have done anything, packing boxes, sweeping the floor. I’m a surfer, I’m local and I knew the shop really well as a customer so just thought I’d have a conversation and see what happened. It’s gone really well and I’m loving it.”

What makes Secret Spot different? “We’re really dedicated to our customers. Of course we all love surfing and love working in a surf shop but we don’t just head out to make the sale at any price. We want to offer real solid advice – whether that be on a wetsuit, a board, a fin or leash. We’re massively selective in what we stock – and we will only stock stuff we use ourselves. In turn we can offer the customer really solid advice and we become real ‘trusted advisors’. As such the customer will return again and again. We know it works.”

How do you compete with the online stores? “We don’t need to – we have great relationships with our suppliers and we will never race to the bottom. I can only reiterate what I’ve already said – people come to us for advice and guidance – no matter what they need or how long it takes to talk things through – we have time for our customers. We’re a core surf shop and that shows in both our customer base and the products we sell. Unashamedly core, unashamedly enthusiastic.”

So what’s been good this past year? “The summer saw a dramatic increase in Foam boards – that’s continued with present buying in the winter. 2019’s been good and we’re optimistic about 2020”

What’s interesting for me is that the more and more I write these articles I find that the stores that are (really) dedicated to their sports, the stores that (really) have a genuine passion for the sports and (really) offer solid and honest advice are the survivors. These are the stores that will grow and develop our sports.

Without naming names some of the recent casualties, and some survivors, approach all this 100% as a business. Of course it is a business but from a rider’s perspective this approach carries little water - eventually it is seen through. Our board riders want to talk to participants... they do not see themselves as customers – they see themselves as boarders, as surfers, as riders. First and foremost they are enthusiasts.

GORDON WAY

UK

- GERMANY
- AUSTRIA
- FRANCE
- SWISS
- ITALY



# MARKET INSIGHT

## FRANCE

GERMANY  
AUSTRIA  
SWISS  
ITALY  
UK

Stable growth and reduced unemployment: according to the Banque de France forecasts, indicators should keep pointing in the right direction for the 2020-2021 period. But this rather optimistic scenario is still subject to the whims of an unstable, tense international context. For over a year, French economic activity has followed a pretty consistent rhythm and the situation is

set to continue, as the scenario put forward by the Banque de France forecasts an annual increase in GDP of 1.3% in 2020 - the same figure as 2019 - and 1.4% in 2021.

However, once again, France has seen strong social mobilisation at the end of 2019 after the government announced new reforms to pensions. The strikes caused an economic air pocket during the key period of end of year festivities. But it was a temporary air pocket. You just have to look at what happened during the strikes of 1995 and 2010 in the demonstrations against pensions reforms, 2016 against Employment Law and even last year with the 'Gilets Jaunes' crisis, the impact remained limited overall. According to Insee, we have lost 0.1 to 0.2 points of growth in one quarter. Our Gross Domestic Product (GDP), in other words the whole country's productivity, is slowing down but it has almost always picked back up afterwards. There are actually delays in terms of calendar. The purchases that weren't possible during the strikes are sure to be made later on in the coming months and a good amount were already made before the strikes. Black Friday worked really well this year, which means it was down to many people anticipating the disruption and buying their presents early. It was above all the small retailers who suffered the effects of the strike. That's also why the government appealed so much in support of them, setting up aid schemes. In fact, it's sad, but for businesses in economic sectors that aren't doing well, these social movements are often accelerators toward defaulting.

The strikes have undoubtedly disturbed the end of year festivities in one way or another but have they had an impact on our industry and in particular for our retailers' shops? How did the end-of-the-year period pan out?

Depending on the region, the reports on shop visitation numbers varies quite a lot. Shop Manager Claude Marie from Hawaii Surf, Paris tells us: "We moved to Paris and it's clear that the social climate disrupted our end of year sales but the effect of having a new shop right in the centre of the capital meant we had good visitor numbers and an increase in our turnover compared to the same period last year." At ABS in Lyon, it's a little bit of the same story: "Visitation and sales are better than last year which is pretty encouraging but it was mostly in the last days of December that people came to buy their presents, perhaps because of the social climate and the strikes."

On the coast at Uncle Zaz in Mimizan, Shop Manager Alban Causse has a similar feeling: "People are purchasing more and more last minute and we really feel that in the shop. The last days before Christmas were pretty good in terms of visitation and turnover. Even though sales were a little bit down on the same time last year, the end of year festivities went pretty well." A bit further north on l'Île d'Oléron, Cyril Arnaud from Tamarindo Surf Shop lets us in on the fact that: "The first 15 days of December were pretty tame apart from Saturdays, maybe because of the Black Friday effect," before adding "one thing is certain, the trend for last-minute presents is strengthening, which allowed us to make a good turnover in the last days of December," as for the strikes he says: "The complicated social climate has also had an impact on our shops in the provinces. We have seen a drop in visitation numbers from Parisian and

Lyonnais tourists who traditionally come to the island for the end of year celebrations. But because of the disruptions to transport and especially trains during the holidays, they obviously couldn't come this year and that's being felt in sales." He adds: "in addition to all that, the wave conditions weren't great either which didn't help generate sales."

When it comes to resorts, reports are somewhat mixed. It's difficult to define it at the time of asking (end of December), but in at Endless Summer in Courcheval, Jean declares that: "we've only been open for 20 days but we can say that the visitation and sales figures are quite similar to this time last year. Also, this year we didn't have a huge amount of snow for Christmas and New Year." At Snow Concept in Alpes d'Huez, it's a similar story: "The start of the season is quite similar to last year. Here's hoping that some snowfall come soon to really kick off the season."

In the Pyrenees at Les Pieds Dans L'Eau in Lons, Sylvain Perré is quite positive: "Visitations and sales are better this year. Resorts in the Pyrenees opened earlier this year thanks to the large early snowfalls which undoubtedly generated traffic and sales in the shop."

What products are customers most looking for in the shops for the end of year festivities and start of the winter season? At the more urban shops it has obviously been skateboarding that's worked well this winter. At ABS in Lyon: "Street skateboarding worked pretty well, decks and accessories just as well as complete sets that are still really good Christmas presents." The same was felt at Hawaii Surf: "Skateboarding, especially completes sold super well for Christmas and with us being technical roller specialists, that worked equally as well." The most mentioned brands are Cartel, Tricks and Prohibition. However, everyone agreed that street clothing and longboard skating were both slightly down this year compared to last.

When it comes to coastal shops, in this case at Tamarindo it was mostly the winter wetsuit section that worked well, explaining that: "This year especially it was the top of the range that was the most sought after by surfers. They are becoming more demanding and more knowledgeable and going more towards high-quality products." Another section that seemed to work well was boards, and especially beginner foam boards. He tells us: "while this section is more reserved for summer sales, we are seeing increasing sales all through the year and even in winter, which allows us to make profit all year round." At Uncle Zaz in Mimizan there doesn't seem to be any real trend emerging: "Above all it's the budget present that drove Christmas sales in this period. So we sell all types of products and ranges according to the customer." The most mentioned brands include Vans, Patagona, Stance, Torq and Softech.

In resorts, it seems as though Splitboards, which we already talked about last year, are increasingly sought after by snowboarders. Les Pieds Dans L'eau say: "While this product has sold pretty well in recent years, it seems like they're even more sought after this year. More people are coming into the shop for advice and to kit themselves out." When it comes to products, it's the start of the season and customers are coming in for gear, as much for boards, bindings and boots as for technical clothing and accessories. The most popular brands were Burton, Capita, Nitro, K2, Rossignol and Volcom. But everyone agreed that the mid to top of the range are increasingly popular with participants who prefer to opt for quality, even if it means paying for it.

The reports from end of year 2019 seem rather positive. Despite the tense social backdrop during this key end-of-year period, visitation and sales in shops appears to be pretty good. The lights have turned green for the start of 2020 and the retailers are feeling quite optimistic...

BENOIT BRECQ

WWW.NOBILESNOWBOARDS.COM



## NOBILE

N7 is a one of fresh shapes in our collection. Improved details from last season, we introduced three different tail characteristics. With this construction we would like to make you feel like surfing, just in powder. Mellow Camber with Tip Rocker. Especially designed for powder turns. Design by Stani Kulawik. The most wanted powder carving board, available also in split version as well as three different shapes/tails.



# MARKET INSIGHT

## GERMANY

FRANCE  
AUSTRIA  
SWISS  
ITALY  
UK

Everything pointed towards another great kick off to the winter season, especially remembering the powder days of last winter, and customer demand was encouraging. Except then came an unseasonable warm weather pattern that rendered holiday sales of snowboards, outerwear and other gear rather challenging. What's more, late

November proved that more and more boardsports retailers are hopping on the Black Friday hype and offering aggressive discounts.

For a first-hand account, we asked Choppy Water's Head of Sales Michael Link who travelled to core shops around the country: "The mood among core shops was really great at the start of the season. Hardgoods were stronger overall than apparel. It was once again proof that snowboarding remains strong in specialty retail and growth is possible. Online also has growth potential. Generally, I think the market will remain flat year-on-year in terms of pre-orders and sales. The trend towards premium products continues, and we have seen it with our Never Summer snowboards and Flux bindings. I feel that people are thinking more carefully about what they purchase. Sustainability and eco footprint are gaining importance. Kids and carving boards are trending, while splitboarding has seen constant growth. But at the same time, cheap beginners' boards under €300 have turned out real doozies."

For about ten years, Matthias Schweiker together with Konstanze Roth and Jens Blumhagen has been running Umfamiliar Snowboard Shop in Stuttgart. His estimate: "Until now, holiday sales of snowboards have been meagre, softgoods and gloves were better, mostly because we've been lacking snow so far. We hope for real snowfall soon and that we sell not only big brands but that customers are giving small brands a chance, like Dinosaurs Will Die. Due to a double hit of new offspring and our home renovation, we will be 100% focused on our online business at [www.trytheunfamiliar.de](http://www.trytheunfamiliar.de). We hope our customers will understand and seek our professional guidance via phone and email instead. Compared to previous season, we're expecting a minimal rise. The powder trend with volume shifted boards is still strong and splitboarding remains a focus. And in terms of style it's clear that the Nineties are back!"

In the town of Hof in Bavaria, Water Colors store has been in business for 30 years and recently celebrated their anniversary. With more than 120,000 snowboards sold, the team commands a wealth of experience and has brought countless youths into boardsports through classes and trips. "For the past five years, we have cultivated the next level of shop service with our [www.hof-snowpark.de](http://www.hof-snowpark.de) and our two very own ski lifts only 800 metres away from our store directly in the heart of town," said company Founder Bernd Flügel. "Directly in the city, nobody can offer that! Then again, winter has been rather weak between September and December here, while summer performed well with SUP, kiteboard, wakeboard, windsurf and skateboards (15% growth). But we were not satisfied with our

holiday sales due to the warm weather period in December and suffered a 30% decline in our ski, snowboard and apparel categories. Carving has been a strong suit here for some years now, but it was the SUP segment that performed the best in 2019 with 50% growth. That's why we are expanding our SUP offering significantly and will build a new test pool outside our store while also adding a snow machine to our ski lift in 2020. We are really happy with our online business at [funsportone.de](http://funsportone.de) and achieved 10% sales growth."

Volker Lux has been running a skateboard school in Hamburg as well as the Subvert Store for several years now. The basement store is a destination for beginner skaters and their parents. "I only run the store when I can be there myself, as I've had quite negative experiences with staff. So I only open the store a few hours every week while mostly focusing on the skate school, which is really my dream job. Combined with the school I really enjoy running the store. I also see it as a necessity, because they're peddling tons of junk to beginners. Even when they shop in so-called core shops, the staff will try to force gear on them that they're trying to get rid of. Beginners require solid recommendations, which is why I'm trying to keep the shop open. At this point, it's become the shop with the coolest hardware selection in all of Hamburg and surroundings. It naturally happened over time and I'll be getting in 100 new decks tomorrow, including lots of boards in 33 inches length and 18-inch wheelbase.

I really want to include all aspects of skateboarding, including longboards. In my classes, I also rely on longer boards to teach skills and only let my students try to learn things on short boards later on. Drop through boards have been lacklustre for me, although I sold some at discount yesterday. Other than that, it's mostly just top-mount boards with kicktail. Strange, as five years ago people mostly bought drop throughs. In skateboards, I sell a lot of hybrid boards. Perhaps because I'm also a pioneer in this segment. When I started Subvert, there was hardly anything available at 8 inches or 8.5 inches in width, which have now become standard sizes for brands. So I started selling these types of boards in 2004. Looking at skateboarding's Olympic debut, I'm confident it will move skateboarding forward. Especially when it comes to getting permits for new skateparks and indoor parks from the city."

When it comes to the future of boardsports, the close cooperation between brands, distributors and retailers will be crucial. Pre-orders, order deadlines, discounts, follow-up orders and stock refreshing will be decisive factors. But retail is in a crisis, as the latest numbers on fashion retailers make clear: From 23,000 businesses in 2010, only 15,000 are left! The big fish in the market are raking in more profits and expanding their online stores and shop networks. Perhaps we'll see the day where brands have to purchase space on the sales floor like in a supermarket or electric appliances store. In an era of Black Friday, Black Week, Xmas Sale and 20% Off Everything, our industry needs to seriously consider why our products are already seriously discounted right after their release.

JOCHEN BAUER





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Starting with politics we have our usual organised chaos, no clear majority in the parliament which has lead to endless discussions and many solutions. A topic that all our politicians want to solve is the never-ending buerocracy we have which makes life very tough especially for small companies and also slows down growth for bigger companies. Luckily VAT hasn't been raised, which was something many tax experts predicted.

Tax pressure is still the biggest problem for many boardsports retailers as margin has to be on a certain level to make a good living out of a small shop. This leads to a problem many retailers complain about; not having enough margin, especially in hardgoods. The 2019/20 winter started very well with a lot of early snow and Q4 was mainly a success business-wise but as Alexander Berger from Fakie stores says, "Discounts - especially on snow hardgoods - kick in way to early right after Christmas and the customers become hardwired not buy at full price which is a serious problem. If the brands and retailers would act like a team, we could solve this problem and everyone would be able to invest more money in sponsoring, events and the building of a strong scene/community."

The strongest category for him so far this winter has been splitboards with a very high sell-through rate without any discounts or special deals. A trend we can se nationwide as the more mature snowboarders have money to spend and like to hike as a workout and then hit a powder line. In outerwear this also means that a lot of outdoor brands are seeing a slice of the cake with The North Face being able to sell from technical outdoor gear to streetwear and fashion.

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Winter has a firm grip over the Swiss mountains and the winter sports market is showing pretty encouraging signs for winter 2019/2020.

Deliveries of base orders didn't go perfectly this autumn, but even though there was no massive delay to complain about, we cannot say that winter hardgoods and softgoods were delivered well. That said, nowadays it's a little bit less serious than it used to be since it's increasingly rare for retailers to request a delivery date of September 1. For most of the retailers on the plains, deliveries in October are more normal now because September is often still hot and sunny and prime for liquidation of summer stock. So it's in October that the shops turn and unveil their choice of winter equipment. This year the transition was quite frank with a real meteorological shift in mid October when temperatures plummeted at the same time as the bad weather arrived. This sudden change didn't fail to spark the keenest snowboarders' interest in the equipment freshly arrived on the shelves for 19/20. So while a few weeks before everyone was taking the chance to buy shorts in the sales, suddenly you have to put all the boots, boards and bindings out on display to satisfy your hurried customers. Retailers have had the tendency to put their change of season back a bit but then when winter knocks on the door, you have to react quickly to please customers and that's why it's important that the brands are able to deliver their equipment on time. In general we can say that sales have gone pretty well, it seems as though we've

MARKET INSIGHT

During winter months skateboarding dies down a little, but the complete boards business during Christmas has even seem some growth and US deck brands such as Baker, Real and Antihero gain sales because of their amazing video productions. Sadly we're noticing that more and more smaller skate/snow stores have had to close their doors as they can no longer make a living being a core store if they don't change direction into streetwear or the so called hype driven business model by selling sneakers or pure streetwear brands, which are trending heavily. These core stores also suffer with their more remote locations as the consumer nowadays wants to either buy in a big city or online.

We've seen some good news in Milan, with the opening of two new skate shops with the opening of Rufus and Windrose. Verona also saw the opening of a very cool new core skate store named Dear George, a very smooth and minimalist interior (Supreme style), so if you happen to be in Verona it's a must visit. Just a handful of new openings during 2019, but they're very good ones quality-wise.

When talking to Lukas Hoeller from Sub (skate store) and SUBlime (young menswear) he makes one thing clear: "You have to concentrate on what you want to transmit, a clear brand mix, knowledge of the products and really standing behind what you are selling is key to being credible. Too many retailers sell too many different products and brands, which confuses customers and makes it harder to market the store right, especially online.

Now let's enjoy the last wonderful winter months and see you out there! Peace.

FRANZ JOSEF HOLLER

retained a good feeling from the end of last season and a nice start to this season with the bad weather settling in, keeping the mountains covered in snow above 1500m since the end of October. This means that the most important conditions came together to provide the desire to renew old snowboarding kit. And so sales started stacking up.

In terms of visitation numbers to ski resorts, the good snow conditions meant that resorts could open relatively early and you could ski pretty much everywhere in Switzerland during the Christmas/New Year holiday. The presence of the snow and good weather brought record attendance to some of our alpine resorts, which is obviously a good omen for the resort-based shops and snowboard rentals.

In equipment we can see the craze for splitboarding is ever-present, the figures are good and the clientele is growing larger. The ageing of the Swiss snowboarder population has definitely had an effect and now we can see the average age of participants has clearly gone up which leads to specific equipment for piste/carving, and especially freeriding, having the wind in its sails while the freestyle segment is going down each year. Quite logically, with more years under your belt comes more nice powder turns and less double kinked rails... Splitboarding fits this logic perfectly, addressing an audience in search of adventure, open spaces and untracked snow, as well as people who are also looking to keep in shape through physical exertion. While back in the day this was reserved for skiers, it is now proceeding to win over thirty and forty-something snowboarders who probably have a bit more of a budget to put into gear than a young freestyler.

FABIEN GRISEL

MARKET INSIGHT

Cheers to a new decade. The year 2020 is finally here and presents tons of challenges and opportunities. In politics, the Austrian government is still figuring out coalitions after the repeat elections, but currently all signs point towards a union between the Austrian People's party (ÖVP) and Green party. This result promises more stability after the previous government was marred by scandals large and small, including the 'Ibiza Affair'. With the Green party entering our government for the first time, the people are hoping for more environment-conscious policies. We all need a healthy environment to live in harmony, and especially in order to continue enjoying winter season in all it offers. The latter poses a major challenge for the new decade and calls for a unified approach to environmental measures.

As far as the economy is concerned, experts predict less growth than in 2019, but still project 1.4 per cent growth, which is only slightly below 2020 levels. This indicates a strong economic cycle, while consumer spending continues to remain the main growth engine. The slight cool down of economic expansion will also most likely impact the job market, with a slight uptick in unemployment as a natural consequence. At the same time, the Austrian economy still holds various sectors in need of hiring new talent and skilled workers, which include the tourism segment but also retail.

Looking into the boardsports retail situation, let's start with snowboarding as we are right in the middle of the season at the time of this writing. A quick roundup of what's happening on the slopes at our country's major ski resorts, it's undeniable that snowboarding is making a small comeback right now. There are more snowboarders out in the mountains, which also reflects in sales of snowboard gear in retail. The hardware segment has performed particularly well in terms of sales during the final quarter of 2019, which continues the trend from the last two winters. Apparel and goggles have also proven strong performers and further indicate a positive trend in the snowboard segment. Then again, the business with goggles and apparel remains highly weather dependent and can show strong variations according to the weather situation. In retail, that reflects in a tendency

towards more impulse buying instead of planned purchases like we see in hardware. Naturally, the last quarter of the year is extremely importance for retailers to make their margins, so here's a survey of some pro shops around the country: Thomas Alton at Alton Premium Boardstore in Feldkirch is pleased with results in hardgoods. This sentiment is shared by Gernot Brandstätter at Surf Service Graz Shop, whose sales are on par with last season's so far. At the same time, Austria is witnessing a trend towards touring, which creates positive results in splitboard sales, which are a continuous growth market according to Thomas Alton. Specialized shapes for powder runs or off-slope exploration are also performing well this season, buoyed by past seasons rich snowfalls and great initial snowfalls in November. As a trending apparel item, Alton reports strong sales of premium dungarees. But carving boards are also in high demand, said Gernot Brandstätter, who counts among the specialists for this type of riding. Among all retailers, there's a positive trend towards sales in kids' boards. With the growing importance of the youth segment, topics like apparel that can accommodate for children's growth are trending. It's also hard to overlook the new wave of kids at ski resorts and parks. This is also in no small part thanks to a generation of riders who grew up snowboarding and is now pointing their offspring towards sideways riding instead of traditional skiing. The brands are also picking up on the youth trend and have tons of initiatives and events in store for the season. Thomas Alton is also joining the fun with another edition of his Mini Shred Day. On that note, Thomas is currently celebrating a milestone with the 20th anniversary of his Snow Park in Damüls. Congrats and 'nuff respect, Mr. Alton and cheers to the next 20 years! We'll see you all at Shops 1st Try out on the slopes. Happy New Year!

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 28 30 OUTDOOR RETAILER  
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 04 AGENDA  
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 06 12 FREERIDE  
WORLD TOUR  
KICKING HORSE,  
GOLDEN BC, CANADA  
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## MARCH

 02 06 SLIDE ON SNOW DEMO  
PILO, ITALY  
SIGB.ORG.UK

 07 03 FREERIDE  
WORLD TOUR  
FIBERBRUN  
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 28 05 FREERIDE  
WORLD TOUR  
VERBIER - SWITZERLAND  
FREERIDEWORLDTOUR.COM

 23 27 WORLD ROOKIE  
FINALS  
SEISER-ALM - ITALY  
WORLDROOKIE.COM

 25 05 CORONA OPEN  
GOLD COAST  
AUSTRALIA  
WORLDURFLEAGUE.COM


 06 12 RIP CURL PRO  
BELLS BEACH - AUSTRALIA  
WORLDURFLEAGUE.COM

 22 02 MARGARET RIVER PRO  
AUSTRALIA  
WORLDURFLEAGUE.COM

 30 05 BASELWORLD  
BASEL - SWITZERLAND  
BASELWORLD.COM

 13 24 BALI PRO  
BALI  
WORLDURFLEAGUE.COM

 04 14 QUIKSILVER PRO G-LAND  
INDONESIA  
WORLDURFLEAGUE.COM

 18 27 OI RIO PRO  
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 07 19 CORONA OPEN J-BAY  
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 03 04 US ON SNOW DEMO  
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 28 04 FREERIDE  
WORLD TOUR  
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FREERIDEWORLDTOUR.COM

 09 11 SPORT ACHAT  
LYON, FRANCE  
SPORTAIR.FR

 23 31 SWATCH FREERIDE  
WORLDTOUR  
VERBIER - SWITZERLAND  
FREERIDEWORLDTOUR.COM

 18 LONGBOARD  
STUBEN AM ARLBERG

 MAY 08 09 PERFORMANCE DAYS  
MUNICH - GERMANY  
PERFORMANCEDAYS.EU

 16 19 PITTI UOMO SUMMER  
FIRENZE ITALY  
PITTIMAGINE.COM

 T B C ITALIAN SURF EXPO  
SPIAGGIA DI SANTA SEVERA  
ITALIASURFEXPO.IT

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