

BOARDSPORT

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EUROPEAN SURF/SKATE/SNOW BUSINESS

**BIG WIG GLOBE'S MATT HILL  
+ MIZU'S JUSSI OKSANEN  
SECURING INVENTORY IN  
2020'S SKATEBOARD BOOM**

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# EDITORIAL

## SOURCE#102

Surf and skate hardgoods (and many categories connected to them) have thrived through COVID-19. Those who were able to pivot and set up online stores, or further accelerate current offerings have been the real winners. No one would have believed we'd head into the pandemic and come out complaining of a supply shortage. You'll read a feature on the booming beginner segment in skateboarding (P.73), with a report from the frontline by the UK's top action sports academy where since opening from lockdown, their coaching sessions for beginners - of all ages - are maxed out!

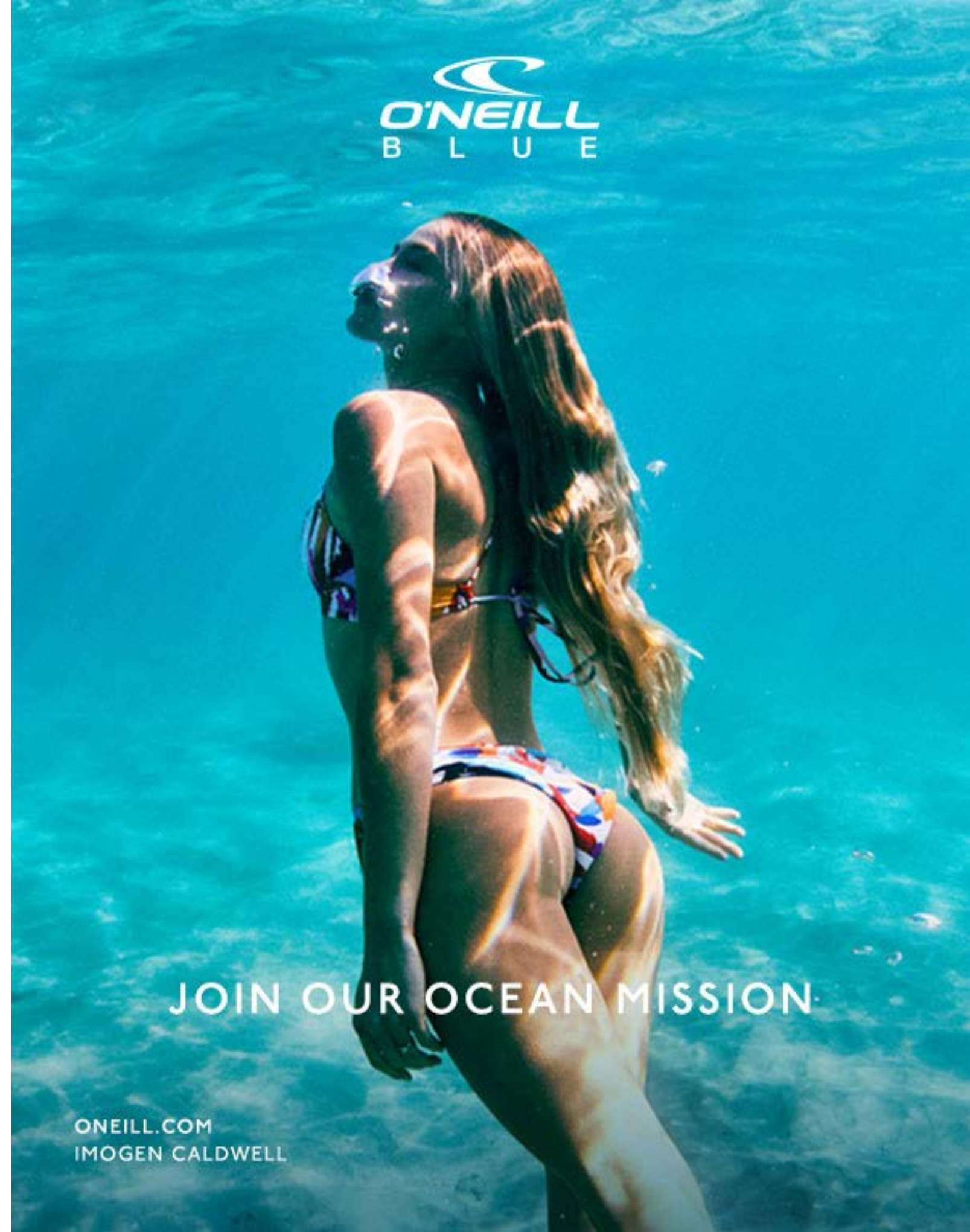
With furloughs and government grants propping up unemployment figures at the moment, the real damage of COVID-19 may not be fully

realised until 2021 or even 2022. But it's our job as the boardsports industry to keep the stoke alive and welcome these new skateboarders and surfers with open arms. Make sure their first board is a legit one, not some shitty Wavestorm or piece of crap skateboard that's going to break within a couple of weeks. That whole 'one chance for a first impression' thing is more pertinent now than ever before.

You'll notice my editorial has a little extra vigour this time round, some punchy swears. It's a combination of real energy, optimism, and utter excitement for taking off on holiday for the first time since early March. To most normal people a 6-month hiatus from heading to the beach may seem like a first world-problem, but with the shit pay we receive in this boardsports racket, the glitter this jobby of an industry is rolled in is supposedly travel. But like everyone else in our industry, I've bitten down hard, bent over and have been shafted by an almighty workload, the likes of which we haven't seen before.

Here's to getting fucked by the new normal. But here's to also working in a business that benefits from being practiced solo. Let's take a minute to think about our poor counterparts who have been hit the hardest in the festival, live music, hospitality industry or even the team sports world. We'll all learn lessons from this one, and even though it sucks balls, I think we can feel thankful our biggest problem from all of this has been a shortage in supply. So, without being a total capitalist bastard... next time the world plummets into an economic recession or global pandemic... hit the fucking go button! (also, read our feature on how to secure inventory and service customer needs P.12)! Make surf- and skateboards. Get innovative with ways to operate through lockdown laws, because that's what we are as surfers, skaters and snowboarders... innovators.

**Always Sideways,**  
**Harry Mitchell Thompson**  
**Editor**





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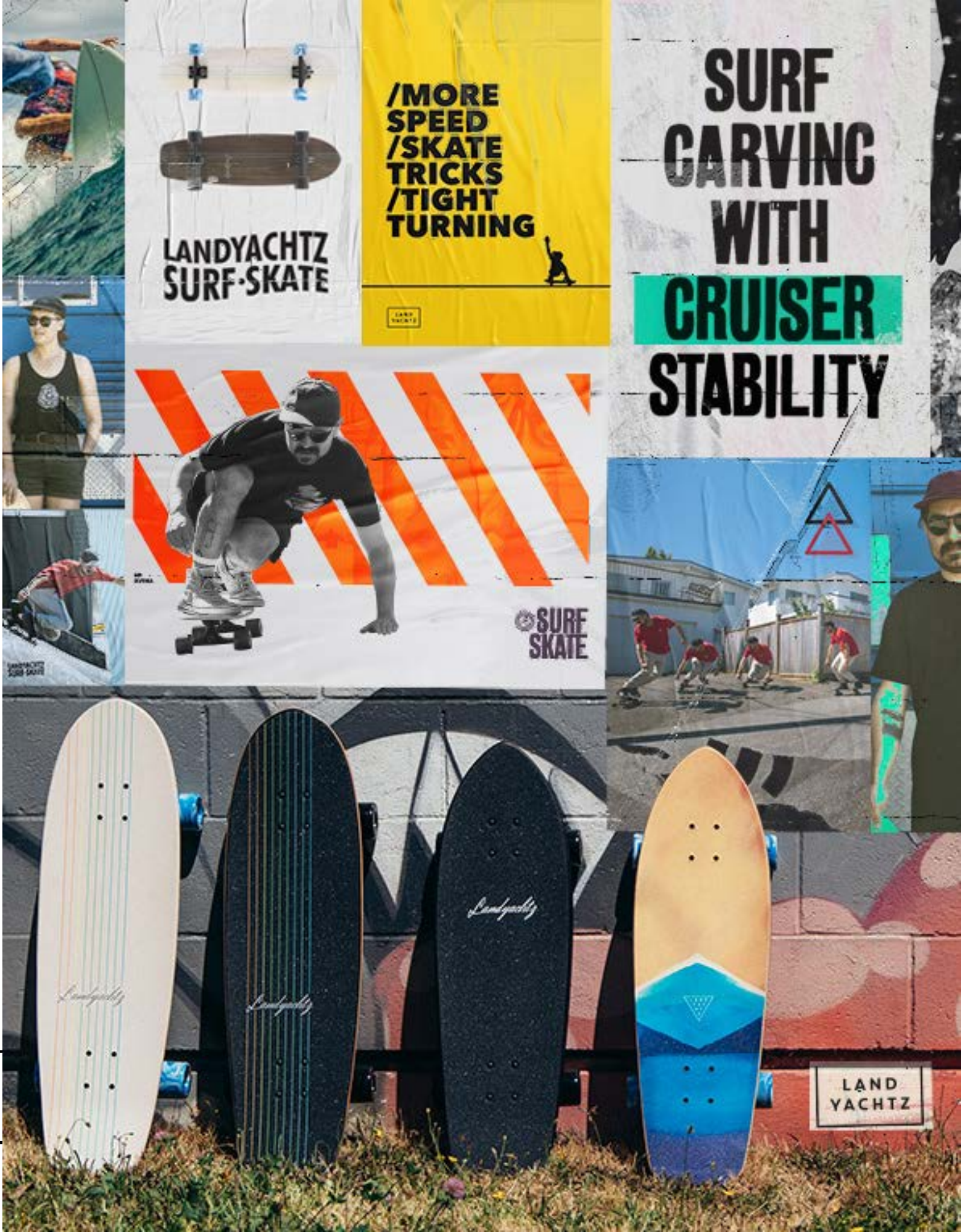
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On the cover Xué Gil YOW brand manager at Mar Bella skatepark, Barcelona.  
Photo by German Antón Spot.







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## NEWS

#101

- **Three Industry Lifers Look To Shake Up Flip Flop Market With FoamLife; The Next Big Thing**  
Over lockdown in the UK, three friends and industry lifers with eclectic backgrounds in action sports, music, design and street art got together to start something new. Launching in Spring 2021, FoamLife is a new flip flop brand heavily tipped for the top by some of the industry's key players. Read a full profile of the brand with co-founders Timo Mullen, Daniel Macaulay, and Karl Read on the SOURCE website.

- **Burton's Social Compliance Program Accredited By FLA**

After an extensive review, Burton's social compliance program that ensures fair international labour has been awarded accreditation by The Fair Labor Association.

- **Rip Curl Debuts Girls Store In Baleal Bay, Portugal**

Riding on the decade-long-wave that is the rise in female surfers, Rip Curl has opened up a girls store in Baleal Bay, Portugal. It will be the 4th of its kind in Europe that only stocks women's apparel and technical surf gear.

- **John John Florence Launches Brand W/ Hurley Family**

Back-to-back world champion and qualifier for the USA Olympic surf team, John John Florence is launching a new outdoor apparel brand in collaboration with the Hurley family. Florence Marine X is set to arrive in Spring 2021.

- **VF Corporation Sets Up Shop In Heart Of Milan**  
VF Corporation have set up shop at 11 Orefici Street in Milan. With their new multi-brand shop set to open in the autumn, VF aims to create an

innovative, customer-focused experience just a stone's throw away from the Duomo di Milano.

- **UK Boardsports Retailer Two Seasons Repurchased From Boardriders By Founder Stuart Roberts**

Stuart Roberts has purchased the domain name, stock, e-commerce business and assets for Two Seasons back from Boardriders with the help of two investors. Stuart founded Two Seasons back in 1982, and in 2007 merged with the Billabong Group – in 2020 he has taken it back.

- **Kandui Holdings LLC (Hurley Family) Acquire Simple Shoes**

Kandui Holdings LLC, owned by the Hurley family, has added Simple to their network of brands after acquiring their outstanding assets and intellectual property. Kandui will work closely with Denis Ryan, who brought Simple Shoes in 2015, to continue to evolve brand whilst keeping Simple products high quality and eco-friendly.

- **UK National Snow Show Set To Debut In Birmingham, October 2021**

October 2021 sees the reincarnation of the legendary London Ski & Snowboard Show, with the birth of The National Snow Show, hosted by Raccoon Events. The new event, run by some of the former event's management team will take over the NEC in Birmingham for a weekend of action, talks, workshops, brand and retail exhibitors, entertainment, after parties and some of the biggest names in snowsports. The new UK Snow Show will unite the snowsports industry just as winter kicks off for the 21/22 season, providing brands with the perfect platform to activate any new marketing campaigns.

- **Wildsuits Enters Spanish Market With Playgop Agency**

French eco-friendly wetsuit brand, Wildsuits has signed a deal with Playgop agency. Playgop's experience and knowledge of the Spanish watersports market will give Wildsuits the best possible start in their new venture.



### Huge Changes At WSL: 2020 Cancelled, 2021 Season Starts In Hawaii, Hossegor Off The CT Circuit, 1 Day World Title Events

Due to the ongoing COVID restrictions and subsequent safety concerns, the World Surf League has decided to cancel the 2020 Championship Tour. Accompanying the news is the brand new schedule and set-up for the 2021 Tour and Challenger Series; features include equal numbers of events for men and women, distinct seasons and a high pressure and exciting single-day final. Big news in Europe is that Hossegor is off the CT and Portugal moves from October to February. There will however be a new series of pre-season exhibition events featuring CT surfers in the USA, Australia, France, and Portugal called The WSL Countdown. 2022 will see the introduction of a cut, where the CT will reduce the men's and women's fields from 36 and 18 to 24 and 12, respectively at the season's midway point.

### Recycled Tire Footwear Brand Indosole Now Available In Portugal Through CoolandFunctional

Using their own Sole Engineered Tyre Technology (SETT), Indosole recycles rubber from used tyres into footwear, the result? Comfortable, sustainable and adaptable material. Since 2004, Indosole has spread to over 25 countries and now, in 2020, is going to be available in Europe. They are available in Europe through CoolandFunctional and now have B Corp status.

### Town & Country Return To Europe With Opening Of New Store

Hawaiian surf brand, Town & Country has returned to Europe through 'The Salts Only' (Wilco Prins, Stephan Moretti and Arnaud Touix) in time for their 50th anniversary. The return is coupled with the opening of their new shop 'The Salts Only' in Hossegor.

### Darren Broadbridge Joins Pure Surf Camps

After 13 years at Euroglass, Hossegor-based Darren Broadbridge has taken on a position at Pure Surf Camps. His start with Pure was hampered by the global crisis, however things have started looking up with high levels of interest in this summer's camps.

### POC Set To Further Engage UK Market With New UK Sales Team

The leading manufacturer of headwear, eyewear, apparel and body armour, POC, has launched a UK Sales Organisation to continue their business growth and maturity. The new team will allow POC to engage more with the UK market, their UK partners and customers.

### Nixon Announces Nancy Dynan As President

Focusing on experiences, Awayco aims to reduce With 25 years experience under her belt, a proven track record of successful development of brand strategies and growth and 2 years as Vice-President of Marketing at Nixon, Nancy Dynan has been promoted to President of Nixon.

### Pilot Fish Opens Concept Store Biarritz

Pilot Fish has opened their first shop in Biarritz, the first in Europe – the shop aims to bring a connection between customers and the brands they buy through a unique and modern retail experience.

### CEO And President Of Patagonia Steps Down

The CEO and President at Patagonia is stepping down after 12 impressive years. Champion of Change recipient Rose Marcario has led Patagonia through huge changes in advancement of climate and environmental policies, to the point of Patagonia becoming a leader in the Benefit Corporation Movement. Patagonia wish her well for the future.

### Pura Vida Now Available In Europe Through Hectic

Pura Vida Bracelets ("Pura Vida"), the La Jolla, California-based digitally native jewellery and lifestyle accessories brand has announced its partnership with European distributor Hectic Ltd. Hectic will be responsible for the sales, marketing, and distribution of Pura Vida products for wholesale accounts throughout Europe. Pura Vida joins fellow Hectic brands such as Stance, Arcade Belts, Firewire, Deus, Slowtide and more.



x



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# SECURING INVENTORY IN 2020'S SKATEBOARD BOOM

Nobody saw it coming. Now skateboarding is officially booming, and supply is running low. Learn retailer strategies for securing inventory and serving customer needs amid unprecedented demand in this special guide by SOURCE Skateboard. Editor **Dirk Vogel**.

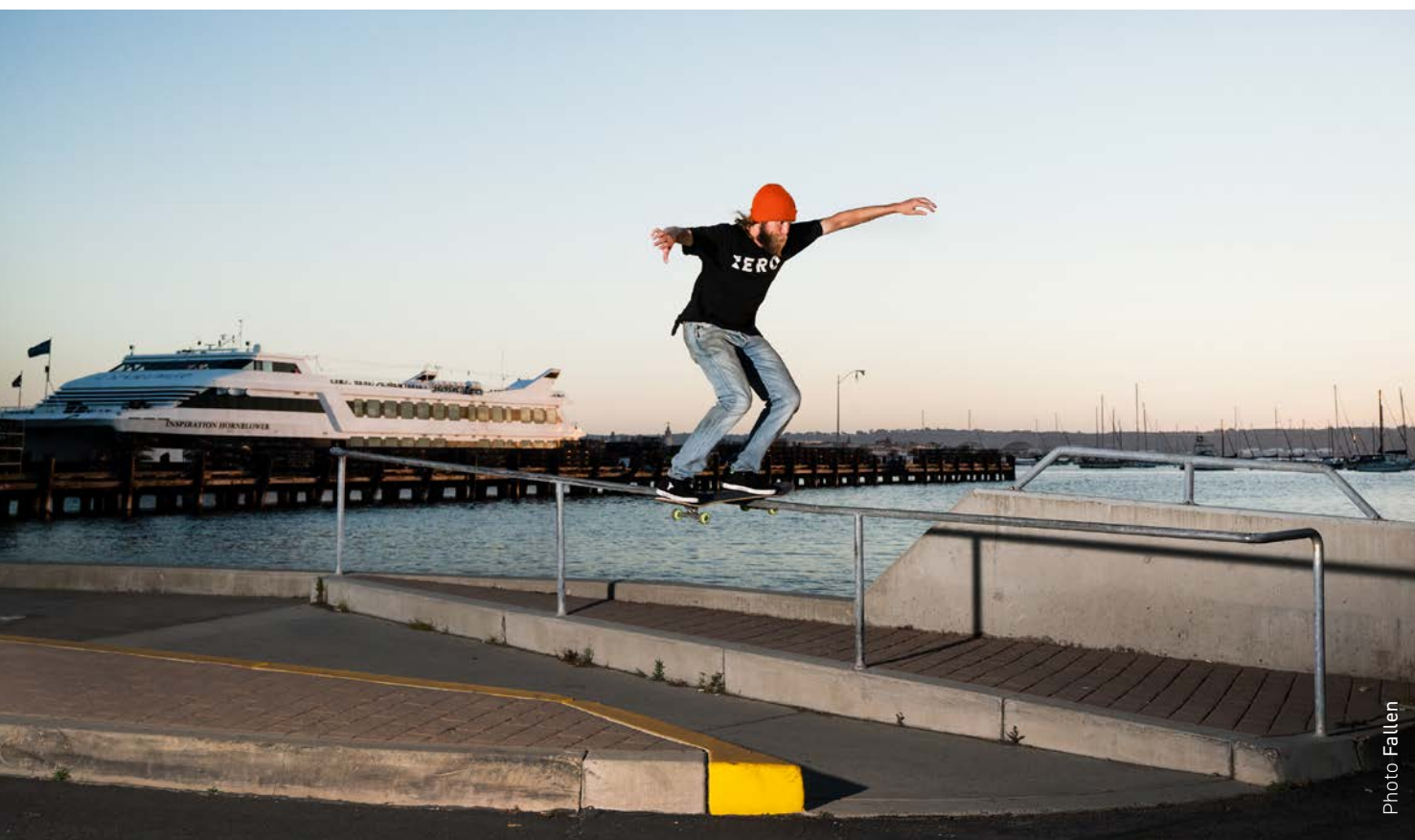


Photo: Fallen

What a rollercoaster ride! The skateboard industry was bracing for a boost from the Tokyo Olympics. Then the pandemic hit and sent retailers, manufacturers and distributors into lockdown. But out of the silence, skateboarding popped back into the mainstream spotlight as the year's surprise trend: "Since the pandemic started, we have had a huge spike in sales mainly due to the stimulus packages with governments trying to fuel the economy and encourage spending," said Kris O'Brien, Founder/Director at OBfive Skateboards. "People need something

*"The market and participation at the moment are very strong and this is backed up by the unprecedented amount of sales we have seen this year".* **Jamie Smith, Team Manager at Enuff.**

to bring them some fun and peace during these difficult times getting both the recreation and exercise we all need. Skateboarding brings freedom and serenity to a world that is a bit difficult to navigate right now," said Eben Woodall VP of Sales at Carver Skateboards. The wide availability of decent public skateparks and the socially distanced nature of skateboarding have created the perfect storm, also from a business standpoint: "The market and participation at the moment are very strong and this is backed up by the unprecedented amount of sales we have seen this year. There appears to be a new influx of youth picking up the sport and also some older guys getting back into it, next to the core group of riders that is always

*"If I worked in the soccer or hockey industry, I would be stating something very different. In my ten years in the longboard industry, I have never seen this level of growth happen over such a short period of time".* **Dave Price, International Accounts Manager At Landyachtz Longboards.**

there," said Jamie Smith, Enuff Team Manager. At Landyachtz Longboards, Dave Price, International Accounts Manager said: "Covid-19 has created a very unique situation. We are lucky to be in an industry that is an individual based activity that can be practiced close to home. If I worked in the soccer or hockey industry, I would be stating something very different. In my ten years in the longboard industry, I have never seen this level of growth happen over such a short period of time."

## POP GOES THE MARKET

According to reports from retailers and distributors, everyone has sold through an entire year's worth of inventory in the two months following March. Take some time to let this



Photo: OP

information sink in. Two months, full year! A blessing and a curse, as it turns out, because practically nobody in the industry expected such a surge in demand. "Carver sales have tripled with the impact of Covid-19 across all sales channels. This also has put a huge strain on the supply chain. With components coming from different parts of the world and those countries experiencing their own set of problems individually, supply is definitely very challenging right now. We have a decent flow of goods from our suppliers, but we are still behind on orders," said Eben at Carver. Kris at OBfive Skateboards said: "The next challenge for us, and most other brands, is replenishing stock for the future. All reports from our factories are that they are at full capacity and lead times and MOQ's are high."

## SIX STRATEGIES FOR SECURING INVENTORY IN SKATEBOARDING'S BOOM CYCLE

In order to chart a way forward, we sat down with an industry insider who's seen the rise of globalized supply chains in skateboarding from day one: **Steve Douglas** at Rolling Thunder, global licensees and distributors of Zoo York, Ocean Pacific, Speed demons, Vol 1, Blueprint, Verb, KFD, RAD, Pivot trucks, Killer Speed Co and The Heart Supply. "Skateboarding has never been in the Olympics, so everyone knew there was going to be a ripple effect. But nobody saw this coming!



We don't know yet if it's going to be a one-foot wave or a 60-foot wave, but I want to be on that wave! I'm not going to just sit there during what could be the biggest expansion of skateboarding in history!" said Douglas.

*"Skateboarding has never been in the Olympics, so everyone knew there was going to be a ripple effect. But nobody saw this coming! We don't know yet if it's going to be a one-foot wave or a 60-foot wave, but I want to be on that wave! I'm not going to just sit there during what could be the biggest expansion of skateboarding in history!" Steve Douglas*

In the following, the former pro skateboarder and accomplished company strategist joins industry insiders for these helpful retailer strategies:

#### 1. Throw out the old rule book

The new reality after COVID-19 is anything but normal, so stores need to adjust their pre-booking and order frequency, like, right now. "Some companies still work with their old calendar, thinking delivery windows and lead times are still the same. Factories are telling them, 'No way!'" said Steve Douglas, adding: "Everything is delayed by three to four months right now. Shops will not have inventory for Christmas season if they're not on top of it now. People need to change the way they do business."

#### 2. Don't put your eggs in one basket

Shops can no longer depend on a single distributor or hardgoods manufacturer to secure supply. Instead, branch out and work with a variety of suppliers to secure inventory in case one of them runs out. "Everyone is hoarding as much product as possible right now, so don't put all your eggs in one basket," said Douglas. "It's a great time for woodshops right now, including American and Mexican companies. Usually, it's too expensive to ship internationally from North America because of airfreight, but European distributors are buying whatever they can."



#### 3. Embrace complete boards

Asked about the key product of the moment, Benoit Brecq at HOFF Distribution said: "Completes are the strongest category right now. COVID19 seems to have a great impact in terms of demand and sales." And finally, core skateshops are waking up to the category: "Completes are where it all starts for the majority of people, yet a lot of people in the industry used to not embrace it," said Steve Douglas, who specializes in quality completes from licensed brands such as Alien Workshop and Zoo York, adding: "Someone could be the next Tom Penny, but might as well get a crap complete board and just quit. Stores like Slam City Skates now carry completes, and people new to skateboarding now start on good boards. It also makes walking into a core shop far less overwhelming."

#### 4. Talk pre-orders with suppliers

Despite the current drought in supply, Jörg Ludewig, Managing Partner at Urban Supplies distribution noticed: "In hardgoods, which is 95% of our business, we have only had a few SS21 pre-books so far." According to Steve Douglas, many shops may be risk averse in the current uncertain climate. But he strongly encourages stores: "Ask if your suppliers will take the risk and put in a pre-book order. It helps shops secure product and the suppliers also benefit, because they receive better information about the kind of products that are selling well. Which helps decision-making all the way into manufacturing."

#### 5. Constantly check in

Now more than ever, stores need to keep in touch with suppliers amid disrupted global supply chains. "What you think you are getting delivered may differ from what's actually coming in," said Steve Douglas. "You need to constantly check in with your distributor or supplier to make sure you are actually getting what you ordered. Some product that was supposed to arrive in October 2020 has already been pushed back by manufacturers to March 2021."

#### 6. Keep an eye on accessories

The drought is not just affecting decks, trucks, and wheels. "Expect shortages of things that aren't on your radar, like griptape, hardware, bushings and so on. Manufacturers are scrambling because there is so much demand," said Steve Douglas. Now is a good time to stock up on these accessories, while always keeping in mind that in this new normal, suppliers will be quick to point out the difference between the products you want and the products you can get. People are ready to buy blue wheels instead of white wheels, and niche brands that were formerly scoffed at now sell thousands of units, on the mere strength of having inventory.



Obviously, securing inventory for the holiday season should be first in mind for core retailers at the moment. But what happens afterwards? How long will this drought continue? "I don't see the situation changing until springtime 2021 or summer. There are going to be lots of unhappy people this Christmas," said Steve Douglas at Rolling Thunder, adding: "Christmas product may take until spring to turn up. And spring stuff is already delayed. Factories now have up to six months lead time to make completes."

At Landyachtz, David Price also said: "I've never seen a global shortage of skateboard completes and trucks, but that is the state the industry is currently in. Many people have been asking me how long this level of growth will last. Sales always drive more sales and with so much demand left on the table, I could see this lasting a year or two." At the same time, the rate of new releases and product innovation is bound to take a hit: "It has been challenging to drive new product development and tech with the supply chain as affected as it is now. We are just trying to keep up with demand," said Eben at Carver Skateboards. Then again, after years of oversupply, all those empty shelves in retail and warehouses have a plus side, said Sly Kookmaster at Sector 9: "We're keeping on track for 2021, but back to decent production rhythms. No more overstocks and that sounds good." ☺



# LESS IS MORE

## GERMANY

AUSTRIA  
FRANCE  
SWISS  
ITALY  
UK

A lot has happened since our last German Market Insight two months ago. Covid-19 lockdown regulations were easing up and sports goods brands

were coming out of some of their most turbulent times after shifting strategies both in production and marketing. But it hasn't all been doom and gloom, skateboard sales have been through the roof with little product left in stock and a similar trend in other solo sporting goods segments.

As of June 17, regulations have eased up, shops have opened and can be entered only with a facemask and the number of customers has to be regulated by staff as well as ensuring disinfection measures are kept in place. The wearing of facemasks can also still be seen on public transportation and restaurants with plenty of space left between tables to safeguard social distancing. Event-wise, large scale events still won't be permitted until October 31 at least and with strict regulations in place for small public and private events, however the rules for these are varied between states.

Looking at the economy, Germany suffered a 10.7% drop in the second quarter but thanks to the German 'kurzarbeit' system, unemployment wasn't affected as sharply. With a slowdown in unemployment numbers in June, July 2020 saw the first decrease in unemployment since February with the number of unemployed people in Germany falling by 18,000. Germany's ifo research institute (Institute for Economic Research) is predicting GDP to grow 6.9% in the third quarter and 3.8% in the last quarter of the year. To boost the economic recovery during Covid-19, Germany has

unveiled the largest financial aid package in their history of the Federal Republic. According to the Federal Ministry of Finance "the total volume of measures affecting the budget amounts to EUR 353.3 billion and the total volume of guarantees to EUR 819.7 billion."

The snowboard industry seemed to get the brunt of the Covid-19 hit with lifts and resorts closing early due to lockdowns so what has happened there in the last few months? Dominik Lyssek, Head of Marketing at SP United offers a bit of insight: "In Germany especially in these multisport shops that might be selling ski and snowboard gear in the winter become quite bike heavy in the summer and they are doing quite well and that probably has something to do with the fact that in Germany we were allowed to go outside and do sports. How that is going to pull over into winter is really hard to say. We can see the bike parks are full, lifts are in full swing, social distancing rules are being respected and it works. Whether that will transfer to the winter season the same way is really hard to say. Generally, I think many retailers pulled through the pandemic positively, we'll see how the sales go at the end of the summer season, there's already a big discount battle on the market."

When it comes to surf, Andy from Norden gives us his take on the market: "Generally I would say, anything that floats sold well. For us it was beginner surfboards such as softboards, mini Malibus and longboard surfboards, as well as all-round hardboard SUPs and skim boards. We have worked on a lot of new products in the past few months, especially the stuff that sold well during these difficult times. If people are meant to stay at home, we need to give them stuff that they can use on their door



step,” and commenting on the morale between brands and shops, “I think it was a good year to build up the relationship with our retail partners. We all had to survive, and we achieved that and came out with a smile as it was a really good season this year, if not, one of the best seasons we ever had. So if our partners help us with the planning of the next season, we are on a good path. I think everybody was happy the way it went and everybody believes in the future of outdoor sports and is motivated.” Over at Wellenreitshop Hamburg, the surf business has been good since the end of lockdown with customers buying products to use locally rather than travelling abroad, explained Yann Kuehlke. In hardgoods foamies has been a strong category followed by Malibu's and shortboards but in softgoods sales have been slower.

We also spoke to Nicolas Wendelken from Choppy Water and got his take on the surf industry: “All watersports are selling strong: SUP, surf, and windsurf. We expect normal winter sales. Summer shows that people invest in sports goods and enjoy their sports as long as they can reach the spots/resorts by car. I am optimistic for winter sales for all countries which are close to ski resorts. We are very positive about summer business 2020 and optimistic about Winter 2020/2021.”

Malte from Surflin in Kiel tells us how it is at the frontline: “Inflatable SUP was pretty sizzling, stocks melting like ice cream in the sun, after the borders opened again surfboards also increased in sales, all outdoor sports hardware sold very well. We even had a big increase in skate longboards. Clothing is still a pain, all thanks to the big online outlets. We are only working with small brands like Hippy Tree, Picture and bleed for example.

I expect a bit slower business at the end of the holidays so we are getting ready for snowboarding business that hopefully starts at the end of October. We will still keep stock levels low and buy the gear where it is available. All outdoor gear will still stay strong in 2021... the virus will be around for a while, so indoor clubbing or indoor sports and so on will still be masked and keep the customers away, or won't be allowed like concerts.”

Jörg Ludewig from Urban Supplies gives us his insight on the skate industry: “Every category is selling equally well, anything hardgoods related sells. There's no real strategy, there was obviously a product shortage as everybody knows. So we were trying to get our hands on as much product as possible, buying anything that our suppliers were offering us on top of existing orders. So we got additional orders from companies who for whatever reason did not take their orders from suppliers. We weren't really sure when we would get back to normal and the lockdown was only affecting brick & mortar stores, it didn't affect online stores and our online sales in Germany are pretty strong so were still selling products. So we were on the lookout for any options to buy products on top of what we already ordered.”

We also spoke to Heiko Schoeller from Concrete Wave in Cologne, “Everything in hardware is in demand, with completes selling the fastest.” Heiko estimates that “of the increase in demand, 40% is from people returning to skate and 60% from newbies, with girls being an important component. At the same time demand for skate lessons has exploded, with schools full across the country.”

**DANA MISKULNIG**



...lost

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## STIL-LADEN VIENNA, AUSTRIA

**VANS**  
"OFF THE WALL"

Located in Vienna, Stil-Laden started as a skateboard and streetwear concept store in 2005 and has since seen its reputation grow as one of Austria's finest skate shops. Now complete with coffee shop installation and a brand new skate-goods-only shop opening just across the road, CEO Michael Paul tells us how the reinvention of the store and online presence creates the community and drives the business.

### Tell us about your store's history.

STIL-LADEN was founded by Günther Zott and myself [Michael Paul] in 2005 and the concept of the shop has changed over the years. In the beginning, it was more of a street culture shop with its own exhibition space - Nike Urban Lab Vienna - which we curated together with Nike Sportswear. We were also one of the first Nike SB dealers in Europe.

### What's your USP?

We actually never paid any attention to what other shops do and continued to develop as a store. First and foremost, we simply made sure that we keep reinventing the shop

concept and that business stays exciting for us. I think boredom and standing still is the biggest poison for a small retailer.

### Just what kind of advantage does a small retailer have over the big guys?

There are two incredibly important things you can do as a small shop. Firstly, you can create your very own image that you should convey authentically. Secondly, you can build personal contact and connection with your customers. As a small shop, not only do you have the advantage of being flexible and quick in your reactions to certain trends, but you can also organise cool events regularly.

We have organised countless events in the past 15 years and these events are still a major part of our DNA.

### How your business was affected by COVID-19 and how you're dealing with the new normal?

Despite a rather slow start after the coronavirus reopening, our sales have stabilized again and we have seen good growth, especially for skate hardware. This trend is actually still there, but there are currently major delivery problems in this category, which unfortunately complicates potential sales. Our online business has also done well, where sneakers have been increasingly purchased.

Recently there have been stricter hygiene regulations in Austria to which we react accordingly and give our customers the option of free masks, as well as disinfectant spray in our store.

COVID-19 hit us in the middle of our renovation and opening phase of the new Skate Goods store. Of course, that was a hard blow and not foreseeable. Yet, the pandemic has shown us how great the support from the community is, especially in the online area. Our numbers in online sales have increased by around 20%, so we are at least able to pay the fixed costs. We kept coming up with new campaigns every two to three days during the quarantine on social media platforms, like Instagram. For example, we did StayHome skate contest, raffles of limited stuff with a purchase in the online shop or special voucher campaigns.

### How's your online business evolved over the years?

Online is still a difficult topic for me, personally, because it is actually a complex and expensive business. If you add up the costs of packaging, shipping, the effort put in taking photos and product maintenance

in the online shop, you have to ask yourself why are you actually doing it? On the other hand, we understand, that you can't do retail today without an online presence. For us, the ratio is around 30% in the online area and 70% in the shop. We also see our online sales as a kind of virtual shop window especially for local customers. Saying that, it's important for us that the online shop has a corresponding look to the actual store.

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

Social media is, of course, an important stone in this whole mosaic. While Facebook is more or less irrelevant, channels like WhatsApp or our newsletter are currently the most important tools for us.

### How does having a cafe in the shop help drive business?

We decided some time ago to expand our shop with a café, and at the same time we also dealt intensively with the topic of sustainability and social responsibility. This has resulted in our café being completely geared towards sustainability - everything from the coffee beans to the cups are 100% sustainable. We have also aligned the selection of our textile and shoe range accordingly. That is why we decided to outsource our entire skateboard area and opened a skate-goods-only shop in April 2020 - directly opposite the existing shop.

### What was your best-selling skateboard and skate shoe of 2019 for you?

The best-selling skate shoes in 2019 were the Nike SB Blazer and Vans Old Skool Pro, however recently there's been a big increase in requests for the Vans Half Cab. The best-selling skateboard apparel and hardware in total was Fucking Awesome Skateboards.

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# SKATE HELMETS & PROTECTION 2020

Instead of suffering whiplash from coronavirus, skateboard participation is booming. Here's how to keep all those newcomers rolling safely in our Skate Helmets & Protection Retail Buyer's Guide 2020 by SOURCE Skateboard Editor **Dirk Vogel**.



Photo Protec

The year 2020 keeps dishing out surprises left and right. After skateboarding's Olympics debut was cancelled due to the global coronavirus pandemic, industry insiders feared for the worst. But as it turns out, the outbreak has actually triggered a new boom period for skate participation. "We were already seeing a growth in the category, but with coronavirus and the rush to get outdoor sports equipment to keep kids and families active while quarantined, there's been a spike," said R.P. Bess, Global Brand Director Pro-Tec. While team sports and gyms remain shut down, skateboarding offers some much-needed escape. "With enthusiasts making the most of the limited exercise time during the lockdown and

looking to get out on their boards, bikes and other sports, we've seen an increase in the demand for protection gear," said REKD Protection's Toby Dray.

*"We were already seeing a growth in the category, but with coronavirus and the rush to get outdoor sports equipment to keep kids and families active while quarantined, there's been a spike". R.P. Bess, Global Brand Director Pro-Tec.*

In contrast to previous boom periods – like 1999's Tony Hawk's Pro Skater videogame effect – this time it's not just young kids getting on board. Hip and fashion-minded tweens and entire families are (re) discovering skateboarding.

*"Nobody wants to go to the ER for a sport related injury, so people seem to be wearing helmets and pads at an increased rate these days". Noah Todaro, Marketing Coordinator at Triple Eight Helmets/187 Killer Pads.*

According to John Phaneuf, Director of Global Sales at Bern Helmets, families are looking to "get back outside and ride to stay in shape but also as a healthy and safe way to navigate through the pandemic." Speaking of safety, quarantine measures have also sensitized consumers not to strain their healthcare systems. "Nobody wants to go to the ER for a sport related injury, so people seem to be wearing helmets and pads at an increased rate these days," said Noah Todaro, Marketing Coordinator at Triple Eight Helmets/187 Killer Pads.

**MARKET & PRICE POINTS**  
Brands in the helmet and protector segment are already noticing the effects on their order sheets. "After initial uncertainty, we were surprised by a real boom. April and May were top months for the sale of helmets and protectors," said Rudolf Herger, CEO at TSG. But keeping in mind the current drought in skateboard hardware, will retailers be able to meet surging demand? For now, the good news is that supply levels appear secure. Although many leading brands reported supply chain squeezes earlier this year when China first shut down, everyone has been strategic about creating extra inventory. This includes increased manufacturing, but also carryovers of last season's bestsellers; which is not inherently bad and perhaps a welcome break from the pre-crisis obsession with newer-better-faster refreshes.



Photo REKD

Brands are also shifting their sales support for retailers online, and Sandbox Brand Manager Joel Giddings said: "We won't be doing any tradeshows or road travel for SS21 sell-in, so the majority will be via email, zoom, and phone."

*"After initial uncertainty, we were surprised by a real boom. April and May were top months for the sale of helmets and protectors". Rudolf Herger, CEO at TSG.*

Despite strained supply chains, price points remain stable. "We're continuing with the same pricing we've had for years, €40-50 in bike and skate helmets," said R.P. Bess at Pro-Tec. While full-feature helmets can retail for up to €100 and pro-engineered knee pads command similar price points, beginners have access to certified helmets and pads at comparatively low prices. As Noah at Triple Eight said: "Our top-of-the-line helmet, The Certified Sweatsaver, retails for \$59.99 and our most popular padding 3-pack for \$34.99,



meaning you can get fully protected for under \$100.” When it comes to making a strong sales argument, here are three things for retailers to keep in mind:

**1. Fit is everything.**  
Retailers need to know how sizes run for each brand. Perhaps also encourage customers to measure head sizes at home before try-ons in store (less gear to disinfect). And always focus on fit. This is where core retailers have a big advantage over chain stores, which for Nadja Herger, Marketing Manager at TSG, is the reason “people believe a poor fitting helmet is how these helmets should fit. This is a huge misbelief and at the same time a great sales argument for skateboard shops. If they offer good helmets, they can easily convince their customers, why they should not buy PPE at discounters.”

**2. Understand personal needs.**  
Skateboarding is a broad church these days, from cruising to vert to street and downhill. Shops need to assess every customer’s individual skill level and goals before recommending protectors – all the way to the pro rider. “187 Killer Pads are typically for the more experienced rider, and you can wear the same exact knee pad most pros use for \$99.95,” said Noah at Triple Eight. Nadja at TSG is on the same page: “All our pro skateboarders ride exactly the same products that are available in the shops. There is no better sales argument than to say: ‘You can actually buy (pro rider’s name) knee pad.’”

**3. Think combos.**  
Protection never stops with helmets. And while combination sets of wrist guards, elbow and knee pads used to be the domain of young grommets, brands are increasingly offering adult protector sets (also at cool prices). Adults understand that a single Mr. Wilson – the kind of slam where the board shoots out underneath your feet – is all it takes to sideline a wrist or elbow (and their keyboard typing capacities) for weeks.

“Protection is very important, especially for new riders. They’re the most susceptible to taking those spills as they learn to ride



a piece of wood with four wheels under it. It’s also good habit to get used to, wearing a helmet while participating in the new sport,” said R.P. Bess at Pro-Tec.

**HELMETS: CERTIFIED PROTECTION**  
First things first, core retailers need to lead by example and carry only certified, quality helmets. In 2020, brands featured in this Buyer’s Guide comply with certificates such as EN 1078, EN 1077B, CPSC, CE, ASTM, and AS/NZS 2063:2008. As Joel at Sandbox says: “Safety certification is a must have for us. This can possibly lead to a higher cost versus some brands who sell helmets without certification to hit a low price point, but we feel it’s important.”

Also demand helmets featuring ABS (Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene) in the outer shell with high density EPS



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(Expanded Polystyrene) for the inner mould and keep an eye out for advanced impact protection tech such as MIPS. Triple Eight is proud of the Certified Sweatsaver helmet, which is actually dual-certified (U.S. CPSC Bike and ASTM Skate safety standards). TSG just dropped the Nipper Maxi, a light in-mould helmet for kids featuring secure, adjustable fit options.

**HELMET DESIGNS: LIGHTWEIGHT AND COOL**  
Brands are stepping into 2020 with reengineered takes on proven helmet models. Updates include less weight, like the 15% lighter Macon 2.0 model from Bern. The Macon 2.0 also features twelve vents to keep cool, which is the second big trend for summer helmets this year, including the Legend model from Sandbox and new

Sweatsaver-equipped Tony Hawk model from Triple Eight. For the latest in head protection, choose models such as Macon 2.0 (Bern), Meta and Evolution (TSG) Classic 2.0 and Legend Street (Sandbox), Certified Sweatsaver and Tony Hawk Pro (888), Elite 2.0 Helmet (REKD), as well as Classic and Full Cut (Pro-Tec). In terms of cuts, low profiles like the street-ready Sandbox models are on the rise. Visors are disappearing from core skate helmets, but full-cut helmets with ear protection continue to trend, including ProTec's flashy Mark Gonzales Flames model and Signature Full Cut for 12-year old skate phenom Sky Brown.

**HELMET STYLING: BRING IN THE COLOURS**  
Speaking on colour trends, Pro-Tec's R.P. Bess said: "Black, Black, Black are the three bestselling colours still. But we've added some pop colours for Spring." Standouts at Pro-Tec include tie-dye patterns and a collab with '90s skate brand The New Deal. TSG offers the Evolution model in a number of cool finishes from psychedelic, to firecracker and luxe metallic finishes. S1 Helmets teamed up with Girl is NOT a 4-Letter Word to recreate a 1970s helmet colourway worn by pioneer Cindy Whitehead in the S1 Lifer model.

**PADS: ENGINEERED FOR MORE PROTECTION**  
The attitude towards pads is changing, and brands are using R&D to evolve their collections. "Padding is making a comeback – beyond learning to knee-slide and needing beefy quality pads to skate transitions, it's not viewed as uncool anymore to wear wrist guards or keep some coverage on your elbows," said Noah at Triple Eight pointing out the brand's new Kevlar-coated Stealth Hardcap Elbow pads initially made for derby athletes. Toby at REKD is stoked on the introduction of a new material in Ramp Knee Pads and Pro Ramp Knee Pads: "Energy Foam is a non-Newtonian material that stiffens and becomes rigid during an impact but is flexible in its natural state.

Our Energy foam disperses up to 75% more impact energy during compared our standard



A large image featuring a skateboarder in a crouched position, a REKD helmet, and promotional text for the REKD Ultralite In-Mold Helmet. The helmet is black with red accents and the REKD logo. The text includes 'PERFORMANCE PROTECTION', 'ULTRALITE IN-MOLD HELMET', and a list of features: 'LIGHTWEIGHT IN-MOLD CONSTRUCTION', 'ANTI-BACTERIAL LINED PADDING', 'EN1078 &amp; CPSC CERTIFIED', 'WEIGHS JUST 295g (S/M)', and 'SIZES: XXS/XS, S/M, L/XL'. It also mentions the rider '@MIRKO\_PAOLONI' and the brand '@REKDPROTECTION' with the website 'REKDPROTECTION.COM'.





high-density impact foam.” At TSG, Nadja points out the performance of ACF foam, that is “flexible and soft in the normal state but when met with impact the molecules form a hard, protective shell.” TSG also implements Arti-Lage soft foam that absorbs up to 95% of impact energy and a double amount of foam in the Kneeguard Force V Pro, “the safest Mega Ramp pad ever.”

**PAD DESIGNS: BETTER FIT, MORE COLOURS**

Skateboarders today come in many shapes and sizes, and the pad offering is finally becoming more diverse in terms of fit. After three years of development, 187 Killer Pads is launching Slim Knee Pads for, “the perfect balance of mid-weight protection, flawless fit, advanced features, and a low-profile design” including a Fusion groove Channel with Memory Foam System. Several brands also offer flexible soft protectors for low-impact riding styles like surf skate. On the other side of the spectrum, hardcore scenarios like downhill longboarding call for extreme protection, answered by pads

like the TSG downhill pads Kneepad Sk8 DHP. Another aspect that’s becoming more diverse: Pads are no longer limited to drab black-and-grey colourways, with splashes of colour and cool patterns hitting shelves across the board. ⑤

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**HIGHLIGHTS**

- 1 Rise in adult/family participation
- 2 Increased safety consciousness
- 3 Stable price points
- 4 Protector sets for grown-ups
- 5 Lightweight, ventilated helmets
- 6 Engineered foam padding
- 7 Specialized pad fits, use cases





MARKET INSIGHT

UK

GERMANY  
AUSTRIA  
FRANCE  
SWISS  
ITALY

I hope you guys are all safe and well and that Covid, whilst impacting businesses in different ways, has not impacted you in a personal way.

Well...what a difference a few weeks make! Not

long after lockdown skateboards sold like hot cakes, then we all saw the bike ‘revolution’ (which appears to be continuing) but who would have predicted the watersports boom? Not me. As soon as the great British public were allowed to, they took to the water - and not just those that were hardened watersports enthusiasts but, it seems, so did many newcomers.

You actually feel guilty saying how good things have been because so many industries have suffered and continue to suffer. Travel and Tourism (overseas) is having a terrible time and (at the time of writing this) further travel restrictions and isolation rules have just come into force. Their loss may just be contributing to our gain and we simply have to ‘make hay’ whilst we can – who knows what’s around the next corner? Winter could be tough!

Watersports are going off, the ‘staycation’ business is booming and the £££’s that were going to be spent in Spain, Greece, Turkey and wherever are now heading towards UK shops, schools and businesses. Similarly the ‘pot of gold’ that I eluded to in my last piece does appear to have materialised and shops are reporting ‘best ever month’, ‘best ever week’.Is this sustainable? Who knows, but without wanting to overlook the misery and devastation that Covid is wreaking, we don’t want to look a gift horse in the mouth. The fervent hope is that the new-found (or re-found) watersports enthusiasts are going to stick with it and indications from the bike industry (which is ahead of us in the curve) are that there is a sustainable uplift.

So I am a little surprised that this article has a very positive feel. I appreciate that this may not apply to every store in every corner of

the UK but hopefully if it’s not good for you now... it’s on the way. I don’t usually like to quote without a name but one watersports retailer (who has asked not to be named) had this to say. “May was better than expected and higher than last year. This surprised me. June was manic and massively up on last year and now [mid July] we have already doubled the previous year’s full month which was, in turn, our highest ever month since we started. Coping with demand is the issue and getting supplies in and out.”Well that sounds like a good problem to have.

Moving on, how has the season been so far? “Remarkable. After the lockdown and the doom and gloom we could never have imagined that it would bounce back as it has done,” says Matt from H2O in Poole. “At the time of lockdown we, like so many others, were wondering if we would have a business to return to but we cannot really believe it. It’s awesome.”

So paddle boarding is obviously the real winner? “It is. Sales have been fantastic and boards are outselling anything else. It’s like nothing we have really ever experienced. Even going back to the heady days of windsurfing - this is way bigger than then.”

Are these completely new enthusiasts or born-again enthusiasts? “They’re new. That’s the great thing. And they’re already returning and buying second and third boards for other family members – they are all loving it and they’re here to stay. This is an amazing time to be here helping all these people discover a new way of life. And that is going to feed through to other sports – WindSUP, Wings, Windsurfing, Surfing and Foiling are all going to feed off this – it is amazing!”

I didn’t want to put a downer on things but I had to ask if something was not going well? “Wetsuits. We didn’t get the sale of spring suits and everyone has gone straight into a shorty plus a lot of the business has gone to the big online guys. And fashion for us is out – we’re really a hardware store. Back to where we used to be. It is awesome.”

MARKET INSIGHT

Moving down to Sessions in Cornwall I spoke to Simon and a new word popped up amongst those we have covered already. “Mental, it’s absolutely mental,” you could hear it in Simon’s voice and you could also hear the busy shop in the background. “We reopened on the June 15 and it has been completely non-stop since then. The tourists have arrived in force and they are spending money on watersports kit – so much so that we may actually run out of wetsuits.”

How did you feel when lockdown was first announced? “Like everyone I really did not know where we were heading. We missed Easter and May Bank Holidays - which are really important to us - and then as we reopened I was still concerned about how it was going to be. But it’s been amazing and if we can sustain these gains through August we will have made up all the lost ground... and some. We’re currently breaking loads of records.” And is it newbies? “Yes, absolutely, and that’s the great thing - we are definitely getting newcomers and they are staying with it – they’re loving it - even those who have bought ‘supermarket kit’ [I think the word ‘crap was used by one of us] now realise they need some decent kit.”

Matt did say that, like me, he felt guilty when talking to other local businesses who are not fairing so well: “It is really tough for some and we should never forget that, but, we cannot dwell on that. We’re more than happy with how it’s going and could never have foreseen this. Long may this continue.” The thing with all this is that we don’t know how long this will last – both Covid, the restrictions and the flourishing watersports business. We should still ‘plan for the worst and hope for the best’ because as quickly as things first went into lockdown mode it could all happen again.

As mentioned in the last Market Insight, skate is doing just as well. Nic from Route One kicked off the conversation exactly as Simon had done :“Metal. It’s completely mental.” Aha, I have heard that before so I know what’s coming:

“From really worried to mental in a few short weeks. It’s exploded and nobody is more surprised than me. Did anyone see this coming? “I think the answer is no. “Biggest issue now is the supply chain – we’ve got the customers – new customers, young and old, adults, kids, parents, and the best bit – loads of girls taking up skating. Now we just need to get the supply.”

Looking to the upcoming winter season the biggest concerns are going to be liquidity of stores and then, whether or not the consumers will come through. Personally I think they will - Covid and travel restrictions allowing. I also believe that our mountain lovers will come through with enthusiasm in abundance. Those that missed out on an end-of-season-week in 2020 will probably try and tag in some additional time this coming season. Some wintersports stores are already reporting better than expected sales and good interest in new kit. People do have the money and they want to spend it on stuff they like. We’re here to serve of course! If this winter can follow the summer then, well... fingers crossed.

Someone who is keen to serve is Stuart Roberts. He’s just become the proud owner (second time round) of Two Seasons, after acquiring it from Boardriders. Welcome home Stuart and good luck. We’re all pretty sure that going forward, the business will look very different and are also confident that Stuart will steer it in the right direction. Great to see a ‘new’ (old) retailer on the block. So we welcome the new members of our congregation with open arms and hope that they stick with us for years to come. Who could possibly have predicted that maybe, just maybe, Covid could have a positive outcome for the boardsports industry. All that said I think we would all agree that we could do without it and I am sure we are all looking forward to the day when it is not dominating our world. Stay safe.

GORDON WAY



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# BOARDSPORTS BAGS & BACKPACKS 2020

With travel down but skate participation up, what is happening in the boardsports bags and backpacks segment? Find the major trends for 2021 in our Retail Buyer's Guide by **Dirk Vogel**.



Photo Dakine

Welcome to the new normal. While skateboard hardgoods are booming, other segments are under pressure amid the coronavirus pandemic. With travel and holiday bookings in freefall, the luggage segment has suffered a 90 percent decline in sales over last year, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). As consumers spend less time on the road, boardsports bags and backpacks also feel the effects. “Our category was of course greatly impacted by Covid-19, with travel bags and backpacks being amongst the top 20 most impacted fashion accessories,” said Domitille Parent, Product Director at Eastpak, adding: “That being said, we are seeing a positive turn as we ramp up towards the important BTS period.” What exactly back to school (BTS) will look like this year remains a guessing game. But even amid lockdown measures, consumer demand proved resilient: “The shutdown still led to a requirement among end consumers

for backpacks and shoulder bags for daily use,” said Maria Schmieder, Marketing Coordinator at Pacsafe. But daily use is changing. While indoor gyms, sports facilities, restaurants and bars remain closed (varies across regions), people congregate out in the open air, where it’s safe. That’s why the backpack emerges as a valuable companion, whatever the use case. “For the summer

*“Our category was of course greatly impacted by Covid-19, with travel bags and backpacks being amongst the top 20 most impacted fashion accessories”. Domitille Parent, Product Director at Eastpak, adding: “That being said, we are seeing a positive turn as we ramp up towards the important BTS period”.*

season, we believe that consumers look for light and durable backpacks with different pack options and extendible pockets to store bottles, jackets or towels. They want versatility and crossover to use one product in many different environments and situations,” says Maxime Lemaitre, Bags & Accessories Product Manager, Picture Organic Clothing.

## PRICE POINTS & MARKET

The boardsports bag segment has matured tremendously over the past years. As a result, solid quality is already available in the entry level price segment, with quality backpacks starting around €39. Then again, the demand for versatile packs that transition between usage scenarios also justifies premium price levels. “The trend of versatile, multi-purpose product is at a high right now. Consumers are investing in quality product that they know can help them transition between activities and accompany them in their everyday,” said Bettina Rohde, Category Director Lifestyle at Dakine. Some brands stake their claim in the entry level/fun segment. Others in premium.

*“The shutdown still led to a requirement among end consumers for backpacks and shoulder bags for daily use”. Maria Schmieder Marketing Coordinator at Pacsafe.*

Some do it all: “We have a broad range of backpacks starting with daypacks on lower price points like our Vardag collection starting at €79 up to high-end long-distance trekking backpacks like our Kajka 100 for €419.95,” said Philipp Kloeters, Head of PR at Fjällräven International.

According to Amplifi’s Head of Design Tom Howells, the current market situation demands, “continued focus on quality to price ratio. People need to get their money’s worth if they’re going to jump up to the next price point.” In direct response to the crisis, brands have made sure to keep prices

stable and supply flowing. Not an easy task, as February’s shutdown in China created a squeeze and many endemic boardsports brands are bracing for lower overall turnaround. As a result, some of this season’s product releases were pushed back to next year. Meanwhile, several brands resort to carryover of last season’s products while focusing on the strongest, best-performing SKUs in their line-ups.

*“People need to get their money’s worth if they’re going to jump up to the next price point.” Tom Howells Head of Design at Amplifi*

Speaking of performance, here are the **Five Hot Backpack and Bag Trends Retailers Need to Watch In 2021:**

### 1. Season Trend: Sustainability

The pandemic has laid bare mankind’s impact on the environment. On a positive note, nature has come back in a big way during shutdown (human-made noise levels are down 50% worldwide!). The impact on consumer behaviour is immediate: “Sustainable options are key, the younger generation is informed and cares about their future and the future of the planet, therefore a big portion of our line is using recycled polyester and bluesign-approved materials,” said Bettina at Dakine. Look for models like the Fjällräven Kånken Re-Wool (made from recycled wool), as well as Pacsafe’s daypacks and side bags made from Econyl, sourced from ocean waste. Eastpak goes full circle with the Rebuilt to Resist line, which deconstructs existing backpacks and reassembles them into a new and unique bag. Meanwhile, Picture Organic is proud to say: “100% of our range is sustainable. The light ripstop we use on our technical range as well as our Soavy fabric are 100% recycled and the cotton of our beach bag is 100% organic.”



2. Made for movement

Consumers may travel less in the new reality, but they still move around every day. “Our customer is focused on journeys closer to home. The opportunity to pack up a car and hit the road shifts the need from larger bags or luggage to daypacks and duffles,” said



Photo Eastpak

Jaelem Sangara, Director of Retail Marketing at Herschel Supply Co, pointing out the feature-rich and versatile Pop Quiz and Nova Mid packs. People also move around

*“The Covid crisis has created even more digital nomads. People need to be able to work anywhere and we design our bags to enable this”. Laurence Poole, Marketing Director at OID*

for work: “The Covid crisis has created even more digital nomads. People need to be able to work anywhere and we design our bags to enable this. Many people carry 1000s of

pounds worth of tech and need their bags to help them stay organized,” said Laurence Poole, Marketing Director at UK-based brand OID, home of the 48HR and EVERYDAY packs. Eastpak has the CNNCT collection for “urban professionals who are commuting in more sustainable ways to get to work.” Pacsafe caters to this trend with the City Safe backpack in a pod design, while Fjällräven has the Vjardak 28l bag and Vardag Mini for keeping gadgets and laptops protected on the go. Picture Organic keeps it compact with the Helio 18L pack in ripstop fabric and the vintage-inspired Soavy backpack. Just in time, Dakine releases the Packables collection featuring “packs and duffles that are durable, lightweight and hold a long-weekend’s worth of gear but are able to be stuffed down into their own pocket for easy storage.”

3. Security in mind

The world became a more threatening place this year, not just in terms of infection risk. Street crime and digital fraud are on the rise, and bag makers are playing their part to secure people’s valuables from illegal access. Pioneers Pacsafe double down on PopNLock, Roobar Locking Systems, eXomesh slashguards, and RFIDSafe blocking pockets. Several brands shield outside shells of bags and backpacks in resilient Rugged Twill Cotton, Ballistic Nylon, and Matt Nylon. They also tend to feature less directly accessible compartments, also meaning fewer velcro pockets. Instead, large zippers and roll-tops safeguard the bag interior, which in turn opens into additional pockets. Laurence at OID goes the extra mile by implementing, “Cordura to provide durability combined with our Safety Stitch. We have also partnered with D30 to provide the thinnest and most advanced protection against impact, the Impact Protection System (IPS).”

4. Durability and timeless styles

Another direct impact of Covid-19: Consumers buy less gear but demand better quality. Brands are responding by creating

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VALUABLES.  
PROTECT  
OUR  
PLANET.

We’ve turned ocean plastic into the best anti-theft bags.





less hype products and more items that retain their relevance over the long term. “Even prior to the impact of Covid, we’ve been noticing a trend in trans-seasonal colours and styles, so rather than specific product per season the consumer is looking for product that is less seasonal. This reflects in our colour palette and prints in SS21,” said Bettina at Dakine. Tom at Amplifi said the brand is, “keeping it nice and monochrome this year. We love our stealth packs, but we’re throwing in loud colour hits here and there, too.” OID continues to bank on understated exterior colours while maintaining its tribute to the original MA1 jacket as a brand staple, down to “the same high-vis orange on the lining of all our bags so the contents can be seen more easily.” Bucking the trend, Herschel is celebrating its ten-year brand anniversary in 2020 with a line “inspired by the rich tones, prints and graphics of the 90's and from collections from Herschel's last ten years.”

5. Original styles, large and small

Brands are breaking the mould by going beyond standard backpacks this season. Standouts include the skateboard-ready Everyday pack from OID that will keep shred sticks protected from rain: “Our Everyday backpack is totally unique and designed by skateboarders. With an adjustable and removable strap system, it can be changed from backpack to side carry mode for bikes,” said Laurence Pool. Skate protection company 187 Killer Pads releases the Standard Issue Backpack: “Built from our 20-year heritage making skateboard pads for the world's top pros. Everything we know is packed into this everyday backpack perfect for travel to the skatepark, school, work, and beyond,” said Noah Todaro. Compact backpacks are nice, but for those who want big bags for bigger adventures, Herschel has the Miller, featuring dual top carrying handles, a 13-inch laptop sleeve and 32L capacity, while Dakine launches the huge Split Adventure 38L, and Fjällräven has the Bergtagen 30L for all kinds of exploration. And if you only need

to stash your phone, hand sanitizer and mask for a short trip into the outside world, last season’s fanny (bum) bag trend has evolved into side bags. Worn over the shoulder, these compartment-rich models include the OID Side Bag and Pacsafe Vibe 325. For those who prefer to store their everyday carry around the waist, there’s the Amplifi Hipster Pack and Eastpak’s Iconic Springer bum bag. Stay safe out there and wherever you go, bring a cool bag this season! ☺



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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Demand for versatile bags
- 2 Carryover, pushback and focus on strong SKUs
- 3 Longevity and quality
- 4 Nimble commuter packs at 18-28L
- 5 Recycled and sustainable materials
- 6 Less seasonal styles
- 7 Small side bags



Ride, Protect & Share





MARKET INSIGHT

FRANCE

GERMANY  
AUSTRIA  
SWISS  
SPAIN  
ITALY  
UK

While there’s currently no indicators in the red at the time of writing these lines, the COVID-19 figures are worrying and France could fall into a situation like that of Catalonia at any given moment.

Although wearing face coverings has been mandatory in public places since July 20, with fines of 135 Euros for violations, the sanitary situation in France remains uncertain. However, the French economy is bouncing back with various indications that economic activity is picking up faster than anticipated. The 100 billion Euros put in place by the government for a scheme to boost the economic recovery seems to be bearing fruit. But these positive signals should to be observed with caution. Household consumption, a crucial factor in evaluating economic recovery, spiked in May, June and July. Consumption in France has pretty much returned to normal levels (-5%) after the collapse brought on by the novel coronavirus crisis (-30%). Economic upturn began at the same time as deconfinement and seems to actually be accelerating in France with activity showing signs of dynamism in all sectors but the end of the year remains uncertain and the government at this point is remaining cautious, refusing to review its prediction of recession for 2020.

France has seen the strongest regrowth in Europe, much faster than Germany or even the U.K. National demand is starting to pick up again and most businesses are back up and running with consumer expenditure beginning to climb back to normal levels. Banque de France expects a bounce back of 14% GDP in the third quarter and Insee, more optimistically, are charting 19% growth after a drop of 17% in the second trimester in the midst of lockdown.

What does all this mean for our industry? The summer season is generally the key period for sales so is it going as well as in previous years? When it comes to welcoming people into shops and how that works on the ground, it’s fairly unanimous: the norms put in place by the government are all accepted and respected by customers as well as shop staff. Shops have organised themselves and have implemented the government’s recommendations

and these were adopted by the vast majority of retailers before July 20, the law for mandatory face coverings has also been adhered to. Some additional measures have also been put in place by shops with high affluence such as markers on the floor for distancing and/or circulation purposes, limiting the number of people in the shop as well as Plexiglas screens and disinfecting payment terminals at the cash desk.

In most cases, clothes are disinfected after being tried on and, like at Gliss’up in Bordeaux, neoprene wetsuits are isolated and “put into quarantine for a few hours after being tried on if they are not purchased.”

During the summer period, tourism often links directly to shop visitation numbers and it would seem that this year the COVID-19 effect will have a different impact depending on region and shop.

At Nozbone in Paris, Alexis tells us that, “even though we continued our online activity during confinement we saw a drop in turnover in the region of 70% but since May 11 sales went steeply upwards.”

It’s the same feeling at Chattanooga in Paris where Laetitia confirms “after the confinement period there was an intense upsurge with lots of people in the shop. There was a real feeling of wanting to kickstart the little local businesses and a frenzy for outdoor sports.” However, she does add, “since the summer holidays began we have seen a slight drop in customers but this is in line with last year.”

Sylvain from Urban Surfer in Paris says “tourist numbers in Paris are lower than in other years. There are noticeably less foreign tourists this summer and a lot of Parisians have left to get some air elsewhere in France.”

In Bordeaux at Gliss’up, Thomas says “we have seen a big boom since reopening with unprecedented customer levels and sales for this particular period! Visitation numbers have returned to a more normal level since July but are still really good for the time of year.” This analysis comes from Surf Avenue in Vieux Boucau, “confinement brought out a real sense of frustration in people. When it was lifted people had a need to buy things,” and adds, “we are

MARKET INSIGHT

really happy with the start of the season with good visitor numbers and June’s figures corresponding to a normal month of July and that of July corresponding to August in previous years.”

Cédric from Unclezaz explains, “undoubtedly there’s a fear of reconfinement but since the beaches reopened in June lots of people have come to kit themselves out,” adding, “buying habits themselves have changed, before people took a lot of time to think and gather info. These days sales are more instinctive, it must be the fear of tomorrow...”

Benjamin from Hawaii Surf in Paris, a benchmark of E-commerce explains that, “the first week of confinement was very weak in terms of sales online. However, during the following weeks customers started to buy again and with consistent growth.” He adds, “since the end of confinement, demand has exploded with a further boost to equipment sales when the beaches opened again.”

When it comes to products, it seems as though skateboarding and especially the ‘street’ sector has enjoyed massive interest. At Chattanooga Laetitia tells us, “skateboarding has been on a good run for 2 years but after COVID we have seen real excitement with sales more in line with the Christmas period.” It’s the same story at Nozbone where Alexis says, “2/3 of turnover was made from skateboarding hardgoods with double figure growth in overall shop turnover.”

In street, the most noteworthy brands are American ones like Real, Santa Cruz, Antihero, Thunder and Venture as well as European brands like Jart and Cartel. When it comes to surfskates and cruisers brands like Yow, Carver, Flyingwheels and Kruuze seem to be selling best this summer.

In watersports, the reports seem to follow suit. Cédric at Uncle Zaz tells us, “the technical aisle is working super well this season, we’re selling quite a few surfboards with an average of 2 to 3 boards sold per day.” It’s a similar vibe at Gliss’Up, where Thomas confirms, “all of our aisles are firing, mainly foam boards and beginner and intermediate boards or entry-level inflatable stand up paddle boards.”

Benjamin from Hawaii Surf adds, “during confinement we experienced quite high demand for information about surfboard kit and neoprene in view to making

a purchase. Since the beaches reopened, the aquatic section has had really good sales.” The most mentioned brands are mainly from surfboards: Torq, Softech and Catch Surf.

In clothing, the dialogue is a bit more mixed, “the clothing section has been a little less under attack since the shops opened back up,” says Benjamin from Hawaii Surf, adding, “it was really when the sales period started that we started selling at a pretty decent rate.” The sales effect was also felt by Sylvain at Urban Surfer who confirmed, “we saw a slight increase in sales and visitation numbers with the official launch of the sales period, especially on the whole streetwear section.”

Summer means summer so it’s only natural that it was summer apparel that sold best like at Surf Avenue, “we have a lot of demand for the whole section of flip flops, swimwear and shades, the flagship summer products.” When it comes to brands, it was as much the big brands like Rip Curl, Element, Volcom as the smaller labels like Rhythm, Picture or Polar that were sought out by customers.

Confinement seems to have had a depriving effect on consumers, which produced a strong desire to rediscover freedom and outdoor activities. It seems as though this situation has benefitted our outdoors sports and, therefore, our own industry. Furthermore, the limitations to foreign travel appears to have encouraged the French people to take holidays within France this year and so to spend more locally. While it’s true that foreign tourism is down significantly this year, it would appear that shops have already done some really good trade with their compatriots this season.

The government is still floating the possibility of a second wave and of a potential partial or total reconfinement. Is the COVID-19 episode fully behind us? We’ll have to wait and see.

BENOIT BRECQ



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# SKATEBOARD FOOTWEAR SUMMER 2021

Skate hardgoods are flying off the shelves, so expect surging demand for proper shoes. For what's happening on shoe walls, read our Skateboard Footwear Summer 2021 Retail Buyer's Guide by SOURCE Skateboard Editor **Dirk Vogel**.



What a year! First, the pandemic shut down the entire world and postponed skateboarding's Olympic debut. But after the initial shock, the skate industry awakened to an all-out boom in participation. "It's obviously been a turbulent first half of the year with Covid hitting Europe. March especially was a tough month but going into April and May, business started to pick up for retailers again. The retailers with a good online presence have even been growing rapidly in May and June," said Bas Janssen, Senior Sales and Marketing Manager EMEA at etnies, adding: "We hear a lot of good news regarding hardgoods sales and our retailers' hopes are that more new avid skateboarders will keep skating and need shoes!" This trend is confirmed by David Atkinson, Senior Product Manager at Vans Skateboarding, Europe: "It's more stable than expected much in part to people picking up skating in quarantine and the well-established

e-commerce of skate shops." E-commerce is growing rapidly due to Covid-19. And with all major tradeshow cancelled, brands are shifting resources into digital marketing, also to support retailers: *"going into April and May, business started to pick up for retailers again. The retailers with a good online presence have even been growing rapidly in May and June". Bas Janssen, Senior Sales and Marketing Manager EMEA at Etnies*

"Sell-in wise we're working on lots more digital assets to support our salesforce and retailers. Digital catalogues, video, multi-angle photography are a few examples," said Bas at etnies. Vans has generated more than \$4

million for independent skate shops with the Foot the Bill campaign. State Footwear is running a special initiative to support retail: "We are offering a free pair of shoes to all skate shops from anyone who buys a pair of shoes on our online store," said State Founder Kevin Furtado. Supply chains suffered an initial shock from Covid-19 when Chinese factories shut down in February, but most brands have since recovered. Nevertheless, the current boom exceeds even the most optimistic projections for 2021. "We're scrambling to get more shoes. Overall sales are up," said Brent Phelps, Brand Manager at DVS. Price points have remained stable despite the uncertainty. The main price window for skate footwear now ranges from €75 to €110 and retailers have a broad selection of models and brands to choose from this season.

### 3 Major Trends in Skateboard Footwear for Summer 2021:

#### 1. Classic-looking shoes.

Let's keep in mind that while the last big skate boom in 1999 mostly revolved around street skating, it's much more diverse today. A large cohort of new beginners choose casual styles of skating such as longboarding, pump tracks and surf skate. So they also want casual shoes, not necessarily the latest tech, which translates into a resurgence of vulcanized styles. For those who appreciate a classic look with some functionality under the hood, Vans completely re-designed the Pro Classics line, now called Vans Skate Classics: "These are the Vans skate staples, and we have improved fit, durability, performance and style. These were already some of the most loved and iconic shoes in skateboarding but we really focused on making them perform even better whilst maintaining the iconic Vans look." etnies is also going back to the classics: "With the introduction of the Windrow Vulc, we are pushing the Stylized E logo that was prominent in the early '90s etnies shoes like the Lo-Cut. We've added that logo on Trevor McClung's Veer and Barney Page's Marana Slip

*"We're scrambling to get more shoes. Overall sales are up". Brent Phelps, Brand Manager at DVS.*

XLT colourway," said Rick Marmolijo, Director of Design at etnies. Emerica has the Tilt Vulc as a remastered classic that's based on the Emerica original "Tilt" now featuring a slimmer overall profile, Flick Shield, G6 Foam insoles, Desert Grip and a vulcanized outsole. Also watch out for classic styling in the Buckler 99 from C1rca, Pacifica Cup from State and Fallen Patriot model.

#### 2. Skate slip-Ons go viral.

The trend towards skateable slip-ons has gone from a low simmer to a rolling boil. etnies goes all in with the new Marana Slip XLT, featuring "the very first Michelin vulcanized construction that is three times more durable and is also used on the Joslin Vulc that just hit the stores. It has the Evertoe rubber toe cap and the extra thick Pro Foam 2 footbed." Emerica has the Wino G6 Slip On, while Vans landed a hit with the skate-ready Slip-On Pro. For Globe, "the Liaison is for sure the product for SS21. It is a nice trendy loafer slip-on available in both suede or leather."

#### 3. White kicks.

Back in 1995, the KCK model by DuFFS cemented the timelessly stylish combination of white leather upper and natural gum outsole in skate footwear. White shoes are back with a vengeance this season, and Globe references the classic style in the AUSSP20 model. Vans is getting an overwhelming response for the Off White colourway, especially in the Skate Classic Icons line. Fallen keeps it frosty with the Trooper model featuring an all-white upper and blue translucent outsole. etnies packs two trends into one sleek package with the Marana Slip XLT in a crisp white variation. And core brand OSIRIS makes a statement by releasing a



Covid-19-themed version of their NYC 83 high-top in a white and baby blue colourway with a protective mask emoji on the tongue. Also keep an eye on the Emerica Gamma model in a crispy white colourway, and the éS Footwear luxurious White Jade pack with a focus on clean, wearable, neutral tones mixed with a trend forward pop colour.

SILHOUETTES: INNOVATION AND DIVERSE FITS

As a countermovement to classic shoe constructions, skate footwear brands are beefing up their performance tech. Look out for wedge soles, rubber panelling, visible air pockets, and deconstructed elements such as oversized logos and straps. DVS showcases athletic style in the Devious BLK model and Tech Comanche hero: “DVS is all about chunky performance. This is our niche and brand DNA, it’s very clearly carved out and represents our volume.” OSIRIS brings back the high-tech D3 model in a killer Black and Red Rum colourway, while Vans does an impeccable job at inserting technology into classic kicks.



Photo Globe

At etnies, it’s all about offering a diverse range of fits, said Rick Marmolijo: “We understand that skaters have different foot shapes and shoe volume preferences depending on how they skate and what outfits they wear. The Marana and the Joslin are probably our most padded shoe which requires a wider last. The Veer is a silhouette that is a lever slimmer than the Marana and all our vulcanized shoes use our slimmest last to keep the upper and midsole close to the foot for better board feel.”

COLOURS & STYLING: SUMMER FLAVORS

Warm weather seasons puts a pause on the disproportionate share of black sneakers on shoe walls. David at Vans is hyped on, “a Beatrice Domond colourway of the AVE Pro. Supreme and FA’s first women rider designed her version of her favourite Vans shoe The AVE Pro. Not only a homage to her Boss Anthony Van Engelen but also the most technical Vans shoe.” At C1rca, new footwear harmonizes with softgoods: “We are doing an apparel collection with some artists and a special model better for skaters, called BUCKLER 99.” At OSIRIS, General Manager Brian Barber said: “The theme is really in the colour combinations and some cool graphic prints on both low and high tops! Even a COVID themed shoe will be available!” At Fallen, CEO Ronnie Mazzei is happy to announce the return of an iconic graphic: “For this season we brought back the Rising Sun model which a ton of our customers have been asking for. Fallen was established in 2003, so we always have a piece of history to tell in our collections.” DVS is throwing it back to the 1980s with the Honcho Hero high-top in classic red, white and black, and releases the Devious in a cool black, camo, and orange suede version.

MATERIALS: NEXT-LEVEL AND SUSTAINABLE

Innovation is alive and well in the shoe game despite the crisis. David at Vans introduces Sickstick rubber: “Our new rubber outsole compound is even grippier than classic Vans rubber and lasts even longer. Overall we are most proud of not just one feature but the fast

A large advertisement for etnies Marana Slip XLT sneakers. The central image shows a skateboarder in a white t-shirt, tan pants, and a blue cap performing a trick on a wooden ramp. The skateboarder is wearing red sneakers with white soles. Surrounding the central image are several product details and text elements. In the top left, a close-up of a shoe's outsole is shown with the text "3X MORE DURABLE MICHELIN OUTSOLE". In the top right, the text "HIGH-TECH LOW-MAINTENANCE" is displayed. In the middle left, a close-up of a red sneaker is shown with the text "FORCE SHIELD REINFORCED UPPER". In the bottom left, a close-up of a red sneaker is shown with the text "EVERTOE RUBBER TOE CAP FOR DURABILITY". In the bottom right, the etnies logo is shown above the text "MARANA SLIP XLT". The background of the advertisement is a concrete floor with some red splatters.





that we have been wear testing and gathering extensive consumer insights on these specific styles for nearly two years to make every part of them better.” Brian at OSIRIS defines this season’s key features as “comfortable insoles and upgraded materials.” Rick at etnies said: “I’m very proud of the Michelin vulcanized outsole that we have developed. When it came to design the Joslin Vulc, we had met with the Michelin team and wanted to see if they can develop this construction, which is the first time they’ve done it.” Fallen is glad to “announce our new Impact Foam2 Insole with the highest quality of PU with a 40-degree hardness, for all the shoes in our line-up. Regarding material, we have new Vegan friendly models but most of the collection are Suede combined with Cotton Twill.” State keeps banking on Duraflck, “a thin perforated rubber layer underneath the toe and ollie area helps withstand the wear from griptape.” éS Footwear is pushing Beyond Suede this season as a vegan and eco-friendly collection featuring non-animal leathers. Meanwhile, Globe is launching new and long-lasting Wolverine Leathers in the LAll and Surplus model, as well as organic cotton and eco leathers that are made from “bio-degradable and metal free pigskin nubuck.”

So there you have it: The skate footwear segment is weathering the storm while offering innovation, skate performance and diverse fits for the new wave of riders. Looking ahead, Fallen CEO Ronnie Mazzei said: “At the beginning I think everyone felt as if it was the end of the universe, and now people are learning how to live with it and learning to adapt to whatever the new normal is going to be.” ⑤

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

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### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Stable prices and supply chains
- 2 Core brands under pressure
- 3 White shoes
- 4 Casual VS. high-tech
- 5 Recycled and sustainable materials
- 6 Engineered footwear technology
- 7 Colour splashes and pro colourways



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## BIG WIG INTERVIEW GLOBE'S MATT HILL

We sat down with Globe CEO Matt Hill to discuss the threats and opportunities facing our industry at present. Matt talks about the divestiture of Dwindle to Highline, he talks about business during the COVID-19 era and also reflects on what he'd tell the Matt Hill of 2015 with the benefit of hindsight.

Interview by SOURCE Editor, Harry Mitchell Thompson.

**Matt, for those of our readers who don't know your story, please could you give us a summary of how you came to your current position of CEO at Globe.**

Globe was originally founded by my two older brothers Stephen and Peter Hill in the mid-80s as a skateboard distribution company for Australia. We had all grown up skateboarding, and the guys barely out of their teens saw an opportunity to import skateboards into the Australian market from the USA and went for it. The business quickly grew and pretty soon we had expanded into apparel,

then footwear and then into Europe and ultimately the USA which I came over to help set up in the mid-90s and where I have been based since. By the early 2000s we had grown significantly and were operating around the world and had the chance to take the company public. We did that, then experimented with some short term, outside CEOs that didn't quite integrate into the culture of the company and ultimately we realized one of us needed to do the job. It was important to us that one of us oversaw the balance between culture, core values, and the expansion, change and

*"We experimented with some short term, outside CEOs that didn't quite integrate into the culture of the company and ultimately we realized one of us needed to do the job. It was important to us that one of us oversaw the balance between culture, core values, and the expansion, change and growth that would be required to always adapt over the long term. In 2004 I said I would do it for a few years, and here we are 16 years later".*

growth that would be required to always adapt over the long term. In 2004 I said I would do it for a few years, and here we are 16 years later. Peter and Stephen have never stopped being involved at an executive board level and often drive key growth projects. The balance works well and has helped us get through ups and downs for over three decades!

**This year marks 35 years of being in business and 25 years of Globe. Let's leave chat of COVID for later; how has the business landscape evolved since our last catchup for your 30 year anniversary? If you could give 2015 Matt Hill some 2020 insight, what would it be?**

When we recapped and looked back on our history at that 30 year mark in 2015, we were really struck by how a real distinction of our company vs a lot of boardsports companies that had come and gone was how we had evolved.

*"If I was giving insights to someone five years ago with the benefit of being here now, I would say be prepared to not just sell online but to have your brands transformed to a complete digital program from consumer communication, retail account support, marketing and distribution channels".*

We had maintained a through line and stayed true to skate over three decades but had at the same time diversified into different markets like surf, streetwear, workwear and into different regions around the world and operated in a wide variety of distribution channels.

Those characteristics have remained true over the last five years. Since we last spoke we had seen skate hardgoods decline and now we see our Globe skateboard sales come charging back over the last 12 months. We have had our workwear brand FXD dominate in Australia and be expanded into Europe and North America. We've also launched new brands like Impala which is a female oriented multi-discipline skate brand. o we've kept on the same path and looked to adopt and diversify our brand mix, customer base we sell to and distribution channels to move with the times. Clearly in the last five years the biggest change has been the change to a digital marketplace. If I was giving insights to someone five years ago with the benefit of being here now, I would say be prepared to not just sell online but to have your brands transformed to a complete digital program from consumer communication, retail account support, marketing and distribution channels. All our newer programs that have been launched in the last five years have adopted that philosophy and have really flourished. Impala is a prime example that was born in a purely digital time



and has grown organically in that sphere and as such has a genuine contact with its customer base that is perfect for the demographic it sells to and the platforms to communicate today.

*“We had been looking to have globally relevant single scale brands in each product category and market and so divesting of Dwindle made sense, particularly since the division and people would go to a good business in Highline that was attracted to the idea of a mix of multiple core brands to complement their brand assortment”.*

**Last year you sold Dwindle to Highline. Can you explain the current crop of brands at the company, how each brand works in relation to your other brands and why last year was the right time to part with Dwindle? How has the sale of Dwindle affected production of Globe’s skate hard goods?**

We have always had our own factory in China, making the best premium skateboards in the world and nothing has changed there. Dwindle still makes their boards there also, so as far as production of skateboards goes, we are unaffected and still have ownership and exclusive access to the highest quality, most stable supply chain for skateboards in the world and continue to invest and look to innovate through that production facility. So post the Dwindle transaction we are left with four core global brands operating in different segments all now operating in Europe and the other regions.

- Globe in the skate/surf apparel, footwear and skateboard market

- Salty Crew operating in the surf, fish, dive and sail apparel market
- Impala operating in the female quad roller, inline and skateboard market
- FXD operating in the workwear apparel and boot market

All these brands have much further global scale potential to grow from where they are today and can do so in all regions, giving us an awesome mix of both different brand growth but also a good even mix of product categories between apparel, footwear and skateboards.

**Can you give us a summary of how COVID affected business and where you’re currently at with regards to opportunities and threats arising from the current situation**

We can say that in Europe, as we don’t have a summer drop, business was not too badly affected as we delivered to all clients before the lock down mid-march and when stores reopened sell-through was strong. Clients moved through our products and are ready for

*“We have found that our hardgoods products like Impala and Globe have been extremely popular in the COVID era as they are great individual socially distanced activities that can still be social, that people can do at home, in their own neighbourhood or local community. We expect to see that continue for the coming period”.*

Fall deliveries. Our supply chain has been very reliable and so we have seen good opportunities as some competitors have faced challenges in those areas. We have

found that our hardgoods products like Impala and Globe have been extremely popular in the COVID era as they are great individual socially distanced activities that can still be social, that people can do at home, in their own neighbourhood or local community. We expect to see that continue for the coming period.

Meanwhile, as to threats, it is simply the uncertainty in the world and the virus. The business needs to find the balance between long term planning and investing in the future while taking short term views of where opportunities are today and making sure we run hard and fast at those and support our retailers with adaptive programs and flexibility where we can!

**How has your office culture changed and how do you see things working moving forward in this area?**

In all our regions our offices have always been social gathering places where we have tried to encourage the interests of our staff and embody the culture of our brands. We always pushed for vibrant interactive creative environments. Since COVID this has been tough as we have taken a very serious and strict approach to a safe workplace looking to mitigate the spread of the virus wherever we can which most often involves reducing human contact and crossover. So now we have that safe platform established, we are looking to add back the more social components within those new constraints. It’s not easy but we have a creative staff base, so it’s up to all of us to find the ways to do it!

*“COVID may mean good opportunities for independent, true destination, non-mall based core retailers. We are seeing that retailers around the world who are truly core and have a dedicated customer base are doing better than mall-based stores, and have new customers coming for their specific needs”.*

**Knowing both the distribution and brand side to the industry, what do you see as the future of boardsports retail? How does the future look for core surf/skate retailers and how do brands, distributors and retailers work together in harmony?**

Once we get through the economic shock of COVID which will be extremely tough on independent retailers, COVID may mean good opportunities for independent, true destination, non-mall based core retailers. We are seeing that retailers around the world who are truly core and have a dedicated customer base are doing better than mall-based stores, and have new customers coming for their specific needs. It may well be that this is an opportunity for the return of the independent core surf/skate retailer which would be awesome as they are the lifeblood of the industry. We have always looked to support these original retailers in all ways we can and we will continue to keep them as a priority for our company and brands. ©



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# BOARDSHORTS SS21

At the time of writing this edition of Boardsport SOURCE, a heatwave is sweeping across Europe, an increasingly common occurrence in recent years. In fact the climate is an “opportunity” for the boardshort category but one that's not about unscrupulously exploiting the planet as it burns. A peek at 2021 collections by **David Bianic**.



Photo Hurley

The English expression “the elephant in the room” depicts issues that we can all see but no one dares to confront. In this case, the boardshort category is somewhat biased in the sense that “shorts for boards” only represents a marginal proportion of overall bathing shorts sales. “The demand for technical boardshorts

*“The demand for technical boardshorts is always slightly lower than the one for our wide range of walk shorts and beach shorts”. Joffrey Delfgaauw, Design Manager at O'Neill*

is always slightly lower than the one for our wide range of walk shorts and beach shorts”, confirms Joffrey Delfgaauw, Design Manager at O'Neill Europe. At Rhythm, Marie Azam also asserts that

“beachshorts are enjoying big success and sales are increasing more in this category than in fixed waist boardshorts.” Amongst these bathing short sub categories, beachshorts are losing ground to the benefit of volley shorts, explains Tom Purbrick, Global Design Director at Quiksilver and this is the consequence of a more general trend from the wider public textiles industry for versatile shorts with elastic waists and drawstrings. Behind this trend hides a desire for multi-use shorts, as embodied by Dewestone's Life Shorts, shorts that are “built to be the short that you travel in, the short you train in, the same short you dive in, surf in, climb in, adventure in, live day to day in”, assures the brand's founder Rory Atton. It's not surprising then that the beachshort is also gaining ground from the walkshort or bermuda, getting away from the beach and invading all corners, outdoor to urban.

## THE VIRUS AND BUSINESS

The economic and sanitary crisis linked to the COVID-19 pandemic is not happy with just affecting current 2020 sales and is weighing down on collections to come for spring/summer 2021. Let's start with the unveiling at the tradeshow, or in this case, without the tradeshow: “usually in July we would be attending a bunch of trade shows in Europe and USA, whilst visiting our customers for face to

*“When it comes to pricing, brands are all saying that the most popular models come within the €50-70 bracket while the most technical models like the Hyperfreak Hydro from O'Neill come in at €129.99”.*

face appointments”, reminds Nicholas Crook, Founder of Boardies Apparel. “That's all gone out of the window now as we are presenting our shorts collection via Zoom video meetings.” At Lost Enterprises, Freddie Sipowicz (President) and Jonathan Gilbert (CEO Europe) explain that the Covid crisis has affected every development phase, including production timeframes for samples and shorter pre-orders. As a result “they have moved the seasonal offering closer to the actual seasonal timeframes.” It's a similar story at Quiksilver who have not cancelled any ranges but have rescheduled some of them for later release. Vissla have also adapted and some spring/summer garments have been put back to 2021 (7% of the 2021 range). Hurley are doing the same, explaining that it “not only helps clients reduce their orders and reduces the pressure on them, but it is also a good way for us as a brand to keep control of the brand representation in the market,” says Manon Jouanine (Hurley EMEA Product Manager and Valentine Grandamme (Hurley EMEA Marketing Manager), the other solution being to thin out the SS21 range, an idea supported by Dewestone, counting on the collection's flagship products.

The impact of COVID can be seen in a positive light as well thankfully, like for O'Neill Europe with “a significant growth on all online platforms not just our website but partner/account platforms as well”, says Joffrey Delfgaauw. Many have been swamped by this online demand, like Protest Sportswear who have bolstered staffing at their distribution site in The Netherlands. The brand has also put in place an online b2b tool, Elastic Suite, which allows you to see the collections and place orders without physical journeys, explains Menswear Manager Ingrid Kalma. When it comes to pricing, brands are all saying that the most popular models come within the €50-70 bracket while the most technical models like the Hyperfreak Hydro from O'Neill come in at €129.99.



Photo Quiksilver





2021 TRENDS: PRINTS & COLOURS

Designing a boardshort rests on a three-layer design brief: “It’s all about prints, lengths and fabrics”, as summarised by Vissla. Let’s starts with prints and more generally with the pieces’ graphic story. Unsurprisingly, the 90s are revisited by many of our players. Boardies Apparel are rolling this out in the form of tie-dye and Memphis style (poppy colours

*“Fortunately there are alternatives to the 90s, tropical and Californian options, like from Quiksilver and their Endless Trip collection with more earthy tones”.*

and geometric shapes) and while flower and palm motifs are losing ground, black is at full throttle, “In the water, everyone we’ve seen surfing in Bali is wearing solid black”, assures Nicholas Crook.

Rusty are also leaning on their 90s glory days with emblematic styles from the era,

“reinvigorated for a new generation”, adds Ben Noble, Head of Design. Another era and another style at Chiemsee who portray a really colourful, vibrant, dynamic world, paying homage to the 70s surf scene. To counterbalance loud retro colours, the brand is calling upon sun-faded effects for “a relaxed look”. Lots of brands are playing on two levels like Hurley who on one side are proposing many different motifs inherited from the 90s (“bright colours, geometrical shapes and fun prints”) and another collection featuring flower prints and more “classical” colours. Added to this is the rerelease of the Party Pack, one of the best sellers of recent years at Hurley: namely three boardshorts with all-over fantasy prints (parrots, hula dancers and pineapples). At Lost, the exotic style meets techno through a Cyber Tropics theme based on cyans and coral colours. From the tropics to Californian palms there’s only one more step that O’Neill are taking, and that’s pastels for their California Vacationer Pack, “with stylish American Retro Vacation silhouettes in pastel colours and nostalgic all-over prints.” Protest have also opted for pastels (mauve, dusty pink, sand and shady blue) next to more classic colours (red, blue, petrol and mandarin).

Hurley)  
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FILIPE TOLEDO



Fortunately there are alternatives to the 90s, tropical and Californian options, like from Quiksilver and their Endless Trip collection with more earthy tones “Inspired by missions south of the border, desert point breaks and campfire nights”. We also like the Life Shorts Pro in Muted Jungle from Dewestone, inciting the need to act against deforestation: “For every Muted Jungle Life Shorts Pro we make, 50 trees will be planted in Central America”, explains Rory Atton. For one model, the brand has also teamed up with the Gili Eco Trust, a foundation coming to the rescue of baby turtles.

2021 TRENDS: SYNTHETIC VS NATURAL

While technical boardshorts go hand in hand with synthetics, beach/walkshorts offer a more eclectic range of materials that call on comfort, durability factors as well as reductions to cost. Boardies, Hurley, Dewestone, Protest, Rusty and Quiksilver are using polyester fibres obtained from recycled plastic bottles.

*“While technical boardshorts go hand in hand with synthetics, beach/walkshorts offer a more eclectic range of materials that call on comfort, durability factors as well as reductions to cost”.*

Quiksilver are proud to announce they have used the equivalent of 250 million plastic bottles that ended their days in landfill. The brand also explains that their 2021 Highline range (performance) will benefit from a plant-based hydrophobic treatment (with no PFC and bio certified in the United States). For most brands it’s about stretchy polyester fabric (uni and multidirectional) while the less technical ranges inherit mixtures of polyester/cotton that allow for more competitive price tags. Another option comes from Rhythm who are offering- as well as polycottons -100% nylon models or thick cotton canvasses,

choices that correspond in our world to neo vintage aesthetic decisions rather than technical solutions. Vissla offers a range of boardshorts that are 100% eco-friendly using Cocotex fabrics (coconut and polyester fibres), as well as Repreve, hemp or bio cotton, not forgetting PFC-free beading treatments.

Finally, a few words on the details of finishing touches, starting with the Explore Phantom+ Apex boardshort from Hurley, a hybrid model with multidirectional stretch with a mesh liner for breathability and a mesh waist that holds the short in place without retaining water or sweat. At O’Neill, the WP-Pocket Hybrid model has a waterproof pocket (30 metres), featuring an automatic magnetic closure system.

So no revolution in the boardshorts world then but recurrent models/styles whose developments from one season to the next are not always outstanding enough to highlight to customers. The good news is the rise in the beachshort and hybrid short categories, two styles that are capable of seducing a non-core clientele who are rediscovering a surf look with the practical features of mainstream clothing. ☺

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

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Hot: beachshort, volleyshort, hybrid short
- 2 The classics: 90s and tropics
- 3 Pastels and earthy tones
- 4 Recycled fibres





# MARKET INSIGHT

## AUSTRIA

GERMANY  
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The last months have been a challenge for everyone. It needs to be said that following the early lockdown and the various measures taken, we had relatively low infection rates in Austria. The government measures worked well across the board. After the cautious first store openings in April and the first opening to tourism at the end of May, the unemployment rate, as of July, has fallen again somewhat, but is still twice as high as in the same period last year. This has naturally also had a dampening effect on private consumption, which before the crisis was seen as the engine of the economy and which provided a decent boost to gross domestic product (GDP). In addition, exports, imports and also investments have slumped considerably due to the global restrictions. So now we are in a recession of historic proportions. The government is trying to counteract this through various measures.

Amongst other things, companies are being supported with fixed cost subsidies of 100%. The short-time work model, deferrals of contributions and loans, the hardship funds for small companies and other measures to support the economy were extended and increased in order to revive the economy and get it back on track. Many experts, however, believe that the situation is extremely precarious and expect many company bankruptcies to be postponed to next year or even later. It therefore remains to be seen what the long-term effects of the various government programs will be.

The currently increasing infection rates have now led to somewhat stricter measures. In addition to the current social distancing rules, compulsory masks have been reintroduced in many areas of administration, public transport and supermarkets. In retail stores, however, a relaxed obligation to wear masks is practiced.

After the complete opening of stores and the borders to neighbouring countries, the situation in trade and tourism has recovered somewhat and positive

indicators can be seen. Regarding boardsports, Steve Zdarsky from the agency Kullu Products reports that skateboard products are very popular: "Skateboard hardgoods are booming and this impacts other skateboard products such as shoes and creates a healthy demand." Kids skating (both boys and girls) can be seen all over the country from Vienna, to Graz, Innsbruck and Bregenz. In some cases the demand can no longer be met. "Products are becoming scarce and are even sold out", Peter Brandl from La Resistance Shop in Zell am See tells us, "it is difficult to get trucks and decks". He is very satisfied with the progress the store's made, even if the initial period was an uncertain one, in the meantime it is working very well again and boardsports are in high demand again. "Some brands were very supportive to get over the hard times, others not", he says. "I would wish to see mutual support from all sides, it is necessary to give and take from all sides," he says.

Michi Seidl from the Store Boardshop Seidl in Salzburg serves as an example for us in the area of water sports. The water sports pro reports: "Sales in the SUP and also river surfing segment are amazing". The nearby river wave 'the Riverwave' in Ebensee certainly has a positive impact just like the surrounding lakes. He sees another trend in foiling, which is just getting started and is reported to guarantee a lot of potential. Vacations at home are more popular than ever and the adjacent local markets are also stimulating tourism and business.

Stores in tourist strongholds are noticing this in particular, "since the borders are open again, things are going really well", reports Christian Rainer from Sport Rainer Shop in Zillertal. But they all have one thing in common: there is a big uncertainty about the vital upcoming winter business. So far, it is not clear exactly how ski lifts will work, nor which borders are open or which tourist markets will be allowed to travel at all. But one thing is for sure, we all are wishing for lots of snow and a good winter!

**BJÖRN BETTERMANN / KANOA TRADING**

# MARKET INSIGHT

Take a country shyly recovering from years of economic crisis. Now hit it with a pandemic that shuts down all activity for two months. Hopeless? Not for Spain. Spaniards have a unique combination of resilience and lust for life. Their ability to adapt, and their eagerness to spend when they can, will help the Spanish economy bounce back on the recovery track.

Initial pandemic containment measures in Q1, followed by a full lockdown in Q2 slumped GDP. With retail spaces and borders closed, there was no consumption from either locals or foreign visitors. Sales and production tanked, and tourism revenues collapsed. Drastic job losses happened as a result. The ferocity with which the Coronavirus crisis hit Spain was the last thing its economy needed. But Spanish consumers don't hesitate to spend when they have the means to. Sales and production started to bounce back in May, the moment restrictions were lifted. Employment showed signs of recovery through mid-June. Forecasts point to GDP shrinking by 9-12% in 2020, before growing 6-7% in 2021. The government has procured an aid package of €140bn from the European Reconstruction Fund that it so earnestly helped create. This will allow for investments that will raise productivity, as well as keeping support schemes set up during lockdown.

Not all sectors are having the same experience though. There is an imbalance between businesses that feed off local consumers and the ones that depend on foreign tourists. The latter is suffering from less visitors and capacity restrictions in hospitality. However, the outdoor sports industry in general, and the boardsports one in particular, are enjoying a 'back to normal' wave. This could be due to two factors. On one hand, Spain suffered one of the most restrictive confinements in Europe. People had to stay home, restricted to limited outings that had to be properly justified to the watchful police. The average Spaniard, used to big doses of open air, pined for the outdoors even more. Tito Moro, founder of Hawaii Surf Shop in San Sebastian, says, "as lockdown started to ease, hanging out at the beach was not allowed, but you could do sports. Some people dusted off their old surfboards, just to be in the ocean." Hardware goods are the biggest selling category in post-lockdown sales, according to all skate, surf and kite shops interviewed. On the other hand, with gyms closed, the outdoors offered the best training facilities. Miki Parets, owner of Shine Skate Shop in Mallorca, says, "skateboarding is becoming more mainstream. Some people find that it is cheaper to buy a skateboard and a pair of shoes than to pay a monthly gym fee". Surf and kite schools are busy, suggesting

that the lust for outdoor time is attracting new fans. Tito reports that there are more people trying to surf for the first time, even at older ages. Kite schools have met this demand for outdoor time with new products that are easy to use in any conditions. Sergi Sánchez, CEO of Kite Experience in Barcelona, says, "the biggest trend is wing foil, mainly for its novelty and simplicity." Could lockdown end up being a positive force in the popularity of boardsports, after all?

Two months of no spending resulted in unexpected savings that boardsports fans are happy to invest in more fun time. Daniele Olivieri, Founder of kite shop and school KTS, in Tarifa, says, "people who kept their jobs and did not spend during lockdown have savings. They are willing to spend this money on new material and experiences". Jaime Herráiz, CEO of WET, Tarifa, calls it post-lockdown euphoria, "kitesurf has returned to historic sales figures, wing foil is opening new opportunities and recreational SUP has experienced a surge in sales."

Jaime is cautious though, "possible relapses in coastal areas will be determining for business. Kite shops need the European visitors that come to practice in a warmer climate from October to March." A second lockdown is the biggest concern. Brand support is crucial. Payment rescheduling and discounts have avoided order cancellations. They helped shops make it through two months of watching unopened boxes sit in their closed stores. But they'd like to see increased support in mark-ups and online price regulation. With shops closed, people have taken to the internet to find the products they want. A cheaper price online will lure even the most loyal customers. Brick and mortar stores could end up being used as showrooms. Dani García is a sales agent for many key surf brands, Director of Special Surf School and owner of Go Surfing Shop in Cantabria. He takes the pulse of the surf industry closely and shares a widespread concern, "some consumers use the shop to ask for advice and try the product. Then they go online and click to buy 5 euros cheaper. It's bad for business, for morale, and ultimately for the industry." Dani, Tito and Miki agree that the best support a brand could offer is a good mark-up. That is what allows shops to do business. After all, as Tito explains, "brands and shops have to support each other, if they both want to survive."

**ROCIO ENRIQUEZ RAMOS**

## SPAIN

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# SWIMWEAR SS21

SS21 Swimwear collections empower women in sports, promote care for the environment and display total body inclusivity. Swimwear could be spearheading a much-needed transformation of the women's clothing industry into a fairer, more sustainable one. By **Rocio Enriquez**.



Photo O'Neill

SS20 collections pushed a clear message: stay fit, love your body and look after the environment. For SS21 this message has been set in stone, becoming the three commandments no brand dares to ignore. Nature is present in all collections. Sporty styles will help you enjoy it. A great variety of designs will fit all natural body shapes. Widespread use of sustainable materials will help look after our habitats. By adding a pinch of nostalgia for 20th century beach life and globe-trotting adventures, the SS21 season promises vibrant collections for all women, without exceptions.

*“Swimwear shouldn’t just be outstanding in design, comfort and fit, it should also make a woman feel feminine and sexy”* **Mariet Wieske, Sales Manager at Barts.**

SHAPES

Sporty styles remain strong. Women are active and demand reliable swimwear that will follow their moves. Not at any cost, though, looks are important. They’ll look for pieces that are equally supportive and sculpting. “Swimwear shouldn’t just be outstanding in design, comfort and fit, it should also make a woman feel feminine and sexy”, says Mariet Wieske, Sales Manager at Barts.

Versatility plays a big role. Being able to transform a reliable sports bra into a nice beach lounging top adds value. Rhythm makes versatile one pieces that you can wear as a body suit with denim or shorts. Barts has introduced clips in the shoulder straps, so they can be worn in different ways.

Seasons of pushing body positivity have resulted in true democracy in bikini wear. High waist bottoms and one pieces share shelves with cheeky bikinis. O'Neill's Paul Martin announces, “for SS21 we

*“for SS21 we created a new body shape matrix based on our research. We revisited shapes and sizing to ensure we have styles for all women, regardless of body type”* **Paul Martin, O'Neill.**

created a new body shape matrix based on our research. We revisited shapes and sizing to ensure we have styles for all women, regardless of body type”. Activity and coverage guide women’s decisions, not body shape. Manon Jouanine, EMEA Product manager at Hurley, explains, “at a sell-out level, we see a pretty homogenous interest across all shapes of swimwear. The difference is mostly happening at a country level, where some would opt for more or less coverage”. Marie-Kristin, founder of Zealous, believes that countries preferences are evolving too, “Northern European women are getting more used to the idea of cheekier bottoms and starting to be more playful when it comes to choosing prints and fits.” She will be launching a plus size range to serve even more women.

With all body types wearing any style, brands are extending their supportive and sculpting features to all designs. Rhythm has more underwire styles in both bikini tops and one pieces. This enables larger cups to find good support. Cup sizes get tweaked too. Rhythm is offering up to a double D cup, and Zealous has gone all the way up to G in its popular Mermazing top.

MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

Combining comfort and fit requires a careful selection of materials and ingenious construction techniques. SS21 collections are rich with solutions

that enhance support and shaping. Barts offers triangle tops with a moulded cup for extra support. Rusty incorporates a waist tie and underwire bust in its one-pieces. Rhythm offers a bandeau top with a hidden underwire for a seamless finish look. Essentially, brands are putting their designers’ wits to work so that any woman can wear her favourite style. On a sports performance focus, O’Neill keeps working with the Hyper-Comfort technique that sits securely on the body and prevents skin digging. It also implements a Paddle Free concept to sports pieces, for freedom of movement and no under-arm rash. Roxy incorporates flatlock seams that reduce fabric bulk and ensure comfort in movement. Picture’s Julien Durant speaks about its Curving Swimsuit, “Swell enthusiasts will appreciate the anti-irritation seams and lycra zones where needed for unsurpassed freedom of movement when paddling”. Manon from Hurley explains, “ we focused on our ‘Purpose Built’ approach. Our swimwear is made for surfing and in-water comfort”. These solutions are supported by performance enhancing fabrics, such as O’Neill’s ‘Superkini’. It sticks to your body when wet, offering

*“Swell enthusiasts will appreciate the anti-irritation seams and lycra zones where needed for unsurpassed freedom of movement when paddling”.* **Julien Durant,Co founder, Picture.**

a carefree swim or surf. Roxy pays attention to moisture wicking and quick drying properties in its Active Range. Oxbow chooses Carvico’s polyamide, with anti UV properties and peach effect.

Reminiscing on the beach lifestyle in the 70’s, 80’s and 90’s is a recurring theme. Textured materials and bold details help the journey back in time. “Fabric itself is a design element”, says Ines Wouters from Protest. “We ruffle and smock it. You’ll see fabulous lurex used as straps and functional velvet that bring glamour to your beach look.” Roxy incorporates ribbed fabric, micro terry and jacquard. Rusty’s Designer, Noelle Aguirrebena, says, “one of our popular and premium fabrics is a solid colour textured fabric that gives a unique craft look design.” Details adorning swimwear make 20th century nostalgia obvious. Franca Stahl,



head of Marketing at Chiemsee, describes, “frill straps, a tie band in the middle and a heart-shaped neckline make the bikini top an eye-catcher”. Oxbow’s Ladies Product Manager, Eléonore Courret, describes its most popular shape, “the Malia is a one-piece swimsuit with a bust-band and wide halter neck straps. It has a scooped open back with crossed straps”. Zealous joins the trend, embellishing old fits with tassels.

COLOURS AND PRINTS

We can find three main trends in next Summer’s prints and colours: nature, retro beach culture and mixed world cultures. The timing couldn’t be better. Celebrating outdoor spaces, long days at the beach and faraway travels will hit the spot of women who’ve had all three restricted during 2020.

Retro beach culture is celebrated with bright, pastel colours with sun fading and tie-dyes. Protest chooses candy tones. Rhythm goes for soft pastel hues. Hurley adds psychedelic prints. Chiemsee brings back the 70’s hippies favourite Batik print, with tie-dye prints on pastel gradients. Barts ‘Shoreline’ theme celebrates the endless summer with sun splashed colours and tie-dye prints.

Nature is referenced through sand and ocean colours, flower and animal prints, and landscapes. Nature is the common ground where an active and sustainable lifestyle meet. Oxbow’s Communication Manager Laura Grenon describes, “the key in the collection is to reconnect with the elements, to keep the link between sport and nature”. Barts’ ‘Natural Habitat’ theme features animal skins and landscape structures. Chiemsee develops two ocean themes. ‘Abstract Waves’ features shades of blue with tie-dye optics and neon contrasts. ‘Underwater Garden’ features strong colours on a dark background. Oxbow’s “Shapes” print also portrays a submarine garden, with pastel colours enhanced by a touch of gold. Roxy develops three colour palettes around the three elements that inspire the brand: sand, sky and sea. Sand features rich earthy tones with bright accents, Sky uses pastels combined with tie-dye effect, and Sea offers a selection of shades of blue. Zealous celebrates the sea with lots of blue hues and tones. Animal prints remain popular, with most brands offering an interpretation of it.

Mixed world cultures bring different types of artwork. Rhythm’s ‘Adventurer’ theme draws inspiration from Moroccan spice markets. It offers powerful prints in



Photo Barts

rich and bold colours. Chiemsee selects ethnic elements and rich colours for its ‘Folklore’ collection. Barts’ ‘Natural Habitat’ theme offers traditional geometric art of native tribes.

SUSTAINABILITY

Recycled nylon revolutionised swimwear. The use of recycled yarns from post-consumer waste and ghost nets is quite widespread. Most brands report the use of such fabrics in all or part of their collections. The percentages range from 100 in Barts, Boardies and Picture, to 40% on O’Neill or 35% in Roxy.

Sustainability does not stop at recycled materials. It has to be supported by sustainable production processes and marketing initiatives. ‘Trans seasonality’ is gaining momentum. Offering pieces meant to last for more than one season is a sustainable practice that this year has proved helpful in business terms too.



HURLEY X HELLO KITTY® COLLECTION  
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Packaging, labels and hangtags are being made from recycled or biodegradable materials. Protest uses an eco-friendly alternative to PFC for quick drying properties. Boardies' factory in Bali is run by locals with living wages. Chiemsee and Oxbow have joined initiatives that observe safety, environmental practices and supply chain transparency. Most brands are engaged in sustainable practices, and they are all moving towards increasing this aspect of their business. The sustainability message is strong, consumers are armed with questions, and brands want to offer the right answers.

RETAILER SUPPORT

Retailer support has been of the essence this year. Lockdown during the crucial SS20 sell out months left retailers with unexpected stock. Brands and retailers have worked together on solutions that suit both. Payment flexibility has been key. Ines Wouters from Protest shares, “there has been co-operation and compromise. With the help of flexible payment terms, we have managed to retain most orders and helped

*“Resized, smaller SS21 collections and SS20 carry over colours and styles are the main practices. This lifts off pressure on retailers and also allows them to fill up sizes of SS20 products they have in stock”.*

our retailers through this trying time”. The Covid-19 crisis hit right when brands were developing their SS21 collections, and most were quick to adjust. Resized, smaller SS21 collections and SS20 carry over colours and styles are the main practices. This lifts off pressure on retailers and also allows them to fill up sizes of SS20 products they have in stock. Trans seasonality has become even more relevant. Brands who have been producing trans seasonal styles have less of a problem with the stock situation. Rusty’s Noelle explains, “swim has not been very affected by Covid-19. Because of the virus, a more trans-seasonal focus has been given to fashion, but Rusty was already heading into this design structure”. The launch of SS21 collections to retailers



Photo Hurley

was challenged too. Samples were delayed, presentations moved to digital platforms, and photoshoots cancelled. Still, brands will be ready to push SS21 with their messages that empower women and promote sustainability. Most efforts are concentrated on digital assets to help retailers with the shift to online that lockdown has boosted. These are mainly image banks to feed their websites and social, but there are other interesting digital tools. Barts will offer video tutorials explaining its different shapes, and O’Neill will make its new body shape matrix available as a VM tool. ☺

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Increased size ranges for body inclusivity.
- 2 Supportive and sculpting construction techniques.
- 3 Retro Beach Culture inspiration.
- 4 Sustainable materials and production processes.
- 5 Streamlined collections with SS20 carry overs



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MARKET INSIGHT

ITALY

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FINALLY! Italy is back in business.

In late May most businesses were able to re-open after a very long and difficult lockdown which saw Italy in a very delicate situation for many weeks. This lockdown affected everyone from north

to south and nearly all businesses had to close down and people were forced to stay at home. Grocery shopping and taking the garbage out were the most exciting things to do from early March until mid-May. This was very hard to digest for many companies in general.

The boardsport business was affected heavily as well but we also saw some positive trends. Especially skateboarding was and still is the big winner of the Covid-19 lockdown. Complete skateboards, cruisers and also other hardgoods sold extremely well online and after a while, stores that were locked down had requested so many units that it was even harder for distributors to get enough hardgoods to sell on. We haven't seen a boom like this in skateboarding for a very long time. Retailers from north to south sold out nearly their entire stock of hardgoods.

In general, June performed very well, people really enjoyed their new freedom and even went out shopping and the new law of wearing masks was not an issue at all as people really understood the necessity. Luckily this was the case as retailers were in dire need of liquidity and sales. July was slower but still alright considering the overall economy is forecast to shrink from 8-11% by experts.

Not having an online store was the biggest challenge for many smaller brick and mortar retailers as that meant they had nearly 3 months with no turnover at all. Italy, which is surely a bit behind in terms of digitalization, is for sure

now moving much faster into the new online chapter and many stores are focusing now on their online presence. Even if it's only with some very simple online store pages or a good social media presence. 2020 has taught everyone that having a second pillar to their business to create turnover has become crucial.

The big question mark now is the near future and how things will evolve. SS21 pre-books are starting later than usual and stores are pre-booking more carefully as everyone is afraid of a second wave and a lot of SS20 stock is still on the shelves with companies who are ready with FW20 deliveries.

Eric Mader from Fresco sales agency adds, "SS21 has started later and slower and many stores also opt for online ordering rather than traveling to showrooms and want to order safe sellers and are very careful when introducing new product categories or brands."

Tourism started back up again by the beginning of July and the surf hardgoods business was strong as people really enjoyed staying outside, surfing, SUPing and all the other activities they couldn't enjoy during lockdown. Participating in sports outside gives you freedom and makes you feel secure, so that's why the whole hardgoods sector is doing so well. The winter season now really depends on whether the infection rate stays low or not, as otherwise we could face a very difficult winter season, which is causing many sleepless nights to many retailers already. Alessandro Ricci from ASA sales agency agrees, "if business will move on like it was in June and July we should get through this 2020 with a black eye but if things should get worse it could be a killer for many retailers nationwide."

So stay safe and wash your hands... Ciao!

FRANZ JOSEF HOLLER

MARKET INSIGHT

Evidently Switzerland has not escaped the sanitary and economic crisis due to this pandemic. With the semi lockdown lifted since May, focus has turned to reorganising around new safety and hygiene measures and aid packages put in place by the government to tackle the situation. In our country, wearing a face covering is mandatory on public transport as well as public spaces with over 10 people (only in certain regions) and hand disinfecting is obligatory before entering any retail space. Gatherings of over 300 people are forbidden and bars and clubs have curtailed opening hours with closing time set at 2am. Unsurprisingly, all this changes the vibe of our towns and tourist resorts. Following advice from the authorities, many Swiss have stayed in the country for their summer holidays, which has somewhat boosted internal tourism, especially in the mountains. While it's still too early to analyse results, this could more or less make up for the lack of foreign tourists. In cities you can also see a change this year with more Swiss Germans in French speaking cities and vice-versa.

To help businesses out, the government has put various types of aid in place to confront this unprecedented challenge. Lots of fees have been levied to allow for loans and other partial unemployment benefits as well as working hour reductions that were implemented to allow businesses to tackle loss of earnings and encourage them not to lay people off. This aid will in many cases be in place until the end of August and potentially extended into autumn. Independent workers are also being helped out, but the grants seem quite difficult to obtain and are often not enough. Then, as cited in the previous issue, wide scale civic initiatives have

popped up, whether it's collaborations between online platforms and small businesses, support systems between individuals or other initiatives to support businesses. On one hand we have seen online commerce

understandably smashing records, while on the other hand local business on the ground like farms, artisans and other regional producers have seen considerable increases. There has been a realisation of the importance of these businesses, especially in times of a sanitary crisis that stops people moving, however, it remains to be seen how long this will last.

As a general rule we can see that the lockdown obviously caused some damage and loss of earnings but many shops admit to having found alternative solutions to generate some turnover nonetheless. Manly Shop, Levitation and 3sixty were able to pull it out of the bag to mention just a few. Switzerland did not go through a strict confinement and these shops put their products on sale on social media then directly delivered to their customers' doorsteps (following social distancing of course). This meant that skateboarding sales in particular could continue, generating substantial revenue. Since the big reopening, business has picked up in an astounding way and while many were fearful of a decline in visitation numbers and a drop in sales, it seems as though the opposite was true and the months of June and July easily surpassed expectations and appears to have saved a summer that seemed doomed.

FABIEN GRISEL

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SPECIAL REPORT:

# SKATEBOARD HARDGOODS AND SURF SKATES 2020

In a year full of surprises, skateboarding is seeing the biggest boost in participation in decades, perhaps ever. Time for a special Skateboard Hardgoods and Surf Skates Report by SOURCE Skateboard Editor **Dirk Vogel**.



Photo YOW

Welcome to the new normal. But actually, let's call it the new reality. Because normal, it is not. "I have been in the skate business for 26 years and I have never seen it like this. Every pocket of the world has huge skate demand and we have seen the demand for completes definitely increase," said Eben Woodall, VP of Sales at Carver Skateboards. "Every planet is aligned for skateboarding right now. Skateboarding is being taken seriously and towns across the world are building proper skateparks. It's really the perfect storm," said Steve Douglas, Director at Rolling Thunder Distribution. Several micro trends are already in play in this new boom. Jamie Smith, Enuff Team Manager, noticed: "One of the biggest growth markets is women taking up skateboarding; this is becoming more and more evident by the increased coverage at the bigger skateboard contests." While skaters are more safety conscious and look to avoid potential injury amid strained healthcare systems, "it seems that the flatland skate is

*"I have been in the skate business for 26 years and I have never seen it like this. Every pocket of the world has huge skate demand and we have seen the demand for completes definitely increase" "Every planet is aligned for skateboarding right now. Skateboarding is being taken seriously and towns across the world are building proper skateparks. It's really the perfect storm". Eben Woodall, VP of Sales at Carver Skateboards.*

coming back and decks between 7.7 to 8-inch are coming back," said Benoit Brecq at HOFF Distribution. And as this report showcases in a separate section: "We are seeing a boom in the surfskate scene which could be as big or bigger than the longboard boom a few years ago," said Xué Gil, Brand Manager at Yow Surf.

*"We are seeing a boom in the surfskate scene which could be as big or bigger than the longboard boom a few years ago". Xué Gil, Brand Manager at Yow Surf.*

### The Skate Market and Covid-19

"Spring business was staggering, up five times from what it was last year," said Steve Douglas at Rolling Thunder, global licensees and distributors of Zoo York, Ocean Pacific, Speed demons, Vol 1, Blueprint, Verb, KFD, RAD, Pivot trucks, Killer Speed Co and The Heart Supply. The combination has created a unique situation: "Production delays and a surge of demand have left nearly everyone in the industry with limited available inventory. COVID-19 has taken us on a wild ride, but the future is looking bright," said Ross Druckrey, Marketing Manager at Arbor Skateboards. The situation could be worse, but it's also far from ideal, said Jörg Ludewig, Managing Partner at Urban Supplies distribution: "The demand has been bigger than the supply. Basically, that is better than vice versa, however, we have been selling less than we could done under normal conditions." Looking ahead, securing enough inventory will be the make or break for retailers and suppliers. Some are lucky, including Shane Maloney at Madrid Skateboards: "We make our own boards, so we've been able to control the supply better than most." But as Xué at Yow Surf sums it up: "The brands that are producing in Asia have been highly affected, with difficulties in producing their goods, whilst somehow the demand has grown exponentially." Surging demand and low inventory usually translate into higher price points. But quality skate hardware has remained stable, at least for now. "Covid-19 has affected prices and consumers will notice that next year," said Dave Price, International Accounts Manager at Landyachtz. As Jörg Ludewig at Urban Supplies breaks it down: "Decks sell the most expensive at €59.99 retail, wheels at €57.99, trucks at

around €40, while completes sell the most expensive at €99.99." Speaking of completes, they're easily the season trend across diverse riding styles from street to surf skate and an important point of entry into skate. That's what Benoit at Hoff is pushing: "Kids complete decks in the Hillmore Range at €35, but our main product is our CARTEL complete at €69." Jamie at Enuff is catering to kids with Pow and Skully mini completes: "These are a fantastic way of getting kids into the sport and giving them a proper taste of skateboarding on a board that is slightly lighter and easier to control." Rolling Thunder is dedicating an entire brand to beginner completes with price points around €40, said Steve Douglas: "Vol 1 offers good quality completes for skate shops intended to get more kids on skateboards."

*"The demand has been bigger than the supply. Basically, that is better than vice versa, however, we have been selling less than we could done under normal conditions.". Jörg Ludewig, Managing Partner at Urban Supplies distribution.*

Here are **Five Skateboard Hardgoods Trends to Watch Right Now:**

#### 1. Season Trend: Proper complete boards

"The demand for completes has increased dramatically this year," said Ross at Arbor, pointing out the Recruit Series featuring Ace trucks and Revert wheels. Steve at Rolling Thunder said it's about time for core brands to embrace complete skateboards: "90 percent of the market doesn't even make complete skateboards but completes are what most people start with." As Jamie at Enuff said: "We believe that if kids get a good feeling from their first board, they are more likely to keep skating for a longer time!"





## 2. Less brand preference

The drought in skate hardware is causing consumers to consider alternative options (also see 5.). “At this point the ‘star’ is the product that is actually available. Shops enjoy available products of ‘no so hot’ brands over not having anything from the ‘hot’ brand. And in some cases, a ‘not so hot’ brand turns into a ‘hot’ brand, simply as it has not been visible before,” said Jörg Ludewig at Urban Supplies.

## 3. Fewer seasonal products

The amount of new pro models was already declining in favour of logo-driven boards, then came the pandemic. “Covid has definitely made us think and plan a little differently. We have reduced our number of SKUs for our 2021-line plan with the hopes it can make it easier on our suppliers,” said Eben at Carver. “We decided to carry over a big part of the range during the COVID situation but the sales after the break are pretty high, so we need to create and produce a new range,” said Benoit at HOFF. At Rolling Thunder, permanent board graphics are labelled ‘Evergreen’ designs and offered year-round.

## 4. Niche deck brands

Decks are among the scarcest commodities right now, and brands previously considered niche are filling the gap. The likes of Thank You Skateboarding, April, Jeremy Klein Industries, Business & Company, are selling out of new drops almost instantly. European labels like Jart, Enuff, Mindless, and Cartel are flying off the shelves. The Heart Supply was co-founded by Element Skateboards creator Johnny Schillereff with a social mission: “Our aim is to give kids the gift of enjoying and riding their own skateboard. We believe the freedom and friendships that come from skateboarding are invaluable.”

## 5. Crumbling truck and wheel monopolies

The truck segment used to be cornered by Independent, Venture and Thunder, while Bones and Spitfire dominated in wheels. After Covid-19, these brands are sold out in many a shop, so brands like Krux, Ace, Gullwing, Carver, and Enuff with their Decade Pro Trucks have their time to shine. Wheel companies like Small Wheels are suddenly ‘big’ and Shane at Madrid is hyped about sales of Autobahn Dual Duro Ultra wheels, “our fastest and most durable wheels yet.” Meanwhile, Steve Douglas is stoked on, “Pivot trucks, a new price point made in the key truck factory in China.”

## SURF SKATE: RIDING THE WAVE

“Surfskate is stronger than ever. It is now officially its own genre and whether or not you surf and want to use a Carver as a surf trainer to become a better surfer or just have fun on a surfskate not living near a beach, surfskate is a lifestyle,” said Eben at Carver, pointing out the patented truck systems C7, CX, and C5. At OB Five Skateboards, Founder/Director Kris O’Brien is on the same page: “We are seeing more everyday cruiser people upgrading to our Surf Skates. It’s no longer just surfers buying them to use as trainers, a much broader range of riders are looking for that loose carvy surf feel.” Kris recommends the latest Resonate Surf Skate, Psyched Tiger and Happy Hour Surf Skate models.

 The image is a composite. The top half shows a surfer with blonde hair riding a wave, with the text "TRAIN AND SUCCEED" and "PRO TEAMRIDER @erinbrookssurf" overlaid. The bottom half shows five different skateboard decks arranged horizontally, with the text "ENJOY YOUR RIDE!" and "JUCKER HAWAII" overlaid. The website "www.juckerhawaii.com" is at the bottom.
 

# TRAIN AND SUCCEED

PRO TEAMRIDER @erinbrookssurf

# ENJOY YOUR RIDE!

JUCKER  HAWAII

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*"We are seeing more everyday cruiser people upgrading to our Surf Skates. It's no longer just surfers buying them to use as trainers, a much broader range of riders are looking for that loose carvy surf feel". Kris O'Brien Founder OB Five Skateboards.*

At OP, Steve Douglas recommends the OP Swell 40" pintail, Swell 31 Cruiser and OP Regular popsicle. Jamie at Enuff suggests Mindless surf skate trucks and Viper wheels.

Over at Jucker Hawaii, Mike Jucker said: "I am more surfer now than skateboarder and I LOVE skatesurfing. Also, our balance trainers have become extremely popular. I love our Bamboo Fiberglass constructions and our Rugged2 Skatesurf truck." Speaking of new product, Iciar Sánchez, Product Developer at Slide Surfskates is proud to announce the new 3.0 Slide surf skate trucks and significant updates in completes: "Based on our best-seller model, the Gussie 31", we have created a board more focused on surf training. And our Quad Sunset is great for kids, as it is 30" long and quite wide so that they can start turning safely." At YOW Surf, Xué Gil is banking on surf-specific trucks such as the "System S4 and an upcoming new system which will be called Meraki. We offer the same trucks for all our models at 9 inches, we are mounting all models with 66x51mm wheels in different hardness depending on each model's necessities."

At HOFF, Benoit attests: "Surf skate is still the best segment in cruisers and longboards this year. We are out of stock in our summer collection!" Benoit recommends the Capitol truck, STR truck and Lombard truck with dedicated base plate for maximum turning sensation." Dave at Landyachtz has the surf skate and cruiser market covered with, "Dinghies, Dinghies, Dinghies and price point drop through completes under 250 euro." At DB Longboards, Designer Tim Mackey is happy to say: "Factories in China have been

backed up but we are very fortunate to have manufacturing capabilities in house in the US. Our Coreflex technology is a fiberglass bamboo construction that is very durable and produces a trampoline flex great for carving and cruising." At Flow Surf skate, this season is all about the 159mm surf skate trucks, "spring-loaded to create smooth and flowing turns that replicate the feeling of surfing in the ocean." For retailers looking to ride the wave, make sure to get inventory sorted now and read our Inventory Strategy Guide on our website. ©



Photo: Fallen

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Low inventory, high demand
- 2 Price point completes
- 3 Less seasonal product
- 4 Brand monopolies crumbling
- 5 Boom in surf skate and cruising
- 6 Updated surf trucks
- 7 Surf training on skateboards



ocean pacific  
NEW SPRING 2021 DROPS



SWELL 36" SWELL 31" SUNSET 8.25" SUNSET SS 32" DAWN 40"







## UK'S GRAYSTONE ACTION SPORTS HIT BY BOOM IN BEGINNER SKATEBOARD LESSONS

We've reported on the pandemic-inspired skateboarding boom from the supply and demand side, with accounts from many different retailers, brands and distributors confirming the trend. Now we've spoken with the UK's leading action sports academy, Graystone who confirm from the front line that their return from lockdown has been a prolific one. Fuelled by a strong local community and with reports of fully booked beginner coaching lessons (of all ages), Graystone Co-Founder Kevin Gray and company Director, David McCabe give us the inside track on what's powering this phenomenal surge in action sports.

**Please tell us how your business was affected by the lockdown.**

Well, we had to close of course. We had been making great progress at the start of the year and experienced our best two months to date in Jan and Feb 2020. We were finally on track to meet our ambitious targets and have our most successful month ever in March when the message about staying home came out. It quickly became clear that we were going to have to close down and we got started cancelling some of the events we were scheduled to host, like the National Skateboarding

Champs. A huge disappointment but... c'est la vie! We then had a few days of nothing happening at all, which was weird, and then the instruction to close.

With the doors closed we were able to make a few adjustments and improvements to the park, like our new access ramp for WCMX users. It was mainly about trying to stay in touch with our community through competitions like the incredibly successful design a deck competition we ran with Skatehut. Our community have been phenomenally loyal and supportive throughout. When we got a hint of being able to re-open, the

*"Our adult beginner coaching has gone crazy too. Such a cool group of 22 last week with most staying for a beer and a chat afterwards. It is becoming one of the best evenings out in Manchester and so popular that we are giving them a second night on Mondays".*

community and a group of parents in particular, were right there with offers of help to get us started again. It is something we are incredibly grateful for and will never forget.

**What procedures did you have to put in place for reopening?**

There were many. We are fortunate that we have almost 40,000 sq ft of really well-ventilated space to play with, but we still reduced our capacity by half. We introduced a one-way system in and out of the park. Restricted all users to a 2 hour session and we clear the park out completely before a new session begins. This was in addition to all the spending on cleaning products/sanitizer/face coverings and extra staff time for cleaning touch points. Even then, you have to look at how things work in practice and make adjustments. Sometimes the guidelines were incredibly unclear. At one point we worked out we could've had 40 customers in the bar/restaurant, but not 40 users in the park, where they would've had 1000 sq ft of space, each!

*"The demand for total beginner coaching in all our sports, but particularly skateboarding, has gone absolutely off the charts during last couple of weeks. People are even booking intensive 5-day courses to get them up riding as quick as possible".*

**How has consumer appetite been since reopening?**

It has been remarkably strong. With the reduced capacity we are filling lots of sessions completely and there has been a bit of a scramble for places at popular times. Customers have needed to get used to booking online, well in advance, which has actually been a goal of ours since opening;

online booking allows us to plan sessions better and capture data, ultimately allowing us to deliver better service. There is also a general feeling of support and of our customers wanting to help us get through, which is really very cool. They have been totally happy to comply with new measures and just generally stoked to be back at Graystone.

**Can you break it down by demographic, or user type - Age, sex, ability, coaching etc.**

Coaching has really taken off, skateboarding in particular, especially at the absolute beginner level and with real youngsters around 3-7. Consistent with what Nic Powley said in BSS last week, we have seen an increase in girls coming for coaching and sessions too. The demand for total beginner coaching in all our sports, but particularly skateboarding, has gone absolutely off the charts during last couple of weeks. People are even booking intensive 5-day courses to get them up riding as quick as possible.

Our adult beginner coaching has gone crazy too. Such a cool group of 22 last week with most staying for a beer and a chat afterwards. It is becoming one of the best evenings out in Manchester and so popular that we are giving them a second night on Mondays.

**And your Camp Graystone product has been popular too...**

Sold out! It's a great product and really good value. With great childcare being at a premium, there has also been a scramble for places and our families are so grateful for the service. It's also just been so much fun to see kids back in the park.

**Do you have any takeaways / thoughts on trends arising from the lockdown?**

I read your interview in BSS last week with Nic Powley from Pharm and thought it was excellent. One thing I really liked was the way Nic pointed



out the way companies behaved towards each other during these difficult times. We generally experienced an excellent response from other SMEs that we are involved with. There was pretty much an understanding that we were all in this together and payments would be made when they could be. Of course, not all businesses were as understanding and forgiving. We generally found that the bigger/wealthier the company or individual was, the more likely they were to demand their payment.

**Clearly there is the demand there ... do you have any advice for action sports brands and retailers on how to capitalise on this?**

I am not sure we are in a position to offer advice to anyone yet. Afterall, we are still just a young start-up. I would say though that with skateboarding in particular, it feels like there has been an Olympic

effect, even without the Olympics, so we are massively excited about the next few months and the first half of next year. As for advice for action sports brands, our closest partners are Stance... we'd suggest everyone tries to be more like Stance. Please see the next question...

*"Action sports are brilliant for physical and mental well-being, we see it every day, but there are so many young people who simply can't access them because they haven't got the equipment, basic skills, encouragement or even a safe space to practice. There is a certainly an even greater need right now for projects that bring young people into action sports communities like ours".*

**Finally - the Graystone Foundation has been a really admirable project of yours. Can you talk us through it and plans for the future.**

So, STANCE have been phenomenal with this and given us the tools (money) to allow us to make some great projects happen and ultimately to deliver some exceptional social value in Salford and Gtr Manchester. We can't thank Rich, Nathan and Laura (before she moved on) at STANCE enough. We are talking to them again really soon about what the next couple of years could look like, but we certainly want to expand and develop the range and reach of the projects as soon as we can. Action sports are brilliant for physical and mental well-being, we see it every day, but there are so many young people who simply can't access them because they haven't got the equipment, basic skills, encouragement or even a safe space to practice. There is a certainly an even greater need right now for projects that bring young people into action sports communities like ours. ©



**Issue 01 Clothing Available Now**  
Delivering February 2021





# NOBILE

Founded in Poland by Dariusz Rosiak in the 1990s, 'Nobile' now successfully operates across multiple markets and their production in Europe allows for great supervision and quality control in the making of premium boards. The Nobile team have talked us through their way to worldwide recognition, wide distribution and shared their view on the latest market opportunities arising from the 2020 pandemic.

### Please give us a short history of Nobile

Nobile Sports was founded by Dariusz Rosiak in 1994. Dariusz set up a snowboard manufacturing business in the Polish mountains in a city called Bielsko Biala. One of the reasons for this move was definitely the success of his daughter Gosia in the alpine snowboarding world cups. In 2004, the factory expanded into the production of kiteboards as well and since then has also produced kitesurfing and wakeboarding equipment. Nobile is world-famous

for its patent pending kiteboarding splitboards that allow travelling without having to pay for the additional sports luggage due to oversize dimensions. By producing unique and universal products for all level riders, we are now recognised worldwide.

### Who are the key players in the business?

We have three investors and a senior brand manager, Michal Kamyk. Our sales department is led by Marta Jasiuwian and marketing department by Jan Korycki.

### How are your products and materials superior to non-European factories?

Having your own factory allows you to constantly supervise the production process, especially when developing new products. With the production of quite complicated splitboards, supervision is very important. Simply check out our latest production process video 'Nobile Kiteboarding 2020 collection making of' on Vimeo. Since the beginning we believe in the Nobile Human concept, which stands for putting well trained and experienced employees on top of the ladder.

### How is business going in each product category that you operate in?

Our top-selling segment is definitely Kiteboarding Splitboards. Since we're the only world producer in this area we have to push to fulfil market needs. We're in the process of introducing a new Kite range. All models have been thoroughly tested and should be out of the factory in fall this year. Snowboard-wise, we're constantly growing; splitboarding and powder boards are getting more and more popular, and we're covering that area well. We're also very strong in alpine boards, where we support riders and Olympic teams all over the globe.

### What trends and opportunities do you see in this new market situation?

We believe that the kiteboarding market will go back to normal soon. Sure, there was a large delay, people didn't purchase as much as they normally would, since many borders are still locked and, for example, a simple trip to Egypt is still impossible. But we're all looking for alternatives and most users switched to enjoying their sports more locally. We're happy to have an incredible seaside that is entirely covered with kites at the moment. The snowboarding market was hurt the most, mostly because of bad COVID timing that locked down most of the resorts in full season.

Wakeboarding is doing quite well, at least in Europe most cables are already open and people go wakeboarding on a daily basis. It is possible that even more people will get involved due to a lack of possibility to travel abroad to places they would usually spend their holidays.

### How do you work in Europe?

We use a B2B and B2C model. We have solid distributors, for example, in Germany, Italy, Russia, USA and UK. We also put loads of pressure into selling directly from [shop.nobilesports.com](https://shop.nobilesports.com) where we deliver products worldwide.

### How do you market the brand?

We market our kiteboards as premium products. Since we're the only splitboard producer we keep the prices at a relatively high level, but in return they are produced with top quality material and truly last forever. The same goes with snowboards and wakeboards. Handmade in Europe brings top quality, but unfortunately larger operating costs in return. Our main philosophy is the Human concept idea, bearing the final user in mind, in order to make top-quality, best

performance, and most importantly comfortable, safe and user-friendly gear. Only top quality materials are used in our products; sandwich technology using a woodcore changed the way the boards react and behave. On top of that, plenty of patent-pending technologies like: Advance Flex Engineering, Added Pre-Stress or Elliptical Concave are making sure that our boards react right in all conditions.

### What is your most successful territory and why?

We're well recognised in Poland since it's our home market. If you visit a beach on the Polish seaside, almost every 3rd board is from Nobile. That also shows us how durable and long-lasting our products are. Apart from that, we're happy with results for example in Germany, UK, USA, Russia, Canada and France. Our brand is definitely recognised in places where people travel the most to. Kite enthusiasts that tend to travel more often take advantage of the benefits that splitboard technology brings into travelling.©



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SPECIAL REPORT:  
**MEN'S STREETWEAR SS21**

Let's face it: Streetwear has never been business as usual but always ready to surprise and adapt to any situation. So even amid the global pandemic, streetwear brands are bringing the stoke, as outlined in our SS21 Men's Streetwear Retail Buyer's Guide by **Dirk Vogel**.



How exactly do you dress for a global pandemic? In one word: Casual. As the majority of workers transitions to work-from-home schemes and video conferencing replaces on-site office meetings, dress codes are shifting to ‘above the waist’ outfits. In other words, business-ready button-up shirts on top paired with pyjama pants, which have increased sales by 144 percent since April (New Yorker Magazine), or plain old boxer shorts below. Then again, boardsports enthusiasts have been finding ways to leave the house and get active even during pandemic lockdowns, and of all people, very much care about what they wear below the waist. In positive news, skate and surf have emerged as top trending activities during lockdown (see hardgoods reports in this issue), which has boosted sales despite adverse pandemic effects. “For us it has rebounded well post-lockdown. Obviously with retailers having to close their doors across Europe due to the pandemic, things slowed down, but for those that could maintain

*“For us it has rebounded well post-lockdown. Obviously with retailers having to close their doors across Europe due to the pandemic, things slowed down, but for those that could maintain an online presence the sell-through was great. Long may it continue.” Joe Bourne, Brand Manager at Santa Cruz Skateboards.*

an online presence the sell-through was great. Long may it continue,” said Joe Bourne, Brand Manager at Santa Cruz Skateboards. What’s more, skateboarding is receiving more mainstream love than ever. High fashion continues to look at street skating for inspiration, most recently including a pro model shoe endorsed by Lucien Clarke for Louis Vuitton, whose Head Designer, Virgil Abloh, has certified skate skills himself. Plus, a remastered Tony Hawk’s Pro Skateboarder video

game brings skate lifestyle and dress codes to screens small and large across the globe, so it’s safe to say we’re on a roll.

**MARKET SITUATION: FACING REALITY**

Mainstream momentum is great, but if the Great Recession of 2008 has taught our industry one lesson, it’s that apparel is always among the first categories impacted by economic turmoil. According to recent surveys on the effects of COVID-19 on private household spending, more than 70% of European and US consumers expect to cut back spending on apparel (McKinsey). Overall, experts forecast a 40 to 50 percent drop in global discretionary spending this year. In response, boardsport apparel brands are navigating the new reality with caution. “We are not taking big risks, but we are also not hiding from the situation. It’s safe to say we are moving forward with new products and concepts but in a less aggressive manner than we would have normally planned,” said the team at original California brand Sessions. The situation is already affecting price points in the apparel segment. In April, apparel prices declined by nearly 12%, the largest drop in five years and more than fourfold the usual price drop between March and April of 2.9% (Adobe Digital Economy Index). As a silver lining, online sales of clothing have jumped 34%, despite much lower prices, and brands are expanding their digital capabilities to support retailers. At Berlin-based Iriedaily, Brand Marketing Manager Denise Graff said: “Digitalization is of course a big keyword! So for the current pre-order season we have created possibilities to have online showroom appointments.” On a similar note, Protest Sportswear is shifting from a traditional sales book to using the online b2b tool Elastic Suite. “This makes viewing and ordering the collection possible without having to come to our showroom. It will make life a lot easier for our distributors and sales agents,” said Ingrid Kalma, Head of Menswear design at Protest Sportswear, who despite the pandemic launched a new street label named NXG.

*“We are not taking big risks, but we are also not hiding from the situation. It’s safe to say we are moving forward with new products and concepts but in a less aggressive manner than we would have normally planned”. the team at original California brand Sessions.*

**SEASON TREND: SUSTAINABILITY**

Across all product categories, sustainability takes centre stage after the pandemic heightened consumer awareness of environmental issues. Whether it’s recycled resources or synthetic materials replacing animal products, or organic sourcing and certified low environmental impact: Consumers want to know what went into creating the products they wear and demand brands to take a stand on social and environmental issues. This brand positioning is communicated on hang tags and collateral, but also factors into apparel designs. For instance, via “socio-political statements on T-shirts but without this lecturing high school teacher attitude,” said Denise at Iriedaily. Speaking from a manufacturing angle, Denise added: “The continuous pursuit of our goal to have Iriedaily products produced more and more from sustainable materials is already producing successful results.” The brand implements recycled polyester from waste products of the textile industry as well as from old clothes in a “cradle-to-cradle principle” while banking on sustainable materials such as LENZING, ECOVERO, viscose, hemp, recycled nylon and cork. Most brands in the boardsports segment are expanding their use of eco materials, including Santa Cruz with the “Organics range alongside guest artist Bigfoot using only 100% organic cotton and OKEO-TEX approved prints.” Meanwhile, longevity emerges as a countermovement to the planet-destroying effects of fast fashion (see 2. Hype Culture). The team at Session said: “The main difference is we use a heavy weight jersey so you can really feel the quality in our products.”



FIVE STREETWEAR TRENDS TO WATCH IN THE NEW REALITY

1. COMFORT EVERYWHERE

Whether in the safety of their homes or out on urban adventures, consumers want to feel comfortable in their clothes. Look out for drawstring pants, flexible denim, above-the-knee shorts, looser tops and slouchier long-sleeves across the board. Protest has taken the time to pursue, “the quest to create the perfect T-shirt. This season sees new qualities, a heavier 220g cotton as well as more structured fabrics. We have improved the fit, lengthened the T-shirts and made them slightly looser.”

2. THE END OF HYPE CULTURE?

In hindsight, the pre-pandemic cycle of hype after hype was wasteful and unsustainable. And consumers have had enough: According to research from Highsnobiety, values such as quality (60% of young consumers), durability (43%), and timeless brands (50%) are more important than hype and

status pieces. From a collection standpoint, this means less seasonal product, more carryover of bestsellers and focus on brand-defining pieces. Santa Cruz Skateboards is banking on the Classic Collection, featuring “flagship theme containing variations of our most beloved graphics” next to the “Speed Wheels capsule celebrating the artwork of Jim Phillips during the golden era of the brand.” Sessions is also, “focusing a lot on heritage style graphics.”

*“At first we weren’t sure if our oversize pants might be ‘too much’. But as part of the whole 1990s revival, it was amazing to see how much positive energy and feedback our baggies received among the cool kids and those at the forefront of setting today’s trends”. Julian Wolf, Marketing Manager at Homeboy.*

3. BAGGY PANTS TAKE OVER

Watch any recent skate video, and it’s obvious that pant silhouettes have ballooned. Leading the charge, German streetwear brand Homeboy has received an overwhelming response with its line of x-tra BAGGY pants available as denim, corduroy, cargo pant and shorts versions. “At first we weren’t sure if our oversize pants might be ‘too much’. But as part of the whole 1990s revival, it was amazing to see how much positive energy and feedback our baggies received among the cool kids and those at the forefront of setting today’s trends,” said Julian Wolf, Marketing Manager at Homeboy.

4. FUNCTION OVER FASHION?

Formalwear is down, but athletic and outdoor gear is thriving. Sales of tracksuits and sweatpants are up 70% and 80% respectively since April (New Yorker Magazine). Consumers also demand functionality that transitions from active to leisure time without the need to change outfits. Iriedaily responds with the Urban Nomad collection, “the urban transformation of outdoor looks. Characteristic materials are organic



Photo Protest



STAY DIFFERENT  
IRIEDAILY FALL/WINTER 2020 COLLECTION

IRIEDAILY - BERLIN'S FINEST STREETWEAR SINCE 1994  
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cotton, hemp, cork, recycled polyester, recycled nylon and various types of jacquard materials, also made from organic cotton.” Protest’s new line is called NXG, which “stands for ‘Next Generation’ and is the fusion of street edge with quality details. Our designers have created a line of innovative shapes; garments that are unique, flattering and eye catching. The prints are minimalistic, the colours are on-trend.” Denim label SA1NT serves the trend with “fashionable product but with hardcore tech function. We make jeans for anyone who rides a bike so that if you fall off at a high speed, we offer protection. But you can still wear our product into the office and not feel like the Michelin Man,” said Eden Palm, European Sales.

5. LOUD STATEMENT PIECES

Timeless quality is a sound strategy, but boardsports brands also know how to make a loud statement. Whether it’s full prints on pants and shirts or massive slogans on tops, summer season is the right time to stand out from the crowd. Iriedaily recommends the Vintachi Hood Jacket, a light cotton shell jacket with an ethno pattern developed in-house and the Modern Vintage collection as “a homage to the most famous looks and patterns of the ‘60s, ‘70s, ‘80s and ‘90s. Miami Vice meets crazy knitting patterns of the 80s.” Protest kills it with the Dudley beach style T-shirt and Farlam Hawaiian shirt: “We’ve been inspired by the perfect summer, by beach parties with their sunshine, inflatables and carefree vibe.” SA1NT reported that, “T-shirt sales are smashing it, and I talk to a lot of these people, so I know that they do not own a bike or watch MX or MotoGP.”

In the bigger picture, accessories like protective face masks from boardsports brands offer a welcome opportunity to accessorize summer outfits, while last season’s trend towards dad hats and hip packs/side bags stays hot in 2021. Looking ahead, all brands agree that cooperation between retailers and brands is key to survival. As Ingrid at Protest said: “Together

with our retailers, we have been doing all we can to make it work. There has been co-operation and compromise. With the help of flexible and extended payment terms that we have introduced, we have managed to retain most of our FW20/21 orders and helped our retailers through this trying time.” ☺

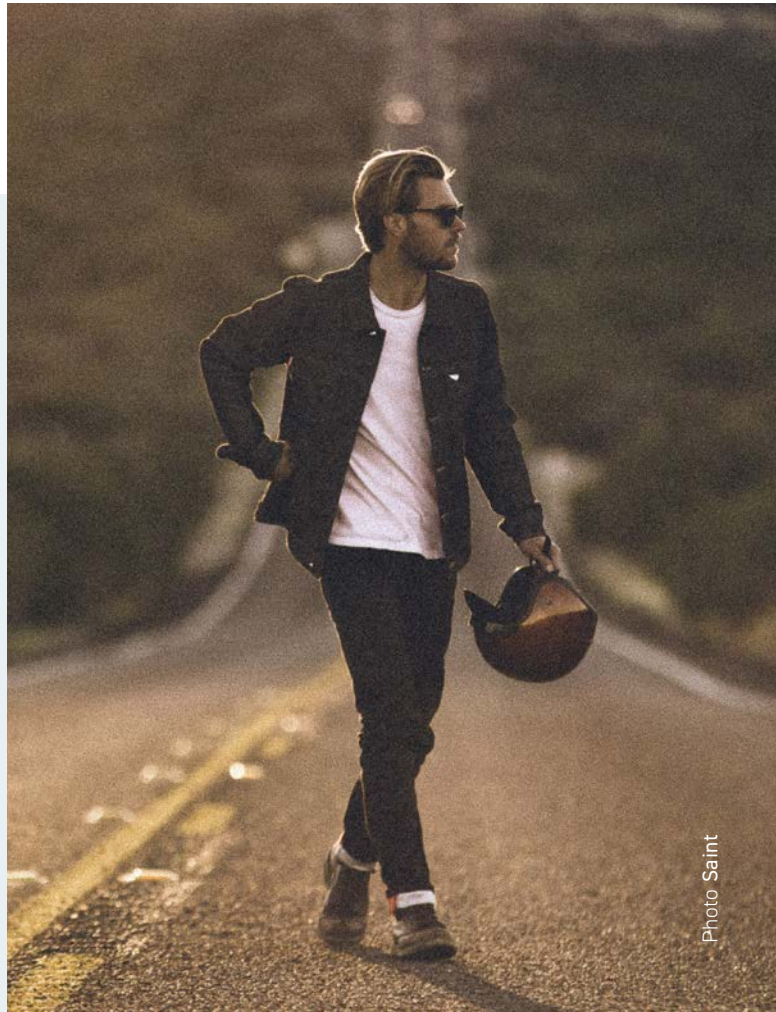


Photo Saint

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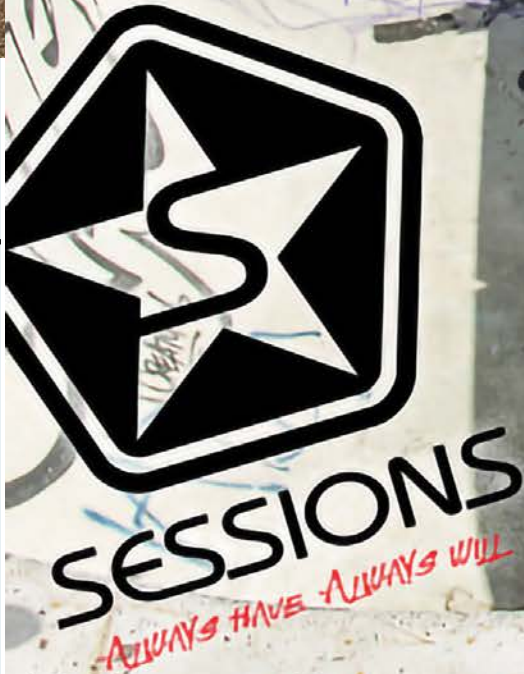
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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Carryover, less seasonality
- 2 Shopping for quality, durability
- 3 All-day comfort
- 4 Baggy pants
- 5 Full-print patterns
- 6 Dad hats and hip packs



Tristan Rennie, Photo: Chris Ortiz



**AMPHIBIOUS SHORTS  
SUMMER 21 COLLECTION**  
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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# WOMEN'S STREETWEAR SS21

Skateboarding's pandemic boom seems to have had a trickle-over effect on the women's streetwear market. An overview of the SS21 category collections by **Natalia Maruniak**.



The streetwear hype of recent years is still going strong and the negative effects of the Covid-19 crisis on many companies seem to be moderate for most streetwear brands. "It may sound paradox, but the pandemic affected our business more positive than negative because we mostly sell online," explains Julian Wolf, Head of Marketing at Homeboy. According to him, the reason is customer demographics: "Customers over 35 were afraid of reduced work hour (or furlough) and lower income, while the customers between 16 and 29 couldn't spent their money at events or clubs. They were bored at home and why not spend the money you saved over the weekend on clothes?" Santa Cruz are upbeat too, "apart from a few unavoidable delays here and there we've come out of it relatively unscathed so far," says Santa Cruz Brand Manager Joe Bourne, attributing this to the global skateboarding boom that is positively impacting the streetwear market.

Although the launch of the SS21 collections were faced with challenges for brands and retailers such as cancelled shoots, missing samples and delivery bottlenecks, most brands managed to overcome these by optimising their online presence and digitalisation. "Thanks to an enormous growth in online sales through our own web shop and marketplaces, we have managed to get through these trying times. A continuing effect of Covid-19 seems to be the increase in online sales,"

reports Ine Wouters, Head of Womenswear Design at Protest. In the wake of the pandemic, the brand has switched from a traditional sales book to the online B2B tool Elastic Suite. This makes it possible to view and order the collections without visiting the showroom - a great advantage in times of travel and social contact restrictions. Iriedaily also got off lightly. Like many other brands, they did not integrate all the new planned styles into the SS21 line and incorporated carry-overs: "In an attempt to give the styles a longer life," says Denise Graff, Brand Marketing Manager of Iriedaily.

**Key Trends: Unisex and Oversized**

Unisex is (still) one of the big buzzwords in the SS21 Women's Streetwear collections. "The boundaries between the genders are becoming increasingly blurred and will, at least as far as streetwear is concerned, more or less disappear completely in SS21. Women are already wearing more baggies than men and the "boyfriend-look" will no longer be inspired by men, but by women themselves," Julian Wolf of Homeboy states. Among the key looks of the unisex style are baggy pants, which "thanks to the skate scene baggies will finally be all the way back in 2021 and we can proudly say, that we are the original," he adds proudly. A modern version of the 90's original, the high-waisted X-tra Baggy Pants, is available to accompany the comeback. Iriedaily is also

pushing the high-waisted 'Loose Fit Style', mostly with 7/8 leg lengths and is bringing loose-fitting pants to the market in different variations - from classic workwear pants to street utility style, slouchy pants or baggy denims. High waist is also a must-have for skirts, no matter whether they are mini, midi or maxi skirts.

Protest is taking over next summer with its 'step' looks, "or as we call it 'the pyramid'". The step look creates volume and is perfect to wear over your favourite bikini on the beach. Highlights of the SS21 collection include the 'Leni' model, a light floral step dress and the short floral step skirt 'Hope'. Another buzzword in SS21 is 'Oversized', the trend is being served by almost all brands. Santa Cruz focuses on 'oversized looks' as well as flower prints, many graphics and sustainable production. The brand achieves the latter especially with its Organics Unisex Collection - made in Portugal - which is made of 100% organic cotton.

**SS21 Season Themes**

The seasonal themes at Iriedaily are 'Modern Vintage' and 'Urban Nomad', where nature, adventure and wanderlust meet modern city life. Beyond that, however, the focus is mainly on sustainability. The brand is increasingly nearing its goal of making its collections from environmentally friendly materials. "Organic cotton and recycled materials are now used in almost all areas of the collection. Conventional materials are no longer the rule but the exception," explains Bella Kruschinski, Women's Designer. Highlights of the collection are the Caipini Jacket with its ethno-jacquard pattern made of 100% organic cotton and the Respicer Jacket made of 100% recycled polyester.

"The real 90s!" is Homeboy's big theme for next spring/summer season. "In the last few years we have seen a 90s trend that was very sporty and sneaker driven. Tracksuits and tennis brands dominated the street scene. Now it's time for the 90s to show their true and genuine side. baggies, skate shoes and oversized tops will define the new image. All this paired with girly accessories a la 00s Britney and Christina Aguilera from her song Dirty," Julian Wolf describes.

**Colours, Patterns & Prints:**

The important pastel trend of the SS20 collection will remain with us next year. This will be used as a subtle basic colour and is combined with stronger tones. Santa Cruz mainly uses pastel shades with accents of blue and red. At Iriedaily, in addition to Miami pastel colours, we find muted, natural tones to match the 'Urban Nomad' theme: muted versions of Tuscany red, lemon yellow, olive green, beryl, pistachio, sky blue or apricot. Ethno patterns appear in earthy tones combined with light summer colours. Protest's SS21 collection "brings with it a kaleidoscope of colour" and works with two colour palettes. The first is composed of earth tones such as sandstone, clay and warm yellow, combined with a

dark coral red. The second is made up of candy colours like pink, mint and frosty yellow, combined with black, white and grey. And at Homeboy, light denim shades are still in demand with regard to the classics, t-shirts and sweatshirts are available in black, white or pastel.

*"Thanks to an enormous growth in online sales through our own web shop and marketplaces, we have managed to get through these trying times. A continuing effect of Covid-19 seems to be the increase in online sales". Ine Wouters, Head of Womenswear Design at Protest*

When it comes to patterns, chequers, bold floral patterns and animal prints simply never seem to go out of fashion. A key theme for Santa Cruz is the California poppy, which is used for graphics and overall prints, like with the Poppy playsuit with a matching fisherman's hat and jacket. Another highlight for the skate brand is the 'Dressen Doghouse' graphic, inspired by Eric Dressen's classic puppy design. Old school prints are also available from Homeboy and Ine Wouters from Protest promises: "This season we bring you the big print trends, which will be making a splash this summer. We have cool text front prints, small feminine floral designs on dresses and tops. Then there is our gorgeous tropical design and our texture print. Stripes are a classic summer design. A Protest collection wouldn't be complete without an awesome animal print. This season we've referenced the zebra and the leopard skin for inspiration." Iriedaily's Modern Vintage theme is a homage to famous 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s styles: colourful patterned t-shirts, sweaters with chic patterns and light blouses in colour-blocking. "A time travel to the 80s and 90s. Miami Vice meets crazy knitting patterns of the 80's", Denise Graff announces promisingly. ☺

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Unisex and Oversized
- 2 Comeback of the "real 90s"
- 3 Pastel shades still in demand
- 4 Chequers, flower patterns and animal prints





# BIG WIG INTERVIEW MIZU'S JUSSI OKSANEN

The reusable bottle trend has taken modern culture by storm in recent years (see trend report on page 92) – a drinking bottle is now the ultimate fashion accessory - but as is with many boardsports industry entrepreneurs, Mizu Co-Founder, ex-pro snowboarder and visionary, Jussi Oksanen was way ahead of the curve, starting the company some 12 years ago. Never one to stand still, Jussi has continued to push the brand towards functionality and sustainability; 2017 saw the brand introduce a filter cap that allowed users to instantly purify water, no matter the source. And 2020 sees Mizu introduce their lunchbox and urban cutlery set as they continue to strive for a single-use-plastic-free future. Struggling to balance life as a pro rider and brand owner, Jussi's wife Zoe took the reins of the brand and then former Ride Snowboards Founder Tim Pogue was employed as CEO in 2012. In 2015 Jussi hung up his pro snowboard boots and has been focused on the brand's creative direction since then.

**SOURCE** Editor Harry Mitchell Thompson interviews snowboarding legend and Mizu Co-Founder, Jussi Oksanen.

**Jussi, please tell us about your career as a snowboarder.**

I grew up in Finland, 30km away from Helsinki and I got into snowboarding when I was 10 years old. We had a tiny hill that was 50m vertical which was about a 5-minute drive away. When we discovered snowboarding, that hill became our second home. I started competing when I was about 15 years old and everything kind of escalated pretty quickly from there. I went to the Nagano 1998 Olympics and from there I chased a dream that turned into 17 years as a pro. I won the US Open, 7 X Games medals, a World Championship and had over 20 video parts. I consider myself really lucky to have signed with Burton in 2000, where I stayed until I retired in 2015.

*"we figured if we could create a cool little brand with quality bottles, we could at least get our friends to kick the plastic bottle habit. We never imagined at the time it would grow to where Mizu is today, but we are stoked as it means even more people kicked the habit, which was what it was all about".*

**2008 was relatively ahead of its time for starting an eco-responsible bottle brand... who did you start the brand with and what was the mission?**

I'd been on the road in Alaska with my filmer (and friend) Brad Kremer and we were sick of seeing all the plastic water bottles piling up in the back of my truck. It really got us thinking about our footprint and what we could do to minimize our single use plastic waste. It all really started as organically as that – we figured if we could create a cool

little brand with quality bottles, we could at least get our friends to kick the plastic bottle habit. We never imagined at the time it would grow to where Mizu is today, but we are stoked as it means even more people kicked the habit, which was what it was all about.

**You started the company in 2008 but continued to ride pro and shoot photos until 2015. How has leaving the pro riding lifestyle allowed you to focus more on Mizu?**

Honestly, it was really challenging at times trying to keep Mizu going while snowboarding full time. My wife, Zoe, ended up running a large part of it while I was traveling which wasn't ideal either as she had two crazy little boys in tow. We knew we needed help from someone who could run the company and grow it to its potential, and I also knew I still had a few years of serious snowboarding left in me and needed to stay focused.



Photo Mizu



So we partnered with Tim Pogue (former Ride Snowboards Founder) in 2012, and he officially joined Mizu as our business partner and CEO. When I retired in 2015, I jumped straight back in full time helping to run the brand and the marketing. I did that for two years during which time I was able to really get stuck into the brand fundamentals and the content side of Mizu while also learning a lot of the business side from Tim. Today, I still work with Mizu on the branding and content side while also expanding my content creation business doing brand photography for a lot of active outdoor brands such as Specialized Bikes, Thule, Kashi, Belgium Brewing Co and more. And ironically, Brad and I came back together on a new project and now have a production company called Diving Board where we also work on content projects with great brands.

**Tell us more about your daily function with the brand now.**

I work closely with the marketing team on creative ideas while also creating most of Mizu's visual content. I am on the road a lot so I get to product test regularly... I figure that if our products can handle what I put them through, I know they are good to go!

**Where is the company HQ'd in the US and EMEA?**

Our US HQ is in North County San Diego. Our European HQ is in Amsterdam. Both our US and European operations have offices, warehouses, and full in-house customization facilities. The Europe office is essentially a mirror of our US setup. Tim has put a lot of focus on the European operations of our brand since joining and it's great to see how strong the business is now there.



**Talk to us about how COVID-19 has affected the business.**

Tim was actually in Japan finalizing the terms of a distribution agreement with our new distributor over there when the pandemic hit. From there he went to ISPO in Munich where it was still only mild-scary and barely a topic of discussion - none of us knew what was really coming at that point. By mid-March, Mizu had shut down both offices and we went into some long planning meetings to figure out how we'd navigate this storm. We came up with a simple approach, that Tim rolled out as: Stabilize, Prepare, and Pounce. Stabilizing the company financially was the first priority, which we accomplished with a combination of a lot of sacrifice and commitment from the Mizu staff, many Mizu vendors stepped up and helped

*"A lot more Zoom and Skype, a lot less face-to-face meetings, no parties, more virtual happy hours... But other than that, it's business as usual".*

out, and we also took advantage of the government programs in both the USA and The Netherlands. Once stabilized, we started looking at what our business would look like in the coming months/years and went into the 'prepare' phase, which we're just about all the way through. This phase included re-focusing some goals and the heavy lifting of retooling each department to better compete in the new landscape. And the next phase is what we're calling the 'Pounce' - the new Lunch Box and Cutlery sets are part of this pounce plan. In summary, we didn't panic, but saw it as just another challenge to navigate.

**What opportunities do you see arising from the pandemic?**

Mizu has always marched to the beat of its own drum and our mission will always be to help reduce global pollution caused by single use 'throw-away' items. This pandemic is unfortunate on so many levels, but it won't take us away from that mission. The opportunity to reduce waste is still here - pandemic or not.

**How will Mizu's corporate culture and office culture change with learnings through the pandemic?**

Not much differently than it will affect all companies I'm guessing. A lot more Zoom and Skype, a lot less face-to-face meetings, no parties, more virtual happy hours... But other than that, it's business as usual.

**A couple of years ago Mizu introduced its Everyday Filter, to allow people to filter water instantly when away from fresh**

**water sources. Now you're launching your lunchbox and urban cutlery set... commitment to pushing the boundaries of outdoor functionality and sustainability.**

It all comes down to this really: Mizu is founded, run, and loved by people who get the most out of our planet's playgrounds, whether that's the ocean, mountains or your local park. We've recognized the need for a lunchbox that could live up to our active lifestyle for a while, and the soft-sided lunch bags (even the ones that keep things cold) just didn't cut it so we've been working on our own version that is airtight,

*The new Mizu Lunchbox kills it and with the updated Urban Cutlery Set that colour matches and provides yet another opportunity to cut back on disposables, we feel like we can now offer a full line-up of products to make saying no to single-use so much easier. I just wish I'd had this when I was in the backcountry snowboarding and filming for days on end!*

smash proof and leak proof. The new Mizu Lunchbox kills it and with the updated Urban Cutlery Set that colour matches and provides yet another opportunity to cut back on disposables, we feel like we can now offer a full line-up of products to make saying no to single-use so much easier. I just wish I'd had this when I was in the backcountry snowboarding and filming for days on end! ☺



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# THE GREAT OUTDOORS SS21

After the initial shock of the lockdown in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the situation in the outdoor market is continuing to stabilise. In times of social distancing and travel restrictions, outdoor activities and camping vacations are booming. The Great Outdoor Retail Buyer Guide for SS21 provides information on the latest developments in the market segment. By **Natalia Maruniak**



Photo Helinox

In recent years the outdoor market has benefitted from great popularity and proved to be stable. In its current 'State of Trade' study on the development of the segment, the EOG sets in stone "the resilience of the outdoor sector in already turbulent times before the Covid-19 pandemic". In 2019, the total market in Europe was worth 5.82 billion Euros; this corresponds to an increase in value of 0.5% and a volume increase of 2.3% over the previous year. According to an EOG survey on the effects of the Covid-19 crisis on the outdoor industry, the brands are confident and believe they will emerge from the crisis stronger than before. The result: the sector has great market potential and the industry remains stable.

*"Covid-19 has certainly increased people's need to be active outdoors in nature".* **Peter Räuber, CEO and Founder of Maloja**

The results of the survey are hardly surprising, as the pandemic reinforces the already existing trend towards a reconnection with nature. "Covid-19 has certainly increased people's need to be active outdoors in nature," explains Peter Räuber, CEO and Founder of Maloja. And the tourism industry is also feeling the effects of this trend: "Online search and campsites booking data is indicating that camping has been a popular holiday choice this year for people in Europe

looking for an alternative to an overseas summer holiday. Camping is accessible to many people, and it offers opportunities to spend time with family in the outdoors where social distancing can be achieved more easily," explains Joe White, European Head of Marketing at Helinox and adds: "After the stress and confinement of the last few months, camping can give people an ideal way to relax, have fun and reconnect with nature." The Voited team confirms this development; many holidaymakers "are more inclined to travel locally, especially younger travellers. This means an increase in camping and living in a van." At the same time "people are now more concerned about their environmental impact." Sustainability therefore continues to play a major role in the outdoor market.

*"In SS20 only 5% of our line was made with recycled or organic fabrics. Fast forward one year and 55% of our SS21 apparel is made with sustainable, eco-friendly fabrics. It's an amazing improvement in just 12 months".* **Jeremy Goodman, International Sales Director at Kavu.**

### Sustainability

For almost all brands interviewed, sustainability is at the heart of their collections and production process. In connection with the relaunch of their brand in Europe, Kavu in particular is making a big leap with its new collection. "In SS20 only 5% of our line was made with recycled or organic fabrics. Fast forward one year and 55% of our SS21 apparel is made with sustainable, eco-friendly fabrics. It's an amazing improvement in just 12 months," says Jeremy Goodman, International Sales Director at Kavu. The brand also uses environmentally friendly packaging, recycled labels and vegetable dyes. Voited is also committed to "avoiding the depletion of natural resources by creating eco-friendly products from ethically sourced raw materials". And Picture Organic Clothing is known for using "sustainable and durable fibres", as is Roark, which makes sustainability combined with style the main trend for FS21.

### "Outdoor function - urban look"

In addition to sustainability, crossover products continue to be in demand, 'urban outdoor' is the key phrase here. "Not everybody who is wearing outdoor apparel wants to look like she/he just stepped down from Mt. Everest. There is a big demand for "Outdoor Function – Urban Look", explains Peter Bauer of Pally'Hi Merino and adds: "Outdoor vibes with urban influence made of sustainable and functional fabrics is our key to reach our clientele." Outdoor apparel must blend in with urban everyday life as well as with outdoor activities. "All of our spring products function from daily life in the city to travel and life in the outdoors. It is important that our apparel can be useful during most aspects of a person's life," says Brent Sandor, VP Marketing at 686. Jeremy Goodman from Kavu confirms this: "We think it's ok to play in the mountains or on the water all day and then grab a beer in town at night. All while wearing the same, good looking shirt."

Looks should not only be versatile, but also wearable all year round. "We see a trend to products that function regardless of the season on many days of the year. Products that practically become best friend - everyday attendants," reports Thomas Spieker of Brandit, Business Development & Marketing. At Picture Organic Clothing, the SS21 collection revolves around 'Action Outdoor' again - the outdoor category is inspired by the brand's action sports philosophy, which athletes can rely on in their daily outdoor activities. 'Soul in the Woods' is not only the slogan of the Maloja brand, but also the theme of the SS21 collection: "'soul' of the forests and the community of trees: They prefer cooperation and friendship and deal with almost every challenge you can think of – together. We think the theme of 'together' is more topical than ever," says Peter Räuber, CEO and Founder. And Roark, who are always gathering ideas for new collections on trips and expeditions, are inspired by Morocco next year.





technique "the fabric becomes truly strong, dimensionally stable, spark resistant as well as resistant to water and wind," explains Jonas Taureck, CEO of Petromax.

For their 2021 summer collection, Maloja uses Warp-Knitting technology for the first time in their waterproof 3-layer BirkeM jacket, "it enables us to meet the requirements of certain body zones seamlessly, in a single elastic fabric." The advantages of this warp knitting technology are abrasion-resistant structures and breathable zones exactly where they are needed. Furthermore, Warp Knit products are waterproof. Pally'Hi Merino remains true to its main material, merino wool with its sweat and odour repellent properties, but fabric combinations with bamboo fibre or recycled elastane are also awaiting us. The fleece jackets OUT of BORDER (for men) and SHERPINA (for women) are made of 95% merino wool and 5% polyester. "This little amount of synthetic fibre is necessary for carefree washing and durability," explains Peter Bauer, Founder, and guarantees these fleece jackets are, "just a perfect piece for our customers' everyday adventures."

### Technical Properties & Materials

Premium outdoor apparel needs to achieve a lot: it should be light, breathable, waterproof, quick-drying, comfortable, durable and sustainable. The particularly tear-resistant ripstop fabric made from recycled plastic bottles is very popular with the brands. In addition to Voited, Picture Organic Clothing also uses ripstop material, among other things in one of its seasonal highlights: "A versatile and robust windbreaker that will delight outdoor enthusiasts and urban explorers will provide an unmatched protection against the wind." Durable water resistance is provided by Teflon EcoElite, a PFC-free PWR waterproofing, which is used by most of the brands presented. In addition, robust Cordura fabrics and breathable stretch material are used, for example by Roark. Petromax is expanding its portfolio to include loden garments made of 100% sheep's wool - sustainable and without additives. Thanks to a special processing

*"We are not in the business of disposable fashion," 686*

### Silhouettes & Styles

"Going our own way...we do not follow trends", is the motto of Maloja. And 686 also relies on classic looks that outlast the times. "We are not in the business of disposable fashion," assures Brent Sandor, VP Marketing. The best example: the brand's number one product is the Everywhere Pant, which was created several years ago with the goal of designing comfortable pants for the office and for outdoor adventures. The pant is made of technical stretch material and is extremely practical with its 10 pockets and excellent fit. "We have seen this pant travel the globe and be used in all parts of life, sports and activities."



**Ride, Protect & Share**





Brandit also sets itself apart from fast-moving fashion: "We do not follow fashion trends. Functionality is in the focus," assures Thomas, Business Development & Marketing. The brand creates classic and timeless looks with straight cuts and a casual fit, as these ensure "a long life". Kavu is also comfortable. Fans of comfortable cuts with bright colours, fun designs and great prints will find what they are looking for here: The Women Overall San Blas impresses with its relaxed fit and with its light, quick-drying spandex performance fabric is perfect for hiking, music festivals or in your own garden.

Outdoor Essentials

Venturing outdoors for a considerable length of time means you must be well prepared - all the same whether with the tent or the camper/ van – and next season sees practitioners spoilt for choice. Many brands offer functional and innovative products that make the heart of every outdoor enthusiast beat faster. According to Joe White of Helinox, European Head of Marketing customers are, "prioritising good quality products that are built to last." A bestseller of the brand, which offers foldable chairs for backpacking, is the Speed Stool, "the lightest and most portable seat in our range." It weighs only 470 grams and offers a stable seat in every situation - whether in your own garden, on the balcony or in the wild. It gets cozy and comfortable at Voited, the brand's pillow blankets made from recycled plastic bottles are much more than just a pillow: They transform into a blanket, fold into a sleeping bag or can be worn as a sleeveless cape. "A four-in-one insulated & water-resistant indoor/outdoor blanket for van life, camping, travel & home," explains the Voited team.

Extremely robust and essential for outdoor enthusiasts: the Petromax Atago is an absolute all-rounder that can be used as a grill, oven, stove and fire bowl. Practical for every camping trip is also the brand's coolbox with its powerless cooling system, which cools food and beverages for up to 12 days and allows for a nature experience in absolute self-sufficiency. Of course, no pocketknife should be missing on any real outdoor adventure. With The Pike, The James Brand has released a "new version of one of their favourite silhouettes". It is reminiscent of the design of the pocketknives from the 50s and



60s. "It's designed as a true pocketknife: small, beautiful and very functional. It's designed to go inside your pocket at the beginning of the day and then go back on your dresser at the end," says Ryan Coulter, Founder and Chief Creative Officer. And Mizu now also offers a leak-proof and airtight stainless-steel lunchbox - available with or without a bamboo cutting board - and a cutlery set, which includes a reusable straw with brush, in addition to its drinking bottles. Perfect for the office and every excursion into nature! ☺

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Strong throughout crisis
- 2 Outdoor activities and camping on trend
- 3 Sustainability key focus
- 4 Cross-over products, buzzword: "Urban Outdoor"
- 5 Timeless silhouettes against fast fashion trends

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Founded by former Element Global GM Frank Voit, Voited exists to meet the needs of those who travel and represents the passion for comfort and zero-waste culture in the outdoor sports community.

**Frank, please tell us about your work history leading up to the founding of Voited.**

After working in the sports industry for over two decades, I became increasingly troubled by how mass production, driven by shareholders' interests and bottom-line objectives was not catering to the new expectations of consumers who were leaning towards specialized products designed by authentic and innovative brands. My vision was to create sustainable, versatile products that would be supplied to the market in proportion to the demand, therefore eliminating waste and providing enhanced value.

With this in mind, I made the bold decision to walk away from my executive career to pursue my dream of owning

my own passion-driven brand. My mission was to increase the scale of consciousness of what buying a useful product does for the consumer and for the environment. I conceptualized a digitally native brand to manufacture products directly to the end consumer, avoiding waste and involving the consumer in a collaborative design process. In an effort towards responsible ownership and production, I have envisioned a brand dedicated to avoiding the depletion of natural resources by creating eco-friendly products from ethically sourced raw materials.

**Please tell us about the brand.**

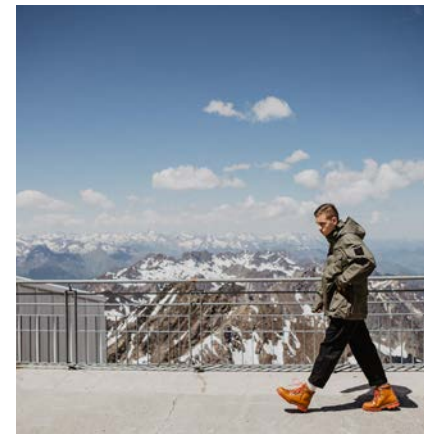
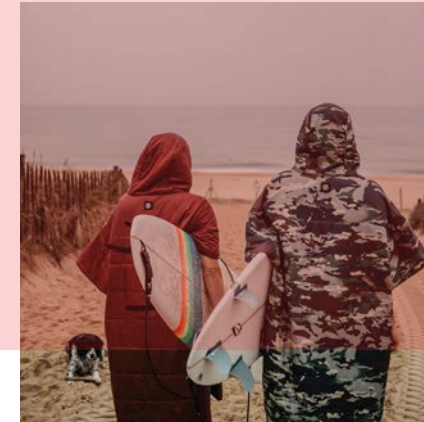
Our mission is to co-create unique products that inspire us to get out there and live authentically. VOITED is a community of like-minded and inspiring creatives who have a hand in developing products that are eco-conscious, durable and highly functional. Our products are a combination of love for the outdoors and adventure sports with our dedication to lessen the impact that manufacturing has on the environment. The result: collections that blend creativity, performance, quality and value.

**Eco-Conscious**

At VOITED we blend state-of-the-art recycled fabrics with contemporary design at no cost for the planet. Our high-performance products hold their own whatever you put them through. We use materials typically found in premium outdoor gear that are lightweight, breathable, water-resistant, quick-dry and made to last. We design for the movement, to keep you comfortable on all your adventures.

**Factory**

Our factory is important because we want you to know where our products come from. We have worked very hard to achieve such sustainable responsible practices. It's a project shared between the people who make our



products and those responsible for VOITED. We are continually striving for zero waste and zero impact on the environment.

**What 's your USP?**

As From our adventures, we came to know what's really important and what isn't. When developing our products, we integrate only the best and most useful features. Whether you are a surfer, kayaker, mountain biker, climber or just a general nature lover - we design with multiple purposes and sustainability in mind. Our lightweight, packable products are equipped with useful details to save you time and space so that you can purely enjoy your explorations.



**What's your sales model in Europe?**

We are first and foremost a digitally native brand dedicated to enhancing the consumer experience, supported by a "factory to market" model that has emerged from our past encounters with inefficient traditional supply chains. VOITED operates on a flexible distribution chain, integrating consumer demand into our design and marketing program to be more responsive to trends. Our manufacturing process supports a more seasonal, trend-oriented product line with relevant stories that interact with our target consumers. Our main objective is to work with partners selected according to their approach to the market and how it is reflected in our VOITED brand. By selecting companies that reflect the values of our brand, we create an amplified opportunity for our retail or distribution partners to benefit from rapid stock rotation thanks to our conceptual approach to the market.

**How are you marketing the brand?**

I envisioned a brand whose purpose will be to avoid the depletion of natural resources by creating



eco-conscious products from ethically sourced raw materials that pose no threat to the environment. With this in mind, we want our marketing stories to talk about seeking outdoor adventures in the nature and escape from everyday life. One of our marketing principles is to integrate consumer-focused content into the mix to engage and share the brand experience with our audience.

**Which channels and markets do you see providing the best opportunities for the brand in the coming 3 years?**

We will continue to build our Direct to Consumer reach throughout Europe. Our North America platform is showing amazing growth with a receptive consumer audience engaged in popular outdoor and van life culture. There are countless opportunities to work with a new breed of retailers that offer a showroom as a retail space while functioning as a regional online partner, leveraging VOITED products through a fast supply and high inventory turnover program. ©



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# BOTTLE AND FLASKS SS21

Reusable bottles have gained some serious traction in recent years and bottle and flask brands have really stepped up to the plate. No longer seen as just a tool for fighting single use plastic but they're now personalized, multifunctional accessories and as our consumers head into the outdoors more than ever to get away from it all, the one thing they'll always need is to stay hydrated. **By Dana Miskulnig.**



Photo Mizu

### Innovation

Bottles and flasks are meant to replace single use plastic bottles meaning they're part of the daily checklist; wallet, phone, keys, water bottle. This has led brands in the space to accessorising their product categories, giving the consumer new ways to customise their hydration game. Founded by snowboarding legend Jussi Oksanen, Mizu offers lids, straws, tech purification filters (more on these later) for all their bottles and seasonal art collabs with action sports' hottest

talent to keep the user on trend and able to drink anywhere, anyhow. Hydro Flask are also offering accessories, explains Abbie Baynes, UK PR & Marketing, "Hydro Flask offer various accessories (such as the new Straw Flex

*"Next to our premium insulating technology, we offer smart functionalities. For example, our GUARDIAN Insulated Bottle comes with a fluid intake tracker".*  
**Katharina Mlynar, Marketing Manager at Thermos.**

*"We only use marine grade stainless steel in our bottles. A better-quality stainless steel than purely food grade – not only does it make it perfect for use even in marine environments, but we believe it helps make our bottles & travel cup even more insulating – hence why we can outperform our competition on hot/cold tests".*  
**Catherine Morris, Commercial Director at Red Original.**

Lid and Stainless Steel Flex Lid) as well as colours and designs including the limited edition Prism Pop collection and the limited edition Shave Ice collection."

Klean Kanteen are integrating multifunctionality into their products, allowing you to use the same bottle for different drinks/activities just by changing the cap. Historic brand Thermos are embracing tomorrow's technology: "Next to our premium insulating technology, we offer smart functionalities. For example, our GUARDIAN Insulated Bottle comes with a fluid intake tracker," says Katharina Mlynar, Marketing Manager & Florian Jankowski, Product Manager. Stainless steel seems to be the material of choice across the board for sustainability and longevity reasons, Red Original take it to the next level as Catherine Morris, Commercial Director says, "We only use marine grade stainless steel in our bottles. A better-quality stainless steel than purely food grade – not only does it make it perfect for use even in marine environments, but we believe it helps make our bottles & travel cup even

more insulating – hence why we can outperform our competition on hot/cold tests." Nolla are bringing out custom product ranges in collaboration with big brands to spice things up, one of these being Club Med where they have produced the 'Club Med by Nolla'. Keeping it classic, Pioneer Flasks have a handy removable clip that allows you to attach their bottles to your sports gear, rucksack or belt, so you can take it anywhere with you.

If you find yourself on an adventure (or city) where you are unsure of the water quality, Mizu have been offering the Mizu 360 filtration system for a few years now and are still one of the only major bottle brands with this system explains founder Jussi:



Photo Red Original





Photo Hydroflask

*"When we launched the Mizu 360 filtration systems in 2017 it was to close the loop on any need for disposable water bottles. A reusable water bottle is great, but when you're out and about and concerned about the water quality you are refilling it with, our filters have you covered. The Mizu 360 filtrations system allows a Mizu user to go literally anywhere in the world and be able to drink water without having to purchase a disposable water bottle." Jussi Oksanen, founder, Mizu.*

system allows a Mizu user to go literally anywhere in the world and be able to drink water without having to purchase a disposable water bottle."

### Sustainability

Sustainability and reusable bottles/flasks go hand in hand so let's dive deeper into what brands are doing to keep the standard high when it comes to protecting our planet. In recent years, Stanley have worked on transitioning their products and packaging to perform better within the circular economy, from recyclability to repair and reuse, "we have also made significant advances working in our supply chain to reuse water, better manage our production impacts, and source energy from renewables," according to Arne Erichsen, Director of Product & Marketing EMEA at Stanley. Klean Kanteen have become Climate Neutral certified and are now 100% Carbon Neutral and shifted production

to facilities which focus more in reducing their carbon footprint. Thermos have spare parts available from Germany to avoid consumers needing to replace the full bottle and rather fix the one they already own to increase the products lifecycle.

### Effects of Covid-19

The bottle and flask segment seems to have weathered the Covid-19 pandemic rather well and are ready for a strong SS21 with more people finding an appreciation for the great outdoors and wanting to live more sustainably while staying hydrated. Brecq Benoit, Brand & Marketing Manager at Nolla states, "As with every brand, Covid-19 just delayed sales, but the 2020 sales during summer are really good. Regarding our collection for the SS21 range, it will be refreshed with some additional products. We will carry over a part of



Photo Klean kanteen

*"As with every brand, Covid-19 just delayed sales, but the 2020 sales during summer are really good. Regarding our collection for the SS21 range, it will be refreshed with some additional products. We will carry over a part of our best range sellers: the inox bottle & isotherm bottle". Brecq Benoit, Brand & Marketing Manager at Nolla.*

our best range sellers: the inox bottle & isotherm bottle." Not giving in to the pandemic on the other hand is Mizu who are still launching the products they had planned and on the same schedule they had intended. Bottle brands have had a relatively relaxed impression towards this turbulent phase of 2020, although workflows had to have a major adjustments during this time, sales didn't suffer but actually thrived explains Catherine Morris, Commercial Director at Red Original, "we have seen a significant surge in consumer demand during lockdown, our challenge is to get our new products to market quick enough. We have seen some supply chain delays, but with careful management, we are avoiding any impact on growth." ©

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

**BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Personalised bottles
- 2 Multifunctional bottles
- 3 Smart functions
- 4 Product collaborations
- 5 Replaceable parts
- 6 Strong sales through Covid-19
- 7 Pricepoint at €15-40





AlterEgo, a sustainable surf brand based in Sardinia, is on a mission to reduce waste in the water sports industry by producing 100% recyclable performance surfboards. A unique biotech production technology, great team spirit and love for nature allows the CEO Alessandro Danese to pursue his dream towards the eco-friendly surfing business environment.

**Please give us an overview of how and why the brand began.**

AlterEgo started in Alghero, Sardinia (Italy), an island full of natural material like cork and many spots with great waves for surfing. The company was launched with the simple idea of manufacturing sustainable performance boards. We have come a long way and today we produce our boards with 95% compostable components made of bio cork (a compostable core replacing EPS), bio resin, and basalt fibre lamination.

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

Ale, our CEO, is a surfer, environmental engineer and a great entrepreneur. Luca is a

surfer and a consultant, who also holds a PhD in Sports Aerodynamics. Beau is an advisor and a Longboard Surfing World Champion in 2000 and 2003. Michele, our head of production, is a freediver and a Nautical Operation Technician. Stefania is our experienced international sales manager and customer service leader. We also have an Executive Committee comprising of an International Financial Service Executive, the Investment Management Expert and Sales & Marketing Executive experienced in sport goods market.

**Where and how are the surfboards produced?**

The factory is based in Alghero, Sardinia, where our surfboards are manufactured using natural materials like cork, basalt, linen and other organic elements. Thanks to our biocork technology, we were able to create the surf and SUP boards that are compostable within 3-4 weeks in an industrial compost and take 6-8 weeks to compost at home. The biocork technology was developed according to a proprietary formula and parameters defined by AlterEgo, so it is part of AlterEgo's exclusive know-how.

**What makes AlterEgo surfboards unique and sets you apart from your competitors?**

We can manufacture a board which combines compostable and ecological materials (biocork core, bio-resin, basalt fibre lamination) plus the high-performance features:

- Better flexibility: if you jump on the board it has a mellow flex
- Smoothing vibration: cork is a natural shock absorbing material
- Improved rebounds
- Stiffness and therefore a higher board speed
- More responsiveness while maintaining flex and damping control
- Attractive design and customisation options

**Please talk more on your overall sustainability program.**

At the moment sustainability is a worldwide issue and reducing pollution is a challenge at any level of human existence and hence production of the goods. Consumer behaviour for water sports is mostly focused on 'isolation' while enjoying nature. After thorough observation it was clear to us that the existing watersports boards are made of 'polluting' or unsustainable materials, that are not recyclable. AlterEgo's solution is to design and manufacture 100% compostable water boards (Surf, SUP, Skim, Pool). Our 'Mission Vision Value' approach to production can help answer this question and explain what we think about sustainability. Our MISSION is to become

the worldwide leader in eco-sustainable water board products and accessories. Our VISION is to create 100% compostable high performing watersport products and accessories to make our clients make sustainable purchase decisions. We VALUE and care about the environment. We believe that innovation and tangible actions will help preserve our planet. We are convinced that there is always a "clean" way to manufacture high performing and beautifully designed products.

**Where are you currently distributed and what is your most successful territory and why?**

We are starting a selected distribution through speciality stores and a few premium online platforms. Our products are currently sold in Europe, major markets are Italy (because AlterEgo is an Italian brand and Sardinia in particular has nice spots for surfing) and German speaking countries (because the consumer is sensitive to environmentally-friendly products and sustainable technology).

**How are you marketing the brand?**

At the moment we tend to invest our limited marketing resources in sales initiatives supporting retailers in different ways. It may be advertising on their website, giving retailers margins on the products above the average, working with selected magazines or offering products for testing and taking part in the proposed initiatives for increasing brand visibility.

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

AlterEgo is a very young brand and is now starting to look at the best ways to support athletes with special ambassadors' programs.

**How did you deal with the COVID-19 shutdown?**

The shutdown started when we were just about to build the inventory for the summer and launch new products. We were forced to close the factory for several weeks and ask the government for financial support. Now the factory is open and we are working in full force, catching up with production plan and orders for the customers. ☺



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# HANGING SHOES SS21

*With surf and skateboard sales booming during lockdown the desire for accessories didn't fall short behind, however many hanging shoe brands did revise their product release strategy to adapt to the economic situation. Dana Miskulnig sees how the market's hanging for 2021.*



TRENDS

Brands are sticking to natural colours in their designs with browns and blues being a staple here and drawing inspiration from palm trees but Reef are spicing things up in their designs to offer a hanging shoe for every occasion, “REEF is innovating by looking beyond 3-point sandals to cater to the “beach to brunch” mentality with sandals that work for all usage occasions while still being ridiculously comfortable.” Sinner are staying true to their bohemian theme and Mayori are bringing you a plethora of colourways to pick from in their product line up, “We use strong colours such as turquoise, yellow, red which also give a colourful summer feeling. It is summer and

you should feel it. On the other hand, we use natural colours which should also match the attitude towards life and its surroundings. Here there are colours like cognac, beige, khaki etc.,” explains Ben Steckermeier, CEO at Mayori. Brands are making adjustments to offer padded comfort and more support for hitting the beach. Boukje Bontenbal, Product Manager at Sinner explains, “we developed a new flip-flop

*“REEF is innovating by looking beyond 3-point sandals to cater to the “beach to brunch” mentality with sandals that work for all usage occasions while still being ridiculously comfortable.”*

for women with a comfortable footbed and top layer, it's a surf style with multicoloured straps. And also a new style for men with a curved footbed for good comfort in a surf style”.

Dropping new for SS21 is FoamLife, a new brand looking to shake up the market, started by industry vets Timo Mullen, Daniel Macaulay and Karl Read. With a focus on sustainability; both materials and their distribution strategy, FoamLife looks to ‘Live Less Ordinary’. Read a full brand profile on the SOURCE website.

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THE C WORD

So what changes did COVID-19 bring about for the hanging shoes industry? Aside from sales moving online, Hurley and Havaianas have also shifted their sales meeting to digital and many brands have also shifted their product releases to SS22 or focused on fast selling styles. At Hurley, “we had to be reactive and smart during the current season: in order to help our accounts for SS20, we decided to move some of the SS20 products to SS21. This decision not only helps clients reduce their orders and reduce the pressure on them but it is also a good way for us as a brand to keep control of the brand representation in the market.” Havaianas are exploring the use of hanging shoes in the home explains Merel Werners, Marketing Director, “people are wearing Havaianas at home more than ever, this is a trend we will be exploring in the coming seasons.”

SUSTAINABILITY

The connection between hanging shoes and nature is clear, so it's just as important for brands to do their part in conserving that nature. Across the board, brands are working with natural materials in their products like leather (vegan as well in the case of



Cool Shoe Corp.), wood, and cork. But brands such as Mayori, Cobian and Sinner are taking a more proactive approach. Ben from Mayori explains how they are putting sustainability into the hands of their customers, “For our summer 2021 collection,

*“For our summer 2021 collection, we will pack a few local tree seeds in each pair of shoes, thus giving each of our customers the opportunity to contribute to the preservation of our environment”. Ben Steckermeier, CEO at Mayori.*

we will pack a few local tree seeds in each pair of shoes, thus giving each of our customers the opportunity to contribute to the preservation of our environment”. Different brands have different approaches to sustainability with Cobian supporting foundations such as Friends of Bethany Hamilton Foundation, Surfers Not Street Children and Surfing the Nations and Sinner help the bee population by keeping their own bee hives. On the packaging front Cool Shoe Corp. are doing their best to eliminate plastic packaging by “using more cardboard, cord and biodegradable polybags. We also use more and more vegan leather.” On the production front Flojos are introducing their first ever eco-collection for men's and women's hanging shoes “by using recycled raw materials such as pre-consumer recycled rubber sponge on the outsole, water based PU to





reduce drainage pollution and low waste production methods,” explains Cole Harmening, Marketing Coordinator. Indosole’s approach sees them focusing on generating jobs and opportunities for people in Indonesia - keep an eye out for one of their new designs handmade and woven by a tribe in the rainforest of Borneo. Gumbies are “looking into

*“By using recycled raw materials such as pre-consumer recycled rubber sponge on the outsole, water based PU to reduce drainage pollution and low waste production methods”. Cole Harmening, Marketing Coordinator.*

incorporating Bloom foam into our Gumbies soles for an even more sustainable footwear range,” states Katie Pascall, Design & Marketing Assistant.

**PATTERNS & GRAPHICS**

As always, brands are getting creative and Hurley have designed the Women’s Pool Float Sandal based off the, you guessed it, pool float craze to convey that ‘carefree idyllic lifestyle’. Sinner have

made their own outsole with the Sinner as I am logo in a honeycomb pattern, a tribute to their work in protecting the bee population. Taking a closer look at Reef’s ‘Women’s Water Vista’, they have created a new category of water friendly products. The straps feature a woven texture, the footbed is inspired by an espadrille, and for added comfort a liner with faux textile detail. With a classic 2 bar slide design and an adjustable Velcro backstrap this style fits a lot of different feet. ©

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

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- 1 More supportive designs and materials
- 2 Sales meetings shifted to online platforms
- 3 Demand for hanging shoes in the home
- 4 SS20 products moved to SS21
- 5 Natural materials
- 6 Pro-active sustainability practices

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# NEW PRODUCTS

## 01 / QUIKSILVER MIKEY WRIGHT'S THE '69 CLOTHING CAPSULE

The new Men's '69 Capsule apparel collection is inspired by Quiksilver's '69 heritage and '90s graphics. The entire collection uses timeless colours -black, white and military green- as a nod to history and to ensure wearers longevity, the collection will fit in with the changing fashion trends of the future.

**QUIKSILVER.COM**

## 02 / DC'S HYDE S EVAN SMITH PRO MODEL SHOE

Designed and tested in the streets by the entire DC team, the Hyde is a skate shoe for all the homies. A pure and simple Vulc, built to skate any spot at any time. DC let Evan get cosmic on his new DC's Hyde S Evan Smith Pro Model Hyde, Showcasing his custom art, with an exclusive colourway.

**DCSHOES.COM**

## 03 / CREATURES OF LEISURE STEPHANIE GILMORE ECOPURE® TRACTION PAD

Plastic pollution is especially a concern for Surfers, with an estimated 8 million tonnes of plastic being dumped in the ocean every year. At Creatures we are always on the hunt for more sustainable materials. The latest of these is their new EcoPure® traction – surf grip that biodegrades in landfill at the end of its life. Additionally all the traction packaging has been changed and is now made recyclable, biodegradable materials.

**CREATURES.COM.AU**

## 04 / VANS MOD SLIP-ON

This latest update to the Mod Slip-On, is a modern take on the classic slip-on silhouette, with help from Vans Surf Team rider and Weird Waves host Dylan Graves. The shoe leverages RapidWeld, a stitchless construction for improved fit and feel, with a no-sew welded upper and rubber details to add structure without weight. With a UltimateWaffle outsole, the Mod Slip-On features a full rubber cup-sole that enables greater flexibility while maintaining optimal traction and durability.

**VANS.EU/SURF**



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## Marketing Coordinator (m/w/d)

Für unser Blue Tomato Headquarter Schladming

Blue Tomato ist der führende Omni-Channel Händler im Bereich Snowboard, Skate, Freeski & Surf mit Hauptsitz in Schladming/Österreich. Neben dem internationalen Onlineshop ist Blue Tomato mit einer stetig wachsenden Anzahl an Retail Standorten in Deutschland, Österreich, der Schweiz, den Niederlanden und Finnland vertreten. Aktuell beschäftigt das Unternehmen mehr als 600 Mitarbeiter\*innen.

### DEINE AUFGABEN

- Koordination und Gestaltung von bereichsübergreifenden Marketing Kampagnen
- Strategische Planung von Content-Themen und Aktionen
- Mitarbeit bei der Pflege von Onsite und Newsletter Kampagnen
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- Ideenausarbeitung sowie Briefing und Kontrolle von Content Elementen
- Mitarbeit bei Erstellung von SEO optimierten Landingpages und Blogeinträgen
- Analyse und Weiterentwicklung von verschiedenen Marketing Aktivitäten

### UNSERE ANFORDERUNGEN

- 2-3 Jahre einschlägige Berufserfahrung im Online-Marketing Bereich, vorzugsweise E-Commerce
- Know-how von Projekt- und Content-Management Systemen von Vorteil
- Sehr gute Deutsch- und Englischkenntnisse, weitere Sprachen von Vorteil
- Gute Ausdrucksweise und Gespür für optische Gestaltung von Marketingmaterialien
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- Analytische Fähigkeiten und Erfahrung mit Tools wie Google Analytics
- Teamgeist, Kommunikations- und Begeisterungsfähigkeit
- Affinität zur Snowboard-, Surf-, Freeski- und Skateboardbranche

### WAS WIR DIR BIETEN

Blue Tomato steht für Teamgeist und Professionalität. Die Leidenschaft für Snowboard, Skate, Freeski und Surf sind die Grundlagen unseres Erfolges. Blue Tomato bietet dir eine aufregende Stelle in einem sportlichen und aufstrebenden Team in einem dynamischen Unternehmen mit angenehmer Arbeitsatmosphäre und Platz für Eigeninitiative und Weiterentwicklung.

### BEWERBUNG

Nähere Infos und Bewerbung unter:  
[www.blue-tomato.com/jobs](http://www.blue-tomato.com/jobs)

**Ansprechperson: Paul Becker**

Blue Tomato GmbH  
Hochstraße 628  
8970 Schladming  
Österreich

### BEGINN & ORT

Ab sofort, Vollzeit in unserem Headquarter in Schladming







Ride Snowboards & K2 Snowboarding suchen eine/n FreiberuflerIn, im Marketing und Eventlager Support. Der europäische K2 Sports Hauptsitz befindet sich in Penzberg, mit direkter Autobahn Anbindung zwischen München und Garmisch.

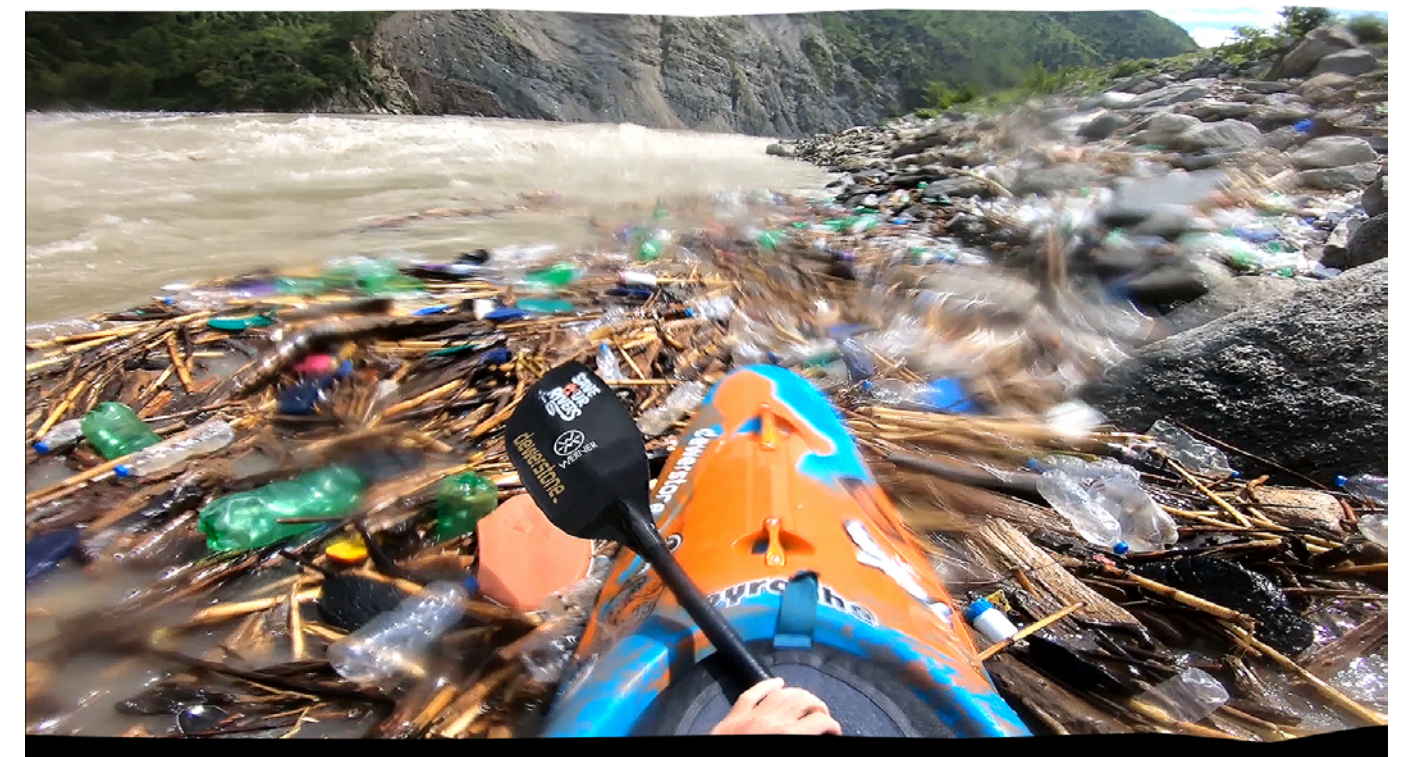
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- Instandhaltung des Demo- und Marketinglagers, sowie des Testkontingents

Wenn du dir darunter etwas vorstellen kannst – aber auch falls du keine Ahnung hast auf was du dich da einlässt – du aber motiviert bist in die Wintersportindustrie einzusteigen, ein hohes Maß an Selbstorganisation mitbringst und bereit bist, auch an Wochenenden unterwegs zu sein, bist du bei uns richtig.

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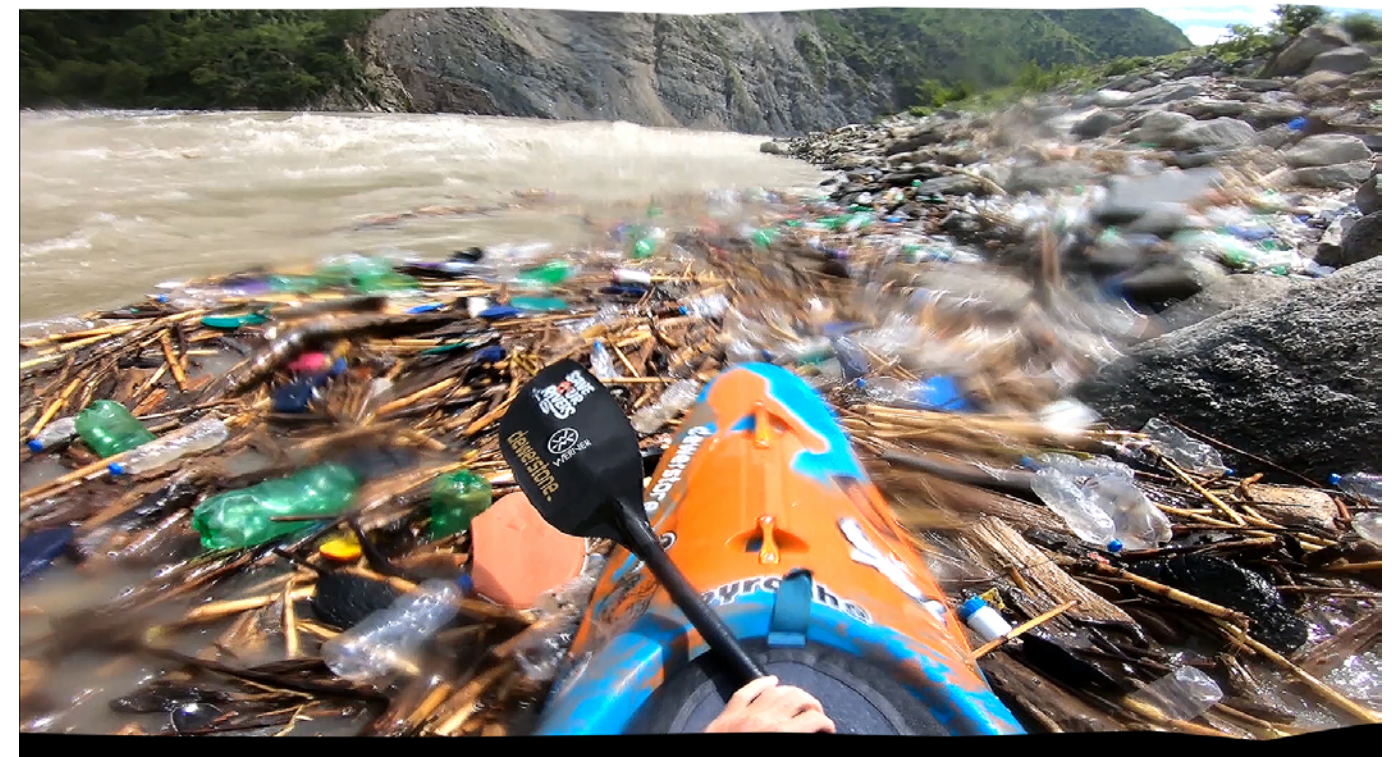
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- Instandhaltung des Demo- und Marketinglagers, sowie des Testkontingents

Wenn du dir darunter etwas vorstellen kannst – aber auch falls du keine Ahnung hast auf was du dich da einlässt – du aber motiviert bist in die Wintersportindustrie einzusteigen, ein hohes Maß an Selbstorganisation mitbringst und bereit bist, auch an Wochenenden unterwegs zu sein, bist du bei uns richtig.

Schick uns deine Bewerbung an [info@k2sports.de](mailto:info@k2sports.de)

**WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE.**



**IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT  
OUR BRAND IS FOUNDED UPON.**



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Die Boards & More GmbH ist ein international tätiges Sportartikelunternehmen und zählt zu den Weltmarktführern in den Trendsportarten Kitesurfen, Windsurfen und Stand-Up-Paddeln. Wir suchen für den Standort München / Oberhaching eine/n:

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