







Storm ready, expedition proven

#### We believe in the impossible.

are no boundaries. Whether your dream line is in the Himalaya, Alaska or your home range, the Shralpinist collection is built for climbing high, riding hard and pushing your limits in extreme conditions.

SHREDDER + ALPINIST

The Uphill Collection



Rapid ascent apparel

#### We want to explore deep into the mountains.

powered backcountry adventures that demand long days, covering huge amount of terrain, through ever changing weather. Featuring cutting edge, stretch breathable fabrics, the Uphill collection is designed to keep you cool and comfortable when you're moving, and warm and dry when you stop, so and sending lines.

The Mountain Surf Collection



All-conditions, every day comfort

#### We want to shred every day.

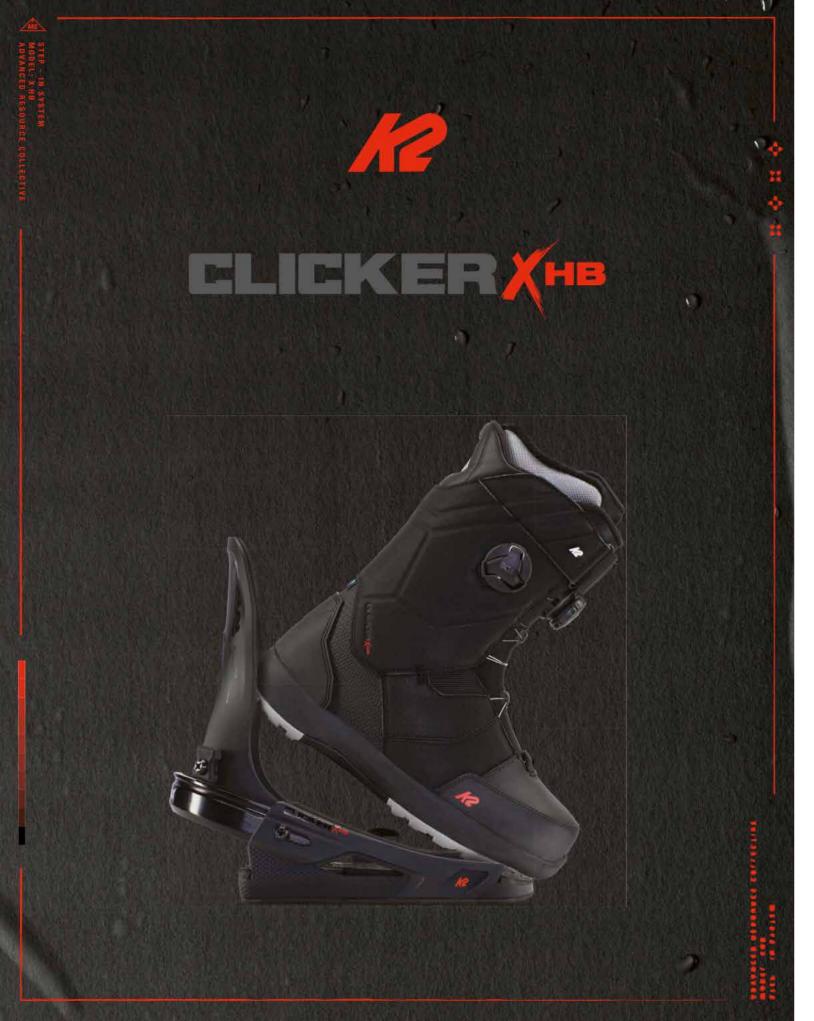
Balancing warmth, comfort, breathability, and durability, the Mountain Surf collection is built to handle any day of the winter and any approach to the mountains. The collection features unique, bodymapped fabric designs that provide protection where you get wet and breathability where you flex and sweat. Chairlift and skintrack proven, the Mountain you can focus all your energy on chasing summits Surf collection is so versatile and so comfortable you won't want to take it off.



Jeremy Jones 📵 Andrew Miller







### **HELLO**SOURCE#110

We keep seeing season after season that is nothing like we've seen been before. Nothing quite like boardsports for being unique, eh?

As we headed into the 21/22 winter, we were blindly hoping (and optimistic) for a good one, but then Omicron struck. There's little point in me explaining what happened, we all know, but at the time of writing – end of January – I can thankfully report that whereas last year everywhere but Switzerland was closed, this year's picture is distinctly brighter with resorts all across Europe open and covid restrictions lifting bit by bit in most countries.

For example, France closing its borders to the UK just before Christmas had a hugely traumatic effect on the snowsports business, but once France announced the relaxing of restrictions in the middle of January we've heard from a number of UK retailers that record sales were hit following the news.

So, here we are knocking on February's door and we are definitely in a better position to last year. Good sell-through is being reported from both brands and retailers, in all snow categories. Splitboarding continues its upward momentum and once again we wait with bated breath to see what effect the winter Olympics will have on snowboard sales and participation numbers.

Even though a little more tricky than normal, here at SOURCE we managed to get around the trade events that survived, and one of the most notable things was definitely the lack of samples due to backlogs in raw materials and production facilities. However, at the time of writing, we know these backlogs have cleared and samples are now with brands filtering down to distributors and retailers.

It was truly unfortunate that Shops 1st Try had to cancel for this winter, but we fully commend the event organisers for their neversay-die attitude and for taking things right to the

wire. With the cancellation of SFT, there have been a number of pop-up regional on snow demos appear, not to mention the launch of Winter Pro in La Rosiere, which was a great success. It's great to see there's an appetite for people wanting to try next year's gear and it shows signs of a healthy market and a need for this type of gathering. A big shout out to this issue's cover star Jari Salo and photographer Keke Leppala for the initiative shown in bagging this shot. A snowdeprived Helsinki saw the pair travel to a local ice hockey rink, fill their car boot with snow and stage the photo, aptly named 'Global Warming', shot on a bridge in Helsinki.

This just leaves me to wish you a successful rest of the winter. I'm glad to hear retailers are placing their pre-orders with confidence and I look forward to taking some well-deserved snow turns soon...

Always Sideways
Harry Mitchell Thompson
Ed-in-chief

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**On the cover.** Rider: Jari Salo does graphic design work for the likes of Capita, Union & Burton. **Photographer:** Keke Leppälä.









#### WINTER PRO 2022 LA ROSIERE, FRANCE JANUARY 9-11, 2022

Winter Pro is a new b2b on snow demo in La Rosiere

organised by Act Media and replacing the Rock On Snow Pro that was held annually in La Clusaz. Act Media, the publishers of Act Snowboarding has been involved in organising events including Ride The Snake and Enjoy The Glacier in Les 2 Alpes since 2010 and has long term relationships with snowboard brands who came to the event. La Rosière resort which is renowned for its snowfall is ideally located in the middle of Haute-Tarentaise, just above Bourg Saint Maurice and offers a 2,000m vertical drop (850m - 2850m). It's part of the San Bernardo area with 170 km of slopes distributed between La Rosière in France and La Thuile in Italy. The event ran from Sunday to Tuesday and mother nature decided to celebrate with a major snow dump from mid Saturday to early Monday, so no shortage of powder for testing on and off the piste and Monday and Tuesday were bluebird days.

Winter Pro was based around three sites right next to the slopes. The 700 sq metre test village containing all the exhibiting hardgoods brands was located in front of the departure point of the Roches

Noire's chairlift, so you could ride right to the village entrance. Two minutes walk away was the 200 sq metre exhibition hall where the exhibiting accessory and textile brands were located and this was also the location for breakfasts and post-testing get togethers. Lunches and dinners were all held at the Le Boréal restaurant a few more minutes down the street. To get access to all the various Winter Pro sites one had to present a covid passport at the door.

This was Europe's snowboard trade season opener and in fact the first snowboard business event in Europe since spring 2020 and the first opportunity for the French snowboard scene has had to get together for two years. 42 brands' 2022/23 range of snowboard products were available for test for the first time in Europe. With the current supply chain problems many of the products to test had only arrived the week before so everyone was keen to get testing. The brand list was as follows: Amplid, Arbor, Bataleon, Bent Metal, Borealis, Burton, Capita, Cardo, Fiell, Flow, Furberg, Gnu, Goodboards, Jones, K2 snowboarding, Lib-Tech, Nidecker, Nok Boards, Nitro, Now, Ride, Rome, Rossignol, Roxy Snowboards, Salomon, Sandy Shapes, Slash By GiGi, Union, Weston, Yes, and

outerwear and accessory brands included 686, Dakine, Volcom, Quiksilver, Roxy, Saxx Underwear, PAG, VonZipper, Electric, Spy and Mammut. Mammut was testing customers' transceivers to check that they were working properly and offering avalanche research and first aid training on the snow front, just in front of the test village.

The demo was from 9am to 4pm everyday with the Roches Brunes chairlift exclusively opening for Winter Pro participants for the first half hour of each day.

On the Saturday brands set up their tents and then had a welcome drink at the exhibition hall followed by dinner at the Le Boréal. Sunday the village opened and testing began. This was followed by a Vans Aperitif of free beers, a film screening of «Elles» & «Oasen» and a DJ set and a photo exhibition by Mathieu Georges and Perly. Dinner at the Le Boréal was followed by the opening Party at Le Boréal with The Climbers and a DJ Set. On Monday diner was held at the Le Boréal followed by the event closing party with Mullit and the Machine rocking the night away. Most of the brands and retailers stayed in the hotels right next to the Roches Brunes chairlift, so it was an easy late night stumble home!

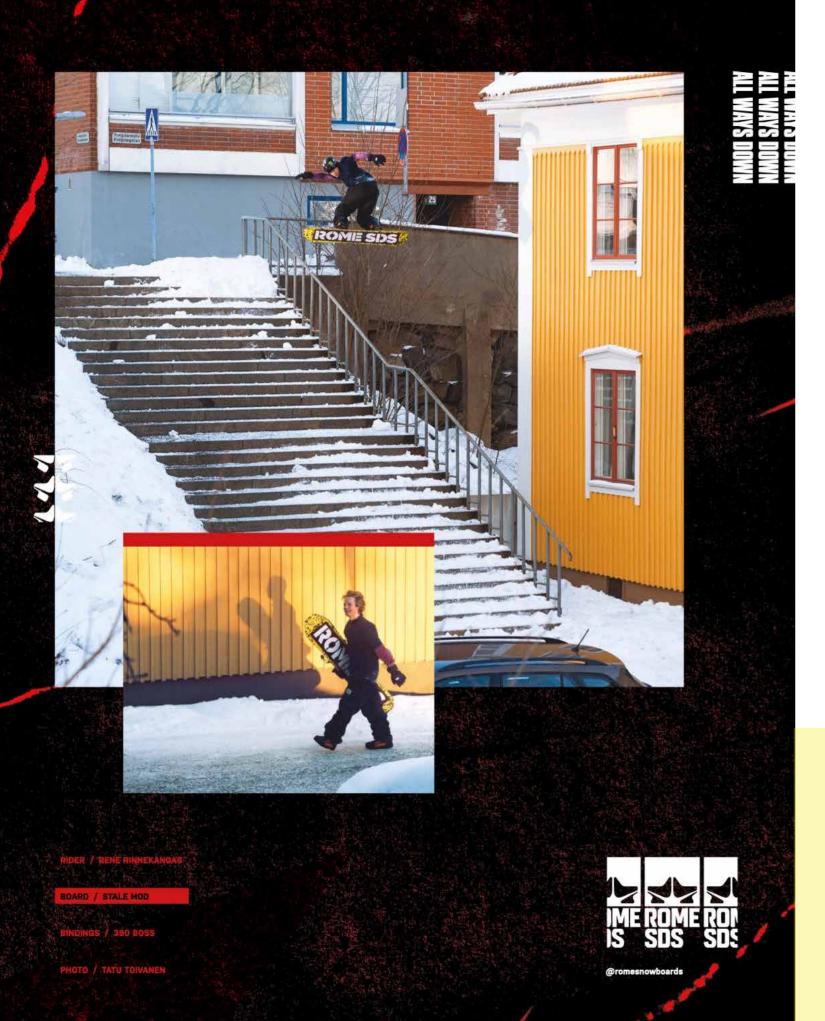
On the first day when it was almost impossible to drive up to the resort, only 23 shops were in the village to test. When the weather cleared on Monday and Tuesday more shops arrived and a total of 133 shops and 345 testers attended during the 3 days. Shops at the event included Le Vieux Camper, Gliss shop, Ecosport, Snow Leader and Addicted. The test system was run by Nineteen Squared, with each product identified by a QR code and each person by their registration card, with all scanning happening at the test village entrance. French pros riding with shops at the event included Victor De la Rue, Victor Daviet, Mathieu Crepel, Arthur Longo and Olivier Gittler and Austrian legend GiGi Rüf.

Brands were happy with this first edition and enjoyed the change of location to la Rosiere. For next year the event will probably move to Monday to Wednesday to encourage even more retailers to come.

Big thanks to organiser David Tchag, Marine Bernard and their team for a great first test event.

actsnowboarding.com/winter-pro-2022-2

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#### RETAILER PROFILE STYLEFISH, WINTERBERG

Staying offline and solely existing as a bricks and mortar shop in Winterberg, Germany, Stylefish's approach may seem a little bizarre considering last year's shift towards digital, however the old-school style is working well for them. The combined shop and snowboard school focuses on hardware and growing a local snow & skate community, so we spoke the boss, Max Bechen, a guy who's pretty much been part of Stylefish's journey from the very beginning to discover how biz is going.

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

Three guys from the Sauerland founded the shop to set up a snowboard school, the shop itself had a different manager. However, this guy stepped down on opening day. After that, the three guys continued with the snowboard school and ran the shop independently.

I started my apprenticeship a year later and stuck with the company, I'm still there today. Some time later, there was tension withthe founders. That's how I started to become more and more involved. Firstly, I became the manager of the snow school. After that, I ran the shop with another guy until we combined the school and the shop again. Now, I've been the boss for approximately one year.

#### Talk to us about your online game... How has this changed in the past 24 months?

For our own reasons, we no longer have an online shop. We believe in the customer-



centric approach and having personality behind the shop. Our customers are welcome to try the boards and receive first-hand help from me. However, we used to have a webshop back in the day which pulled in a little over 2 million in revenue. But then the fight began, and the webshop didn't withstand it. At that time, I wasn't too involved myself; that happened afterwards. As I said, there is no online shop these days.

#### Which brands do you work the best with and why?

We don't stock much clothing anymore. We focus on hardware and only stock a few hoodies or sweatshirts from time to time. We work with 10-12 brands for our hardware gear, for instance, Burton, Bataleon, Ride, YES, Jones, Oakley for goggles and Elevator, to name a few. Especially Burton as we use their stuff in the snowboard school, including



their "Learn to Ride" application. We work with these brands because the European brands understand and feature the right attributes we want from a board, rather than brands from outside of Europe. Within Europe, we need boards for carving, the slopes, and the park. Other boards don't make sense here too much: instead, are better designed for use in Japan or Where do you see the future of retail in your Canada.

#### months?

There wasn't much happening last winter, although I kept some of the models, and I didn't for us to focus on backpacks, trousers, etc... want to be part of the price war for boards with crazy discounts. The problem this year was a stop in production and deliveries, so many shops had their backup stock empty. I'm now one of the lucky ones with some boards that can be sold from the previous season. Next to the snowboards, we sold more than 100 complete skateboards; the reason for that is not primarily the increasing demand, but due to my motivation to follow up on these kids and give them some guidance for their choice. I provide everybody with a clear explanation, and I seek to help everybody who wants to start with skating somewhere; it is interesting because it to buy, but instead a community place with feels like a revival of the '80s, with it becoming hip again. Furthermore, it is easy to take up a hobby brings people together. § that already has a well-established community and one that doesn't need much money in the first place.

#### How do you advise brands to work with their e-commerce sites vs you selling locally?

Honestly, they should stop because many brands desire to become like Coca Cola. But unfortunately, it's the retail sector that has helped them become the brands they are today.

#### region?

It will be difficult for everybody. We are in a Which products sold well in the past 12 ski resort and can sell right next to the slopes. Ultimately, Blue Tomato will take over the clothing branch, and therefore it is pointless Also, I believe people have become lazier, which is beneficial for e-commerce trade. Ultimately, to differentiate us as retailers, we need to be specialists in consultancy and product explanation. We don't need to be bargain hunters, rather a trustful relationship with our customers as part of a more significant community. In addition, I don't want to sell anything of bad quality, but good and longlasting products to cement the trust component in all our customer relationships. Lastly, a retail shop needs to become more than just a place activities, locally produced clothes and fun that

STYLEFISH.DE

## 2022/2023 **PROTO**SYNTHESIS R: CHRIS CORNING PH: PHIL MCKENZIE PHOTO Choppy Water GmbH - Europe - Ph: +49 4343 49 46 40 - E-Mail: info@choppywater.de Trade AG - Switzerland - Ph: +41 81 630 4518 - E-Mail: info@neversummer.ch Maxtrack - UK - Ph: +44 1531 890955 - E-Mail: info@maxtrack.com ne Biondo - Italy - Ph: +39 3388121403 - E-Mail: neversummeritaly@gmail.com

#### MARKET INSIGHT

#### **PORTUGAL**

FRANCE UK GERMANY ITALY SWISS AUSTRIA The last quarter of 2021 saw another bump on the Covid-19 rollercoaster. Despite hitting 85% vaccination rate in October and the economy fully opening... everything indicated that the war was

about to be won. But the Omicron variant ignited fear with our government as they saw the scenario seen in other European countries struggling with exponential growth of infections, so they made the vaccine booster and testing a priority. With the Winter and Christmas season coming, the government called for precautions to be taken with family reunions and made four free tests a month available to each person. Fortunately, the 40,000 daily cases of infections had no serious impact on the number of hospitalizations and deaths. To fight the spread of Omicron the authorities set two weeks of restrictions after Christmas with measures such as mandatory work from home, bars and nightclubs closed, banning sales and store limit number of customers.

Despite all the concern, the Portuguese economy shows positibity with the forecast pointing to 5.8% growth in 2022 and the unemployment rate falling to 6.3% in November (the lowest since 2001).

Surf and skate shops continue to struggle with stock problems due to the worldwide production and logistics crisis. Summer weather in October and November harmed Fall collection sales and the limit of one person per 5m2 instore has returned.

Waterbound is a surfshop founded in 2019 located in a premium spot in Ericeira. His business includes apparel, surf lessons and rentals. They work with brands such as Roark, Ocean&Earth, Salty Crew, Sisstrevolution and Jaase, among others. They also have their own clothing brand which is made from organic cotton. For a store that was only about six months old and was still recovering from the investment it was hard to deal with the shock caused by the pandemic. It was survival mode. Looking back almost two years there were several months they were closed or working with lots of restrictions. For a

store that had its doors open daily from 9am, to start working from 10am to 7pm with a limited number of customers and being closed on the weekend was a disaster. Before the pandemic they had 30 customers in store at the same time but because of government restrictions they only had authorization for two at a time. The result was a 90% drop in the store's capacity. Store owner André Caré admits that his business wasn't prepared for such a disruptive reality. "Our website wasn't ready to have online sales," he said. "Still, we got down to work and opened the online store. But after some sales we had to deal with another setback: lack of stock. This forced us to give up on the idea and remain only with the physical store." Furlough support from the government was key to facing the storm. But that didn't prevent the store from having to reduce staff. Christmas sales didn't go as well as in 2020. That's because there was free circulation of people between cities and a drop in sales was noted. Another reason is customers became more used to shopping online due to the pandemic. The fact that the summer weather lasted until November didn't help to sell the Fall collection either.

Stock and logistics issues that have come to harm the action sports industry also had an effect on the store. "Due to production and transport failures worldwide re-orders sometimes don't arrive when they are supposed to. There's lack of product and a delay in their arrival. Several sizes of clothing are missing. This ended up having an impact on sales", he admits.

But there's always a positive side to things. Waterbound optimized their business thanks to the pandemic. They chose to have only two brands for men and two for women allowing for a more inviting product displays for customers instore. Looking for the present and future, the outlook is colourful. "We feel that the worst is over. We also ended up with new local customers. Special thanks to our staff team, our suppliers and customers for their spirit of resilience. Their unconditional support allowed us to survive and keep the store open and make good sales."

NUNO PRINCIPE

















We wanted to take this moment to say THANK YOU...

For supporting us, for believing in us. For getting out in the backcountry and sharing our love for human-powered shredding.

Thanks for riding with us.

- Will + Becca and everyone at Spark R+D









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MADE IN THE USA 21

#### RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

#### **SNOWBOARDS** 2022/23

Despite global warming, global pandemic or global shitshow, snowboarding is alive and well and knocking on your doorstep to embrace the good life with you. Ready for the ride? Welcome to the Snowboards 22/23 Retail Buyer's Guide. By Matthieu Perez



Like every other industry, snowboard manufacturing goes with trends, moods and influences. The almost 50 brands represented in Europe show an awareness towards distribution network, end consumers, fans, and planet earth. Full commitment, all in, no holding back. The beauty of the manufacturing world consists of a true love for snowboarding and its environment, trying to be consistent through the years and honest to the guidelines established since day one by the brands. The evolution of the products is simply rocketing with tech, shapes, raw materials. Still, the brands need to provide true products, fulfil the needs of riders out there, keep it simple for retailers and customers in order to understand a product and its place in each brand's collection.

"Winter 2021/2022 gave us zero revenue so it was like an uppercut but like Rocky Balboa we always stand up and never give up" Démir Julià, Verdad

Next season is not a normal year or a random year in snowboarding, it will be another beautiful step in our history of progression and fun to have on snow! Starting with commitment, with the likes of rider owned brand Slash Snowboards. Gigi Rüf (please watch PMP's opus: DRIVEN) made a point as people weren't fully aware that he is now fully in control of the company, making his Co the only (current) pro rider owned and operated brand

"In these hard times, we've had to be nimble and manoeuvre to anticipate, split and arrange our production timeline & distribution to make sure W23 samples are delivered on time, and we're confident that because of this, there will be little to no impact on the ordering season."

Antoine Floquet, Nidecker

in Europe(?): "We've done some marketing around this, to ensure end consumers and retailers know when they buy from Slash, they're buying from a fully pro rider owned and operated company." Many other brands are led by ex-pros, continuing their dream to live their life on snow, including Peter Bauer at Amplid, Thierry Kunz at Nidecker, David Lambert at West, Blue Montgomery at Capita Mfg, Christian Kirsch at Canary Cartel, Serge Dupraz at Dupraz Snowboards, Mike Olson and Pete Saari at Mervin Mfg, et al. NB: News hot off the press sees American pro Shaun White introduce WHITESPACE, his snowboard and apparel company launched with retailer Backcountry.

Let's please give them the space and time they deserve to talk about their art. Our entire industry helps grow our culture, drives innovation, raises tomorrow's talent, and more than anything, builds some of the most enjoyable toys on the planet.

Some have been in the biz for so long that we have some major anniversaries coming up. Rome will celebrate its 20th year anniversary with their 22/23 collection and to help celebrate the occasion will feature a capsule collection with a re-issue of the iconic Neasden Control Center Agent graphics. Weston Snowboards, based in Colorado, will be "back in business as usual in 22/23 and it's Weston's 10 year anniversary, so the new line is being launched with two totally revamped and different approaches - coined the Quiver and Mission Series" says Sean Eno, director of marketing.

Not only are we celebrating old dogs, newcomers such as Telos Snowboards are causing a stir in Europe too. Ben Schwitz, its CEO, comments: "not only are we dialling in our line to offer a better range of products and boards but we are growing our team as well." Ka-risma's Kolja Keetman joins Telos as European Sales Manager. Schwitz notes, "This is translating into more happy customers and largely expanding our worldwide dealer network as well." And other brands are experiencing a rebirth, such as Verdad: "Winter 2021/2022 gave us zero revenue so it was like an uppercut but like Rocky Balboa we always stand up and never give up," says Démir Julià, CEO.



"Sure, the world is going to D2C so we need to find the best approach for all partners. I believe direct sales gives a great chance to build up an even stronger brand and to tell its stories more properly." Sebi Schmitz, K2

#### F\*CK COVID.

This hot topic deserves fine fuzz. Since you already know how the pandemic affected your life, let's observe how snowboard brands are managing the side effects. Bataleon keeps on growing. It seems like the brand's customers can't be stopped, even by a pandemic. But there is not one way to drive through this period and everyone has their own approach. At Canary Cartel, Christian Kirsch claims that "despite the recurring Covid situation, things went pretty good. We enlarged outside of Europe and we almost sold out all our 21/22 stock already." For an overseas brand like Lib-Tech, the biggest challenge with boards in Europe has been shipping. Pete Saari, Lib's co-founder explains: "we are adjusting our build calendars, working the logistics details as aggressively as possible and have

"We hold ourselves to the highest standard, to drive sell through and margin dollars at retail. It's a symbiotic relationship where Mervin and our partners see the benefit of creating value for our brands." Maxx Von Marbod, Mervin

our fingers crossed for improvements in the variables we can't control." Antoine Floquet at Nidecker exposes the brand's strategy: "In these hard times, we've had to be nimble and manoeuvre to anticipate, split and arrange our production timeline & distribution to make sure W23 samples are delivered on time, and we're confident that because of this, there will be little to no impact on the ordering season."

At all production stages, brands faced challenges in sourcing materials or materials shortages, and issues with raw materials pricing and shipping. So what could help to be back to normal? Full strategies are put in place like Rossignol who developed a three-winter-season inventory and sales management plan that is continuously updated according to the circumstances. Out of Canada, Yunika's manufacturing and sourcing didn't change since they have a "3 years carry-over" collection so they were on time with deliveries to stores and customers. And David Lambert at West Snowboards offers an approach that nails it: "By the fact that we are not producing seasonal products based on a deadline anymore, is actually helping us to produce what we want when we want." Never submit!

#### **BRICKS AND MORTAR Vs. ECOMMERCE?**

The answer is no. There is no Versus. No brand has ever thought to give priority to online businesses, whether they are online only or the web version of a physical store, but everyone can benefit from the change of habits. For Jones, in fact, this season marks the first time they will sell direct to consumer in a few European countries. This has been a long time coming as they held off on selling direct in Europe for several years to benefit dealers. And ALL brands approve the fact that brick and mortar stores are the foundation of our community and companies. Sebi Schmitz at K2 states: "sure, the world is going to D2C so we need to find the best approach for all partners. I believe direct sales gives a great chance to build up an even stronger brand and to tell its stories more properly." Win-win situation. Maxx Von Marbod, Mervin Sales Director, adds: "we hold ourselves to the highest standard, to drive sell through and margin dollars at retail. It's a symbiotic relationship where Mervin and our partners see the benefit of creating value for our brands." Which translates at Salomon that for sure being close to their local organizations and managing their business with a sweet dose of common sense is the right way to go. Final word from Nicolas Compan, co-owner at Easy, for whom snowboard culture will for sure disappear without physical shops. All hail brick and mortar!

#### TO CARRY OVER OR NOT TO CARRY OVER?

At least on that one, everyone has their own vision and strategic approach. At first you have the Carry-Over pioneers like Dupraz, who started to carry-over the lines from 2003 on. It's in their DNA. Then you have the Korua boys who have successfully been using carry-over since their inception in 2014. Katharina Acham comments: "HEAD Snowboards has been following a clear carryover/new models strategy for some years already, with basically a "never-out-of-stock" program. This has helped retailers in the past years in terms of forward planning and risk management." Stranda firmly believes in carryover designs and changes them every 2 or 3 seasons. As well as Burton who did grow their carryover strategy before Covid and will keep growing it for 22/23. Same for Amplid, which introduced the concept of 2-season carryover models in its range one year before Covid.







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"HEAD Snowboards has been following a clear carry-over/new models strategy for some years already, with basically a "never-out-of-stock" program. This has helped retailers in the past years in terms of forward planning and risk management." Katharina Acham, HEAD

And then right before or since Covid-19, lots of brands committed to the practice. For Goodboards, 80% of the collection was carry-over in 21/22. In the future, they will leave certain series unchanged for two to three years. Same for Borealis, they've always done carry-over because it's better to keep the same graphics on a board for several years rather than HAVING to change it. The goal at Jones for 22/23 is to cut down the number of carry overs to about ¼ of the line as they have lots of new tech and graphics they are excited to showcase.

No matter if you are new to it, growing or decreasing your proportion of carry-over, or even all in 100%, brands are trying to help themselves and their distribution network. Rossignol is carrying over 20%, which is slightly more than its standard carryover year, of our 21/22 boards over to 22/23 due to the inventory situation.

Then, the anti-carry-over brands like Ride have not offered carry-over products for a long time as it believes their customers deserve a fresh line every year. Arbor also assures: "we have moved away from the carry-over thing a little bit and will try to bring some excitement to the market with a lot of fresh designs for the 22/23 season." On its side, Salomon informs that the board line is the only one which is the less impacted by carry-over strategy. Each season it aims to offer a fresh and positive update of its board line.

And Ben Hall at Borealis concludes things with a transition towards our next chapter: "By not doing carry-over, some tend to over-produce and then discount massively. They have the necessity to clear everything before the following season, which isn't very sustainable." Gigi Rüf at Slash reinforces: "we try and roll over some models each season to help promote sustainability."

#### **GREEN OR DIE.**

Borealis, which claims to have offered eco-construction since 2013 and its board development and brand management office uses green energy. The brand also aims to become a 100% carbon neutral by 2024. It brings an important issue to the table: "we need to step



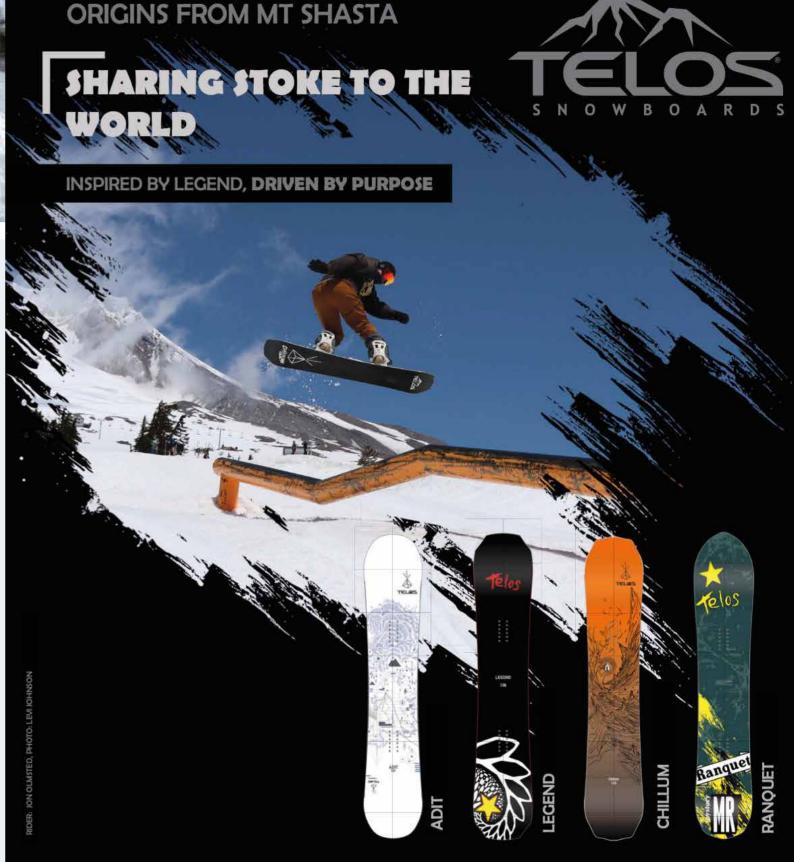
out of that over-consumption logic where everything needs to be used and thrown away as quickly as possible." At Telos, Ben Schwitz states: "doing things that matter to improve the life cycle of our snowboards is one of the most effective strategies."

And Serge Dupraz nailed it down: "the best rubbish is the rubbish we do not produce." Long lasting products have been the specialty of many manufacturers, sometimes for decades. Never Summer claims to build boards which last a really long time and you can get tons of days on. These boards get passed down and re-sold so they stay on the hills. YES. even proposes a lifetime warranty on all of its boards.

Further, Salomon puts quality and durability first. For them, without this foundation, sustainable features and technologies become less relevant. Mervin Mfg (Lib-Tech, GNU, Roxy) and Capita's Mothership have always been environmentally focused. As leaders, they are continuing their long-time environmental practices and always trying to improve. Both intend to be self-sufficient and use green hydroelectric or solar panel arrays, to make products with 100% clean energy, in the USA or Europe.

Some who don't have the in-house expertise or capabilities like Drake, work with an agency to guide them towards becoming Carbon Neutral. It's the same at Easy which feels lucky that its factories, forwarder and shipper are always thinking about reducing its carbon footprint, so they always try to find the right partners with the best eco-consciousness.

As of today, almost everyone is doing its best to take part in the process using green bio-based epoxy, sometimes just at its level banning solvents, preferring water-based products, finding substitute petroleum-



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based materials and from 20% to 100% recycled steel edges. Only the sky is the limit to progression in ecoconstruction, Tur Snowboards are currently doing a collaboration with RISE, a Swedish research institute for developing new eco-materials.

they can source locally but everyone tends to use FSC certified wood cores. Finally, eco wax ensures straight out of factory fast bases like Ride and Salomon. Once the final product is ready, Mervin Mfg works with a partner to compost all sawdust back into soil that is used in gardens and landscaping. They have an extensive recycling program that encompasses almost every material in the process. Huge. Never Summer does work as well with waste management to recycle the scrap base and sidewall P-tex.

inspire people is another brick in the wall. Nidecker, who already managed to turn their headquarters 100% solar powered during the covid period, created the Stash The Trash litter pick event last summer, which was a huge success and went far beyond their



expectations. But more than that, it inspired its distribution network and most of the brand's factories & suppliers took part in this effort too. Joerg Schramm at Ride notes: "we know there are some more steps to help saving the planet and we are trying our best to find better solutions for the future." One alternative is Wood cores has been a challenge for many unless the way Vimana conducts its approach: "our products have been vegan since day one, this is not a direct eco-consciousness decision but more an animal health decision. The good thing is that this synergy effects on climate and our carbon footprint."

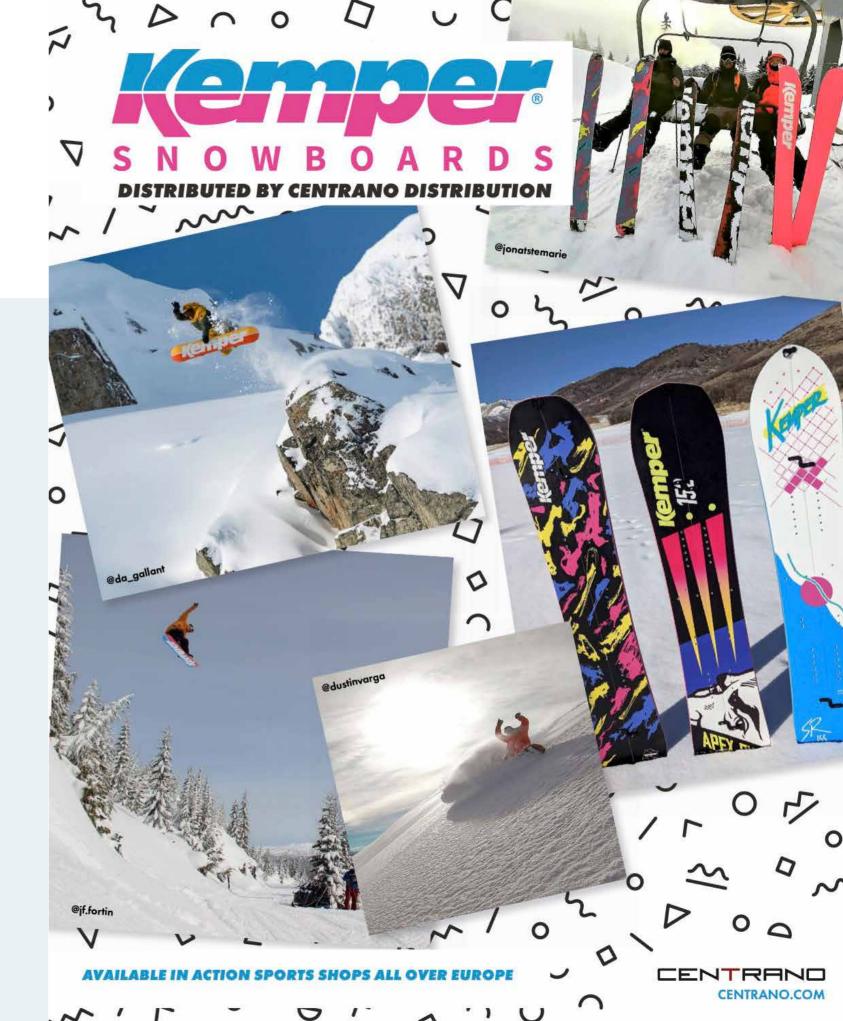
Onto the next chapter of sustainable production, Capita continually invests in its energy systems because it has a duty to refine and improve their manufacturing processes in order to help preserve the winters we love so much. Nitro's President Tommy Delago says that supporting projects financially that will offset those Taking action within your surroundings in order to emissions is the best possible way for us to get as close as possible to a climate neutral product. "We started this approach on boards, and I am proud to say that our snowboards are already 100% climate neutral since the 21/22 season. But we also know that this is still just the beginning of a very long journey." At Bataleon,

> "As my sons grow, they're needing bigger and bigger boards so I'm opening up our cam-rockered park board to the younger punks and smaller women. Our Happy Place board now starts at 135cm and goes up to a 163cm." Gigi Rüf, Slash By GiGi

Danny Kiebert confirms: "we know how to make a high performance snowboard but how can we reduce the impact of making one? This is not just our challenge but this is snowboarding's biggest challenge for the future."

#### PRO-gressive in-HOUSE TECH!

R&D never stops. Always on the run to enhance the end consumer experience on snow, brands are continuously pushing the limits of tech and new material sorcery. For proof, next year brings its very own novelties starting with Head using Graphene for some of their boards. Katharina Acham explains: "graphene is a 2D material that even when an atom thick is one of the strongest and lightest materials on earth. Used zonally in a board it magnifies a board's positive characteristics. Graphene fibres are much stiffer, at a fraction of the weight compared to carbon." For 21/22, Nidecker developed a brand new construction tech and for 22/23 they'll push a derivative of this out to the whole new Snow Surf Collection. "This is called Nidactive and it drives





"We know how to make a high performance snowboard but how can we reduce the impact of making one? This is not just our challenge but this is snowboarding's biggest challenge for the future."

Danny Kiebert, Bataleon

forces directly onto the edges for more precision & a faster response from edge-to-edge", guarantees Antoine Floquet — NDK Product Line Manager. As mentioned above, Ride will use eco wax on 100% of their boards next season. Let's dive into the magical recipe of plant-based wax from WEND: the wax uses Meadowfoam seed oil to replace toxic fluorocarbons, creating a faster and more durable base coating that is fully biodegradable. Let it glide!

Jones began using Koroyd, an ultralight dampening material, in the wood core of two of their snowboards for 21/22. "This featherweight core material proved to be an amazing addition to the cores as it provides incredible chatter reduction at a fraction of the weight of wood - a true win-win for a material. For 22/23 we now have Koroyd in the nose section of the wood core on three models" proudly claims Seth Lightcap. Rome is very excited to be incorporating flax into their boards. Flax is a natural, incredibly versatile, lightweight textile material. Depending on how the flax material is used, it has advanced impact absorption properties or the

ability to create rigidity and strengthen specific regions of a board. Who said a deck is just wood, P-tex, steel edges and epoxy glue?

#### ONE FITS ALL?

A specific plank or a one board quiver? No matter a riders' abilities, everybody has his or her own vision and expectations. Manufacturers are exploring it all and combining programs and very specific sticks. Démir Julià at Verdad comments: "today the focus is more on all mountain boards, carving came back in force and free riding is bigger than freestyle now." Burton continues its focus on freeriding and splitboarding, check out the Family Tree. Under Peter Bauer's influence, Amplid's focus is mainly on directional freeriding and boards for the simple joy of turning.

Telos caters to the premium hardgoods buyer. And although the brand offers a full range that includes entry-level and mid-price-point all mountain models, it specializes in high performance pow and freeride-specific boards. Sean Eno states: "at Weston, as a backcountry company first and foremost, we're focusing our efforts into the freeride/powder category followed by all-mountain". On the all-mountain spectrum, West is providing for everyone, from backcountry to park and street! David Pitschi from YES. introduces us to their new versatile weapon: "we



have a new shape profile coming out that will be a game modern in look and - more importantly - have been changer for the all-mountain rider that will be able to have both, a performance twin and a floaty powder board under his feet."

Not only can some boards do it all, they are also unisex. Drake increases its gender equity proposal with a ... X ... new board. Tao of Drake, which is a unisex model for freestyle/jibbing that will be ridden by the brand's international team, including both men and women. our new model, the Satori, the third board that stems At Good Boards, they value the fact having "a number of perfectly coordinated models for every area. It is important that these boards are also versatile." One board for all, all for one board.

#### YOUTH AGAINST SNOWBOARD ESTABLISHMENT

What was your stoke level when you were a kid or Drake brings the Battle which they've made in collab a teenager discovering what snowboarding was all about? What Burton pioneered a few years ago became what the future of snowboarding will be. During the pandemic Burton saw a surge in demand for on! Endeavor is excited to launch a new shape called youth product throughout categories. For 22/23 they restructured their youth boards/boots/bindings line to make it easier to navigate for dealers and consumers.

Beginners and entry level riders are building our future. Now many brands commit to this segment with complete and wide offerings. At Head, the next progressive sidecuts... in surfing everything is built off generation is very important so they bring kids on snow and invest in the future of snowboarding with its Futureheads program, events dedicated to kids arcs. Lib-Tech has an incredible amount of artist collabs and juniors to offer them a memorable experience on snow. Barrett Christy Cummins presents Roxy's effort: artist interviews on their website when the line drops. "we have had success with our Poppy package, a youth board/binding set up that comes mounted in a sales artist Talysa Klein again. Another artist, Sam Turner floor box in a size range from 80cm – 128cm. Our entry level boards have also been popular with 3 options for few concepts for the 22/23 line. Nitro has collaborated more beginner – intermediate riders." At Rossignol, when it comes to the youth market, the brand has a second graphic option with the Optisym x Eivy. Each Tur variety of true twin models that go from size 80cm shape features unique artwork by the famous Swedish to 150cm and whose shapes and constructions vary according to the target. Rome has seen youth products illustrated. The names of the shapes come from specific and package products growing. Thanks to the influx of new riders. In the meantime, Never Summer's youth fit the surroundings each snowboard is made for. Plenty line has specifically grown to a size range for 80-110 for of offers to choose from. the real little ones. At Slash, Gigi Rüf observes: "As my sons grow, they're needing bigger and bigger boards SHAPE IT UP so I'm opening up our cam-rockered park board to the

updated in width to match our corresponding boot sizes now perfectly." Kemper knows what it means and what it takes so for 22/23, they are offering a Mini Rampage for kids in a 100, 110, 120, and 130. All hail heritage!

Collabs are the sinews of war. Arbor goes deep: "on the product side we are especially stoked on the addition of from Arbor's ongoing collaboration with legend Bryan Iguchi". Statement, remember Melt Down Project, 1995. Burton continues to work with creatives like Scott Lenhardt on its Thinkers Series and Photographer Jesse Dawson on the Feelgood models.

with the Rusty Toothbrush crew and a female freestyle board with an Italian artist who is making his graphics dedicated to women's themes and psychology. Bring it the Free Ranger, designed by Pyzel surf shaper Doug Moreau. Heavy duty, Kemper has partnered with Mötley Crüe and will introduce their collab Freestyle model in 22/23. Pete Saari at Lib-Tech shakes the snowsurf world by working this year with Matt Biolos to redesign all the Lib-Tech x Lost shapes to incorporate surfy hard-carving the bottom turn...Matt's vision for snowboarding is that everything builds of agile turns and hard-carving throughout its collection, you will be able to find all the Colorado-based Never Summer will be using local who they've used since 1996, has also worked on a with its friends at Eivy Clothing to offer a beautiful artist Ragnar Persson where the name of the model is birds that, through their unique features and habitats,

The board manufacturing world is shaking the tree of younger punks and smaller women. Our Happy Place snowboarding by continually bringing new approaches board now starts at 135cm and goes up to a 163cm." and contents. Still, at Nitro, Tommy Delago shares his Nitro put lots of love into the youth segment, says thoughts on evolution: "I believe the hunt for the next Tommy Delago: "all shapes of the Ripper and Spirit crazy shape has slowed down. While this trend injected have been completely redesigned: they are now more a lot of healthy curiousness and open-mindedness into



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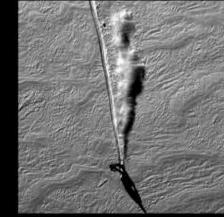


















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now." Where Rossignol blends old and new: "a lot has been done but retro shapes are always great fun to this tech to add - what I call - Dog Ears to the tip bring back with cutting-edge technologies."

white & red aesthetics with minimal branding and graphics while continuing to push the envelope with shapes. At Nidecker, the whole Snow Surf Collection comes out in brand new shapes with state-of-the-art As you might have figured out, ALL brands put blood, details & production finishes.

really helps keep things fun and fresh." Creativity is the snowboard newness. way to go and get lost!

Gigi, with 10+ years of Slash R&D in the archives – not to mention his time with the Burton Uninc crew and then making Volcom boards with Signal & Nidecker has given Slash's impressive ALL MTN freestyle board, the ATV an overhaul for 22/23: "To continue to push the envelope in what's possible with board design, I've updated the tip and tail with 3D technology, which

the market, it's more about functional evolution rather we successfully introduced with our new model, The Vertical two seasons ago. Tried & tested, I've used and tail of the ATV. It's not quite the same amount of scoop as the Vertical's 3D nose, but just enough flick However, Korua continues to stick to their clean black, to improve the handling on snow with added lift and more butterability, while making the board look more interesting too."

sweat and sometimes tears into bringing the new 22/23 snowboard collection to life. Whether focused Tony Sasgen at Never Summer translates shape on simply surviving, saving the planet, bringing experimentation: "combining years of design on shapes progression, or creating excitement, they've got the and profiles into a blend to create something we have job done. Before we will even be printing this article, never seen before. Tim Canaday, one of our owners numerous on-snow tests will have taken place in and board shaper, continues to push the boundaries of Europe, and more are to come. Go on snow, meet what is possible in board design and construction. It THE people behind the brands and get stoked on the

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of this category.

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1 Everyone mindful of Mother

2 Kids are the future

3 Price rises in raw materials

4 Carry-over creeping in

5 Newness still key

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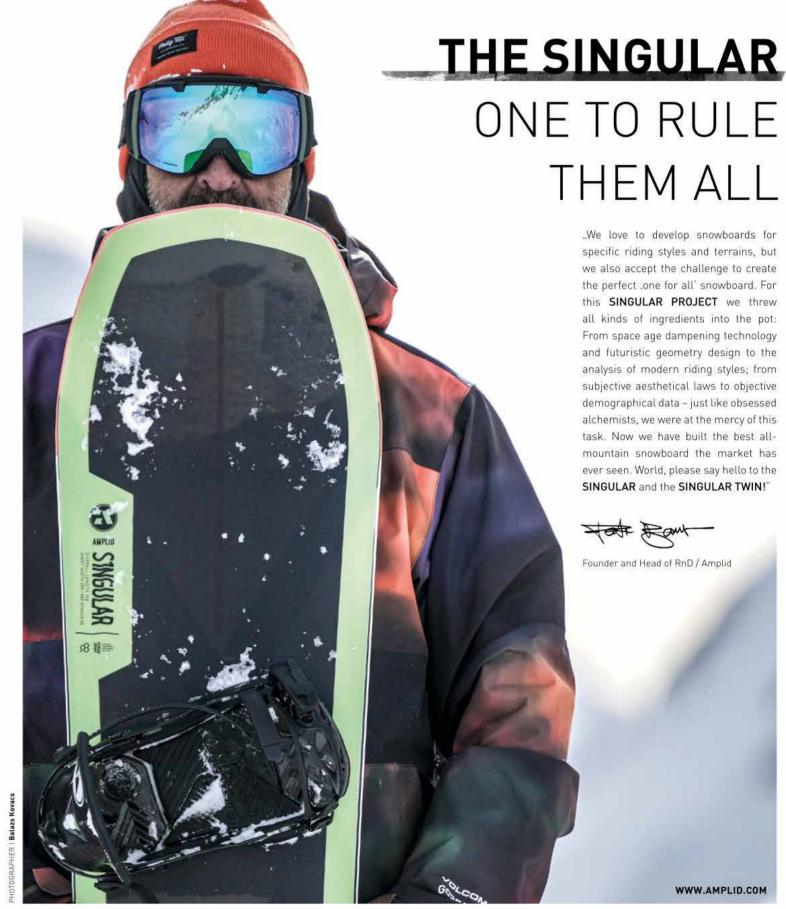
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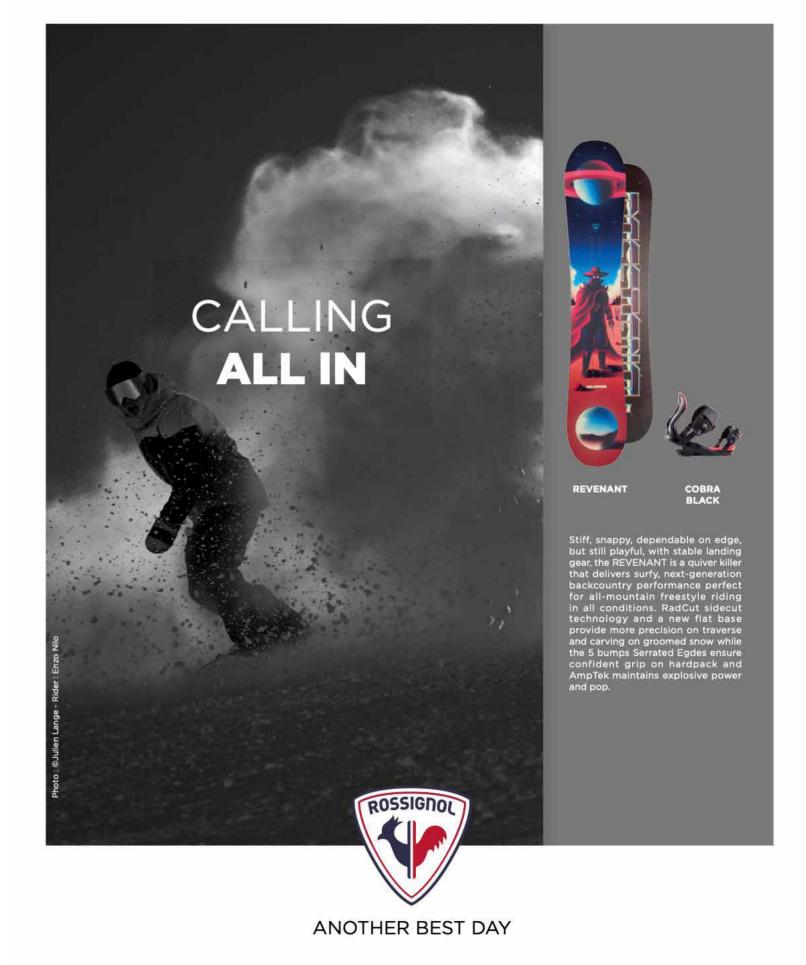
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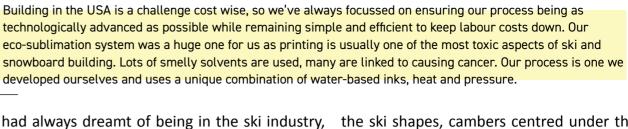














#### **BIG WIG INTERVIEW**

#### PETE SAARI, MERVIN MANUFACTURING

We're stoked to welcome Mervin Manufacturing Co-Founder Pete Saari to the Big Wig chair for issue 110. Based in the Pacific Northwest of America, the company is one of the planet's finest and most ecologically conscious board designers and manufacturers (spanning surf, snow & skate) and Pete talks to us about how he and Co-Founder Mike Olsen met and how they've strived to build a company that they themselves enjoy working for.

#### Pete, tell us about your background in business and snowboarding.

I grew up skateboarding, skiing and surfing in Washington State, which is the NW corner of the USA just below Canada (snowboarding didn't exist when I grew up). There were almost no other surfers around, especially young ones. In my teens, I ran into Mike Olson at the beach with our mutual friend Mervin. At the time. Mike was shaping surfboards for friends and had also been building snowboards, both as shop projects and for friends. Since there were no surf shops around back then, we were all making our own boards as that was the only way to get them.

In my teens, I ran into Mike Olson at the beach with our mutual friend Mervin. At the time, Mike was shaping surfboards for friends and had also been building snowboards, both as shop projects and for friends. Since there were no surf shops around back then, we were all making our own boards as that was the only way to get them.

In about 1984, I started snowboarding with Mike and our tight little crew. We'd both finished the first couple of years of college when Mike decided his snowboards worked a lot better than some of the others he'd checked out; as a result, he wanted to give making snowboards a go as his own business and needed someone to help him.

I had always dreamt of being in the ski industry, the ski shapes, cambers centred under the back so when he offered me a job as his "abrasive foot so you could fully activate them. Those first technician" doing all the dirty steps, I was all in. We both guit college and have been building boards full-time ever since.

#### How did you come to create Mervin?

I can't do this interview without Mike Olson. He's a technical genius. An obsessed creative artist who always thinks outside the box. He was going to make it in this world, no matter what he did. As I mentioned above, he gave me a lifesaving, dream opportunity that I just knew I had to take. We both love making boards and experimenting. Together, we built Mervin.

Mike and I grew up as passionate skiers and were inspired by Bobby Burns (of The Ski) and Mike Burnetto (who hand built skis in the 70s). We were also surrounded by the waterski industry, with people like Connelly and Denny Kidder, who were running their own waterski building

We take all the dust from our core shop and donate it to a local soil company that composts it into soil for residential and commercial use.

business in our region. Boeing Aerospace was our hometown employer, so our region was home to a large composite engineering community. The Kirshner Brothers had their ski company Our production process has evolved from our 'K2' on Vashon Island, so we did have examples R&D prototype system, a system which allows us and heroes who showed us it was possible to be composite board builders. (Ironically we later designed K2's first snowboard.)

energy to board building, step by step, year by early geometry concepts that basically defined

geometry concepts put us at the forefront of bringing snowboarding to resorts: our boards carved amazing pin lines on hardpack when other boards were either powder focussed or skidding around and barely controllable in resort terrain. Our local resort, that had allowed us to ride for years, actually shut down snowboard access when the first Burtons with fins arrived and people couldn't control them.

As we began to have a bit of success, we were able to buy all the tools we needed (or wanted!) to create the ultimate board building "kitchen", something which has become the foundation of what makes Mervin, Mervin. Essentially, we have a toy making factory where we make high performance snowboards. Great boards attract great riders, like our first world champ, Amy Howat. Matt Cummins, an innovative skateminded shredder, was our first Lib team rider and he still designs new boards for us every year. Other team riders have included: Jamie Lynn, Danny Kass, Barrett Christy, Temple, Cannon, Austen Sweetin, Eric Jackson, Phil Hansen, Jacob Wilhelmson, James Stentiford, Travis Rice, Jamie Anderson, Naima Antolin, Forest Bailey, Blake Paul, the Worbingtons and many more amazing shredders over the years.

to easily experiment with all aspects of design. The creative freedom this provides inspires us, and our ExperiMental Division crew, to think outside the box. Any ideas can be built and tested From quitting school and dedicating all our quickly without cost challenges. It's this creative freedom that's attracted some great people to year, it all eventually came together to create Mervin, including myself, our Head Production what is now known as Mervin. Mike had some Engineer Steven Cobb (who had previously worked with Mike), and our athletes to name the modern snowboard as you see it today. Deep a few. Together, we've worked on all kinds of progressive sidecuts, full width tips inspired by fun design projects over the years. Even after 3



decades of board building, there's still nothing more exciting than getting a new shape or design concept on a hill and seeing how it goes.

Manufacturing and just being alive leaves an environmental footprint. We are doing a lot of things to minimise Mervin's environmental impact and hopefully inspire others to do what they can.

#### What are the top 3 achievements in your career?

Just being able to run an idealistic factory/ company that has sticked to its principles for all we would work harder. It's been a lot of fun and a heck of a lot of work keeping things going through various economic climates and eras.

I think what matters to me the most is the and industry folks that we have been fortunate enough to work with over the years. We have such a great team internally, who all excel in their own way and all love to shred. I love them all.

concepts to snowboarding, and oddly enough, this includes introducing camber in the early 80s and, a decade later, the re-introduction of hybrid rocker/camber contours. Magne Traction® serrated edges is another fun concept we were able to introduce to snowboards and skis. This concept is still very much developing.

#### What have been the biggest lessons learnt in the past 18 months?

The past 18 months have been interesting... the first thing I had to relearn is not to panic... study the world around you so you are aware of these years has been something of a miracle. what's going on but also, to remember to live in Mike and I always felt like we would work the moment. One day at a time. If you feel like smarter than anyone else and if that didn't work, the world is crumbling around you, take a deep breath and step outside into nature... usually everything is just fine. In fact, it's lovely. I selfmedicate with skateboarding, biking, surfing, and when the snow falls, sliding on just about every snow toy we can build or find... injecting a little relationships we have with our crew, our riders bit of risk into your life forces you to focus and be in the moment... it becomes mediation. Also, I've learned to take nothing for granted, every day is a gift and so are the people around you (well... most of them;)).

In terms of technical accomplishments, we The pandemic has created so many challenges, have brought quite a few innovative ideas and but I just try and focus on the gifts. I spend half

time with my kids. My schedule is a bit more flexible nowadays, so if the surf is good, I can get at it during lunch and still get all my work done store; we don't build inventory specifically for our seamlessly. As I'm writing this, I've just got in from a snowboarding session with the kids. Before the pandemic, my work schedule was a lot more rigid, so the new flexibility has been magical for me and my family.

#### Could you please talk to us about your predictions for the future of retail and ecommerce in the snowboard industry?

We are really committed to working with retailers. There is something special about a surf or snow shop and getting to talk with knowledgeable and passionate people that love shredding and know their gear. I grew up crawling around on the floor of the original REI in Seattle, back when it was a one-stop mountaineering shop. I've got the smells of boot sealer, sleeping bags and camping gear imprinted on me. I hope the economic climate will always allow good retailers to thrive. Many have a balance between online and brick and mortar. I feel like variations of that kind of hybrid setup is going to be a formula that works going forward. I am a gear nerd, so I like to touch and feel what I buy especially when it comes to boards, boots, bindings etc... I also love the comradery and friendships that build around local shops. The current pandemic climate makes being instore challenging, but this will pass eventually, and we will return to some sort of new normal that will allow us to be together again. Perhaps Omicron will be a blessing in some way and set up a solid herd immunity that facilitates humans gathering again. In the meantime, online is an option that works when we have restrictions in place.

#### it improved customer service for B2B and B2C?

We use Hubsoft. We are a manufacturer; we build to fill prebooked orders which really helps us plan and map our year. We always build a small percentage of sales straight away. These early orders and builds are based on B2B forecasts from our sales team, to give our dealers an insight into what we have available, a shop window if you will. Our dealers always get first look in. The shops that

of the day working from home, so I get more take advantage of this opportunity love it and usually take almost everything we build. If our retailers don't want it, we shift it to our own online online business.

#### What was the thinking behind the diversification into surf and skate?

We love surfing and skating and have been building skate and surf boards for ourselves all our lives. We didn't want to enter those worlds from a business perspective unless we had something exciting to bring to them. Traditional surfboards are so fragile, and the building process is so toxic, that we decided we wanted to build boards with a longer lifespan and were much more environmentally friendly. Developing our surf construction process was a huge undertaking. A process led by our very own Mike Olson.

Making one environmentally friendly board is fairly easy but developing a whole new process that allowed us to build cost-effective boards at our factory in the USA took us 10 years. We're constantly improving our surfboards. The newest version of our board is lighter whilst still being just as strong and environmentally friendly. It's pretty

With our skateboards, we were focussed on improving durability. People break so many skate decks. If you're skating a lot, a traditional deck lasts roughly 2 weeks. Under heavy use, ours will keep their pop for around 3 months. They last a year for me... but then again, I'm an old dude. For the past year, skate has taken a bit of a backseat as we've had to focus on our core business, but skate will always be something we do. Surf gives our business more balance, providing different peak What B2B software are Mervin using and how has season cycles. The best surf is usually in the winter when the snow business is firing, but peak selling seasons for surf is in the spring/summer.

#### Which eco achievements are you most proud of with your production facility?

Mike and I have always been very conscious of making sure Mervin is a safe and healthy place for people to work. We spent most of our lives on the factory floor and wanted it to be a healthy

environment for ourselves, then when we started hiring friends, it became even more important to ensure processes and material decisions were safe.

We started Mervin with passion and ideas but very little money, therefore efficiency with materials was paramount and still remains part of our formula. We try to minimise waste as much as possible. Building in the USA is a challenge cost wise, so we've always focussed on ensuring our process being as technologically advanced as possible while remaining simple and efficient to keep labour costs down. Our eco-sublimation system was a huge one for us as printing is usually one of the most toxic aspects of ski and snowboard building. Lots of smelly solvents are used, many are linked to causing cancer. Our process is one we developed ourselves and uses a unique combination of water-based inks, heat and pressure. Developing this process was a big breakthrough for us which made it possible to have the kind of work environment we wanted, from the start of the building process to the end.

Our 'Sawdust to Soil' wood dust recycling program is a fun one. We take all the dust from our core shop and donate it to a local soil company that composts it into soil for residential and commercial use. On the surf side of business, our entire process is pretty amazing; it's completely unique and has many environmental components. The first of which is a longer board life, however it's the materials and building process that's the exciting part. We use a plant-based resin, our foam uses a non-ozone depleting blowing agent, we have eliminated most of the sanding steps and our process radically minimises any exposure to resin and uses no solvents. We compact all of our foam dust and are able to send it back to our core manufacturer to make more blanks.

#### How does a snowboard company sustainably grow year on year?

That's an interesting question. Manufacturing and just being alive leaves an environmental footprint. We are doing a lot of things to minimise Mervin's environmental impact and hopefully inspire others to do what they can. Patagonia is one of

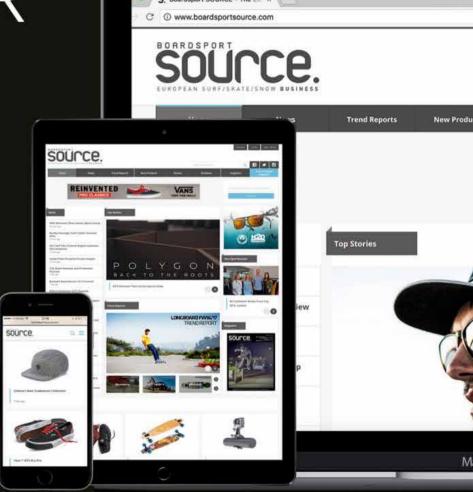


the companies that inspired us. There is a certain point where our factory capacity maxes out, from which we will have to make some decisions on scale. For now, we have diversified into surf and tried to bring something environmentally significant to that world. There are still some steps in our snowboard building process that we can improve on. We have produced zero hazardous waste for years and our next goal is to reach zero waste being dumped in landfill, instead, we aim to have all of our waste either recycled, composted or made into other products downstream. There are some front-end costs, in both time and money, that we need to work through, but overall, this goal is another exciting step for us. I think the answer is always going to be that the bigger you are, the larger environmental footprint you have on the planet... but we are constantly working to be better and improve our little toy factory. §

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What a strange situation, with the pandemic in its umpteenth wave at the start of 2022, many sectors are

suffering from a lack of workforce due to quarantines but retail commerce seems to be holding up pretty well.

Shops that aren't in resorts are really happy with their autumn and start to winter, visitation numbers are good and sales are going well. It's hard to explain but it seems as though your average Swiss person at this point in the pandemic still has good buying power and less opportunities and different ways to spend it. The limited access to culture, restaurants and indoor leisure in general has led people to turn towards outdoor activities and this seems to be confirmed by retailers and rental shops active in winter sports who seem very satisfied with their 2021 end of year period. There's a guick transition when completing purchases, customers are less calculating and really eager, they need their equipment right away and the price matters less than before.

For resorts, we don't quite have enough perspective but for sure the big tourist destinations that attract foreigners are suffering from the travel restrictions; the Brits, the Belgians and the Dutch are lacking and that's being felt. Will local tourism be enough to make up for this shortfall? Probably not. Well, let's not make any hasty judgements because the season is still young.

The splitboard market continues to grow and when you analyse the sales you realise that the majority of them last season and up to now this season were made by newcomers, a whole segment wanting to start splitboard touring. Although the statistics aren't infallible, we can say that the majority of splitboards sold with bindings are destined for

newcomers to the sport. According to quite a lot of the shops we asked, board sales that did not include bindings (assuming therefore that they already had an old board bought elsewhere) was very rare, only 15% of cases, and most wanted to buy the complete set up. This is interesting and a good sign because this means that the sector is still growing and that it hasn't reached its peak.

Having said that, the problem is that the quantity of bindings dedicated to this activity is very limited, the product has become a rare commodity and it's now certain that there are way more splitboards on the market than bindings for them. This could potentially make sales nosedive at the start of 2022 because if people are looking for complete set ups then the solo boards are going to just stay on the racks because of a lack of bindings. No problem, they'll sell next year, they'll say.

Steve DeCrousaz from Altmann Sport in Vevey says that he's done some good trade and sold well but in memory he has never had so much to do in terms of assembling products that were ordered online. At SB Sport in Gland, the weeks leading up to the end of year holidays were also intense and Yan Bosson has noticed that sales and discussions with customers have changed, these days there are certain products that are so hard to get that the game of stock availability and restock waiting times has completely changed. This makes the customer complete the purchase quicker and the shop anticipate more. From now on there's no more presuming that there will always be exactly what you need at a certain supplier or another. This provides a certain motivation to retailers to make their orders for next winter as soon as possible in order to ensure delivery and good trade in autumn.

**Fabien Grisel** 



#### The 30th Anniversary "TRIPLE DECADE"

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Born in 1992, "FLUX" was created with the concept of providing the "very best snowboard bindings for Japanese feer." It was the pursuit of craftsmanship that would convince the Japanese snowboard community and bring about product quality of the highest caliber. From the beginning, FLUX has added a variety of new functions, new technology and innovative ideas from a global perspective.

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Flux continues soaring to even further heights, impressing all snowboarders allowing them to make their dreams a reality.

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#### **GOGGLES 2022/23**

Goggles have been improving technically at speed over recent years. The result is highly educated consumers. They know what they want and are ready to spend more on brands that meet their needs. By Rocio Enriquez.



Goggle users expect improved visibility, wearing comfort and good looks. Efforts in sustainability are rewarded.

"We expect growth from our new bio-based and recycled collection" Maarten van der Laan, Aphex

coupled with quick adjustment to light technology is paramount. conditions. Ventilation avoids fogging. "Customers expect the best vision Toric lenses have proved appealing." possible in any condition", says Alexis They combine great peripheral vision Ratajczak from Spy+. To be able to with a sleek look. Double lenses interpret the slope correctly secures minimise spaces in between, avoiding enjoyment and safety. Customers distortion issues. Photochromic lenses seek the largest field of vision possible are a solution to varying light conditions,



We created a lens with color so vivid and details so sharp, it will not only boost your mood, it will redefine how you see the world. A truly euphoric visual experience. We call it #APPY BOOST.















Comfort relies on a good fit. The goggle needs to sit steadily but softly on the face. Seamless integration with the rider's helmet and face mask is crucial. Weight is also important, especially for splitboarders for whom every gram carried makes a difference.

The popularity in backcountry riding has increased the eco awareness. Global warming becomes a concern when you like playing in virgin snow. Customers pay more attention to how their goggles are made. Brands are responding with new sustainable materials. Bio-based plastic frames, recycled fabric straps, and carton packaging are amongst the new solutions. "We expect growth from our new bio-based and recycled collection", says Maarten van der Laan from Aphex.

There seems to be two main style trends. There is a demand for frameless, thin designs with toric lenses. These speak of premium tech and high performance. There is also a nostalgia for the freestyle scene of the 90's and 00's. This is driving a demand for framed cylindrical lenses.

"Due to the uncertainties the pandemic brings, people search for products that can be used for several years" Lydia Hofer, Red Bull Spect.

Innovation has resulted in a wide offer of goggles. Every customer is likely to find the goggle that meets their needs while suiting their budget. Let's take a look at who is doing what.



#### **TECHNOLOGY**

Lens technology has claimed a lot of R&D efforts. Most brands are offering their own version of high-definition lens with expanded field of vision. Toric lenses have secured their spot in the lines. The slight vertical axis curve provides a wider field of vision than cylindrical lenses, with less bulk than spherical ones. Rossignol offers several toric styles. Anon's M4S is offered with a cylindrical and toric option. Bollé's version is the Torus. CéBé introduces their first toric style called The Horizon. There are other technologies to explore. Anon's "Perceive" range offers high definition and true colour contrast with a protective coating that keeps the lens clear. Aphex is pushing their V+ lenses. Giro's EXV+ technology offers enhanced peripheral

Head has developed their own lens dye systems, we find as many solutions formula called 5K. "It focuses on specific as brands out there. Anon offers two wavelengths of the visual light spectrum, systems, Magna-Tech and M-Fusion. CéBé controlling brightness, colour brilliance developed their own Swipe technology. and contrast", explains Katharina Acham. Their double lens styles have the inner offer maximized ventilation, or completely lens laminated directly onto the outer to make switching lenses easy", explains one. This eliminates the space between Adélie Gaillard from CéBé. Dragon has them, increasing the field of vision in 15%. introduced their Switflock magnetic lens Red Bull Spect's Pano Tech also laminates changing system. It features magnetic the double lenses. Salomon's Sigma contact points coupled with a one-sided Photo Lens enhances contrast, reduces release lever that makes the changing eye fatigue, and adjusts the brightness secure and quick. Giro's system is made according to conditions. Smith's Birdseve of pressure snaps and magnets. Melon technology increases the field of vision adds their EasyMag system to their Akira by 25%. Spy+ is expanding the use of model. Poc's new Zanula model makes their Happy lenses. They block out the their toric lenses interchangeable. Red damaging sun rays and let the beneficial Bull Spect offers the Magnetron system ones in. These enhance colour contrast with a mirrored good weather lens and and boost the user's mood and alertness. a contrast enhancing bad weather one. Poc has added their Clarity high contrast Rossignol's Magne-Click technology uses lens technology to the toric lenses of magnets and small clips to secure the their Zonula goggle. Rossignol, Melon and lens on the frame. Roxy has added the Spektrum rely on Zeiss Sonar technology. It maximises the light transmitted and Rosewood model. Salomon has spent eliminates the blue light effect. Spektrum two years developing their Magnetic has released their own BIOptic lens. It is Interchangeable lens. Their system uses made of two layers of cellulose acetate sixteen magnets, and it can be removed and a polarised sheet in between.

Adaptability to varying light conditions Good ventilation secures no fogging up tone between a category S1 to a category

vision. Their Vivid lens enhances contrast. S3 as needed. As for easy lens swapping "It allows the lens to be slid up a little to Speed Connect magnet system to their with gloves on.

sits at the top of demands. The two main of the goggles. Bollé optimises inner solutions are photochromic lenses and airflow of their Mammoth Heritage with easy lens swapping systems. TSG has a symmetrical ventilation. Quiksilver has added photochromic lenses to their line. added an Aeroprene filter mesh fabric Spektrum is having their photochromic to their Switchback model, increasing lenses injected rather than coated. breathability. Head's Dynamic Ventilation They perform better and last longer. System allows air into the goggle from Quiksilver's NXT lens claims to be the three sides. According to Spektrum, their fastest photochromic lens in the market. Kyohuo inner lenses have 150% better fog Head's photochromic lens adapts the management than the industry standard.

Frameless designs are pushing their way. Fit is an area of constant tweaking. forward. The lighter weight is a plus for Anon's new M4S features a unisex frame backcountry riders. They have improved design. This allows the goggle to fit field of vision and a cleaner, more modern better on small and medium faces. Head look. Dirty Dog, Rossignol, and Red Bull Spect offer several frameless styles. snug fit when worn with a helmet. Bollé's Dragon's new R1 retains the timeless Mammoth Heritage is equipped with signature teardrop silhouette without articulated outriggers for a perfect fit a frame. Head's new F-LYT also discards with your helmet. Their Blanca Heritage the frame, gluing the lens directly to style has triple density foam, making it the foam. Frames are not something of the past, though. Salomon is making combines their hinge-style strap with their frames with flexible TPU, using the three-density foam too. This makes the same technique as their ski boots. The goggle conform to the rider's head. For most noteworthy innovation in frame tech is the use of bio-based materials. Several brands have joined this push for technology. Mask compatibility is also sustainability. Aphex, Spektrum and Bollé important. Anon relies on their patented offer bio-based frames combined with MFI system that magnetically connects recycled fabric straps. "We introduce our the goggle to the facemask. React for Good campaign for the first time in winter sports", announces Dawne LOOKS Warren from Bollé. Poc is trying their There are two predominant trends. new bio-based frame on their Zanula Frameless construction and toric lenses model. Quiksilver and Roxy use BIO TPU offer a modern, clean, and high-tech injections in their frames. They also use look. Loud, framed styles are a throwback no varnish or painting, tinting the raw to the 90's and 00's. "It's a kind of MX material directly. Salomon uses recycled inspired type of goggle like we saw in core TPU in their frames. They combine it with freestylers in the early days", says Darius recycled and bio-based nylons for straps Heristchian from Giro. Modern designs and ventilation mesh. Lenses have gone gravitate towards neutral colours that eco too. Spektrum's BIOptic lens, the first have a long life. "Due to the uncertainties bio-based lens in the market, is made the pandemic brings, people search for with cellulose acetate. Sustainability is sought in packaging and shipping years", says Lydia Hofer from Red Bull too. Smith and Aphex have ditched Spect. Aphex has opted for natural colours plastic from their packaging. Smith has for their line. Spektrum brings in new the partnered with Gogglesoc® to include a 1ce Blue and Mountain Rose colours. lens protector made of recycled water bottles in every model. Melon has moved their production to Italy, securing quality and less carbon footprint.

places the straps on the front, assuring a easier to adjust to any face size. Rossignol prescription glasses wearers, Dragon and Rossignol offer OTG (Over the Glasses)

products that can be used for several Smith has developed terrain colours aimed at creating an inclusive, gender-neutral line. Red Bull Spect has calmer colours on headbands and lenses, while keeping

a focus on Red Bull's classic black, white, There are many brand collaborations to and silver. Heritage styles are louder, speak of. Spy+ has developed a collection Bollé has created a capsule collection that with San Diego based collective Club serves their Torus, Mammoth and Blanca Midnite. Melon has invited Eivy to in a fun 90's vibe look. Quiksilver offers a develop a special edition of their capsule print on their Switchback, to tie Alleycat goggle. Giro carries over their in with their "Heritage" outerwear range. collaboration with POW. They also have a Their Browdy style also feeds from colours kid's line developed with Namuk clothing and logos from archives. Brands are and a collaboration with Fender guitars. careful to link their colours to their textile CéBé celebrates their third anniversary or helmets range.

Markus Keller will stamp his style on the brand. Smith has a few collaborations: two TSG models. Spy+ signature names they have partnered with Crayola to feature Chris Rasman, Eric Jackson, Trevor develop adult and junior models, they Kennison and Tom Wallisch. Smith works continue their five-year-long partnership with Zeb Powell, Broolyn Bell, Taylor with The North Face, they have a custom Lundqvist and Connor Ryan. Quiksilver Smith x VSSL canister, and they round up offers a version of their Switchback their collaborations with a C.R. Johnson and Browdy goggles signed by Austen Memorial line in partnership with High Sweetin. Dragon is very proud of their Fives Foundation. new signature model done with Dennis Ratalner. The Olympics are present in some designs too; Salomon has created a specific collection for the Olympics that brands, especially the ones that sell their athletes will wear and CéBé has mostly in Europe. The general immediate created a uniform look for their athletes response has been to hold back new based on Acid Lime and Black.

snow goggles. Anon has teamed up with haven't had the chance to test their visual artist Shantell Martin. This capsule sales performance yet. The challenging collection includes top performance situation in production and shipping has products as well as newly launched ones. made many brands change their cycles. Giro has worked with San Francisco Pre-orders are requested earlier. Many based artist Mad Alchemy, adding some brands are stocking up to enable smooth extravaganza to the graphics. Smith features in-season re-orders. Efforts have been graphic designer Aaron Draplin's artwork on individualised to suit customers' needs in two models. Spy+ has partnered with the these trying times. The results have been talented illustrator, tattoo artist and author on-time FW22 deliveries and a good from El Salvador, So Lazo, who'll sign one planning for FW23. adult goggle and one snow item for kids.

with Superdry and the collaboration features unique graphics that bring out Athlete signature styles are very present. the typical Bristish/Japanese flavour of

#### **RETAILER SUPPORT**

Resort closures last year impacted many launches and carry over references. This helps retailers fill up gaps in stock. They're A few artists are offering their rendition of also avoiding discounting products that



"Customers are much more aware of the various attributes that make up a good goggle"

Damian Phillips, POC

There are marketing efforts to support retail sales. "Customers are much more aware of the various attributes that make up a good goggle", says Damian Phillips of Poc. The more educated training of retail staff is. CéBé, Dirty Dog, Dragon and Smith have dedicated training programmes for their in-store teams. Salomon offers demo tools for their Custom ID Fit and Sigma Lens technology. They also have a full range of POP materials that highlight and explain key products. Red Bull Spect in depth brand previews of this category.

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that customers in research mode can come across. They also offer high quality content about features that the shops can use. Stock management is addressed too. Melon has developed a clever restocking system that lowers the low stock risk for the shop. Red Bull Spect have set up a B2B eCommerce portal to order easily. Aphex offers the possibility of ordering only frames, lenses, or straps when they need a replacement. All these efforts are combined with POP displays, key visuals in media and a good team of ambassadors. ©

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Increase use of toric lenses
- 2 Easy lens swap magnetic systems
- 2 Lasy tens swap magnetic systems
- 3 Popularity of frameless designs
- 4 Retro trend of 90's core freestyling scene.
- 5 Athletes, clothing brands and artists collaborations

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#### GOGGLES 2022/23

#### PICTORIAL®



Airblaster - Pill Air



Airblaster - Clipless Air Goggle

Anon - WM3



Airblaster - Awesome Co



Anon - M4





Dragon - PXV Ranalter

Giro - Method



Electric - The Roteck

Dragon - R1 OTG Black Pearl

Head - Contex



Giro - Contour

Dragon - RVX Mag OTG

Head - F-LYT



Giro - Ella

Electric - The Hex

Head - Magnify



Anon - M4S

Aphex - XPR



AZR - Galaxy



Aphex - STYX

AZR - Slalom



Aphex - XPR Black

AZR - Urion



Melon - Akira



Melon - Jackson



Melon - Parker



Oakly - Flight Deck M



Bliz - Flow



Bliz - Nova Nano



Bliz - Split Nano



Bolle - Blanca



Oakley - Flight Tracker L Horgmo



Oakley - McMorris LineMiner L



Poc - Fovea



Poc - Opsin



Bolle - Eco Blanca



Bolle - Mammoth



Cebe - Horizon



Cebe - Icone





Quiksilver - Browdy



Quiksilver - Greenwood



Quiksilver - Switchback



Cebe - Slider



Dirty Dog - Mutant 2.0



Dirty Dog - Mutant Legacy



Dirty Dog - Mutant Prophecy



Red Bull Spect - Magnetron



Red Bull Spect - Soar



Red Bull Spect - Solo



Roxy - erjtg 03184

69



Roxy - erjtg 3197



Roxy - erjtg



Rossignol - Maverick Sonar



Rossignol - Magne'lens



Rossignol - Maverick Sonar



Salomon - Aksium 2



Salomon - GHO



Salomon - Radium



Smith - 4D Mag S



Smith - Sequence OTG



Smith - Squad S



Spectrum - Helags Summit



Spectrum - Huala



Spectrum - Ostra Bio Plus



Spy - Legacy



Spy - Marauder Elite



Spy - Raider



TSG - Expect 2



TSG - Goggel-four s



TSG - Goggel-four



Volcom - The Footprints



Volcom - The Odyssey



Volcom - The Yae



Von Zipper - Hana Beaman Cleaver



Von Zipper - John Jackson Capsule



Von Zipper - Kevin Jones Mach

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

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#### **FRANCE**

GERMANY ITALY **SWISS** PORTUGAL SPAIN UK

One, two, three, four, five waves...After two years of pandemic, the terms "contact case", "positive" and "new variant" are now part of everyday parlance here in France, much like they are in

the rest of the world. But after the emergence of Delta then Omicron, are we dealing with the same epidemic as we were at the start 2 years ago? Since the end of December 2021, the fifth wave of Covid-19 this winter 21/22 has smashed previous infection records on a daily basis in France with almost 180,000 new cases recorded at the end of December and 330,000 at the start of January. This easily surpassed the figures in the second wave that, at its peak in November 2020, had around 50,000 new cases each day. The difference in figures is in part down to an increase in testing: up to one million per day in France, compared to just half that in May 2020. At the start of this year, the rate of positive tests is pushing 16%, higher than that of November 2020's infection peak. We can be thankful though that the rate of hospitalisations is not following the same curve as the infection rate. According to the World Health Organisation, this is the result of a more contagious but less severe Omicron variant. While the fifth wave of Covid-19 might - once again - make the French economy stall, Banque de France are taking a reassuring view on 2022. According to the financial institution, the French economy should have repaired the damage caused by the pandemic to reach its pre-crisis cruising speed by 2024.

This return to pre-crisis level growth is also being brought on by more sustained household consumption with people starting to dip into their savings, to the order of 170 billion euros racked up throughout the pandemic, again according to Banque de France. There are also large investments to come from the businesses that have maintained their profits during the health

crisis. These investments may translate into a rise in employment (with an unemployment rate of around 7.9% in 2022) as well as an increase in employee spending power (with a rise in salaries?). These predictions remain uncertain and if additional health restrictions come into effect in the first guarter of 2022 it would lead to a weaker rate of growth next year in France, only to catch up again in 2023. It must be said though, problems with supply and recruitment could well take the shine off France's economic success if they last longer than expected. It should also be said that neither of these two likely scenarios would reduce the nation's debt. The inflation rise in recent months has become the government's main concern, multiplying benefits for low-income households in the form of energy cheques, inflation indemnity and gas price freezes. Banque de France is foreseeing two phases following each other: after a peak of 3.5% for the harmonised inflation rate at the end of 2021, this will stay above 2% for a large part of 2022 before retreating to around 1.5% in 2024.

So how did our industry fare at the end of 2021 and how is it looking at the start of the new year 2022? When it comes to ski resorts, the start of winter 21/22 seems incomparable to last year. From Chambéry La Ravoire in the Alps, Christophe Finaz, Director of Montaz, a large shop with 25 staff, tells us: "Visitation numbers were excellent compared to 2019 and 2020 due to the snowy scenes since the start of December and a real eagerness for outdoor sports." And this is already reflected in the figures, adds Christophe: "We are already up by 20% in turnover compared to last year which was already good." It's a similar story in the Pyrenees at SLIDEWAYZ in Soldeu where shop owner Merlin Balfour confirms that: "We are a Snowboard shop at the foot of the pistes with 6 employees and the start of this season has been excellent," before adding: "Last year was quite strange with the ski lifts closing but this year we are up by 90% on visitation numbers and nearly 80% on billing. Compared to a normal year we are up 30% overall so it's super positive."

The weather conditions seem to have been pretty favourable for mountain shops, as confirmed by Christophe from Montaz: "the weather is by far the coastal shops, especially in the off season. We had most important factor, beyond economic conjecture. The end of November and start of December were in the shop." cold with decent snowfalls and that was reflected in our figures." It's the same story in the Pyrenees at When it comes to product, again, much like last year SLIDEWAYZ where Merlin confirms that: "the early season snow and the good weather were favourable for sales."

When it comes to product, technical equipment seems to have had good rates of sale and much like last year touring gear and especially splitboarding seems to be really popular. Christophe tells us: "Splitboards are still highly sought after products this season and once again we don't have enough supply for customers."

At street shops and especially skate shops, it's a little bit more of a mixed bag. At XOXO in Marseille, Francis del Rosario says that: "We had an excellent year in 2020 with strong interest in skateboarding, especially with its debut in the Olympic Games." However, he does go on to explain that: "visitation numbers were weaker during the end of year holidays compared to last year. The rise in Covid case numbers had a part to play in turnover and visitor numbers." While the weather in the mountains was beneficial because of its snowfalls, it wasn't from Slideways tells us: "there hasn't been any price necessarily so good elsewhere, Francis tells us: "The weather was pretty dreary for the end of year holidays with quite a lot of wind and rain and with our geographical location just next to the famous Marseille bowl, it was significantly detrimental to inshop visitor numbers."

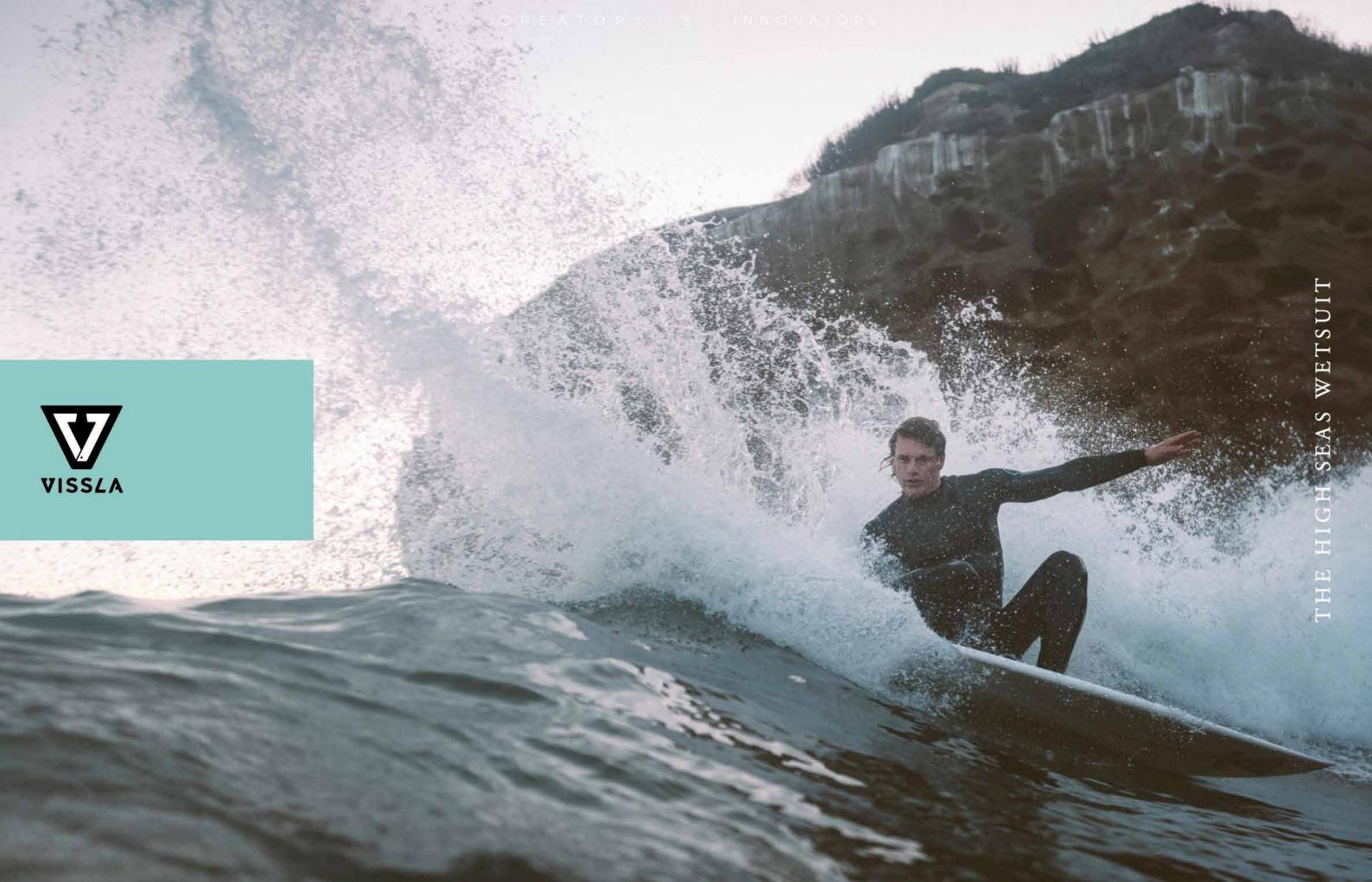
At coastal, surf orientated shops, the outcome has been pretty positive as explained by Xavier Aufray, Shop Manager at ATS Surf Shop in Plouharnel, Brittany: "the start of winter went relatively well with strong visitation numbers in autumn and winter," but on the other hand: "we slowed down a bit during the holiday season which is normally quite BENOIT BRECQ good for us," explaining that: "it's undoubtedly due to the health situation." On the Atlantic coast the

conditions were excellent Xavier tells us: "weather conditions are a big factor in bringing people into superb wave conditions so we saw a lot of customers

neoprene has been under attack this winter. Xavier describes that: "neoprenes naturally sold really well, even in spite of the delays experienced by almost all brands." He adds: "foam boards are still really popular and now it's all year round, even in winter."

Finally, there were two topics that regularly came up in conversation. The first topic already affected a large part of 2021 and seems to be an issue this winter 21/22 once again: supply and delivery delays. Xavier from ATS Surf Shop says: "The COVID crisis deeply affecting ordering schedules, causing delivery delays due to high demands and shortages of raw materials looks set to continue for 2022." He adds: "We are unfortunately going to have to contend with and manage customers' impatience like we did in 2021." This is a sentiment shared by Christophe at Montaz: "There are still delays to deliveries, we're still waiting for products that were supposed to be for October 2021." The second preoccupation is inflation on products for 2022 and although this looks to be marginal for winter 21/22, as Merlin hike at the start of this winter," Christophe does then add that: "Price increases will be felt from 2022 onwards." This point may well prove significant throughout the year to come.

The start of the 21/22 winter has therefore gone pretty well for our industry but although the outlook seems to be positive, the current health situation is still concerning and unstable. Also, the heralded inflation rise constitutes another unknown factor for 2022 to deal with. Watch this space...



#### RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# WETSUITS FW 22/23

It has become the black gold of the boardsports market: neoprene is hot property in shops and online, to the point where stocks are almost out. For fall-winter 2022/23 the mission remains clear: be warm, flexible and durable. Let's see if the recipes have changed at all... An overview of next winter's wetsuit range by David Bianic.



After two years marked by COVID-related caution in the neoprene category, the clouds still haven't cleared when you look ahead to winter 2022-23. However, brands are no longer happy with a passive attitude and have decided to move forward. "We are the only brand owning our own R&D lab and manufacturing facilities," says Léa new technology and refreshing the range ever.

"We are the only brand owning our own R&D lab and manufacturing facilities. Which allowed us to keep launching new technology and refreshing the range each season." Léa Duquay, Rip Curl

each season". It's a similar story from Valerie Hill, Head of Global Swimsuit and Wetsuit Product at Roxy, announcing a total Duquay, Assistant Product Manager at Rip overhaul of their collections: new liners, Curl. "Which allowed us to keep launching recycling, warmer, softer and stretchier than

Over the years, the demand for tackling are quite forthcoming about it, announcing winter surfing has also increased in Europe an average increase to the order of 3%. "If the hooded Torch FX 5/4 is selling well in quality of their wetsuits", warns Julien from the southwest of England while the 6/4 is Manera. more appealing in the Northeast, Scotland

Designer at the British brand Alder. The Neoprene is not the only criteria of media trend for cold water surfing has quality in a wetsuit, everyone knows destroyed the aesthetic barrier around that, but it's still a powerful sales hood wearing and "Customers understand argument. Rip Curl are stressing that

"If some brands manage to keep the same pricing in FW23 it means they don't have a healthy business or they decreased the quality of their wetsuits" Julien Salles, Manera

and especially their head/ears", confirms assures Product Manager Tom Copsey. Julien Salles, Brand Manager at Manera.

So, there are two different 5/3s that meet Japanese slightly different needs, says Marin Mauriac (limestone) is a mark of luxury and from Söoruz: "It would be so easy to have second skin sensation, on offer at Saintjust one winter model...but from Norway to Jacques Wetsuits and Zion for example. southern Spain, the requirements are just not

water surfing

depths of a long, cold Tasmania winter".

and all brands are noticing a rise in sales some brands manage to keep the same on their hooded 4/3s and 5/3s, a once-pricing in FW23 it means they don't have shunned product. "You can clearly see that a healthy business or they decreased the

#### WETSUITS FW22/23: NEOPRENE

and Ireland", says John Westlake, Wetsuit Fancy a little warm up stretch? in their Heatseeker they are replacing E6 neoprene with E7, which has 20% more stretch and less weight but just as warm as the E6. Another wetsuit giant, O'Neill are counting on the fourth generation of Technobutter (TB4) neoprene that "incorporates graphene the importance of protecting extremities, to help keep you warmer for longer",

> Another label that speaks to surfers, Yamamoto neoprene

Oysterprene neoprene composed of oyster shell limestone continues to the same." Claiming one's affiliation to cold gain ground, now utilised by Adelio, Roxy, Alder (Luxe FX), C-skins (Halo has even become a marketing pitch, at Zion X) and still at Söoruz who developed Wetsuits for example, designed "in the technology. As for Eicoprene from Picture Organic Clothing (a mix of limestone and recycled rubber from Before going deeper into what's new for used tyres), it's getting an upgrade to FW22/23, let's address the elephant in become Flexskin, still just as stretchy the room: yes, you should count on the but more durable. Vissla presents their inevitability of next season's public price new I Foam, a neoprene made from increases because of the exorbitant costs Japanese limestone, recycled oyster of raw materials and transport, that is to shells, scrap rubber and eco carbon say an invoice which has tripled reports black. The use of Yulex remains niche the Hurley Europe staff. At Picture, they but has gained some converts under



"You can clearly see that the hooded Torch FX 5/4 is selling well in the southwest of England while the 6/4 is more appealing in the Northeast, Scotland and Ireland," John Westlake, Alder

thinking of Oxbow who are combining free AquaATM glue.

#### **WETSUITS FW22/23: LINERS**

Together with neoprene foam, they form a duo to determine the flex/durability ratio of a wetsuit and they boost the heat-retaining properties like a third The performance of these liners is such Rip Curl are citing the betterment of Seas Comp model. their Flash Lining, the Flex Energy liners

that "have the exact same properties as the flash lining plus an added warmth factor coming from friction.", explains Léa Duquay, making a gain of 1° to 2°C according to your activity level. We'll the impetus of Patagonia: here we're take all we can get! Comfort-wise, the likes of Yeti Wool linings, as offered at it with recycled materials and solvent- Zion, makes for an outstanding plush feel. For their super cold water wetsuits - the North Seas -, Vissla extends their Fever Fiber thermal lining "top to bottom", says Adrian Waller: a wetsuit within a wetsuit so to say.

dose of Pfizer serum. The basic idea is that you can now go for thinner wetsuits, to trap the air and drain water, like the indicates Phil Bridges from Dakine, cosy FDL (Fast Dry Lining) and Fireline highlighting their Hexotherm2 on their liners from Alder do. On their more Cyclone 5/4 hooded models. Another high-end models, O'Neill are introducing piece of good news is the trickledown a TBX-4 Firewall liner, a top dog in effect of these thermal lining to Hurley's terms of warmth/flex. For their part, entry level models, as well as Vissla's 7



RUSSELL BIERKE | BLUEPRINT CHEST ZIP FULL DESIGNED IN SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA, SINCE 1952



On the outside, the so-called "liquid skin" liners are also enjoying success, like on is now a top priority. This can be done in the Dark Matter from C-Skins, adding only a really thin layer of material around the torso to negate the wind chill effect, and with no extra stitching.

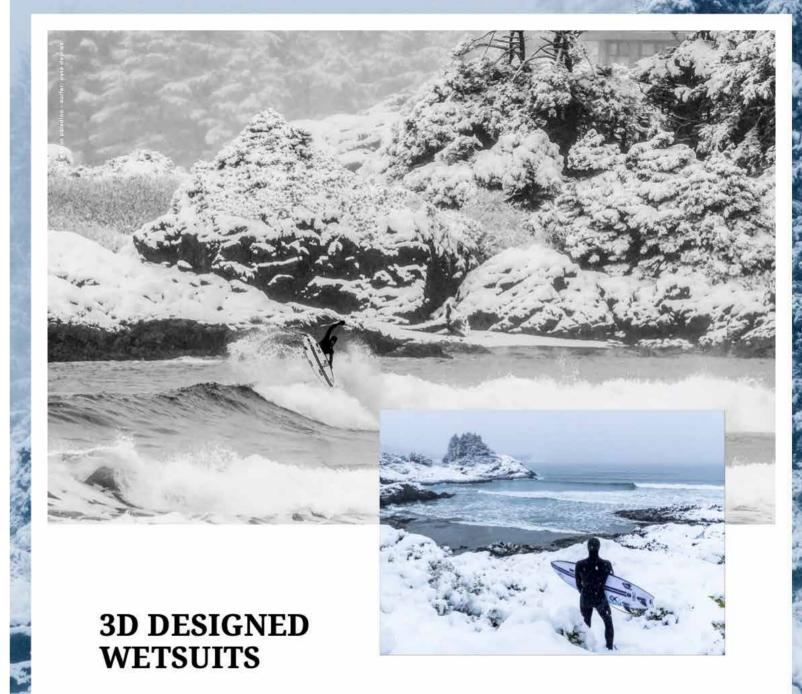
# **AND FIT**

The different panels that combine to make a wetsuit and their assembly have long-since been segmented into three categories: flatlock (flat stitch, entry-level), GBS (glued blind stitched) in the mid range fabrication "It represents a lot of work and and GBS taped seams (more durable, more waterproof) for premium models. Nowadays we can see a "trickle down" effect with the use of GBS featuring more and more on lower range models. These customers in shop". Others prefer the more lower categories have also been enriched by stitchless versions like the Pyscho tech solution. At Quiksilver, the Highline Tech from O'Neill or the Wired+ 6/5 from C-Skins, often with the bonus of having a "liquid seam", a taped joint covering the "non stitches".

stretch to provide a good fit before noticing that this pressure exerted on the material to see".

affected its longevity. So changing this really simple ways sometimes: "In terms of fit and material, we've revised the crotch area on all our men's styles to reduce the likelihood of leaks and increase the suits longevity", explains John Westlake, Wetsuit WETSUITS FW22/23: CONSTRUCTIONS Designer at Alder. But more and more brands are using 3D in the design phase to get as close as possible to a second skin fit. We're thinking here about Manera who use a computer programme that can then go on to produce 2D templates for it's not something you can easily notice in the shop, but we're all about how you feel in the water instead of using expensive marketing gimmicks to impress the old-school, handmade option to the high-Pro model is assembled by hand in Japan using only five panels.

"It is also crucial to work on cut and the placement of reinforcements," Maurin Moreover, for a long time brands relied on from Söoruz reminds us, even though "these details are often hard for customers





When the industry standard is to develop 2D patterns and try to fit it on a 3D body, we decided to break new ground and take the opposite direction. We use computer design to model good-fitted wetsuits in 3D, then we employ an innovative software that converts it into a precise 2D pattern for the factory. It creates a natural, second-skin fit that makes the MANERA wetsuits stand out.

Learn more on manera.com





#### WETSUITS FW22/23: FINISH AND DETAILS

You do know where the devil is don't you? Trevelyan explains that they have lined the The details when it comes to finish are anything but details - they are capable of elevating an OK wetsuit to an excellent one. The designers have really used their grey matter for FW22/23. Let's start with the Finally, it's difficult to talk about wetsuits zips (where front entry is still popular). At Adelio, Brett Vergou explains to us that they have added a new double-entry to their chest zips, "for those that like a centred, even feel". At Roxy, this zip zone has been redesigned "to avoid unnecessary water entries and rashes". And Stan Bresson from Saint-Jacques reveals that backzip models are more popular amongst the female surf population, to the point of almost selling

out. At Circle One, Business Director James panels on the shoulders with nylon, "so less susceptible to stretch on the hanger (when drying or storing the suit)". Good idea.

for cold water without mentioning their obvious accessories: hoods, gloves and booties. Solite have made significant headway in this market in the last few years, enhancing the whole category. Business Director Europe, Dee Caldwell highlights their 8mm booties with onepiece sole and cosy thermal liner as well as their extra millimetre around the toe for extra warmth without sacrificing the tailor made fit that the brand is famous for. Solite will soon be extending its range to gloves, four innovative models between 2-6mm. Endemic brands are responding too, for the benefit of the final consumer, in the shape of 5/4 Cyclone booties from Dakine for example (5mm and 4mm on the sole for more feel on the board), containing the same Hexotherm2 as on the Cyclone wetsuits and double texture sole for grip.

#### FW22/23: THE GREEN WETSUIT, THE **UNICORN**

Yulex, Oysterprene, recycled polyester, solvent-free glue, dope-dyes...All the effort made by brands can't detract from the fact that final consumers mostly favour wetsuits that are scarcely eco-friendly. Not wanting to break the "customer is always right" rule, but aren't they at fault here? "The gap between what consumers say they're going to do and what they actually buy is still too big", reckons James from Circle One. For JL, Technical Designer at C-Skins, customers are no different from brands, in that they are simply not prepared to sacrifice on performance. Nevertheless, it is the brand's responsibility to offer at least one natural neoprene model, believes



Julien from Manera, to get higher volumes Let's leave the last word to Marion Bertrand and therefore lower the price of these from Picture Organic Clothing whose types of wetsuits.

remains a priority. Most of the brands carbon consultants on the power and we talked to estimated that the average responsibilities of individuals, businesses lifespan of a wetsuit is three years if it has and the State: "Thus, the best that we been carefully rinsed and dried. "With the could expect from voluntary individual right care we'd expect the top-end suits to lifestyle changes would be a decrease of last at least 5 years", assures James from approximately 5%-10% of the average Circle One. Nowadays many brands are personal carbon footprint" so "in order to taking a product's afterlife seriously by win this battle, we need to look beyond the delaying it in the first place. Rip Curl have individual level and reach a new level of their own repair centres and similarly collective action". All for one and one for all! O'Neill are using a network of certified repairers while Patagonia design their models to be repaired in the first place, like their easily-replaceable zips for example. "We recently opened a second European repair partner in France", adds Gabe in depth brand previews Davies, Ocean Marketing Director.

objective is to do their "fair share" in the fight against climate change, in line with In the meantime, the lifespan of wetsuits the report from Carbone4, the French

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#### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 More 5 and 6mms with hoods
- 2 Slow progress of eco-friendly neoprenes
- 3 Tech liners (graphene)
- 4 A lot of work on fit







### GOTCHA







and will be available in Europe again from this spring. The brainchild of legendary surfer Michael Tomson - RIP - Gotcha will be available in Europe through Estar (2018) Ltd (apparel) and New Day Fury Ltd (hard goods, also in The Middle East) via Nuno Fonseca, formerly of Maui & Sons.

Surf brand Gotcha has risen from the ashes

#### Please can you give us a short history of the brand from conception.

Founded in 1978, in a one bedroom cottage in Laguna Beach, Gotcha® catapulted the surf industry into a new realm, gave it respect and opened up the perception of surf as a legitimate category in apparel. The brand's meteoric rise was documented by founder and surf legend Michael Tomson. Gotcha® always has been a risk-taking idea factory, a creative foundry that gambles and breaks the rules. The brand in Bordeaux, France in Spring creates a look that embodies a lifestyle, a language, an attitude, and a music sensibility to customers. We will all work all at the same time.

#### Who is behind the relaunch of the brand in Europe?

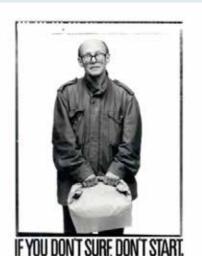
Gotcha is owned by Perry Ellis International, who has entered into licence agreements across Europe with various partners to relaunch the brand. Estar (2018) Ltd has taken the licence for apparel in Europe, targeting retailers across the continent. Simultaneously, I (as New Day Fury Ltd) have signed the licence for Gotcha® hard goods in Europe and The Middle East. In addition to this, Kennek FZE will open a stand-alone store 2022 where both apparel and hard goods will be available side-by-side.

#### How is Gotcha now going to be distributed in Europe?

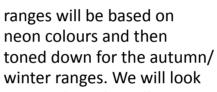
Gotcha will be sold across a variety of wholesale accounts in Europe, both apparel and hard goods specialists. As mentioned, there will also be a store opening in France early in 2022, with more to follow in coming years.

#### Where will you draw your inspiration from for your products?

The collections will stay true to Tomson's original concept from the 80s; designs will be vibrant and bold with irreverent graphics across the ranges. The spring/summer







to introduce the collections to younger consumers, who might not know the rich heritage of the brand but will soon learn its credible and authentic identity.

#### Tell us more about the product categories on offer.

Wetsuits and other hard goods such as soft top surf boards, skateboards, scooters and paddleboards will launch in stores from February 2022, with apparel following shortly afterwards in March. Men's, women's and children's apparel products will include t-shirts, hoodies, sweatshirts, sweatpants and swimwear. These will be available in



IF YOU SURF, NEVER STOP.

stores from March 2022.

We have also re-introduced More Core Division. aka MCD®. Originally a subdivision of Gotcha®, MCD® was created by Michael Tomson to represent the most modern and progressive pro surfers of the day. Our mechanical accessories such as skateboard trucks, wheels and surfboard leashes and fins will all carry the MCD® mark.

We are excited as the launch comes at a time when the Olympic cycle for surfing and skateboarding has just begun. Performance factors will be a key element in products; we are introducing a wetsuit range, a superstretch high-end product

that will be tried and tested by champion surfers, as well as a beginner wetsuit that focuses on the needs of a first-time surfer.

#### How are you planning on marketing the brand in **Europe going forward?**

Gotcha ® plans to support professional athletes in this Olympic circle through sponsorships and events which will be announced in 2022. We want to bring Gotcha® back to its roots and ensure it is visible to both the surf and skate fanatics of the world as well as your everyday customer. As well as sponsorships we will work on a social strategy, organic and paid, which will help us reach our target consumer.

#### What can we expect from Gotcha in the upcoming vears?

The brand is working on a global strategy for the upcoming years. The relaunch in Europe is strengthened even further by existing partners in Latin and North America. In North America specifically, The RP55 Group hold a joint venture for the brand. We hope to bring Gotcha® back to what is once was. §

GOTCHA.COM

GOTCHA.COM

#### **ITALY**

MARKET **INSIGHT** 

SWISS PORTUGAL SPAIN UK FRANCE GERMANY

In Italy, the beginning of 2022 has seen Covid infections reach an all-time high, however nearly all

business types have managed to stay open as hospitalisations have not yet reached a critical level. Christmas business was decent for most retailers, but there was less traffic on the streets and in city centres as people were more cautious about going out.

Winter tourism is suffering. We're seeing less tourists coming from abroad and hotels are being hit by last minute cancellations, mainly due to Austrian and German governments continually changing their regulations, making planning and confirming winter trips more difficult.

Masks are still a must when entering stores and certain areas have reintroduced masks in outdoor settings when social distancing requirements can't be met. The Green Pass is needed when going to a restaurant or when you want to buy a ski ticket. Boardsport stores are happy with the 2022 season so far as ski resorts have remained open, which wasn't the case last year. In general, everything is slower than before Covid times, but people seem to be happy with less nowadays and are mostly just happy at the idea of not having another lockdown.

At the moment, overall price increases are considered very critical to the market's success. Gas, electricity, etc... are increasing heavily and people will have less buying power in 2022, which makes the outlook for the rest of the year very cloudy. As businesses are open, government help is slowing down but many are still facing cash flow problems as turnovers are not where they used to be. Due to price increases, Italy is now implementing a tax reduction for employees to give them more buying power, which will be crucial for our GDP in 2022.

Boardsport retailers saw decent sales in hardware and outerwear this winter, even if a lot of sold goods were on sale; many retailers offered discounted prices on leftover stock from last year which customers welcomed and appreciated. Splitboards continue to do well, even though the range of products on offer is way bigger this year, the trend continues and is seeing good growth numbers.

Skateboarding in general is still trending, but hardgoods sales have slowed down due to many stores and distributors having high stock levels. There's now a lot more product on the shelves which needs to be sold and stores who carried less boards (before this increase in demand) are now either fully or over-stocked. As a result, some are able to drop their pricing to get rid of stock.

Overall, retailers agree that spending money on freetime activities has become more important than ever and that people would rather spend more on being outdoors than on other stuff, as having fun outside has become the new luxury. As we face so many regulations in daily life, everyone's been trying to stay outside as much as possible, to experience feeling free.

Starting in February 2022, the government has also decided on a vaccine mandate for everyone over 50, anyone who refuses will face fines. Of course, this has incited many discussions as not everyone agrees, with some claiming it to be a defeat for democracy, however the government sees it as crucial if we want to end this Covid-19 crisis anytime soon. There has also been a very high vaccination rate across all other age groups.

Let's hope the spring and summer of 2022 will give us relief from the high infection rates experienced over this winter. So far this winter, the situation has been getting worse week after week and there's fear of a lockdown being just around the corner.

So that's it, stay healthy and be outside as much as you can.

FRANZ JOSEF HOLLER



## RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# WOMEN'S OUTERWEAR 2022/23

Times are challenging and change is all around us. If tackled the right way, there's great potential for shifts that benefit not only the brands themselves, but also their customers and our environment. Anna Langer reports on the trends for Women's 2022/23 Outerwear.



The last two years have been tough, for everyone. Brands in all branches and industries had to adapt their working practices to continue to function. Which isn't an entirely bad thing. Delays have led to rather healthy collection overhauls and strategy changes in a world of constant overproduction, as Candide and Eivy have reported. "We are focusing more on carryover styles and bestsellers paired with some really eye-catching seasonal prints and colours" says Martin Vister, Eivy CEO. Marion

"crisis has allowed us to improve our carryover and essentials strategy and to rationalise our Collections." Marion Bertrand, Picture Organic Clothing

Clothing agrees that the "crisis has allowed us to improve our carryover and essentials strategy and to rationalise our collections." Burton's Director of Product Strategy Europe, Christine Egger says it has accelerated and enforced what they've already started: "building out the foundation by increasing Bertrand, Product Manager for Picture Organic carryover products and focusing on versatile

layering". Black Diamond invested in digital infrastructure: "We put a big focus on forecasting and committed to higher inventory to be able to guarantee fulfilment and deliver in time." Roxy reviewed their buying strategy: "The idea was not to create too much stock and to arrive this winter with a fresh new collection. The frustration of last winter made everyone rush to book their vacations for this winter." And while things continue to be challenging as long as travel is restricted and

"The idea was not to create too much stock and to arrive this winter with a fresh new collection. The frustration of last winter made everyone rush to book their vacations for this winter." Roxy

resorts can't open fully, there is a silver lining to be found, as Kari Traa point out: "The trauma of the pandemic has given a new understanding of how we can contribute to our overall health, effectiveness, and wellbeing."

#### **THEMES**

When asked about trends for 2022/23, Tony McWilliam, Head of Product at newcomer Candide explains: "The old ways of annual/seasonal collections is over. We focus on ensuring that what we design and create are essential, technical, functional pieces which support the user in doing the things they want to do - get outside in the mountains and express themselves on snow." FW sum it up to "quality is sustainability", which has evolved from a trend to a recurring and majorly important theme for the majority of brands. "Product durability is key to consumers when making a buying decision and an important sustainability criterion. This is an attribute we at Black Diamond consider in all our products and have put a heavy focus on for F22," says Kristina Ehrschwendtner, Black Diamond's Apparel & Footwear

"The old ways of annual/seasonal collections is over. We focus on ensuring that what we design and create are essential, technical, functional pieces which support the user in doing the things they want to do - get outside in the mountains and express themselves on snow." Tony McWilliam, Candide

Merchandiser, Europe. Picture's campaign theme is "Make An Impact", illustrating how people's smallest actions can have a big impact on our environment. Kari Traa state their goal as making comfort sustainable: "Designing starts with fibre choice, and it's essential to weigh up fibre performance versus its overall environmental impact". At Norrona, new launches are supposed to last for a minimum of 4 years before









Black Diamond



Black Diamond





Dakine









Elho

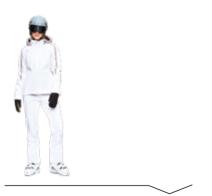
FW



Horsefeathers



Jones



Kari



receiving changes: "This is a matter of consistency, which, in turn, is a matter of quality." Rojo's Tread Lightly concept includes only producing what's needed and measuring the subsequent impact on Mother Earth, the concept addresses both the difficulties of Covid as well as their sustainability goals.

A newly emerging, yet long awaited trend by the female clientele, is inclusivity. "A main focus when developing the 22/23 line was Gender Inclusivity: ensuring product accessibility with non-binary options and creating gender product parity between sexes to ensure performance products with the same end use," explain Burton. Kari Traa agree that a "big focus in the collection is on inclusivity and the materials responding to specific needs of the growing plus-size markets. And it is not just about the size, but the multiple variations of female curves that require a greater variation of silhouettes." Norrona work with gender neutral colours and 686 embrace riders like Mia Brookes, Emma Crosby and Darrah Reid who wear mostly men's outerwear and have introduced more gloves and mid-layers designed specifically for women, that also combine well with the men's looks.

"Product durability is key to consumers when making a buying decision and an important sustainability criterion. This is an attribute we at Black Diamond consider in all our products and have put a heavy focus on for F22," Kristina Ehrschwendtner, Black Diamond

Other important themes are backcountry riding and technical gear from Airblaster, Burton, Black Diamond, Dakine and Jones: "Every shredder on the mountain deserves high performance and sustainably made outerwear that offers the confidence to move fast and ride hard in any weather. That was the inspiration behind the new Jones women's outerwear line - to balance a fresh style, comfortable fit and sustainable materials with the technical features you need to ride all day and stay safe in the backcountry. This is outerwear for hard charging women who want to look and feel their best whether skinning up, riding down or celebrating after." Plus heritage inspiration form Burton, elho, Kari Traa, Roxy and Rojo, as well as contemporary takes like L1TAs military and workwear inspiration or Rip Curl's surfing the mountain vibe.

#### **SILHOUETTES**

Tying into the inclusivity theme, Airblaster developed a new "Every Body Fit" which is a shorter silhouette with a wider fit. Kari Traa have a growing number of products designed to work with a diverse range of body types. "Oversized fits are becoming increasingly more important as far as how we broaden our offering and cater to a deeper consumer base" finds L1TA Designer, Jon Kooley, Norrona generally gravitate towards a more spacious fit offering a bit more volume between the body measurements and the garment, while elho offer oversized, padded windbreakers, next to "a very new and sporty short jacket for women, that looks different from all the 'ski-bunnies' stuff" says CEO, Simone Pitow.

For something different on the lower half of the body, female riders can opt for "high-waist outerwear pants that meet the needs of women ready to perform in the mountains" from Rip Curl, a super feminine Softshell pant from Kari Traa and new pant styles from L1TA that "have evolved to a higher waist, tapered leg and encased elastic hem," adopting elements from fashion to create unique and feminine styles.

Burton reworked their technical performance offering in the [ak] women's line and created a new, authentic backcountry kit for women, Picture Organic offer new silhouettes dedicated to backcountry touring, and also the new CANDIDE C2 range is composed of premium technical outerwear and mid-layers for those who wish to combine pinnacle performance with Candide's elegantly refined style. Jones Outerwear also premier their Women's line for FW22/23, with relaxed fit high performance wear "blend comfort, performance and sustainability in a fresh look."

Rehall focus on a cleaner design with less colour/print combinations and elho are "coming back to the more casual fits for skiers, offering the first performance jackets without oversized fit in our signature colours." Rojo promote silhouettes and styling which they know are current and have staying power. Dakine articulate the designs in each of their four segments to fit the designated riding style.

#### **COLOURS & PRINTS**

A lot of brands will be mixing earth tones with brighter colours, especially blue. Burton introduce a new brand colour called "Jake Blue"; FW contrast sky blue with bright orange and lightning blue; L1TA combine a "synthetic blue colour that to me emulates the look of blacklight" called "Ultraviolet" with their earth shades; Norrona feature a lighter cold blue / grey called "Blue Fog" next to a classic sporty Mykonos blue;





Jones



Kari



L1



Norrona



Picture



Rehall



Rip Curl



Dakine mix up Carved Blue, Rusted Orange, Earth Green and Dustbowl Pink; Horsefeathers mix earth colours with toned, yet bright colours; and Rojo opt for "shades of green that act as a soothing calming colour as we connect with nature and a new consciousness". Rosy shades stay important for women's as well. Black Diamond add Tundra, ice pink, aloe and blackberry; Rehall work with "Rose Snake, Plum Perfect, Dark Purle and Pink Lady"; Candide updated their cabernet colour; and Roxy introduce a soft purple lilac into the mix which works really well combined with black.

For those who like it brighter, elho extended the neon range with some powerful colour combinations next to a sportive black and anthracite, alongside two of their iconic all-over prints, Rip Curl mix checkers with pop colours such as mint green, and Roxy introduce honey as a strong new street colour and eye-catching bold red in the Chloe Kim range.

L1TA blur the line between fun and familiar with a tie-dye camo print, Picture Organic show three new feminine prints such as a cloudy/smoky textured effect, traditional cement tiles to a floral photo print, Rip Curl feature ethnic and geometric Aztec prints, Horsefeathers paint Cheetah in black & anthracite, and Roxy show a strong mix of florals and sportive abstracts.

#### **MATERIALS**

In a weather dependent industry such as ours, you can't afford not to think about your impact as a brand – especially in times like these. Yet the story doesn't end with just eco-

"big focus in the collection is on inclusivity and the materials responding to specific needs of the growing plus-size markets. And it is not just about the size, but the multiple variations of female curves that require a greater variation of silhouettes." Kari Traa, Rip Curl

friendly production: for real sustainability, products need to last. "We begin with a purposeful and researched fabric selection. We incorporate eco-friendly materials where they prove to be both durable and functional. For 22/23, the recycled fabrics ratio on the collection is getting higher, from insulation, to linings, to zippers," says Irena Umek, FW's Marketing Manager. "Dakine is a company that has made life saving equipment since 1979. We respect the high standard by designing apparel to last. Like equipment, all styles must be durable with classic designs that are both a pleasure to use and keep you protected from the elements.



Roxy



Norrona



Picture



Rehall



Rip Curl

Roxy



Glue ramps, internal bellows, cold pressing - these are all ways we build products to last and perform." CANDIDE agrees: "Our products are either sustainably created or recycled. Our C1 and C2 collections feature a unique bio-sourced/recycled polyester fabric. In an industry first, refined crystalised sugar is extracted from sugar cane waste, fermented, and transformed into ethanol. This bioethanol is converted into bio-mono ethylene glycol (Bio-Meg) and extruded into a thread then weaved. This process generates 25% less CO2 emissions vs. traditional methods." Picture Organic Clothing have continued to expand their "Biosource" initiative, so far, they've achieved making their RESORT range 70% bio, making their products from Biosource fabric and recycled polyester. Black Diamond continue their collaboration with GTT's EMPEL Technology, a revolutionary water-repellent treatment which eliminates the production of water pollution from fabric finishing and Rojo also feature a recycled element wherever possible in their outerwear fabrics. linings and insulation and are now looking towards packaging and trims. Horsefeathers use biodegradable packing and are implementing Primaloft Bio alongside Ultratech Recycled on more of their models. Next to re- or upcycled materials, Jones also emphasize the social impact of their products by only working with ethically certified factories.

Staying warm and dry is obviously another major factor for our beloved sports. Roxy have extended their Warmlink innovative heating panel technology to other products of the range such as gloves/ mittens, base layers and a belt that you can wear under any snow jacket. Rehall continue their Re-tech dry outer shell fabrics with an improved lamination and Kari Traa feature Porelle lamination (durable, long-lasting and a great fit to female needs) in one of their pants and a parka. Norrona combine "the comfort of tights with the functionality of a ski pant" in their new lyngen collection with 4 layers: a warp knitted highly stretchable and thermal quality, a highly stretchable woven double weave, a 200D waterproof fabric and a highly stretchable quality for the pockets made to accommodate more oversized items." And last but not least, FW enhance comfort with their new, so called pre-baffled insulation fabric: "The baffles are made during the weaving process, ensuring a super-soft hand feel, durability, and more water resistance." S

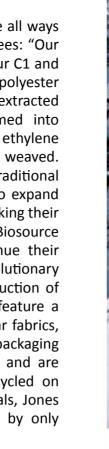
#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

1 Inclusivity

2 High Waist pants

3 Sustainability

4 Earth tones, blues & rosy colours





# RIDE, PROTECT & SHARE

«Ride, Protect & Share. These three words represent the essence of who we are: a snowboard, ski, surf, and outdoor clothing brand who, while not taking ourselves too seriously, still want to effect change.»

#### FW22 BACKCOUNTRY-TOURING

Technical, lightweight, eco-friendly & ergonomic products, dedicated to backcountry skiing/touring.





MCTIGGA MITTS



WOMEN

TOKELA BEANIE



TEHANIE HYBRID IKT





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#### RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# MEN'S OUTERWEAR 2022/23

Crisis or not, people still need to go outside - in tough times probably even more so. And to do so, they need proper gear, which the brands featured below continue to provide despite all challenges. Anna Langer reports on the trends for Men's 2022/23 Outerwear.



On top of logistics issues such as delays and growing costs, the last two years have had a accumulated effect on many brands. Rehall find that "it's becoming less fun to do your work because we're very eager and want to create nice things so everybody can feel good while wearing our garments but if then lockdowns keep happening, crazy restrictions have been applied so nobody will be able to go riding, it gets you down every time," says designer Dana Smits, and elho notice that "the unsteadiness of the overall feeling of safety leads to much lower spending." Yet as we all know, every

"We've been wild since '77. The wild energy of the natural world inspires us to adapt, evolve and overcome. We are having fun in the face of fear, we rise above and stand out" Christine Egger, Burton

an unbroken high demand for their products: "We continue to see growth in a lot of categories - especially in apparel. Our direction and strategic plan have not changed. The pandemic has reinforced our focus as a brand" says Kristina Ehrschwendtner, Apparel & Footwear cloud has a silver lining and Black Diamond feel Merchandiser, Europe and also Floa and Dakine

"The fortunate thing in a very scary and unfortunate situation was the need for people to get outside and participate in so many outdoor activities, including snowboarding. I would say the influx of new consumers in our sport has really made us look at our product offering through an inclusive and accessible lens," Jon Koolev, L1 Premium Goods

share a positive outlook on the coming season.

"The fortunate thing in a very scary and unfortunate situation was the need for people to get outside and participate in so many outdoor activities, including snowboarding. I would say the influx of new consumers in our sport has really made us look at our product offering through an inclusive and accessible lens," L1 Premium Goods Designer Jon Kooley elaborates. Burton, Picture Organic Clothing and Horsefeathers have used the situation to work on and increase their carry overs, elho focus on bestsellers in new colour stories and patterns with only a few new products and Rip Curl have developed a new range structure already for 2022/23.

#### **THEMES**

The heritage theme has been going for a couple of seasons now and is only starting to slow down a little bit. Burton state NAUGHTY BY NATURE for FW23/23: "We've been wild since '77. The wild energy of the natural world inspires us to adapt, evolve and overcome. We are having fun in the face of fear, we rise above and stand out," says Christine Egger, Director of Product Strategy Europe. Elho draw inspiration from a pool of over 70 years of brand history with unique designs and ThirtyTwo sport some "seriously OG style" with a wide fit driven by Chris Grenier and Dakine also showcase a baggy cut that reminds you where urban riding started. Quiksilver's High-Altitude capsule collection also features baggier fits with prints and arts are inspired by the early 90's, but with a modern-day twist and a unisex approach feeding the inclusivity trend, inviting women into this collection as well. And Oakley also use bold and bright colourways from their heritage to target younger consumers.

Answering the success of their apparel collection, Rip Curl tie their outerwear products to that division, cre-







Black Diamond



Black Diamond



Candide







Dakine



Dakine











Horsefeathers

Jones

"In the case of a snow jacket, it means creating a fabric partially made with plant material such as sugar cane or castor beans, wiping out of the extremely polluting dependence on fossil fuels" Marion Bertrand, Picture

ating consistency between snow jackets and the apparel offer in polars, fleeces, tee-shirts, "to keep our surf spirit in the mountains." They highlight trans categories jacket that "can be worn in a city or during a cold day at the beach, proposing a versatile offer where everyone can find a perfect match," says Raphaël Delfour, Winter & Trade Marketing Manager. Horsefeathers bring back rideable shirts and DC promote "outerwear for everywhere. Matching flawless technical function with original DC style. Building the boundaries between streetwear and outerwear. Balancing advanced mountain performance with city street wearability", explains Manu Labadie, Marketing Manager. ThirtyTwo's biggest theme this season is to create better accessibly for all snowboarders through refinement of features, improved waterproofing / breathability, more fit options, and lower price points. "We want to make outerwear that everyone can afford, but still functions in all conditions," says Susanne Dachgruber, Merchandise Director. Oakley focus on layering that works on & off the mountain, like their Park RC 10K Softshell Hoodie that can be used as a midlayer but can also be considered as a jacket.

Dakine's collection is designed for "urban playgrounds and backcountry pillow lines. We think about this product like Dakine's Trusted Equipment, an interface between you and the mountain and shaped by the many ways we ride." Burton also focus on technical layering systems (base/mid/outer layer), replacing certain lifestyle product without functionality by a highly functional base/mid/outer layer offering. Airblaster highlight their super techy Beast Series with maximum function for splitboarding and resort riding, made out of 100% recycled content; Templeton offer a basic layering system including, base layer, vegan synthetic insulator as mid layer and triple layer bonded outer layer jackets as shell; Horsefeathers also bring back their shell jackets for freeriding and Norrona expand the lyngen collection: "a freeride-driven touring line, first launched in 2009. Pushing the limits of durable lightweight, packability, and the balance between protection and breathability," explains Fredrik Lundberg, RDD Director. Jones Outerwear state their collection "is about making cutting edge apparel that performs just like we move through the mountains with complex simplicity. One foot in front of the other, but no wasted steps, and no wasted energy. This is apparel we believe in every step of the way."

Sustainability has evolved from trend to permanent theme. Tony McWilliam, Head of Product at Candide says: "We are not interested in trends – our design ethos exists where elegance and functionality collide. Sustainable materials and premium constructions result in timeless pieces." Norrona also follow a general aesthetic based on their design DNA, "Loaded Minimalism™." Black Diamond heavily focus on product durability, which is key to consumers when taking a buying decision and an important sustainability criteria. FW also focus on durable materials which are fit for purpose to make products that last and keep out of landfills. "Make An Impact" is Picture Organic Clothing's campaign theme, illustrating how the smallest actions can have a big impact on our environment. DC report of their most eco-friendly line to date, implementing more sustainable materials than ever, next to clean-energy snowboard production and 100% recycled packaging and hang tags.

#### **MATERIALS**

When it comes to new technical developments in outerwear, bio sourcing deserves a big mention that is used by both Picture Organic Clothing and Candide. "In the case of a snow jacket, it means creating a fabric partially made with plant material such as sugar cane or castor beans, wiping out of the extremely polluting dependence on fossil fuels" explains Marion Bertrand, Product Manager at Picture. "The shell fabric, which is derived from sugarcane waste and blended with recycled PET, reduces carbon emissions by 25% while providing the same level of durability and performance as traditional polyester. Picture's short-term goal is to expand the use of bio-sourced materials throughout 100% of its technical apparel line." Templeton feature an ecological water-repellent impregnation BIONIC FINISH ECO from RUCO that is approved by RWTH University Aachen and based on a fluorine-free recipe and Black Diamond continue



Elho



FW



Horsefeathers



Jones



Jones



L1



L1



Norrona



Picture

Picture



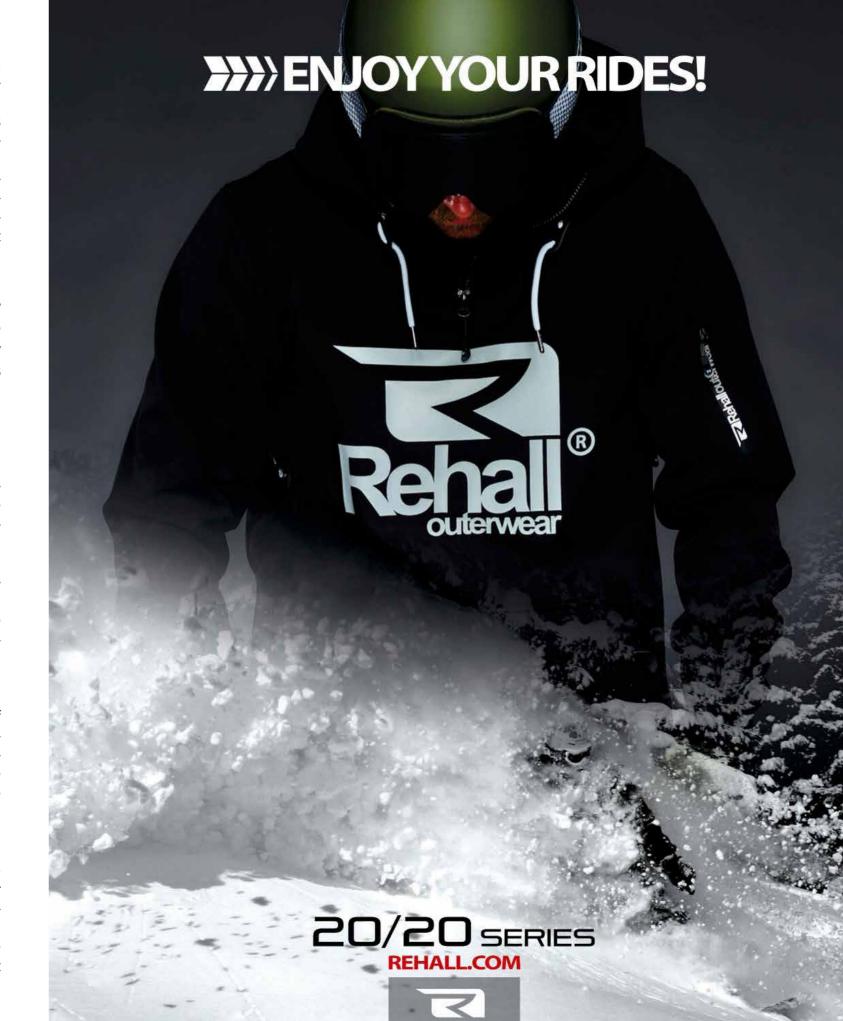
their collaboration with GTT's EMPEL Technology, a revolutionary water-repellent treatment which eliminates the use of water pollution from fabric finishing. Oakley introduce a biodegradable fabric: "Bio-Earth is a comprehensive solution aiming to reduce the environmental impact of textile products. The Bio-Earth collection is modified by organic compounds to enhance the biodegradation of our products in a biologically active landfill and is tested no harmful substances being released to the environment," says Laurent Vogt, Global AFA Category Manager Snow.

"It's an incredible way to add adaptable breathability properties to the fabric. It helps keep your body at the ideal core temperature of 37.5°C when you're active by removing the sweat during its vapor stage before it gets liquid." Rip Curl

Not really new but still relevant is the use of recycled material. Horsefeathers use Primaloft Bio and Ultratech Recycled on more models next to biodegradable packaging, L1 continue their transition to more recycled and sustainable fabric options. ThirtyTwo even use 100% recycled shell fabrics in their TM-3 and TM Jacket, Pant, and Bib, made from recycled plastic bottles and also FW report that their ratio of recycled fabrics is getting higher. "We are stoked to have more and more products featuring almost all recycled materials, from the main fabrics, insulation, linings, and zippers. For you to not only look good but also feel good" says Irena Umek, Marketing Manager. Rip Curl also use recycled fabrics on most models and 75% of their outerwear range is BLUESIGN approved, matching The Global Recycled Standard, Quiksilver use between 80-100% recycled materials. Jones add the Oekotex certificate to all their materials, which range from organic cotton, upcycled down and non-mulesed merino wool to PFC-Free DWR treatments.

For their "Search Series", Rip Curl introduce their 37.5 technology, based on the Heatseeker lining of their wetsuit range. "It's an incredible way to add adaptable breathability properties to the fabric.

It helps keep your body at the ideal core temperature of 37.5° C when you're active by removing the sweat





L1



Norrona



Norrona



Picture



during its vapor stage before it gets liquid." In order to answer Travis Rice's demand, Quiksilver combine "Primaloft Active, the most breathable, lightweight insulation in the market, with Gore-Tex Infinium to create a jacket that is super light, extra warm, and made to move with you. 686 keep riders warm and dry with the new GORE-TEX PRO 3L Thermagraph Jacket and Bib that combine the most rugged GORE-TEX PRO with fused strategically placed Polartech Alpha insulation panels to help with warmth retention and moisture management. Norrona blend two GORE-TEX® technologies for their lyngen Gore-Tex Active Jacket: the Active SHAKEDRY <sup>™</sup> – a technology that eliminates the face fabric, preventing water absorption to maintain comfort during high-intensity and 30D GORE-TEX® Active, built for extreme breathability, ideal for highly aerobic, done-in-a-day activities. Rehall continue their Re-tech dry outer shell fabrics with an improved 20k lamination and FW work with a new pre-baffled insulation fabric for a super-soft hand feel, durability, and more water resistance.

#### **SILHOUETTES**

While they're almost completely extinct from women's collections, bibs continue to stay super relevant and popular for men. "We're seeing an increased need for a wider selection in bibs and more price accessible styles" report L1, Rip Curl updated their backcountry bib with 37.5 recycled twill fabric with no lining or padding, FW add a workwear inspired bib to their catalyst family, 686 offer Forest Bailey's oversized signature Dojo pant as a bib and also Burton introduce new pants to "build off momentum in bibs and continue the modernization of the line." Pants are generally moving towards a wider fit again, as seen at Dakine, L1, Norrona and elho.

Supporting the lasting backcountry trend, layering options are a must have for riders which is catered for by the Burton Men's AK TUSK Jacket, a splitboard-specific jacket designed to be as packable as it is functional, Candides's new C2 flagship collection, and the ELIAS ELHARDT x Picture Organic pro model, a 3L jacket and pants with their revolutionary XPORE membrane. Jones use an origami-inspired fabric pattern that maximizes mobility and breathability by minimizing taped seams that don't breathe or stretch in their Shralpinist Stretch 3L Jacket and Bib.





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104 Quiksilver



Quiksilver



Rehall





Rip Curl

Templeton



"We're seeing an increased need for a wider selection in bibs and more price accessible styles" L1

Dakine dedicate each of their outerwear segments to a certain riding style and articulate the patterning to move effortlessly with the body. "If it's for the backcountry, it's shaped to move freely with your stride. As we move into the resort comfort is king and the fit has a more relaxed articulation. Then to the streets and park where style and protection help you stomp the rails by incorporating heavy fabrics that demand a loose cut." For the street, this means a heavy workwear influence that can also be seen in the L1 range, and Rip Curl also reworked part of their range in a more minimalist direction "that it will fill the gap between classic outerwear products and more lifestyle jackets."

Last but not least, elho continue to rock their colourful all-over printed overalls, while Templeton highlight their "overall that does not look like a overall, with full waterproof with taped YKK zipper and seams, made with our most functional 3-Layer bonded Outer Layer shell."

#### **COLOURS & PRINTS**

Rehall make their designs "more clean and with not so many colour/print combinations" and in general colours are a bit more toned down than in previous years. "Inspiration for the colours and prints comes from the colours found in nature during its seasonal changes" say Picture and Rip Curl feature natural and earthy colours in their SURF LANDING search collection.

Blue is the main colour for 2022/23, in various variations ranging from Burton's new Jake Blue, L1's Ultraviolet synthetic blue, Norrona's cold blue / grey Blue Fog or their Mykonos Blue, Oil Blue from Horsefeathers to Kingfisher or Indigo at Black Diamond.

Inspired by riders like Victor Daviet and Matt Belzile wearing head to boot in the same colour with pop accessory hits, 686 created a collection of tonal outfits in both brights and neutrals, that combined with key gloves and facemasks in specific accent colours create a signature look throughout their range. For more colourful options, Burton show shades of reds and greens, elho extended





Quiksilver



Rehall



Rip Curl



Templeton



Templeton

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the neon range with some powerful colour combinations and Rip Curl use bright and fun colours directly referring to their surfing roots. Black Diamond introduce Lime Green as highlight colour for FW22/23, Candide update their cabernet colour and Dakine feature Flame Orange, Earth Green, Purple Haze, Fir Green and Russet Brown. FW on the other hand introduce pastel colours like Sky Blue and Wisteria "to bring sweetness and contrast with the very bright orange and lightning blue. The new and very neutral sand colour is easy to merch with all kind of colours. The new burnt orange Antelope canyon brings warmth." Rehall sport Cathay Spice, Navy, Olive and Dessert Palm colour combinations.

Colour blocks are making a comeback in the collections from Templeton and Burton, next to elho's iconic elho all-over prints from the past. Dakine say that camos have always been part of their DNA, featuring a terrain version for FW22/23, L1 blur the line between fun and familiar with a tie-dye camo, Picture Organic show a world map in the form of a camo and ThirtyTwo have a blur camo with red that was inspired by JP Walker, snorkel blue by Chris Grenier, and forest green by Scott Stevens. "Zeb wanted something with a space theme and so we did a play on NASA inspired logos and colors. I always let the team drive the bus on colour, prints, and general direction." Burton's prints are inspired by natural patterns, Picture show a new print called CLOUD, a cloudy textured effect next to LINES, graphic lines representing mountain tops and Rip Curl also introduce geometric prints as well as taping details. Oakley have developed specific prints for each of their Team Collection riders: an allover tie dye print jacket inspired by a snow mountain for Sage Kotsenburg, a crackle print and a skull patch logo used on a color blocked jacket for Stale Sandbech and a bandana 

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Bio Sourcing Materials
- 2 Camo prints
- 3 Baggy Pants & Bibs
- 4 Splitboard / Backcountry gear
- 5 Blue colourways



#### **GERMANY**

ITALY SWISS **PORTUGAL** SPAIN UK **FRANCE** 

The pandemic continues, and we hope to see a development towards lower numbers, balancing political unrest with increasing options for outdoor sport and holidays. As the Omnicron variant of the virus

continues to spread worldwide, the German situation is tense with ongoing discussions upon a vaccination duty. As we are speaking, the numbers are breaking records and don't suggest an early easing to the situation.

The corona pandemic continues to influence our behaviour and business practices. Although, studies show that an increasing number of citizens (19%) believe that positive economic development is taking place again (Rudnicka, 2022). Yet, the numbers are considerably lower, but a positive trend can be seen compared to the previous month. However, the inflation rate has increased steadily and is over 5%. These inflation levels were last reached 1992 after the fall of the Berlin wall (Statista, 2022). The crisis as we know has led to unforeseeable changes to the boardsports business, with many sectors experiencing great demand for their products.

The global supply chain strongly influenced the skate market last year because shipping prices skyrocketed in line with the reduced availability of containers. Furthermore, new customers to the sport created enormous demand for complete boards. Therefore, the demand was much larger than supply. Jörg Ludewig from Urban Supplies underlines this fact "as the demand was approximately double the supply, it was impossible for the manufacturers to cover because their production sites could not simply increase their output." However, the situation has now normalised, and materials are available again, and production has started and can catch up again to restore the logistic cycles. Nevertheless, the fragile global supply chain last year delayed the cycle by 2-3 months. "We see an ongoing participation in the skate community, which is much influenced by the 90's in softgoods and in growing numbers in online retail", states David Morgan from Search & Destroy in Berlin.

Similar developments took place in the SUP industry. With countries locked up, and the corona regulations heavily influencing holiday choices, tourists preferred to stay around their region or holiday in Germany. Furthermore SUPs can be enjoyed in many environments from lakes, to rivers to the ocean. Although the latter was not reachable for most German tourists; instead, their choice fell on their own country's rivers and lakes. As a result, the need for physical engagement rose and consequently the demand for SUP as a water sport. "The SUP sector outgrew the windsurf sector significantly although the demand increased for every sector such as surfing or wakeboarding", explains Nicolas Wendelken from Choppywater. The reasoning for the unparalleled growth lies in the freedom and individuality of the sport. Moreover, the entry barriers are comparably small, and the range of applications to make use of a SUP is very wide compared to wave surfing, which needs the appropriate environment to be executed. Consequently, the demand for surfboards will only pick up this

summer if the travel regulations allow it. are kept moving." However, importing The SUP sector faces different challenges goods from Asia has become an issue as due to cheap production in Asian countries. prices have skyrocketed. Meanwhile hybrid Big retailers offer very affordable products products which worked very well last year to meet the demand curve for the growing are already selling very well again. For SUP market and have often outplayed instance, certain products are already sold smaller retailers. However, because of the out, such as Crab Grab gloves and helmets. rising prices in production and logistics, even bigger retailers are now dealing with So far this season with a booster vaccination, problematic price increases. "We hope to the slopes of Austria can be used, and see that the bigger discounters will have people are keen to go snowboarding. The problems providing cheap hardgoods so political and regulatory processes will that the specialist retailer can profit as influence how the snowboarding industry well from higher prices", expresses Nicolas can recover its post-pandemic state. Wendelken from Choppywater in Kiel, Generally, people have changed their travel Germany.

rising for both hard and soft goods, with experience growth and strong demand a few shops even specialising in specific because regulations encourage people to sectors to meet a growing market. On the participate in these individual outdoor other hand, industry experts still predict sports. Another trend within the industry is a balance between retail and e-commerce the ongoing integration of online shops in because the customer enjoys the services the B2C and the B2B market. The company offered by the physical shop and clients Good Question Supplies, for instance, set often prefer trying on softgoods such as up a new online store with an improved wetsuits or hardgoods such as snowboard login section. "This helps dealers to put boots to find the right fit.

As we are writing, the mountains in Austria confirms Eric Bruweleit, the CEO of Good will see moderate numbers of tourists Question Supplies. However, as the industry arriving from Germany, but the season is still young. The last year overall the purchase of softgoods, the demand for snowboard industry was hit hard because physical retailers remains as customers many of the biggest ski resorts in Europe are still willing to pay for their face-to-face remained closed, whilst the split boarding services. sector boomed. The snowboard industry will pick up again as production, and the availability of materials is steady again. Eric LAURIDS BELLE Bruweleit from Good Question Supplies has adapted his strategy to cope with what's happening globally with the supply chain. "A lockdown in Vietnam delayed some product, but overall, we're fine with our supply chain logistics though working with freight forwarder companies has become very time consuming to ensure our orders

patterns to travel destinations in their In addition, the e-commerce demand is vicinity. SUPs and skating will continue to in a reorder easily and quickly, and we're stoked to see more dealers use that tool!" experiences unusual demand for the online

## RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# **BASE LAYERS 2022/23**

Properly geared up, you can withstand almost all conditions. What you wear underneath is just as, if not more important, than your outerwear, which is why we're now dedicating a full Buyer's Guide to base layers. Anna Langer reviews the trends for FW22/23.



#### **MATERIALS**

breathability for a myriad of different body advanced wicking properties. Also perfect for climates is the main goal for the base layer segment, keeping their customers dry and Suit Pro, which got a makeover with Polartec toasty at the same time - all day long, no matter the level of activity. To achieve this tricky balance, PAG developed a new textile "Protection from the elements begins with material in collaboration with 37.5 Technology, based on dynamic thermoregulation: "Our defence," muses FW Marketing Manager Irena base layer retains the right amount of infrared Umek, a brand who make their layers from to keep you warm in winter conditions and in merino. Norrona launch their first styles in their summer and during intense exercise, it expels new Norrøna Ull merino material for FW22/23: excess heat to keep you cool & dry." FLOA "We will offer Ull in different fabric qualities: combine the natural qualities of merino with pureUll (100% merino wool) and corespunUll

latest seamless manufacturing techniques and Creating the perfect mix of warmth and yarn construction, giving riders a garment with going way out is the popular Airblaster Ninja Powergrid.

proper base wear: the first and last line of the engineered qualities of polyester, using the (which is spun around a recycled nylon core),"

explains Karoline Sarilla, Norrøna's Web and Content Editor. Kari Traa also use merino, and they even pair it with cashmere, yet their main innovation is the seamless wool Oline base layer that adapts to fit your body if you have parts that are in-between sizes, like wider hips or broad muscular shoulders: "This merino wool mix is suitable for a various range of activities and adapts with temperature changes. Seamless construction creates a minimal amount of production waste and is a very big sustainable step."

and women's outfits in merino tencel, with flat seams designed to be anti-chafing, in addition to their usual basic range of layers in recycled polyester. Eivy Clothing have moved all their products to sustainable fabrics, which saw them achieve Global Recycled Standard certification last season, which they are super happy with. "Base layers have been a massive part of Rojo Outerwear since inception," says founder Jo Buckle. "All of our base layer fabrics are saving numerous plastic bottles from landfill and the use of water-based inks and prints is also reducing the amount of water wasted in the production process." Kari Traa have found that "designing starts with fibre choice, and it's essential to weigh up fibre performance versus its overall environmental impact" and are working to update well-known synthetical base layer styles into recycled fabrics. Dakine also feature recycled breathable fabrics. The new Bentu Plus Fleece made of Nikwax Fleece The main colours in base layers range from fabric, is water repellent, warm and breathable. "When teamed with a Duology Windproof, from shade of blues, pinks and greens for the female the Páramo collection, they form the Nikwax Duology waterproof system. This unique system provides optimum protection whilst outdoors."

#### **SILHOUETTES**

Kari Traa's main focus for FW22/23 is on inclusivity and the materials responding to specific needs of the growing plus-size markets. "And it is not just about the size, but the multiple variations of female curves that each require designing different silhouettes. A growing number of products in our collection

are designed to work with a diverse range of body types," like the above-mentioned Kari Traa Oline base layer. Eivy continue their Icecold tops and tights lines, "timeless multifunctional designs that have been incrementally improved since our Founder and Creative Director Anna Vister invented the neckwarmer base laver over ten years ago" says CEO Martin Vister, as well as adding more ribbed styles, for which the FW21/22 pre-orders have been really strong. FW create "RAW BSW garments to act as a second skin which are ergonomically designed to stretch naturally with your body". Dakine offer two Picture Organic Clothing is introducing men's silhouettes: the Kickback and the Liberator, for an articulated and a relaxed fit, respectively. The Liberator also comes with a hood.

#### **COLOURS & PRINTS**

"Our base layer collection does not only match our outerwear design; our base layer's colourful prints, comfortable fabrics and fashionable fits can be worn as a statement before and after the slopes. Our goal was to design base layers that don't look like underwear but can also be worn for any sports activities or even worn in the office," says elho CEO, Simone Pitow. Kari Traa is also known for their iconic patterns, which they are still focusing on with a new, toned down and sophisticated take in Rose Light. Eivy continue their Pink Cheetah, Abstract Shapes and MX Pink prints and will collaborate with Jamie Anderson for the next two years, so keep your eyes peeled for updates on this.

classic blacks for men, women and kids, to customers. ®

#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- 1 Merino & Merino blends
- 2 Ergonomic Designs
- 4 Black for all, pink & blue for women's

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#### RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# **BACKCOUNTRY SNOW SAFETY 2022/23**

There's a new generation of off-piste riders that need to purchase safety gear for the first time. By securing a positive immersion experience, brands will contribute to a steady growth in backcountry riding. By Rocio Enriquez.



For some, last season was one of frustration of use. Ortovox offers their Avabag range of as well as reliable.

and one of discovery for others. Some airbag packs. ABS developed their EasyTech snowboarders were just not ready to wait airbag system. "It is the most advanced the season out at home and ventured cartridge-based system with two airbags on off-piste for the first time. Many fell in the market", says Robert Scheibenzuber. It's love. This has boosted the popularity of immediately available, easy to adjust and backcountry riding. Brands that develop independent from electricity. The ability to snow safety products have benefitted the repeatedly practice the moment of trigger most. The demand for safety gear has grown without the cartridge is a bonus for newbies. substantially. However, these new users Aerosize's vest has a hybrid design which are not familiar with this product category. uses gas to inflate the frame of the airbag, They can be easily overwhelmed by the but the rest is inflated with air sucked from knowledge required to read the mountain the environment. The brand has shared and use the products properly. Brands are that they've got developments to their listening. They are focusing their efforts on system in the pipeline. "Since we focus on creating products that are very easy to use, a different construction, the type of drive - gas or electricity - will be a secondary issue in the future, giving the user the There is innovation in airbag systems, option to choose the drive", says Wojciech aiming for increased functionality and ease Wieczorek. Black Diamond relies on their

AEROSIZE

very light, reduced in size and rechargeable. The airbag can be deployed several times There are analogic solutions too. Ortovox before it needs recharging. "Each activation provides three minutes of continuous pressure. It also features automatic deflation to create an air pocket and has automated self-diagnosis", explains Loïc Tonnot. The Bluetooth capabilities allow easy updates through their Pieps App. Some brands aim for says Alexandra Hlawitschka. It is also versatility in the packs that hold the airbags. ABS presents their A.Round bag; it turns into an all-season, highly functional outdoor pack by just removing the EasyTech compartment. The modular design of Black Diamond's Jet Force Pro system allows it to attach to packs of different volumes.

the form of tools and technological devices. ABS is very proud of their compact A.Ssure set of shovel, probe and first aid kit. Ortovox Diamond's are designed to fit smoothly in the designated pockets of their snowpacks. They offer aluminium and carbon versions, techy side of things, Ortovox keeps pushing their Diract Voice technology. This equips their transceivers with integrated voice navigation. Black Diamond has equipped their Recon BT and Guide BT beacons with Bluetooth, so they can connect to their Pieps App.

Avalanches are not the only danger that the backcountry poses. There are other solutions to keep riders safe. Recco offers a unique system to help the rider's own rescue in case of emergency. The Recco rescue reflectors are quite small and do not need power. They are very easy to integrate into the rider's outfit. It allows the user to be electronically located by an organised rescue team. ABS has developed the A.Way app to plan backcountry adventures. The user can not only check the of this category.

proven Jet Force Pro inflation system. It is weather and snow conditions, but can check and train their safety knowledge as well. offers waterproof first aid kits and bivvy bags. Black Diamond has a snow saw, a buddy binding tool and knee pads. Evoc developed their own LiteShield Plus Back Protector. "It offers the highest possible degree of spinal protection with excellent impact protection". very lightweight and allows for maximum flexibility in all directions. The segmented design enables high air circulation. Evoc's protection technology can also be found in some undergarments.

Retailer support is highly focused on education. Recco has developed "The Plan" Other avalanche safety equipment comes in together with rescue partners worldwide. It provides basic safety information with guidelines about how to prepare and how to behave on the mountain. Their hangtags also has probes and shovels on offer. Black come with a QR-code that explains how Recco technology works. The brand has also developed the Recco Academy. "Retailers can learn more and use it when selling products", so users can suit their weight needs. On the says Manuel Dürmoser. Ortovox also offers several digital safety labs with free tutorials. Evoc is creating video-manuals to explain their technologies and guide through the use. Black Diamond puts a lot of effort into educating customers through media outlets, windows displays and in-store support. These are worthy marketing investments to secure 

## HIGHLIGHTS

1 Growth in safety products driven by BC popularity 2 Ease of use and versatility for new adepts 3 Focus on customer education

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#### MARKET **INSIGHT**

#### UK

FRANCE **GERMANY** ITALY SWISS **PORTUGAL SPAIN** 

The last days of 2021 were marred by the inability of our winter sports enthusiasts to get out to the snow particularly in France and whilst today (7th Jan) the French authorities have eased some of the

travel restrictions it still does not apply to tourism. The next decision date is in a few days (history by the time you read this) and we're all hoping against hope that business can return to 'normal'. Or at least some sort of a 'covid normal'.

I spoke to Olly Lambourne from Mountain Mavericks Holidays who have their base in Morzine - a British Ski resort in all but country!

"Apart from the missing Brits you would not know that there is anything amiss out here. It's just life as normal. Yes, you do need to have a Pass Sanitaire to go on the slopes, but nobody is checking. The lift resorts will sell you a lift pass and simply advise you that you need the Pass Sanitaire but they'll still take your money and you can still head up the hill. You are not going to bump into a Gendarme on the hill and they are the only people who can do anything about it."

But what about travel – people cannot get to the resorts? "Once in Switzerland you can simply drive across the border with no checks at all. So we do have some custom but you can just imagine how poor it is."

And the attitude of the great British winter sports enthusiasts? "They are almost all simply carrying over their

bookings - if/when they are allowed to travel they're going to come in droves and the rest of the season will be manic. But there lies other issues - transfers and staff. Lots of the transfer companies have let their vehicles go and seasonal staff have been sent home (or not come in the first place), suddenly everyone will want to ramp up and it will be a nightmare."

As for the white stuff on the ground? "It's there and we have 30cm forecast for this weekend – we just need the French Government to allow us to get properly open, and then we will overcome all those other issues ... hopefully."

I spoke to Ben from Big Dreams - I always have to remind readers that Ben is virtually unique (and I am not talking about his personality although he is a one off) - his business is pretty unique as he still does not offer product online and is purely a face-to-face bricks and mortar store. "Positive" - that's his opening ... Ben is one of the world's optimist, but even so it's a great start. "Don't' get me wrong it's been a \$hit start to the season. When we opened in October it was brilliant, then we had to close for 20 days due to personal covid infections and self-isolating issues, then we re-opened and it was brilliant... then we got Boris'd and the French joined in and it's been crap. But I am still positive."

How so? "My customers are still 100% dedicated boarders. They're determined to get out on the slopes. They're not tempted by any other offers. Sunny Barbados and all that does not interest them. They want to get on the snow and come hell or highwater they are going to get there. Of course, they are more

cautious, of course it is going to be harder what we're doing I am going to approach and last minute – but by God they are going 2022 with caution. It will not take much to go."

So, whilst Ben's overall business is not than his fair share of knocks he is still, nevertheless, positive. The biggest downer business and my customers. Next year..."

"The winter season started really strong looking great".

And then? "Bang. It stopped. Omicron and hope that numbers will increase." particularly the French putting a halt on things unnerved everyone. They stopped I never cease to be amazed by the buying. It's picking up again now and it is resilience of the boardsports industry. Is it obvious that the enthusiasts are going and avoiding France like the plague - ha!"

business is actually the supply chain and he may well be right. Order deadlines have the difficulties our industry people stay been brought forward and are now earlier than ever, samples are later, people are of what obstacles are put in their way. Is it having to sell from the catalogue, deliveries a certain type of person, of boarder, that are later than ever - for some... not for has gone through the learning curve - on all. "I'm not attending any shows and I boards as well as in the industry - that will do all my buying from here. I'm also gives us eternal optimism and resilience? going to be cautious as hell. Don't get me I do think there is something special about wrong I think that the winter season will our industry, our people. Special - that's actually end well and I know there is a long what we are. Special. term future for us but there is a need to be cautious and careful. The water sports market in particular looks like it is over GORDON WAY cooking so whilst I'm still comfortable with

to go from an over cooked situation to a horrible discount situation."

going to be great and he has had more The Slide Trade Show (again history by the time you read this) is still going ahead as planned and as long as the Govt do not for Ben was that he is not anticipating change the rules then we should, hopefully, getting to the snow himself this year: "No - see a bumper trade show. This year Slide I'm gutted but I have to focus 100% on the has teamed up with OTS (Outdoor Trade Show) so there is more appeal to attend. "We've had nobody pull out and indeed It's a similar story from Angelo at S2AS: have some last minute bookings come in." This is Mike Jardine from Rare Management - we had pre-orders for kit and we were who organise and run the show on behalf flying. When the first deliveries arrived, we of the SIGB: "Pre-registrations were down shipped out the pre-orders, welcomed new a little last time I checked but these people to the shop and started scrabbling things are so fluid. I've not spoken to any around for stock. We were worried that retailers who are not coming and we have we'd not have enough. The season was exhibitors who are booked back-to-back with appointments. We're optimistic and especially with OTS joining us we really

the same in other industries or do we have something special in our winter, water, concrete boarding wonderland? Some Angelo believes the biggest threat to the real challenges lay ahead that we are all going to have to face together yet amidst positive and still move forward regardless

## RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

# **SKATE CRUISERS 2022**

With skateboarding and its various counterparts still gathering pace, we take a look into all things cruiser related with the Retail Buyers Guide for Cruisers '22 with Dave Morgan.



After another booming year for 4 wheeled activities all round, the cruiser market is still going strong. Eben Woodall, Carver's VP of Sales said "we all felt an incredible surge of business during the pandemic that had all of us scrambling to fill orders." However, it looks like brands are figuring out this scramble as time goes on. Nate Shute, Product Manager at Arbor said: "Our sales have seen

"Community and cultural/mental health are more important than ever. Covid has limited our ability to help foster the community but we've been creative (along with the broader industry) in doing digital events and now starting to build local community events again."

Pablo Castro -Loaded Boards & **Orangatang Wheels** 

tremendous growth throughout the year help foster the community but we've due to more people just wanting to get been creative (along with the broader outside and have fun, and a skateboard is industry) in doing digital events and now the perfect tool to take with you on all of starting to build local community events your outdoor adventures." Be it cruising again." to work or simply enjoying the freedom of riding in a more effortless fashion than In response to the skateboarding boom on a normal skateboard, it seems the and the Olympics influencing people's cruiser is the tool of choice for a lot of uptake on cruisers, DB & Rayne's people.

recently, the difficulties of shipping on a board, and cruisers offer that first and delivery issues brought on by the step into this world." It's no doubt that pandemic have affected all sides of cruiser boards give the user an easier and the industry. For Flying Wheels, they more stable introduction to skating due actually missed the whole summer to soft wheels and wider decks available, season as their entire 2021 range was and most definitely give people a taste of delivered in autumn as opposed to what can be done on a board. February. Fortunately, however, brands seem to have solid contact with their distributors and retailers, and people When asked whether the current are understanding of the situation. Andy surfskate boom had impacted the King from Mindless said "Our main issue cruiser market, Ivan Garcia Arozamena, is that it's delaying our ability to launch Product Manager and Global Sales at products we have ready and waiting."

their team riders with enough gear to Brand & Marketing manager Brecq keep them going, as Shane Maloney Benoit summed it up perfectly saying: - Production Manager at Madrid "Everything is linked, people discover Skateboards said: "There have been fewer the discipline by any means: surfskate events to get involved with, but most of is a great entry point. People then our marketing efforts have remained experiment with skateboarding by unchanged during the pandemic. We still discovering the different disciplines and support our team riders, collaborate with this also benefits the cruiser. other companies, and use social media to get the word out about new products." COLLECTION THEMES Loaded Boards & Orangatang Wheels Co-Regarding collection themes, it looks ever. Covid has limited our ability to have a nice variety of cruisers in our

Production Manager, Timothy Mackey said "Many people are still intimidated As I've said with most of the RBGs by park and street skating but want to get

Miller Division said: "Of course, really a surfskate is a cruiser with a front Most brands have put focus on providing axle that turns more." Flying Wheels'

Owner Pablo Castro made a very good like some brands are styling their cruiser point saying: "Community and cultural/ boards on a more surf-style shape as mental health are more important than Shane Maloney at Madrid said: "We

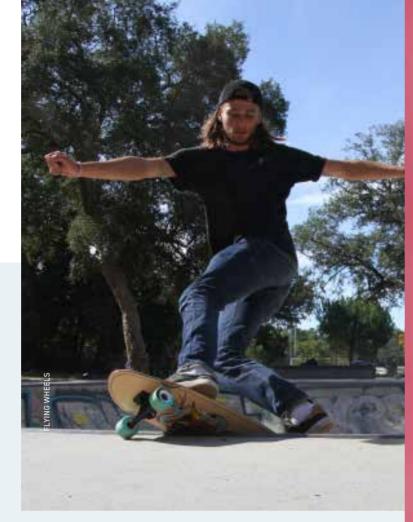
2022 line up. Some are inspired by our roots in surfing, and others are inspired by the revival of 1980s style pool boards." Ivan from Miller said simply: "We really continue to do what we like the most and that is the magic and fun that skateboarding has in general," which I think hits the nail on the head there.

#### **SHAPES & STYLES**

It looks like cruisers are currently taking influence from the surfskate styles and vice versa, with fantails and other surfinspired shapes being prominent in the coming season. Hydroponic for example, will be using surfskate's influence as the basis of their collection, as Jordi Quinto said: "Old school shapes and surfskate shapes are the basis of our cruiser collections. They offer a retro look that is very appreciated by older skaters."

When choosing the right board, it's good to know that brands offer options for the complete beginner, ranging to the skater who wants to skate rougher terrain. Dave Gitlin — Global Hardgoods Manager at Globe said:" In addition to our broad range of every-man cruisers we've added a lot more specialty boards with various concave, wheel and grip options. Blazers are a prime example of boards that anyone can easily jump on, whereas the Chopper and Disaster are wicked shaped street decks set up on oversized softer wheels perfect for ditches and rough transition skating."

The general consensus is that a wider, flatter deck gives more room to manoeuvre and a safer feeling, especially for beginners. That being said, DB & Rayne offer two different styles of board for



various riding styles, as Timothy Mackey said: "Our cruisers with a kick offer a great edition to a quiver for a downhill enthusiast and our compact commuters with big wheels are excellent for getting from A to B and everywhere in between." Completes or components?

Most cruiser boards these days are bought as completes, unless you opt for converting an old skateboard into a cruiser by swapping out the hard small wheels for some big soft ones. Either way, it looks like most brands seem to be offering both completes and components in the coming season. Hydroponic's Jordi Quinto explained that "Completes are a big part of our collections, but spare parts are also in demand." Ivan Garcia Arozamena from Miller had similar thoughts, saying that



they do manufacture parts, but 90% of their business comes from completes, "as it is easier for stores and riders prefer it that way. The technical is not sought so much. but the practical element of a complete is." Loaded Boards & Orangatang Wheels have noticed a recent push on completes, however they prioritise continuing to be a specialised deck & wheel company. Arbor offer primarily completes, as Nate Shute said: "We are known for offering Arbor Certified completes, as people now know to expect a quality product built using select, high-end components that complement the performance and geometry of each of our shapes." Carver who pioneered the surfskate and sell also mainly completes, have just signed Kai Lenny and Jamie O'Brien to the team, and will be releasing 2 pro model completes each, which feature either of the renowned the CX or C7 truck systems definitely ones to keep an eye on!

"Old school shapes and surfskate shapes are the basis of our Cruiser Collections. They offer a retro look that is very appreciated by older skaters." Jordi Quinto, Hydroponic

#### **SUSTAINABILITY**

As is the case with all segments of the industry now, sustainability is something brands really have to be making a conscious effort of. It's true that manufacturing skateboards is never going to be a completely sustainable procedure, however there are a lot of ways in which brands can reduce their impact. Andy King from Mindless said "we are trying to substitute maple for visit our website to see in depth brand previews bamboo where possible, and looking for of this category.

BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

"It's a building process, not an overnight switch." Dave Gitlin - Globe

the highest quality, sustainable eastern maple to reduce the sea freight." YOW are "not working with plastic anymore and focusing on recycled materials" as Xué Gil Guidonet, Brand Manager explained. Nate Shute of Arbor says "we are proud to have been the originators of using sustainable building materials in all of our products, since our founding in 1995. We take that a step further with our Returning Roots Initiative, which has helped plant over 350.000 Endemic Koa Trees in Hawaii."

With replanting operations and a large cutdown on plastics used in production and packaging, it looks like the industry is really making an attempt to be more conscious. This is fantastic to hear, as everyone needs to do their part in contributing to becoming more eco-conscious. Sometimes something seemingly small can make a huge impact on the larger scale, so any attempt is a good attempt. Globe's Dave Gitlin says "it's a building process, not an overnight switch." (\$)

#### HIGHLIGHTS

1 Surf-style shapes and surfskates 2 Cruisers booming 3 Supply chain issues still present 4 Pro models a plenty



#### **NEW PRODUCTS**

#### 01 / HEAD VOY SPLITBOARD

The new VOY splitboard, including skins, is your reliable partner in untracked terrain. The shape of this board has proven itself in the highest level of competitive freeriding. Combined with specific splitboarding features, this board will make hiking uphill as effortless as riding downhill. This is easy splitboarding.

DE.HEAD.COM



#### 02 / NIDECKER SUPERMATIC BINDING

Like a two-strap binding, just more convenient and much quicker. Drop your foot in and the binding closes by itself. Pull the lever to release. The 'Drop In' technology was developed to allow easy opening and closure in complete safety. Multiple notches allow the binding to lock shut from the first click; there are three in total, which allow closure even if obstructed by snow accumulation. Supermatic offers dual entry for any conditions - just in case you're in steep or offcamber terrain, or in waist deep powder. Supermatic works with every single snowboard boot on the market today.

NIDECKER.COM



#### 03 / GIRO TOR SPHERICAL HELMET

Tor Spherical from Giro could be summarised as sturdy, stylish, safe and boasts a seamless fit with your goggle. Designed for heavy duty shredders who're looking for a sturdy helmet to take anywhere, from resorts to big mountain. Thanks to a hybrid shell construction with an ABS durable upper & a PC lightweight lower, the Tor offers a very nice design in a robust helmet. It's also equipped with Giro Exclusive Spherical technology endorsed by Mips. **GIRO.COM** 





#### 04 / DEELUXE XV SNOWBOARD BOOT

The new XV was developed together with Xavier de Le Rue. Built around a new hiking cast, the XV features a significantly smaller footprint, a lighter design, and a neutral profile optimised for skinning, hiking and riding. The boot's all-new backcountry liner provides a truly custom fit and sports a flexible toe box that offers a precise yet forgiving feel. The boot also boasts a Vibram Eastridge sole. Drop in and never look back with DEELUXE's XV.

**DEELUXE.COM** 



#### 05 / POW VERSA INFINIUM FLIP MITT

If you've ever suffered from cold, wet hands because you had to take your gloves off to do literally anything, then the Versa Infinium™ Flip Mitt is exactly what you need. Featuring Gore-Tex Infinium™ fabrics, Amara palm overlay, grip print and premium Sherpa-style fleece lining, the Versa's fold over flip mitt is not only lofted (insulated) for extra warmth, but also tucks into its own pocket. To top it off, they made the thumb accessible with its own convertible top for even more dexterity when needed.

**POWGLOVES.COM** 



#### 06 / DRAKE FIFTY BINDING

This year, the Fifty has had a complete revamp! They have added the 'Honey' strap, which makes the top of your foot feel nice and snug. It's got injected TPU making it flexible but very resistant. It's super lightweight, which is what you want when you're wanting to get that natural feel under your feet. Plus, it features the new Delta Evo baseplate which just makes riding so much easier. One more addition is the Spade highback.

NORTHWAVE.COM



Made from 100% recycled high density nylon materials, this pack has a diagonal & A-frame ski/splitboard carry, back panel zippered main access, deployable helmet carry (Dual position), oversized fleece lined goggle pocket, snow tool/shovel pocket, splitboard poles and ice axe carry loops, snow shedding moulded backpanel & padded hipbelt, reverse pull waist belt and rescue whistle on sternum strap. Don't go backcountry without it! dakine.eu



#### 08 / Now PILOT Binding

The PILOT is a high-performance, all-mountain freestyle binding. For 22/23, the PILOT is equipped with the new S-sense TPU injected straps, which feature the flip-it function. This new strap moulds to any type of boot while preventing unwanted pressure points. Whether it's park laps or deep-ass face shots you're after—the PILOT is the one for you.



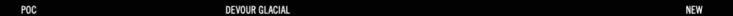


#### 09 / Reell's Black Washed Baggy Pant

The Reell Baggy black wash. A stylish black washed baggy pant created for use anywhere, not just for outdoor activities. Reell Jeans have produced the 'Baggy' since 1997 and offers comfort and style with a really good price / performance ratio. This summer is the 25th anniversary of the brand whose slogan is "Freedom to move!".

reelljeans.com







# THE VISION TO SEE THINGS CLEARLY

DEVOUR GLACIAL with our Clarity lens, optimized for winter conditions. Developed with world leaders in optics, Carl Zeiss, CLARITY is our unique lens technology which will intensify specific colors and enhance contrast and give you a new level of sensory clarity.





#### **NEW PRODUCTS**

#### 10 / POW Tormenta GTX Glove & Trigger Mitt

The All NEW 3-in-1 Tormenta GTX® Glove and Trigger Mitt has everything you need to keep your hands warm and dry in the harshest winter conditions. Featuring a premium FHK nylon with DWR shell, Grade A water repellent goatskin leather, GORE-TEX waterproof and breathable insert, Primaloft® Gold insulation, Micro Fleece lining, AX Suede thumb buff with squeegee, a YKK Zipper pocket for handwarmers or venting, and it also includes removable Poly Pro Fleece touch screen compatible liners.

powgloves.com



# 13

# A boot tested by national team rider Nicholas Huber. It's definitely what you want to stomp hard through big kickers due to its double crossbow vibram sole, which easily absorbs big impacts. One spin system is allocated exclusively for the heel locker retention system which pulls the tongue of your boot snug on your ankle locking your foot in place. The second spin dial closes really nicely at the front of the boot and if that wasn't enough, Northwave added the power strap which will help you feel super rock solid.

NORTHWAVE.COM

#### 11 / Brethren Softshell Pants

Inspired by 90's tracksuits, designed to battle the hill. Featuring a waist gaiter to seal out the snow, 8k/10k waterproofing and breathability, soft brushed lining, 5 different pockets for your mountain essentials and adjustable ankle hems to suit any style, casual cut to max out your comfort, you'll forget you're wearing snow pants.

brethren-apparel.com





# 14 / DAKINE PHOENIX GORE-TEX GLOVE The Phoenix features a Gore-Tex + Gore Active technology outer a removable performance

technology outer, a removable performance liner, 100% Nylon Shell, PrimaLoft® Gold Insulation and a Sealon PU overlay. The 4 way stretch 360g Wool blend soft shell and durable water repellent leather outer is combined with a new wool / polyester blend fleece liner maximizing the natural warmth benefits of wool and the durability and moisture resistance of polyester. Touch screen compatible finger and thumbs.

DAKINE.EU

#### 12 / Airhole Layering Collection

Continuing our commitment of keeping our riders warm and comfortable, Airhole has extended its technical fabrics to a range of layering products - from the Polar Riding Hoody which includes an Airhole built in to our junior collection of fits, the Airhole layering combines our signature graphic aesthetic with our trusted technical fabrics.

airholefacemasks.com





#### 15 / SP SLAB MULTI-ENTRY 2023 BINDING

The SLAB.ONE is a lean, mean, working machine designed for fast laps, big jumps and all-mountain shenanigans. The lightweight aluminium base bears their new aluminium heelcup highback with a straight and direct flex, as well as top-of-the-line technology from top to bottom. True to you in good times and in bad, this binding is the pick of the bunch for the dedicated ripper.

SP-BINDINGS.COM

#### **NEW PRODUCTS**

#### 16 / STANCE THE BOMB HOLE SOCK

Fire in the bomb hole. In conjunction with Legendary East Coast snowboarder, Chris Grenier, Stance bring you these mountain-ready Merino wool blend socks. To reduce fatigue and blisters, they added mid-level cushioning in strategic areas on the OTC cut. They've got Feel360™, Stance sweat-wicking, odor-stopping fabric that's made even better with their Infiknit™ fibres won't rip or shred, unlike you.

#### STANCE.COM

#### 17 / BRETHREN SOFTSHELL ANORAK

Upgraded for 22/23, the original unisex Softshell Anorak comes in 8 colourways, 5 prints and 3 block colours, something for everyone's flavour. They added a locking system to the side entry zip, with a pulley seal to prevent any snow creeping under the anorak. Ideal partners for our Joggers or Bib pants, depending if you're riding park or powder.

**BRETHREN-APPAREL.COM** 



# 18 / AIRHOLE RUSSELL WINFIELD COLLECTION FACEMASK

Uncle Russ is a name stay is snowboarding, his iconic graphics on Ride snowboards combined with his riding style created an everlasting persona, carrying on his legacy, Russell continues to ride, influence and inspire the next generation of snowboarders, this collection celebrates the living legend.

AIRHOLEFACEMASKS.COM



# RIDE, PROTECT & SHARE

«Ride, Protect & Share. These three words represent the essence of who we are:

a snowboard, ski, surf, and outdoor clothing brand who, while not taking ourselves too seriously, still want to effect change.»









ACC140 EQUATIO BOOTS 3MM A BLACK

To complete the perfect adventurer's kit, Picture offers an ever evoluting range of eco-friendly wetsuits for FW22. While the neoprene used in wetsuits comes directly from oil, EicoPrene is a foam made from limestone and recycled tires. Picture relies on this material for a cleaner surfing practice and wishes to democratize «alternative» solutions. Lining made of recycled polyamide from used fishing nets, FlexSkin technology and solvent-free glue are also part of this complete range of wetsuits designed in respect of nature. Of course, this has not prevented the brand from improving the construction, ergonomics and design of its products, as evidenced by the brand new Eicoprene with oyester powder (the oyster shell process consists of substituting limestone with a natural, recycled and renewable filler made from crushed oyster shells), featured on 100% of the wetsuits range.









Combining his pro experience in snowboarding, kayak and SUP, plus multiple years as a surf coach with 30 years of designing and shaping, Corran Addison tells us about how his boutique brand got started and the creative process behind his snowboard line.

# Please tell us about the brand and how you got started.

I was a sponsored racer all through the 1990's until I started to make my own boards in 2000 under the brand 'Riot'. They were highend carbon Kevlar builds and expensive, but it was a different market back then - kind of the time when all the "off brands" were being weeded out and the industry was falling in behind a few dozen big players. In 2004 we closed down the line. Then, in about 2009, I got onto an Original Sin 4807 volume shifted directional board, and it was a shazam moment. The following year I moved to California and was really focused on competing on the

sup Surfing World Cup, but when I returned to Canada in 2015, I knew that I wanted to adapt my snowboarding to snow surfing. I tried a whole bunch of boards, some I liked and some not so much, but all had some personality and uniqueness to them.

But here where I live it's often icy, and mostly crowded, so these perfect powder condition boards were not doing it for me. So, I designed and built one for myself. The goal was a board that I could "surf" on groomers as well as I could on powder. That was the Pitch Wing 155. Several friends tried it, loved it, and they all pushed me to produce it, so I did.



We started off with just the one design and making them ourselves, but we quickly outgrew our capacity to do that, and so the hunt began for somewhere that could make them to the same standards we were accustomed to.

# Tell us about your product family.

It really grew organically, and honestly, quite selfishly. My son was just 3 when I started Soul Stick, and he was struggling on his rockered, curved base twin tip. I realised that a smaller version of the board I was on (in concept, not specific design) would help him stop his helicopter-to-crash



sequence every time he tried to turn, and so I made him this little 105 swallowtail (that had a shorter edge length than his 90cm twin). The same thing happened when other parents put their kids on it and they progressed immediately, so we put that in the line.

Then my wife wanted a board – she was also an ex-hard booter and likes to carve, but she's also a surfer and wanted those sensations too, but she didn't gel with the 150 Pitch Wing that I was by then making, so I did the Girl Powder.

Slowly as my son grew and his skills with it, he needed new boards, and as my bag of tricks and how I was snow surfing grew, I wanted more specific boards for certain conditions or moods, and the line just got a life of its own.

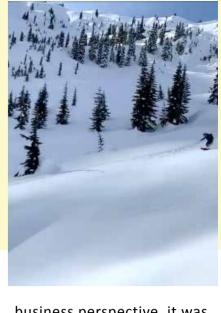
Of course, eventually as we got more and more retailers, and they started to ask for specific designs, we started to develop boards that were not necessarily just want we

wanted, but boards that could take our company focus and style to a broader range of users.

What sets you aside from other multi-boardsport businesses on the market? We make surfboards, and paddleboards, and WW kayaks and snowboards. I was an Olympic kayaker, a sponsored snowboarder for a decade and have competed in the world cup for SUP surfing. So. I think the fact that as the shaper/designer for Soul, my experience at a top level in each of these categories, but all under one roof, gives a level of "expertise" combined with a constant vision and feel that few other companies have. They can hire experts, but there isn't necessarily one person in charge that is an expert in all those fields.

# How did Covid 19 affect your business and distribution, especially in winter goods? As sad as Covid is, and the devastating toll it's had on millions of families around

the world, from a purely



business perspective, it was good for us. It arrived right at the moment where we had the distribution, the line, and the experience to produce and distribute our boards; this preparation allowed us to take advantage of the massive explosion in outdoor sales. If it had arrived a year earlier, we would have been passed by. Instead, we've grown as a company by 200% across our summer and winter lines. The lion's share of this has been our kayak line, but the snowboards are a close second.

# Why should retailers stock Soul Waterman?

We are unique. Our story is unique, our boards are unique. They're not for everyone, and we're not trying to be. We're a high end, performance focused brand whose vision is steadfastly on taking the surfing experience to the mountain, be it groomer or powder. If you have customers that are looking for that experience, then I believe we're one of the better options out there.

SOULWATERMAN.COM

SOULWATERMAN.COM

#### **SPAIN**

UK FRANCE **GFRMANY ITALY** SWISS PORTUGAL

Spain is capitalising on the effectiveness of their vaccination programme and the gift of snow by the weather gods. The spread of the Omicron variant has been as rampant as

This wave, however, has expected. not had the same hospitalisation incidence as previous ones. There has been no need for harsh measures. Spain boasts a spectacular vaccination rate. By Christmas, 90% of the population over 12 was double jabbed. This has kept people away from hospitals. Every region has the autonomy to decide on safety measures. They can tailor them to their specific situation. Generally, these measures are reduced to wearing masks, keeping the distance, and presenting a vaccination certificate to access hospitality venues.

Activity has been maintained. As a result, employment has kept on growing, hitting pre-pandemic levels. Especially hopeful is the decrease in youth unemployment, which has fallen by 38.6% for under 25-year-olds. This means more secure monthly salaries. Combined with savings from the first lockdown, they could secure a steady

consumption.

On the other up to 6.7% uncontrolled energy and not match

of

level

hand, inflation has crept at the end of 2021. The increase in groceries, transportation prices does salaries. For 2022, inflation forecast at 3.7%, while salaries are not expected to increase beyond 1.5%. This will have an impact in Spaniards' capacity to spend. The Central Bank of Spain has revised the 2021 GDP growth to factor this, dropping it two points.

Boardsports keep enjoying the same popularity they started acquiring at the beginning of the pandemic. They are a fun and Covid free way to entertain oneself. Snowboarding remained to be tested after last season's resorts closures. This season, the weather lent a massive hand and sent a chain of storms that generated a lot of

#### MARKET **INSIGHT**

snowfall. Resorts in Spain were able to open in late November. They enjoyed full attendance in the early December bank holiday and over Christmas too. Indoor gatherings were mostly cancelled due to the high infection rates. Many resorts offered snowboarding alternative events for Christmas and New Year. Resorts in the Pyrenees have digitalised their systems. Ski lift passes are purchased online, to offer a crowd free ticket collection. Some shops are taking rental orders online and delivering the gear to the client's address. This climate of safety, after last season's impasse, has done the trick. Snowboarders have taken to the mountains eagerly this December. As winter advances, we will be able to see if snowboarding draws any newcomers in the same fashion that surfing, kiteboarding and skateboarding have done.

The spectacular kick-off of this season has helped to liquidate leftover stock from last season. Shops report good sales so far, although there is some concern about the near future. There is inflation and its impact on spending capacity. The imposition of new restrictions should this wave intensify, looms over everyone. The combination of these two factors is making some people cautious with spending. "The customer wants to buy but the current economic climate makes them doubt. Many purchases are not finalised", says Rafa Sánchez from Back in Black snowboard shop in Madrid. Snowboarding shops are happy about the start of the season, but do not feel that the difficult times are over. They would appreciate long term support from brands. Specific discounts to sell leftover stock with some margin is not enough. Shops have adjusted to the delivery delays and the earlier pre-books that the new global situation has brought about. What they demand is the kind of support that shares the risk of buying in this environment. That kind of support will be the one remembered and rewarded when the situation stabilises.

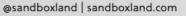
ROCIO ENRIQUEZ



The Winter 22/23 Season introduces a new comfort liner and ear pad lining made with grid fleece, which not only improves fit but elevates comfort as excess heat escapes through the grid lines and vents through our patented airflow technology.

Furthering our commitment to protection, we have partnered with Mips® to offer their patented safety system on select models. Mips® is intended to help reduce the impact of rotational energy to the head by enabling a relative movement between the head and helmet.









LARS DE WEERD - BS 180 Photography - Fabian Reichenbach

# EVENTS #110

snow street/outdoor

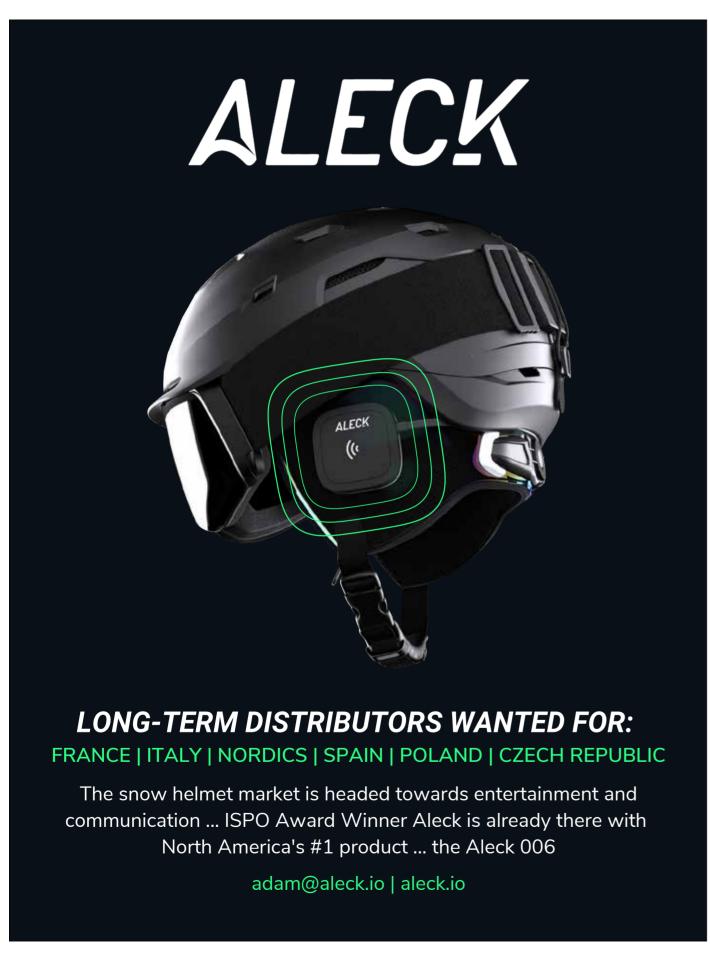




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serf	MEO PORTUGAL PRO	Parilche, Portugal   3-13 Reb 22	working larges com
	SPORT - ACHAT	Lyce, Franco   7-8 Mar 21.	sport-schat.com
FRAFE	PRESIDE WORLD TOUR	Rebothman, Austria   15-20 Nar 22	freetidenoriators.com
	SHOWNGARD WORLD CUP SLOPESTYLE	Beharlani, Grengin   5 Mer 22	No ski sam/ar/arcakowai
	SHOWBOARD WORLD CUP SLOPESTYLE	Spindierne Me, Carch Republic   10 Mar 12	fo-dilam/er/mosbassi
****	SHOWBOARD WORLD CUP SLOPETYLE	Shapime, Seftaerland   27 Mar 22	fo-std.eeey/any/sneetoossi
	FREE MOR WORLD TOUR	Variabry, Section land   25 Mar 9 Apr 22.	tweldsweldow.com
sarf.	REP CURL PRO BELLS BEACH	Balls Bench, Australia   36-20 Apr 22	with the party
Sect	MARGARET RIVER PRO	Herganet Wiver, Azetrolle   24 April 18ay 22	worlder Sangsa.com
um?	<b>COLD COAST</b>	Gold Count, Ametralia   7-15 May 22	working larges core
surf.	MARKY	Sincly Seach, Australia   17-24 May 22	working languages.
serf	QUISEYER PRO 6-LAND	G-Land, Indonesia   25 May-6 Jun 22	workford Sangue 2003
untiloar	ors	Userpeal, UK   7-9 km 22	author/train/traicars
street	OUTDOOR BY ISPO	Ministry, Germany   12-14 Jun 22	ispo.com/en/ontdeor
cubicar	РТТП ИОМО	Floresce, Italy   14-17 Jun 22	phthramagles.com
um?	TRESTLES	San Clemento, United States   15-22 Jun 22	workburlenge.com
en en	WORLD SHOWBOARD PEDERATION BA	Visite, Utikusata   15-15 June 22	meridmombeerdivdenstion.org
serf	OLISO PRO	Separate, Red   27 km-4 kd 22	molibur langue.com
antifect	NEXT SUMMER	Chamberg France   27-28 June 23	
FLP	SEEK	Frankfurt, Germony   5-7-Jul 22	sodificities
Herf	CORONA OPEN J-BAY	Jeffreys Bey, South Africa   12-21 Jul 22	modular laspe com
ptropt	MADDLE SPORTS SHOW	tyce, Praece   28 Sep-1 Cut 21	thepuldesportsbancom
Serf	SURLY PRACE SUMBART	Ses Diego, Californie   18-18 Oct 22	es riperimentral cors
optics.	SENAD	Park, France   28-26 Oct 22	n-endirepeluare
UNIONS	BPO	Merich, Germany   38-80 Nov 32	lipa com

BAGGY

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# DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

# **General requirements**

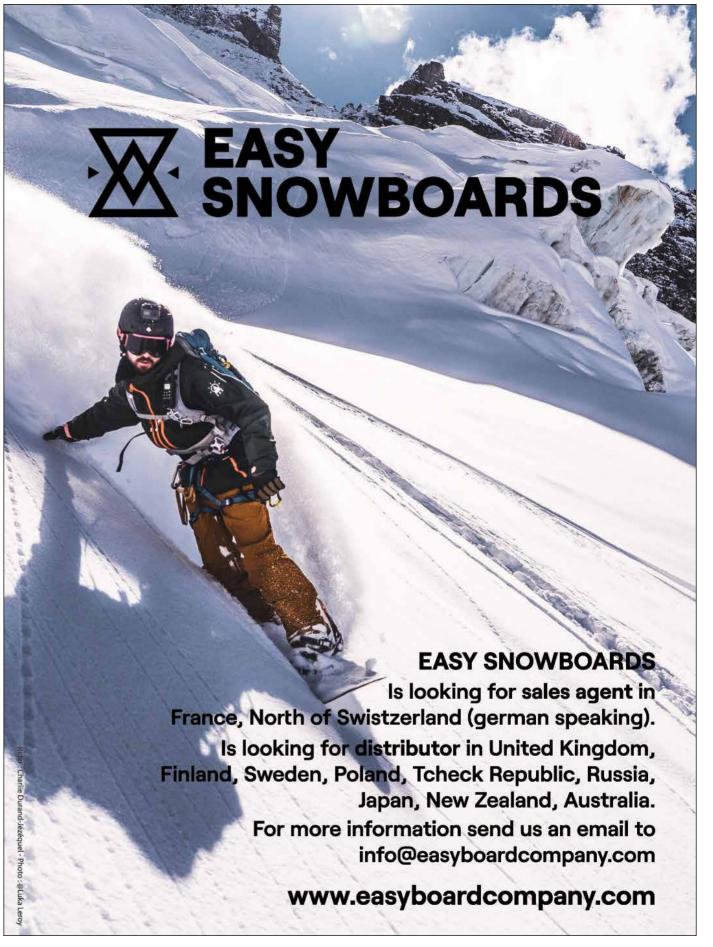
- English fluent + other languages a bonus
- Knowledge of surfing and wetsuit market
  - Business minded and results driven
    - Passionate and dynamic
    - Caring for the Environment





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www.wildsuits.eu





# sales agent

#### **JOIN US**

Takuma is seeking an experienced, motivated sales agent / agency situated in Germany to join our pioneering watersports brand.

With an existing action sports network plus connections in the yachting industry, you will be responsible for growing our foiling and E-foil markets.

For this role, you should be an outstanding communicator, detailedoriented, and interested in the latest watersports tendencies, with a drive and expertise to grow and seek new opportunities.

Native German and good level of English

Inquiries: b2b@takuma.com





#### JUNIOR PRODUKT MANAGER (m/w/d)

Du suchst eine neue Herausforderung in der Sportbranche? Dann freuen wir uns, Dir jetzt eine interessante Aufgabe anzubieten.

Wir sind auf der Suche nach einem neuen Team-Member, das ab sofort spannende Aufgaben in der **Produktentwicklung** übernimmt. Dein Aufgabenbereich beginnt mit der **Analyse von Zukunftstrends** über die **Ideenentwicklung** bis hin zur **Markteinführung**.

Damit Du gut in unser Team passt und Dich in Deine Aufgaben einfinden kannst, solltest Du einige Eigenschaften und Fähigkeiten mitbringen. Du hast **Erfahrungen im Textilen Umfeld** gesammelt und ein gutes **Gespür für Mode, Trends und Farben**. Als Sport- und Lifestylemarke suchen wir jemanden, der/die selbst gerne Sport treibt und dementsprechend das Image der Marke auch nach außen glaubhaft repräsentiert. Selbständiges und eigenverantwortliches Arbeiten erlauben es Dir, Deine Aufgaben zuverlässig zu erfüllen.

#### DEINE AUFGABENBEREICHE

Produktentwicklung

- Begleitung des Entwicklungsprozesses von Sportbekleidung für die Segmente Outdoor/Wintersport/Bike/Yoga in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Produktteam
- Prüfung und Korrektur von Prototypen

**Produktmanagement** 

- Erstellung und Pflege von Tech Packs
- Unterstützung bei der Erstellung von Verkaufsunterlagen
- Kommunikation mit internationalen Produzenten

#### DU BRINGST MIT

Anforderungen

- Erfahrung im Textilien Umfeld
- Kommunikations- und Organisationsstärke
- Gute Englischkenntnisse
- Gutes Gespür für Trends und Farben
- Gute MS Office Kenntnisse
- Sicherer Umgang mit Adobe CC Produkten wünschenwert

**Du passt zu uns?** Dann richte Deine Bewerbung inkl. Lebenslauf und frühestmöglichem Startdatum bitte an diese Mailadresse: office@sn-europe.com

www.supernatural-merino.com

# BURTON



Als Weltmarktführer für Snowboard-Equipment entwickeln, produzieren und vertreiben wir alles, was wir für unseren Lieblingssport benötigen: Snowboards, Boots, Bindungen, Outerwear, Accessoires, ein Ganzjahressortiment an Apparel und Bags sowie anon Helme und Goggles. Doch auch abseits verschneiter Pisten sind wir immer unterwegs. Wir sind draußen - zu jeder Jahreszeit.

Für unseren Store in München suchen wir ab Februar 2022 eine/n:

#### Storemanager/in

(m/w/d)

#### DIE HAUPTAUFGABEN:

- · Training, Entwicklung und Führung eines kompetenten und engagierten Teams
- Operatives Store Management mit allen Facetten (Einkauf, Lagerhaltung, Merchandising, Warenpräsentation, Technik, Instandhaltung und Sauberkeit)
- Umsatz- und Ergebnisverantwortung
- Optimierung und Sicherstellung von effizienten und kundenorientierten Abläufen
- Planung und Umsetzung von Store-, Merchandising- und Marketing-Konzepten
- Enge Zusammenarbeit mit dem Retail Management im HQ in Innsbruck

#### UNSERE ANFORDERUNGEN:

- Abgeschlossene kaufmännische Ausbildung im Einzelhandel
- Gute Fachkenntnisse im Bereich Snowboard & Snowboard Equipment
- Vernetzung in der Wintersportszene sowie Fashion & Lifestyle Branche
- Marketing Know-how und Erfahrung mit Store Events
- Unternehmerisch denkende Persönlichkeit mit viel Charisma und Leadership-Qualitäten

#### **UNSER ANGEBOT:**

- Einmalige Gelegenheit, Burton in München zu repräsentieren
- Herausfordernde Aufgabenstellung mit viel Gestaltungs- und Kreativitätsspielraum
- Angenehme Arbeitsatmosphäre und Flair des Snowboard Weltmarktführers
- Markt- und leistungsgerechte Vergütung je nach Qualifikation und Erfahrung
- Viele weitere Extras wie zB. Saisonale Ausstattung, Mitarbeiterrabatt, Liftticketzuschuss, etc.

Wir freuen uns auf Deine vollständigen Bewerbungsunterlagen unter jobs,burton.com



#### Manager PR & Corporate Communication (w/m/d) 100%

Die Weisse Arena Gruppe ist eine integrierte Dienstleistungsunternehmung in der Tourismus- und Freizeitbranche im Kanton Graubünden. Die Unternehmung ist verantwortlich für die Vermarktung der Destination Flims Laax Falera und positioniert deren Freizeitangebote ganzjährig unter den beiden Marken Flims und LAAX. Zur Unternehmensgruppe gehören eine Bergbahnunternehmung, diverse Hotel- und Gastronomiebetriebe, Sport und Rental Shops, eine Ski-, Snowboard- und Bikeschule sowie eine Management- und eine Baugesellschaft.

Stell dir vor, du bist Teil des PR & Corporate Communication Teams und hast täglich mit Medienschaffenden, Bloggern sowie internen und externen Stakeholdern zu tun.

#### Was du bewegst

- · Beantwortung von Medienanfragen
- · Konzeption, Produktion und Versand von Medieninformationen
- Planung, Organisation und Betreuung von Medienreisen, Medienevents und Redaktionsbesuchen
- Medienbeobachtung und Erstellung von Reportings und Reviews
- Führung von externen Agenturen zur Umsetzung der Kommunikationsstrategie
- Erstellung von Kommunikationskonzepten zu Nachhaltigkeit und Verantwortung für deren Umsetzung
- Erstellung von Kommunikationskonzepten zur Corporate Communication und Bewirtschaftung der Corporate Kanäle (Corporate Website, Corporate Social Media)
- · Kommunikation mit internen und externen Stakeholdern
- Planung und Umsetzung von Kommunikationsmassnahmen in Krisen- oder Change-Situationen
- Erstellung von Sprachregelungen und diversen PR-Texten

#### Was dich ausmacht

- · Abgeschlossenes Studium (Uni/FH) im Bereich Kommunikation oder Journalismus oder Berufsausbildung mit Weiterbildung in den genannten Bereichen
- Mehrjährige Berufserfahrung im Bereich PR & Corporate Communication
- Grosse Leidenschaft und Affinität für die Themen Tourismus und Nachhaltigkeit
- · Gute Kenntnisse der Schweizer Medienlandschaft
- Sehr hohe kommunikative, sprachliche und soziale Kompetenz
- · Ausgezeichnete mündliche und schriftliche Deutsch- und Englischkenntnisse
- Erfahrung und Freude am Texten für unterschiedliche Zielgruppen und Kanäle
- Digital affin und versiert im Umgang mit Social-Media-Kanälen
- Selbständige, verantwortungsbewusste sowie sorgfältige Arbeitsweise und hohe Eigenmotivation
- Sicheres Auftreten, Durchsetzungsvermögen, Flexibilität, Kreativität und Organisationsgeschick

Neben einem attraktiven Arbeitsplatz in den Bündner Bergen profitierst du von zahlreichen Vergünstigungen.

Lust auf LAAX? Dann bewirb dich hier online und erfahre mehr über uns.

Weisse Arena Gruppe, Mountain Vision AG Marketing und Kommunikation

Dominik Baumgartner

www.weissearena.com I www.laax.com





