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ISSUE 1308
FEBRUARY 25, 2013

WEEKLY

THE WEEKLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE SPORTING GOODS INDUSTRY





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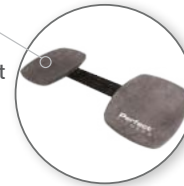
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THIS PAGE: Adidas Outdoors *Daroga Lea K* for boys and girls, features soft suede leather for enhanced comfort and breathability as well as a lightweight EVA midsole, MSRP \$45.

ON THE COVER: From **KEEN** the *Darby Boot* for girls with leather upper that gives way to a flannel collar that's hip and fun. The sturdy outsole stands up to a full day of play, MSRP \$70.

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BY THE NUMBERS

\$3.0 billion

VF Corp. reported revenues rose 4 percent (5 percent in constant dollars) to a record \$3.0 billion from \$2.9 billion in the same period of 2011 driven by strength in the Outdoor/Action Sports and Sportswear coalitions, and in its international and direct-to-consumer businesses. Net income on an adjusted basis grew by 32 percent to \$344 million, compared with \$262 million in the fourth quarter of 2011. Adjusted earnings per share also increased 32 percent to \$3.07 from \$2.32 during last year's same period.

60.5%

Wolverine Worldwide reported consolidated fourth fiscal quarter revenue was \$652.2 million, up 60.5 percent versus the prior year. During the fourth quarter, the company completed the \$1.25 billion acquisition of the Performance+Lifestyle Group from Collective Brands, Inc., adding four lifestyle brands - Sperry Top-Sider, Saucony, Stride Rite, and Keds - to the company's portfolio of brands.

\$3.6 million

Crocs, Inc. reported a loss of \$3.6 million, or 4 cents a share, in the fourth quarter, compared with net income of \$5.6 million or 6 cents, a year ago. Excluding non-recurring charges, earnings were slightly down. Revenue for the fourth quarter ended December 31, 2012 increased 10.4 percent to \$225.0 million compared with revenue of \$203.7 million reported in Q4 of 2011.

-2%

Garmin, Ltd. said revenues at its Outdoor segment declined 2 percent to \$119 million in the fourth quarter ended December 29, 2012, compared to a year earlier, when sales grew 35 percent. For the full year, the segment grew 11 percent and contributed \$165 million of operating income.



SKECHERS DISTRIBUTION CENTER CERTIFIED AS LARGEST LEED GOLD BUILDING IN THE UNITED STATES

Skechers USA's North American distribution center in Rancho Belago, CA has been officially certified LEED Gold by the U.S. Green Building Council. The 1.82 million-square-foot Skechers facility is the largest LEED certified building in the United States to have received this honor.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for commercial buildings involves a scorecard that evaluates several categories: sustainability, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation. The Skechers distribution center, which received its certification on December 28, 2012, earned 41 points from this scorecard. Key features include:

- 280,000 square-feet of solar power generation systems on the roof
- Lighting that operates as needed, regulated by motion sensors and powered in part by solar panels
- A warehouse ventilation system that utilizes outside air drawn through louvers facing the prevailing winds, plus energy efficient heating and cooling systems
- A solar reflective white "cool roof" and light colored on-site pavement to help reduce heat and global warming
- Water efficient and drought tolerant landscaping that reduces irrigation by 50 percent.
- A Water Pollution Prevention Program that captures and treats storm water runoff from 90 percent of annual rainfall.
- Low-emitting paints, coatings, glues, and sealants that comply with LEED standards were used during construction.
- Recycled and regional building materials were sourced within 500 miles of the construction site. The majority of on-site construction waste materials were recycled as well.

David Weinberg, Skechers COO and CFO, said, "With the capacity to annually ship 100-million pairs of shoes, this state-of-the-art automated facility will allow us to efficiently grow our business with reduced impact to the environment. And, with the addition of a Skechers retail store at the site, we can service the local community."



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MOVERS & SHAKERS

Easton-Bell Sports, Inc., which owns the Easton, Bell, Riddell and Giro brands, appointed board member and former CEO and co-owner **Terry Lee** executive chairman and chief executive officer. **Tim Mayhew**, a managing director of Fenway Consulting Partners, LLC and an Easton-Bell Board member since 2004, has been appointed president and chief operating officer.

Footbalance named **Ken Anderson** as its new sales representative in Western Canada. One of his key initiatives is to make Footbalance a stronger player in the marketplace.

SPRI Products, Inc., a distributor of rubberized resistance products and fitness accessories, has hired **Bill Ciszewski** as national sales manager, responsible for managing accounts in the specialty fitness retail, government retail and international channels.

MC Sports promoted **Rob Summerfield** to EVP-chief financial officer, **Dan Winchester** to EVP-chief operations officer, and **Irwin Wallach** to SVP of store operations.

OTZ Shoes, Inc. appointed industry veteran **Bob Rief** as its new chief executive officer. Rief will take over the position from OTZ Shoes Founder **Ludo Malmoux**, who will move into the role of president and creative director.

The board of directors of **VF Corporation**, the parent of The North Face, Vans and many other outdoor brands, elected **Matthew J. Shattock** as a director.



FILA LAUNCHES TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES COLLECTION

Fila partnered with Nickelodeon to create a limited-edition sneaker collection inspired by the Nickelodeon's Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles series, one representing the Turtles and the other representing Shredder.

The Turtles sneaker, *Fila Fx-100*, features interchangeable ankle straps representing each Turtle's mask color – blue, red, purple and orange. The straps also have each Turtle's weapon detailed underneath the Velcro, with two lacing options and custom packaging. Additionally, the *Shredder Sneaker* is entirely suede and features metal lace tips and silver 'cage' memory foam representing the villain's metal details and mask. There are purple accents on the back of the sneaker to represent Shredder's cape, wrapped up in custom packaging.

"We've created a package of footwear and related accessories that reflects Fila's rich heri-



The Turtles Sneaker, Fila FX-100, features interchangeable ankle straps that allow you to switch colors letting you flip between Michelangelo, Raphael, or whichever shelled hero is your favorite.

tage in the athletic world and speaks to loyal fans both of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and of Fila," said Mark Eggert, Fila's VP of footwear design and advanced concepts.

Alix Kram, VP, lifestyle and retail marketing, Nickelodeon Consumer Products, added, "This is a great extension of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles' brand, and this line of edgy sneakers will appeal to die-hard fans and trendsetters alike."



Shredder Sneaker is entirely suede and features metal lace tips and silver 'cage' memory foam.



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SHOCK DOCTOR LAUNCHES MOBILE GRASSROOTS TOUR

Shock Doctor launched its inaugural Fearless Performance Tour, bringing out its star athletes across the country as part of an interactive brand experience designed to educate and inspire young athletes across the country. The tour's primary focus will be around baseball, football, hockey and lacrosse events.

At each event location, the Fearless Performance Tour will present the Shock Doctor Shock Zone to allow players and their parents to touch, feel, interact with and purchase the Shock Doctor's products. With 19 patents to date, Shock Doctor's lineup will feature its advanced technologies like Tri-Bite', Monocoque Shock-Frame, X-Fit' Compression and ShockSkin' that run across its range of mouthguards and protective gear and apparel. Shock Doctor's new line of insoles will also be on display. Merchandise from Cutters Gloves, acquired by Shock Doctor in 2012 and featuring its patented CTack technology, will also be available.

Interactive elements depending on each stop will include the Football QB Toss, the Baseball Pitching Challenge, an Android App testing athlete reaction time, hitting zone contest in a batting cage, and electronic registration to 'Join Team SD.' Giveaways will also be included.

Team Shock Doctor/Cutters athletes will be making personal appearances at select tour dates. Athletes include Akeem Ayers (Tennessee Titans), Ryan Mathews (San Diego Chargers), Jack Johnson (Columbus Blue Jackets), Nick Leddy (Chicago Blackhawks), Jake Gardiner (Toronto Maple Leafs) and Carlos Santana (Cleveland Indians) will participate in the tour making appearances at select event locations as well as via social media channels and promotional events.

The tour will begin in Arizona, then head to California, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Texas and finish up in Shock Doctor's home state of Minnesota and will include over 160 event days in key markets across the nation between March and October 2013. Some of the major events cover California Little League/Pony League, NCAA College World Series, Omaha Slump Buster Tournament, Perfect Game and Minnesota State Legion Baseball in baseball; Aaron Williams Lone Star Showcase, Texas High School Football, and Minnesota High School in football; and Defending the Blue Line, Showcase Minnesota Tournament, US Hockey Prospects Game, and Minnesota High School Hockey Games in hockey.

In addition to the published calendar, the tour will make several stops at local schools, fields, after school programs and retailers in the various markets throughout the tour. A visit can be requested by posting to any of the various Shock Doctor and Cutters social media outlets, including facebook.com/shockdoctor and facebook.com/cutters. Shock Doctor will also be offering tour updates, exclusive video, photos, and fan experiences on shockdoctor.com.

Darci Eckermann, Shock Doctor's director of marketing, told SGB Weekly that Shock Doctor has been doing consumer events at select sporting events for years and also reaching consumers through retail and the trade. But the company wanted to do a better job directly connecting with consumers.

"What you're going to see is a more intensive focus from Shock Doctor in engaging with our consumer so we can feed the relationship we have with the athlete and begin to embrace our position in the marketplace as a leader in innovative performance sports protection equipment," she said. "It's going to be a lot of highly interactive, creative guerilla marketing."

Added Jay Turkbash, Shock Doctor's SVP, marketing and product development, "The Fearless Performance Tour is an opportunity to put our latest innovations directly into the hands of athletes, giving them an opportunity to experience our product's quality and performance and gain immediate feedback from them."

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DIGITALLY ENABLED KIDS PUSH BACK-TO-SCHOOL SEASON DEEPER INTO SEPTEMBER

By Charlie Lunan



Digitally enabled consumers, and particularly kids, are pushing the back-to-school season (BTS) deeper into September and even October to confirm fashion trends and take advantage of Labor Day and post-Labor Day sales.

The trend has important ramifications for vendors and retailers, who have traditionally used BTS sales to get an early read on what products and styles will sell best during the holidays. As more spending shifts from August to September, retailers and their vendors have less time to respond to consumer demand.

"The shift in terms of the way the consumer is shopping to more online and the whole omni-channel aspect of what our businesses are going to look like going forward is shifting as we speak," said Diane Sullivan, president and CEO of Brown Shoes, owner of Famous Footwear. "So there's a tremendous amount of strategic time and energy we are thinking about that because it is not going away, it is accelerating."

The shift came to light last year when the National Retail Federation said its annual BTS survey showed consumers expected to boost BTS spending to \$688, up nearly 15 percent for 2011. By late August, however, many were predicting a disappointing BTS season. But same-store sales growth rebounded in September and October, indicating kids and their parents pushed more of their BTS purchasing deeper into, or even beyond, the six-week season.

Foot Locker posted low double-digit comps in the key BTS months of August and September, but then saw comps accelerate to the high single-digit pace in October. Brown Shoes reported its BTS sales comped up 5.5 percent, but also reported that the business spilled over into October.

"We have definitely seen a trend with kids wanting to wait to go back to school to see what other kids are wearing before they buy," said Matt Powell, chief retail analyst with The SportsOneSource Group, which monitors POS data from more than 20,000 retail doors

in multiple channels to gauge sales of sporting goods. “Secondly, Mom thinks she is going to get a better deal if she waits longer, and there may be some truth to that.”

At Zumiez, CEO and founder Rick Brooks attributes the trend to how the Internet has empowered consumers – and particularly teens – to act more autonomously. They know they can skip the big Labor Day sale, wait until the second week of school to see what’s hot on campus and find it on sale online almost any week of the year.

Over the last four years, Zumiez has seen peak BTS spending shift out of August and into September and continue for up to two weeks after schools start. Over the next five to 10 years, Brooks sees digital empowerment spreading BTS spending in both directions.

“We definitely believe that things are changing, that the dollars aren’t as constant as they once were and they’re extending into the rest of the year,” said Brooks. “We’re going to see the spending spread out...[because]...kids want that new brand when it’s new and when it’s viral, when it hits their smartphone and they see it. They want you to have it then and buy it then, and they’re not going to wait till August to buy it.”

Retailers are responding to this change in various ways. First and foremost, they are investing heavily in digital technology so that consumers can find, research and buy their products when and where they want.

Secondly, many footwear companies have been building up their single-pair drop-ship capabilities. Brown Shoes and Hi-Tec have seen the single-pair delivery side of their drop-ship business take off in recent years as they encourage more of their dealers to offer their entire product line online. In this consignment model, the retailer receives lower margins, but avoids the risk of stocking untested SKUs. The growth of single-pair drop shipments is being driven not just by consumers placing more online orders, but by brick-and-mortar retailers fulfilling more special orders via the Internet.

When combined with in-store pick-up, these drop ship programs are helping drive traffic into stores. “We are also seeing more and more online offers being converted in person at local Famous Footwear stores, which helps validate the continued importance of multi-channel opportunities for our consumers,” Sullivan said.

As with the holiday selling period, the challenge remains counteracting rampant discounting at the mall and online as retailers scramble for their share of the BTS pie.

While parents steadily increased their BTS budgets from 2010 through 2012, surveys show the increase had more to do with keeping up with rising prices of school supplies than buying a new pair of shoes for Trevor or a new fleece jacket for Olivia. In its 2012 survey of BTS shoppers, the National Retail Foundation found 51 percent of people were looking for sales, up from 50 percent a year earlier, indicating consumers remain very value oriented. Indeed, 11.2 percent said they had cut back on their children’s extracurricular activities, up from 10.2 percent a year earlier.

Perhaps more revealing was a Deloitte’s BTS survey that showed that 38 percent of more than 1,000 parents surveyed last July



expected their children to spend at least \$201 of their own money buying school supplies in 2012, up from 5 percent in 2010. This confirms that today’s kids are driving much more of the BTS spending decisions than earlier generations.

The ubiquity of the Internet, meanwhile, has had an homogenizing effect, since most kids buy clothes and shoes not to stand out, but to blend in.

“Kids are much more aware today of what the trends are,” said Powell. “We used to see the BTS business being very regional. The Internet has flattened the earth, so they are much more aware today in Iowa of what’s happening in L.A.”

To wean this new generation of consumers off discounts, retailers are experimenting on several fronts.

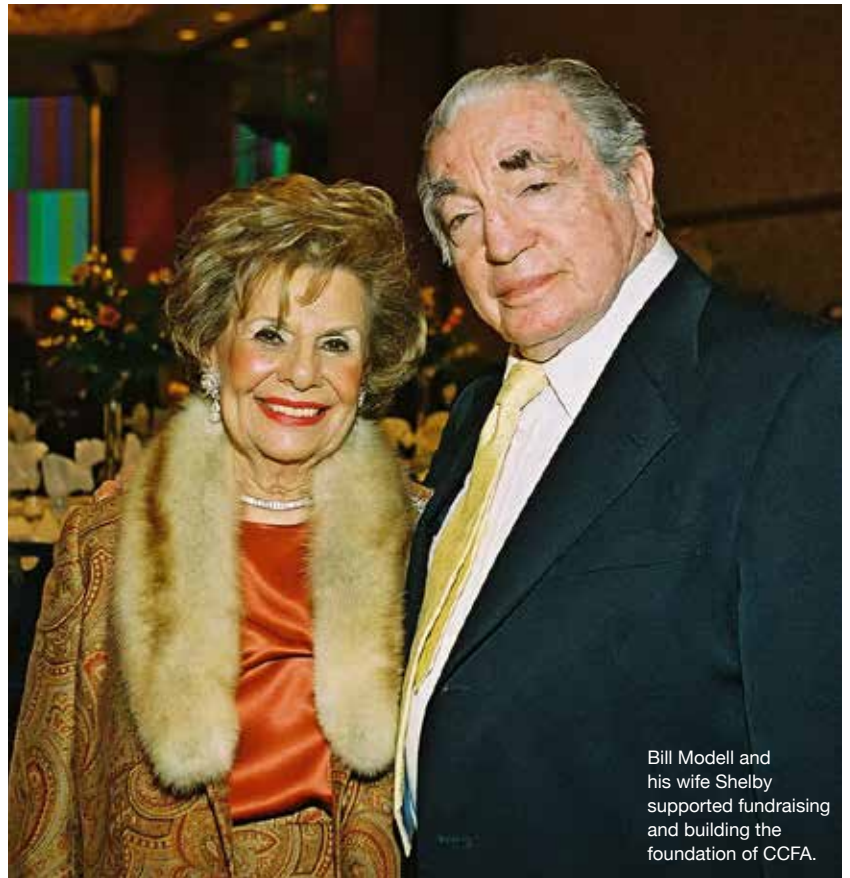
Zumiez is rolling out Zumiez Stash, a new loyalty program that rewards customers not only for making purchases, but for subscribing to its email newsletter, sharing their phone number, filling out an online profile, participating in certain sports, responding to online surveys and attending Zumiez events. Rewards include access to limited edition apparel and autographed skate decks.

Other big box retailers are spinning off specialty concepts in a bid to peel off more serious athletes who are more inclined to pay full price. Dick’s Sporting Goods, for instance, has opened two True Runner stores to cater to serious runners, Finish Line has partnered with Gart Capital Partners to launch the Specialty Running Group, a roll up of independent running specialty stores. In November, Foot Locker announced it was launching SIX:02, a new chain of specialty stores that will carry both major and emerging fitness apparel and athletic footwear for female athletes. ■

MODELL'S FIGHT AGAINST CROHN'S DISEASE

Like many sporting goods chains, Modell's Sporting Goods puts a heavy focus on local programs that support families, youth, education, and physical activity. It's earned a reputation in the northeast for its generosity around sports equipment donations. But in the medical community, the founding Modell family is known for its deep commitment to finding a cure, raising awareness and supporting research for Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

By Thomas J. Ryan



Bill Modell and his wife Shelby supported fundraising and building the foundation of CCFA.

The family's dedication began, devastatingly, when Bill Modell's son, Michael, was diagnosed with Crohn's disease. At the time, physicians and researchers knew little about inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Surgery and a handful of medications were all sufferers had in those days to combat the excruciating – and at times, life-threatening side effects of IBD.

Spending weeks on end at Mount Sinai Medical Center seeking help for their 9-year-old son, Bill Modell and his wife, Shelby, met another couple, Suzanne and Irwin Rosenthal in the hospital. In 1967, the two couples, along with Dr. Henry Janowitz, decided to establish the National Foundation for Ileitis & Colitis, which eventually became the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA).

Today, CCFA remains the only private national nonprofit organization dedicated to finding a cure for IBD. Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are painful diseases that affect about 1.4 million Americans, or nearly 1 in every 200.

Since its founding in 1967, CCFA has invested nearly \$180 million in research, funding studies at major medical institutions and nurturing

investigators at the beginning of their careers. But an equally critical part of the foundation's mission is to provide education and support for people with Crohn's or Colitis.

Non-profits are often the positive side effect of a tragedy. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) was founded by a mother whose daughter was killed by a drunk driver. Nancy Brinker founded Susan G. Komen for the Cure after her younger sister died of breast cancer at the age of 36. Rick Geswell, CCFA's president, said it still takes a herculean effort to launch any national non-profit, and he considers it "magical" that CCFA's founders happened to meet since each had a special skillset that helped bring the foundation to existence.

Irwin, a corporate lawyer, and his wife Suzanne focused on patient-service oriented goals and garnering support from Washington, D.C. while the Modells largely supported fundraising and building the basic structure of the foundation.

Bill Modell was able to tap into his keen business sense in getting the foundation grounded, such as negotiating CCFA's first and eventually larger office space leases. Moreover, his business, sports

and political contacts proved beneficial in supporting the fundraising side. Effectively having run the company alongside his father, Henry, since 1963, Bill eventually led Modell's to become the largest, privately-held sporting goods chain in the country.

But Shelby Modell early on provided the energy and throughout subsequent decades in spearheading fundraising efforts for the foundation.

The couple's connections helped support the first annual awards dinner in 1968 that provided the foundation's first research grant to officially launch the foundation with its final founder, Dr. Henry Janowitz. A dedicated cadre of volunteers was recruited and chapters soon began opening around the country.

"Bill was really the business guy - no question about that - and Shelby was the take-no-prisoners fundraiser pit-bull," said Geswell. "They put us on the map."

The annual dinner continues to be one of CCFA's most successful fundraising events - raising over \$1 million annually. With the support of CCFA's team, the awards dinner is run largely "nuts to bolts" by the Modell family with assistance from many inside the sporting good chain's organization. The efforts include reaching out to its business partners, including many inside the sporting goods industry, for sponsorships, as well as attracting many luminaries to attend to make the event a hot ticket.

Over the last 45 dinners, Mario Cuomo, Abe Beame, Ed Koch, Jacob Javits, Donald Trump, Dick Ebersol, Dick Schaap, Joe Torre and Tommy Lasorda have been among the many feted at the dance.

After chairing the event for 25 years, Bill and Shelby Modell in the early nineties stepped aside as co-chairs and Michael and his wife, Abby, assumed responsibility for the event. Despite being diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease in 1998, Michael remained staunchly committed to insuring the success of the annual awards dinner.

Michael passed away in April 2001 at the age of 48 on the same day that the first gene for IBD had been discovered, considered a breakthrough

by the medical community. With his brother's passing in addition to the loss of his father in 2005, Mitchell Modell, current CEO of Modell's, has stepped up his efforts to support the dinner.

"Mitchell has picked up the baton and he's been very impressive," said Geswell. "He works the phones when we need it and he's always there for me. He's become the driving force for our annual dinner."

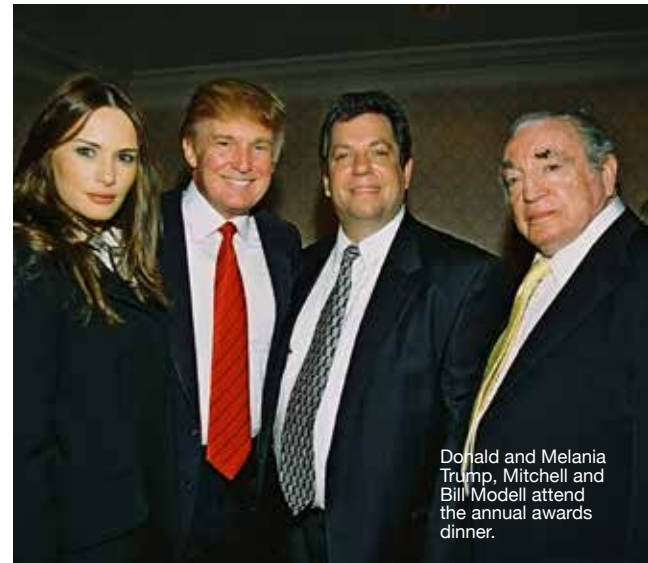
Geswell also noted that Mitchell has put his own "twist" on the annual event. For instance, the last dinner held in December at the Sheraton in New York City featured a casino-themed night. Said Geswell, "It was a great night. Everyone enjoyed themselves."

With the support from efforts by the CCFA, a newer generation of drugs has arrived over the last 15 years that have dramatically improved the quality of life for Crohn's patients. Doctors' understanding of Crohn's disease has also increased radically in recent years to offer more hope of even further treatment improvements and perhaps a cure.

CCFA over the years has also significantly broadened its fundraising reach well beyond the annual dinner to bring in \$43.5 million last year. The foundation now has two national fundraising events - Team Challenge, its endurance-training program, and Take Steps, a community walk program.

But while the support group around those affected by Crohn's disease and colitis has grown significantly since 1967, it all started in a Mount Sinai hospital room.

"We celebrate the Modells every December and what Mitchell continues to do to support our efforts," said Geswell. "It takes a lot of guts and risk to launch a national foundation but it's been wildly successful and it continues to serve as the foundation for all we do today." ■



Donald and Melania Trump, Mitchell and Bill Modell attend the annual awards dinner.



Mitchell and Robin Modell current co-chairs of the CCFA annual awards dinner.



Mitchell Modell is the driving force behind the annual CCFA dinner pictured here with CC Sabathia pitcher for the New York Yankees.

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WITH NEW RETAIL SUPPORT PROGRAM AND COMMEMORATIVE PRODUCTS

By Aaron H. Bible

Seattle, Washington-based Stanley, a brand of PMI, this year is rolling out an innovative Thermalware Retail Support Program (RSP) for dealers, designed to provide retailers with merchandising solutions to drive sell-through and better organize products as a Thermalware category.

The first to officially “name” the category, Stanley believes that Thermalware - defined as food and beverage gear such as vacuum bottles, mugs, nesting systems, and food jars - represents an untapped category with huge potential for retailers as this gear plays a major role in backpacking, back-to-school, camping, work and lifestyle.

In testing conducted this past fall with select retailers, dealers saw an average 35 percent sales increase on items featured in the test. Based off this data, Stanley plans a broader roll out of the program this year, offering it to select retailers nationwide as part of their Fall 2013 purchases.

“The Stanley Thermalware Retail Support Program helps both consumers and retailers by providing clear communication and organization on the shelf,” said Neil Burch, vice president of the Outdoor Division for the Stanley brand. “Retailers receive help in establishing a Thermalware section in their store, which leads to better sell-through and profitability, while consumers are able to locate and compare these items in one area, which allows them to identify the product most suitable for their needs. Ultimately it’s a win-win for everyone.”

The test program was conducted over a six-week period in which Stanley brand representatives worked closely with participating retailers, providing new merchandising tools, displays and

WITNESSE
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"Retailers receive help in establishing a Thermalware section in their store, which leads to better sell-through and profitability, while consumers are able to locate and compare these items in one area, which allows them to identify the product most suitable for their needs. Ultimately it's a win-win for everyone."

-Neil Burch, vice president of the Outdoor Division for the Stanley brand.

point-of-purchase materials. Retailers shared feedback and input on the direction of the next generation of the program. The overall results exceeded expectations, with only positive feedback and results from both sales representatives and participating retailers.

Retailers interested in the TRSP can contact Stanley for additional information.

And to further commemorate the company's 100th birthday, PMI/Stanley is releasing two limited-edition anniversary products, taking inspiration from its early designs.

These new commemorative bottles pay tribute to the original vintage product - from the recessed signature 100th anniversary badge, to the brushed green finish taken directly from the beloved 1944 version - while retaining the performance features that make the brand special. Invented by William Stanley on September 2, 1913 (official patent date), the all-steel vacuum bottle revolutionized the way people enjoyed food and beverage.

"It's such an honor to still be going strong 100 years after William Stanley, Jr. invented the all-steel vacuum bottle. What's even more special is the love people have for this iconic green bottle," said JoAnne Anderson, senior global marketing manager for PMI's Stanley brand. "This bottle represents the shared memories they've had throughout their lifetime. Often times it has outlived the very people they have shared those experiences with and it represents a memory they can still hold on to."

For generations the Stanley brand has been a part of millions of lives, and throughout that time stories of the bond people have with their Stanley bottles continue to be collected and shared online at stanley-pmi.com/stories.

Available from now to December 2013, the new Stanley



Limited Edition 100th Anniversary 1.1 QT/1L and 1.4 QT/1.3L bottles feature: legendary vacuum insulation that keeps drinks hot or cold for 24 hours; double wall, 18/8 stainless steel construction that's guaranteed not to rust; insulated lid that doubles as a cup; and a lifetime guarantee, MSRP \$38 to \$42 respectively.

Founded in 1983 by Rob Harris, PMI manufactures, markets, and designs innovative food and beverage solutions for busy lifestyles worldwide. PMI's two most recognizable brands, Stanley and Aladdin, are both nearly 100 years old. Guided by principles of sustainability, community and integrity, PMI has offices in Shanghai, Amsterdam and Manila and ownership in PMI Joinease manufacturing in China. It currently distributes its products in over 50 countries. ■

8
mplea
att.

BY
William Stanley
Kenyon & Kenyon
ATTORNEYS



KIDS COLOR PLAY

WITH PARENTS SHOWING
A WILLINGNESS TO PAY
MORE FOR QUALITY, KIDS
LOOMS AS AN UNTAPPED
OPPORTUNITY.

By Thomas J. Ryan

With splashes of brighter colors showing up on adult running and hiking shoe walls in recent seasons, the adults seem to be following in the footsteps of kids' trends for a change.

The big sellers in kids continues to benefit from the 'take-me-down' trend, whether because kids want to dress like their older siblings or the 'mini-me' trend, where a girl wants to dress like her mom or a boy like his dad. Ranking as the second largest footwear category in the athletic space after running, it also remains a sizeable opportunity for retailers.

Still, kids remains a challenging category for chains, in part because many SKUs are required to adequately fill the large size range (infant, preschool and grade school sizes). Parents also tend to be even more price-conscious given that kids often quickly outgrow their shoes. As a result, margins tend to be lower.

"As designs and technologies advance in the adult space, it becomes more costly and challenging to take down the most compelling adult product into balance," said Meredith Greeno, product manager, New Balance Kids, while noting that such product typically garners the highest demand.

"In addition to cost, the actual kids takedown development is very challenging as the marketplace mandates that kids "mini-me" product truly mimic adults but also launch simultaneously," Greeno added. "With that said, kids product-teams need to be extremely nimble and be able to flex as adult product changes during the development cycle but still get on retail shelves at the same time."

On the brighter side, parents are increasingly willing to pay more for

quality, versatility, durability and often a fashion play. Experimental colors and fashion-forward treatments are also more widely allowed in kids.

"We've found that style, quality and comfort are most important to parents," said Lorelei Davis, senior product manager at Timberland. "If you get those elements right, parents are willing to invest in a quality boot that children love, that keeps them protected from the elements and has versatile wearing occasions."

"The opportunity in kids footwear is growing feet!" added Erin Simons, product line manager for kids at Keen. "Despite the margin and SKU challenges of the business, kids need shoes and they need shoes more often because their feet are growing. Increasingly, there are also fashion and trend elements to kids footwear. You have the "want" element of buying new shoes to stay trend-relevant and the "need" element of requiring new shoes that fit growing feet."

Simons said that where the adult side of the business has seen a toning down of neons, the kids' marketplace is still receptive to bright colors and patterns because it reads young and fun. She added, "Classic styling is also being taken down into kids footwear...the mommy-and-me story continues with women's and girl's boots, as well as men's and boys' desert boots."

KEEN



LUNA BOOT

SORRENTO

LUNA MJ

For Fall/Winter 2013, a kids' highlight from Keen includes the *Sorrento* for boys, MSRP \$55. Inspired by European styling, the leather and synthetic upper with a classic oxford lace design helps transition from school days to play days.

On the trendier side is the fashion-forward *Luna Boot*, MSRP \$70, and *Luna MJ*, MSRP \$55. Both styles feature bright, colorful suede uppers with stitched floral details. The *Luna Boot* features a medial side zipper and the *Luna MJ* ensures on-and-off ease with adjustable instep straps.

SKECHERS

AIR-MAZING KID:
FIERCE FLEX



BELLA BALLERINA:
PRIMA - SWEET SPUN



HYDEE
PLUS 2

Skechers is extending its newer push in performance shoes to kids. The *Air-Mazing Kid: Fierce Flex*, MSRP \$45, is a lightweight and flexible sneaker with wrap-around side panels on the sole for added stability. For girls, the *Bella Ballerina: Prima - Sweet Spun*, MSRP \$52, features a spin disc on the sole so girls can twirl on their toes like a ballerina. The *Hydee Plus 2*, MSRP \$49, is a suede and glitter high top featuring a hidden two-inch wedge inside for a boost in height.

Fila has increased its focus in the kids business in the last few seasons after eyeing a greater opportunity in the marketplace.

"We've found that our growth in adult sport categories like running and basketball has allowed us to expand our kids range to



bring in more and better kids-specific shoes to market," said Mark Eggert VP of footwear design and advanced concepts at Fila. "As our adult lifestyle range continues to experience a resurgence, we expect the kids range to expand into this category as well."

The retro *Fila Crater*, MSRP \$50, features new tooling, a notably sculpted EVA midsole, minimal rubber outsole upper, and a hook and loop closure. In the *Speedweave Run*, MSRP \$60, a lightweight injected DLS foam midsole provides lightweight cushioning while a minimal one-piece outsole offers traction without adding weight.



FILA CRATER



FILA
SPEEDWEAVE RUN

Timberland's Earthkeepers GT Scramble for boys and girls, MSRP \$45 to \$75, is made with leather and fabric and designed for rugged durability. Rustproof D-ring supports a quick lace-up for kids just learning how to tie their shoes. Traditional lace closure provides a secure fit. Eco-conscious attributes include a Green Rubber outsole made from 42 percent



TIMBERLAND'S
EARTHKEEPERS GT
SCRAMBLE



TIMBERLAND'S EARTHKEEPERS ASPHALT TRAIL BETHEL BUCKLE

recycled rubber, recycled PET mesh lining and footbed cover.

On the more stylish side, *Timberland's Earthkeepers Asphalt Trail Bethel Buckle* for girls, MSRP \$85 to \$95, features a padded collar around the ankle, a recycled PET lining, an OrthoLite footbed and a Green Rubber outsole for maximum traction and durability.

At *Lowa*, the *Kody Jr.*, MSRP \$150, ideal for school, skate parks, trails and everything in between. Featuring *Lowa's* PU Monowrap Frame midsole, a new, patented construction technique that reduces overall boot weight while retaining important lateral stability. Also includes a Vibram Renovo Junior outsole; suede leather and Cordura upper; seamless, waterproof Gore-Tex lining; and climate control footbed with comfort perforations to improve breathability.



LOWA KODY JR.

Modeled after the popular *Breeze*, *Vasque's Breeze 2.0 UltraDry*, MSRP \$79, provides parents with a fully-featured hiker option for their kids. Includes a 1.6mm waterproof suede upper, rubber toe and heel cap, contoured EVA footbed, reflective piping, and *Vasque's* UltraDry waterproofing system.



VASQUE BREEZE 2.0 ULTRADRY

Having seen a strong response with its initial U.S. kids launch of approximately ten styles in Fall 2011, *Adidas Outdoor* is expanding its line to 24 styles for Fall 2013. The *Terrex GTX K* for boys and girls, MSRP \$95, features a reflective *Terrex* print for enhanced visibility and safety, a GTX waterproof/breathable upper and speed lacing construction for fast and snug fit.

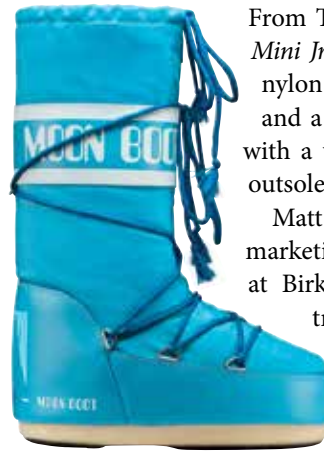


ADIDAS OUTDOOR TERREX GTX K

In Fall 2011 *Hi-Tec* introduced its Big Fit System, which accommodates growing kids' feet by allowing the boot to extend or retract at the midsole. For Fall 2013, the technology has spread across nearly all its kids' styles. Besides the Big Fit System, the *Nepal WP Jr.*, MSRP \$60, features a waterproof suede and mesh upper for durability, versatile lacing system for a secure fit, moisture-wicking lining, and a soft padded collar for comfort.



HI-TEC NEPAL WP JR.



TECNICA MOON BOOT MINI JR.

From *Tecnica*, the *Moon Boot Mini Jr.*, MSRP \$75, features a nylon upper, a polyester lining and a natural rubber midsole with a winter formulated TPU outsole.

Matt Hundley, director, marketing communications at *Birki's*, cited a number of trends working on the kids' side, including vibrant, neon shades; strappy sandals; performance technologies; suede; sneakers; animal skin; prints;

and sequins in addition to color. With more choices available, he believes kids are becoming more fashion-conscious and aware of new trends. Still, he feels parents are more open to paying up for durable, authentic footwear that packs better quality, construction and material use. "Quality and color are our sweet spots and with the trends moving in that direction we're in a good position," said *Hundley*. "And with the quality and wellness features of our products, parents feel good about the investment in their kids' feet."

BIRKI'S TUVALA



BIRKI'S KAY STARS & STRIPES 2

Birki's is seeing good dealer response in orders to its Retro Flags collection, including the *Kay Stars & Stripes 2*, MSRP \$80. The *Tuvala*, MSRP \$70, is part of the playful Monsters collection. *Birki's* kids collections feature a cork/rubber outsole that allows more flexibility while still providing support and structure as well as a Birko-flor upper.

At *Teva*, the *Crank*, MSRP \$55, features *Spider365* for traction on various terrain, *PedalLink* outsole design for integration with a bike pedal and suede and mesh upper for durability and styling. Modeled after its women's style, the *Lenawee* for kids/youth, MSRP \$85, features *Durabrasion Rubber* for



TEVA LENAWEE



COLUMBIA YOUTH
PEAKMASTER
MULTISPORT TRAIL
SHOE

COLUMBIA YOUTH BUGABOOT
ORIGINAL OMNI-HEAT

Columbia's kids push starts with the *Youth Bugaboot Original Omni-Heat*, MSRP \$75, a waterproof, warm and durable lace-up winter boot with Omni-Heat reflective for added warmth. The boot also benefits from waterproof suede leather, Omni-Heat reflective lining and is seam-sealed to keep out water.

On the athletic side, the *Youth Peakmaster Multisport Trail Shoe* from Columbia, MSRP \$60, features a breathable mesh textile upper with a suede leather overlay as well as a bungee-lace closure.



BOGS
ADELAIDE

For girls, Bogs, known for its signature handled, insulated neoprene footwear, is debuting the *Adelaide*, \$78, a 100 percent waterproof, rubber riding boot made with 2mm EverDry with Bogs Max-Wick, a DuraFresh anti-odor protection insole, and a form fitting 4-way stretch upper to keep feet dry and comfortable.

New Balance's Greeno said the colors are supporting kids on the run side. "Similar to the adult running category, color has been

trending and is the biggest selling feature gravitating kids to the sporting goods footwear walls," she said. "Whether it is colored midsoles, full colored uppers or both, kids want fun sneakers that will stand out in the classrooms and on the playgrounds."

The New Balance *Kids 990v3 Neon Collection*, MSRP \$45 to \$70, exemplifies this color trend. Said Greeno, "We have taken our most iconic, classic and heritage sneaker and 'kid-ified' it with a neon pallet and multiple color blocking options."

traction, Tide Seal waterproof membrane to keep dry and a suede and textile upper.

Adam Garrett, The North Face's director of youth footwear, said his team is putting a greater focus on taking it's successful adult styles into youth and will start to be seen in Fall 2013 with a more-aggressive push being set for Spring 2014.

"Spring 2014 you will see more of a push into youth footwear," said Garrett. "We will be debuting new technology and new silhouettes, almost tripling the number of styles in youth. There will be almost no carry-over. Once the volume is there, we will move toward more youth-specific styles."

For Fall 2013, The North Face's kids' offerings include the *Nuptse Faux Fur II* for girls, MSRP \$65, a winter walk-around favorite that delivers down warmth and comfort in a durable day-to-day construction.



THE
NORTH FACE
NUPTSE
FAUX FUR II



NEW BALANCE
KIDS 990V3
NEON
COLLECTION

NEW BALANCE KIDS 750V2

AN OFFER **YOU CAN'T REFUSE.**

WOLVERINE brand, a recognized leader in innovation for 130 years, has designed and built the best quality products since its inception in 1883 and continues to lead the market today. Fall 2013 is no different with the launch of the new **Cameron** and **Rockford** jackets.

There are many duck canvas jackets on the market priced for around \$100 that are very basic in nature, with minimal features and no technology. Wolverine believes that if you pay \$100 you deserve \$100 worth of jacket, which is exactly what these jackets deliver.

"There are a lot of jackets on the market but the Cameron and Rockford jackets are truly different," said Lisa Stoecker, Wolverine Product Manager. "We utilized 3M™ Thinsulate™ Insulation for warmth and 12 oz. heavy duty cotton duck canvas

with DuraLock™ Defend technology for water and oil resistance. The jackets also feature Wolverine's bi-swing back and fully articulated elbows for greater range of motion, and multiple interior and exterior pockets designed to meet the needs of every job. Combine all these elements and we've created the absolute best jackets for the price."

Wolverine has always backed its newest footwear technologies with a 30 day comfort guarantee. And Wolverine is backing the Cameron and Rockford jackets with the same confidence, a rare find in the apparel industry.

"For \$100 retail combined with all the features and functionality, we know consumers will feel these jackets are worth every penny," said Todd Yates, President of Wolverine Brand. "We're so confident, that if your customers are not

completely satisfied with this jacket, we'll take it back directly from them, no questions asked. We think that's an offer you can't refuse."

If you haven't seen Wolverine's Fall 2013 footwear and apparel line, **contact us at 616.863.4774 or stop by our booth at one of the following shows: SHOT Show (booth # 10540), Outdoor Retailer (booth # 32155) or MAGIC.**

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- 4** 150 grams of 3M™ Thinsulate™ Insulation provides warmth in the harshest elements
- 5** 12 oz. heavy duty cotton duck canvas with Wolverine DuraLock™ Defend technology for water and oil resistance
- 6** Triple needle stitching adds durability
- 7** Multiple interior and exterior pockets designed to securely store everything for the job
- 8** Front kangaroo pockets lined with taffeta for wind resistance
- 9** Concealed ribbed storm cuffs keep warm air in and cold air out
- 10** Three-piece lined hood with draw cord provides extra warmth and protection



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- Dependable thermal performance through repeated washings

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WOLVERINE®

Greeno also sees visual technology and lightweight running continuing to be hot for Back-to-School 2013, tracking the adult category. The New Balance Kids 750v2, MSRP \$42 to \$50, is a direct takedown of the adult 750v2 with the same aggressive sculpted Imeva midsole, rubber outsole and fast upper as men's and women's.

From Asics, the *GEL-Lyte33 GS*, MSRP \$65, is a new launch that allows kids to enjoy the unstructured performance similar to that found in the adult version. Kids will love the Rearfoot GEL cushioning while parents will appreciate the added durability of the enhanced outsole coverage.



ASICS GEL-LYTE33 GS

For Saucony, kids' offerings go hand-in-hand with the brand's commitment to help end childhood obesity through its Saucony Run For Good Foundation. For back-to-school, new styles include takedowns of its minimal model, the *Kinvara 4*, MSRP \$60, as well as the *Ride 6*, MSRP \$65, which touts a full-length SRC crash pad and an anti-microbial lining.



SAUCONY KINVARA 4

SAUCONY RIDE 6



For Summer 2013, the big kids launch at Brooks is the ultra-light and flexible *PureFlow 2*, MSRP \$65, that delivers tuned cushion for comfort and a reinforced toe for extra durability.



BROOKS PUREFLOW 2



K-SWISS CLASSIC LITE LIGHTWEIGHT SNEAKER COLLECTION

For back-to-school, K-Swiss' big kids story will be the launch of the *Classic Lite Lightweight Sneaker Collection*, MSRP \$43, available in six bright colors.

In response to overwhelming demand from current fans, Vibram will offer youth sizing in three FiveFingers models new for spring 2013. The *Youth Alitza*, MSRP \$65, is a casual crossover for everyday, urban activities. The transparent mesh upper is soft and comfortable, and the contrasting colored straps across the instep offer security and style during fitness activities.



VIBRAM YOUTH ALITZA

Reebok is bringing its *ATV19* to kids, MSRP \$70, for back-to-school. Billed as the first all-terrain athletic shoe, *ATV19* features irregular lugs, rugged overlays, a padded tongue and supportive collar. All of the outer lugs are beveled at a 28-degree angle, to act as stability-enhancing outriggers.

Sean Finucane, head of classic's, kids and basketball at Reebok, said, "ATV19 is uniquely designed with it's 19 lugs inspired by the 'All Terrain Vehicle' - cushioning, traction, stability with independent suspension similar again to the ATV - ultimately allowing the kids to go where their minds take them."



REEBOK ATV19

DC Shoes builds on the 2012 debut of the Dyrdek Collection in partnership with Rob Dyrdek, the skateboard legend. In girls, the *Alias Lite Hybrid Skate/Running Shoe*, MSRP \$35, set for summer 2013 release is a lightweight, flexible jogger featuring DC's Unilite technology. As part of the Wild Grinder collection, the *Court Graffik Vulc WG*, MSRP \$50, features Dyrdek's Wild Grinders Collaboration with DC's Trademark "Pill Pattern" Tread.



DC SHOES ALIAS LITE HYBRID SKATE/RUNNING SHOE



DC SHOES COURT GRAFFIK VULC WG

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VANS 106 MID



VANS CLASSIC SLIP-ON

Vans has partnered with the Disney Channel's animated comedy Phineas and Ferb for a new play on *Vans' Classic Slip-On*, MSRP \$42. Building on a strong trend around high-tops for children over the last few seasons, the *106 Mid* for boys, MSRP \$45, will be available in a color block scheme mirroring their adult counterparts.

Sanuk, which was acquired by Deckers Outdoor in 2011, is rolling out girls and boys specific versions for 2013 after focusing on unisex models previously in its young history, including the reppy-ish *Donna Girls*, MSRP \$38, on the girls side and the the *Army Brat*, MSRP \$36, for boys.



SANUK DONNA GIRLS



SANUK ARMY BRAT

Reef's Kids Bella Costas consists of take down styles from its new women's Bella Costas collection - Reef's collaboration with artisans in developing countries. The collection includes the *Little Tropic*, MSRP \$44. Reef's signature women's lines also come down to girls' sizes with *Little Reef Dreams*, MSRP \$26.



REEF LITTLE TROPIC

REEF LITTLE REEF DREAMS



For Back-to-School 2013, the Speedo Kid's Surf Walker Extreme, MSRP \$19, features an adjustable bungee closure for easy on/off as well as for a snug fit. The quick drying jersey upper allows for activities in and around aquatic environments.

Moving into Fall 2013, Chooze, known for its focus on making the left shoe and the right shoe different, will introduce



SPEEDO KID'S SURF WALKER EXTREME



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The Toronto Shoe Show: Booth 1322-24

ISPO Winter 13: Hall B5 Stand 101



CHOOZE EMPOWER DRIFT PASTEL

a new Adventure Series of hikers and water resistant. The *Empower Drift Pastel*, MSRP \$23 to \$47, features a neoprene upper, gore straps, rugged TPR outsole, webbed heel tab and molded EVA insole.

At Ugg, the *Butte* for girls, MSRP \$170, is a premium

cold weather boot that fuses function and style. A Vibram outsole specifically designed for wet snowy conditions and breathable eVent membrane to guarantee comfort and wearability in the harshest weather conditions.

For boys, the *Mycah*, MSRP \$65, features top of the line suede with breathable canvas.



UGG MYCAH

At Kamik, the *Scarlet J2*, MSRP \$100, is part of Kamik's new Peak Collection, which are all boots built in the USA.

Most noticeable is the faux fur snow collar and gusseted tongue. The bottoms are made with a waterproof and flexible synthetic rubber shell and Kamik's PEAK outsole for traction on snow and ice. Also features a waterproof quilted nylon and suede upper, fixed 200B Thinsulate insulation, and moisture wicking lining.



KAMIK SCARLET J2

Salomon has offered kids' trail running styles for several years, but the overall kid's push continues to expand since it is now making kids' alpine apparel. The *XT Wings K*, MSRP \$65, includes a quick dry breathable mesh, protective synthetic toe cap, mud guard, breakaway lace system with lace pocket, and non marking Contagrip.

At Merrell, the *Mix Master*



SALOMON XT WINGS K



MERRELL MIX MASTER JAM Z-RAP KIDS

Jam Z-Rap Kids, MSRP \$50, includes a synthetic and mesh upper with Merrell's easy Z-Rap closure system for a personalized, secure fit in one pull so kids can easily pull it on and off all without help. Also includes M-Select Fresh that naturally prevents odors as well as M-Select Grip for traction.



MUCK BOOTS' HALE BOOT COLLECTION

Muc Boots' *Hale Boot Collection* for boys and girls, MSRP \$70, is offered in seven bold, bright colors. They are 100-percent waterproof to the top of the boot, not just to the mid-sole. Other features include a stretch-fit topline binding that snugs the leg; 4mm SBR flex-foam bootie with four-way stretch nylon; and a diamond tread self-cleaning outsole.



SPERRY TOP-SIDER A/O GORE

Sperry Top-Sider is putting a strong emphasis on animal prints and fashion forward shoes in its youth collection. Styles include the the *A/O Gore*, MSRP \$55, with a non-marking molded outsole for traction on wet surfaces.

At Crocs, a more athletic-take in kids is the *Dawson Washable Suede Sneaker*, MSRP \$40, that also benefits from an easy-on, hook and loop closure along with a rubber outsole for improved traction and durability. ■



CROCS DAWSON WASHABLE SUEDE SNEAKER

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TOM COVE

President & CEO
Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA)

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP? The starting catcher of what was then the Washington Senators or the quarterback of the Redskins following in the footsteps of my idol, Sonny Jurgensen.

WERE YOU INTO SPORTS AS A KID? I was a traditional kid – football, baseball, basketball - from the earliest stages. I begged my parents to put the football uniform on and was the manager for my older brother's team when I was around six years old. I played football through high school and went on to the University of Maryland where I realized was too small, too slow, and not strong enough to play D-1. I played rugby from there and competitively for the next 15 years.

WHAT WAS YOUR PROUDEST ATHLETIC MOMENT? When our high school football team beat our rival on their field on their homecoming day. We all knew each other so there was a lot of trash talk and they were favored to win. Afterwards, our principal was so fired up he ran on the bus and told the team we could take off Monday. But my coach, in a rare case of him being more rational than the principal, said, "I don't think we're going to do that. You all better get to class on time on Monday." It reflects the central tenant of how important high school football is not only to youth development, but also to a community. It was a real Friday Night Lights moment.

HOW DID COLLEGE PREPARE YOU FOR YOUR CAREER? I went to the University of Maryland, double majored in economics and political science. I worked most of my way through college on Capitol Hill - parking cars, running parking lots and facilities management. I got a different view of politics and what makes people tick. Coming out of college I wanted to get away from traditional politics and do something real. After majoring in international economic development in graduate school, I landed a job with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). I had a lot of choices but I went with the DEA because I wanted to see how it worked on the ground and around the world making a difference to stop a bad thing from happening.

HOW DID YOU MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE SGMA? It's a convergence of the planets in some way. When I worked at the DEA, the Reagan administration had a very aggressive public campaign against drugs and they used a number of sports celebrities to carry their messages. I knew people working in that area who had worked with SGMA, and when the job of running the Washington, D.C. office opened up, they suggested I apply. I didn't know the SGMA and I didn't really know much about the sporting goods industry. But given the opportunity, I leapt at it and never looked back.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? It is a privilege to work in an industry that I believe in to my core. The role of sports, fitness, outdoor recreation and active lifestyles is central to the well being of society. And while it sounds goofy, it's a great business to be in because you're always working on something that other people find great joy in and get great value from. With our industry in a state of rapid change, the work is different all the time. It's never boring. It's always challenging. And we feel we can make a difference.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE LOOKING TO GET A JOB IN THE SPORTING GOODS INDUSTRY? Follow your passion but the way to be successful in this industry is to have particular skills to match that passion in sports so you can make a difference in a work environment. Also, create opportunities and be ready to make an important decision when given the opportunity.



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