

SGB

ISSUE 1318
MAY 6, 2013

WEEKLY

THE WEEKLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE SPORTING GOODS INDUSTRY





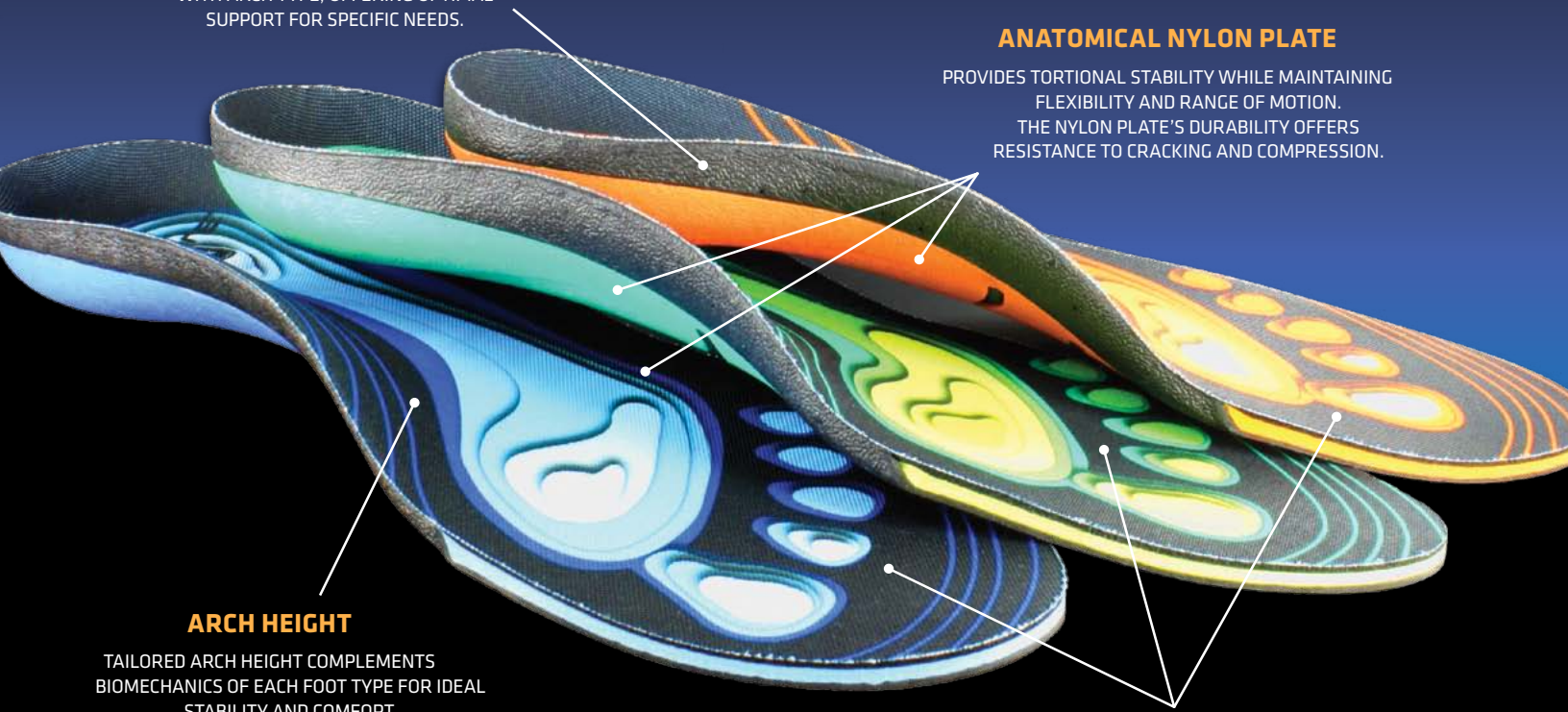
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Photo courtesy of Sanuk

MAKING NEWS

- 4 By The Numbers
PAC Study: One-Third of Americans
Are Truly Active
- 6 Movers & Shakers
K-Swiss Appoints New Executive Team
- 18 Industry Calendar

RETAILER FOCUS

- 8 Sanuk Celebrates First
Flagship Store Opening

PRODUCT FOCUS

- 10 Suunto Introduces New Generation
of GPS Ambit Watches

OUTDOOR BUSINESS

- 12 Stand Up Paddling Is Here To Stay

TEAM BUSINESS

- 14 Franklin Sports Celebrates
Batting Glove's 30th Anniversary

ON THE COVER: Photo courtesy Suunto

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BY THE NUMBERS

72.9%

Cabela's, Inc. reported net income jumped 72.9 percent in the first quarter, to \$49.8 million, or 70 cents a share, compared to \$28.8 million, or 40 cents, in the year-ago quarter. Revenue increased 28.7 percent to \$802.5 million as comparable store sales surged 24 percent. For the quarter, Retail store revenue increased 41 percent to \$486.7 million; Direct revenue increased 18.4 percent to \$225.2 million; and Financial Services revenue increased 2.8 percent to \$85.8 million.

\$246.3 million

Big 5 Sporting Goods Corp. reported net sales increased to \$246.3 million from \$218.5 million for the first quarter of fiscal 2012. Net income for the first quarter of fiscal 2013 was \$7.5 million, or 34 cents per diluted share, compared to net income of \$156,000, or 1 cent, for the first quarter of fiscal 2012. Same store sales increased 10.5 percent.

7.1%

Deckers Outdoor Corp. reported sales increased 7.1 percent in the first quarter to a record \$263.8 million, up from \$246.3 million for the same period last year - with increases of 7.9 percent for Ugg, 3.6 percent for Teva and 4.4 percent for Sanuk. Earnings dropped 75.8 percent due to greater operating costs, as earnings were 3 cents per diluted share compared to 20 cents per diluted share for the same period last year.

26.1%

Gatorz, Inc., which makes and distributes eyewear for the motorsports, military, hunting and fishing, action sports and youth markets, reported revenue of \$327,700 in the fourth quarter ended December 31, 2012, up 26.1 percent from the same quarter a year earlier. The increase was the result of the introduction of 27 Nexcom stores to the company's retail distribution network toward the end of the third quarter. Loss from operations was \$97,000, an improvement of \$308,100 from the same quarter last year.



PAC STUDY: ONE-THIRD OF AMERICANS ARE TRULY ACTIVE

One-third of the American population age 6 and up is "active to a healthy level," according to the latest study released by the Physical Activity Council (PAC), a consortium of six major sports, fitness, and leisure trade associations.

The PAC study utilizes a new "calorie burning" component to define activities as low, medium, or high calorie-burning activities. The groundbreaking "active to a healthy level" statistic is defined by the number of Americans that take part in a high calorie-burning activity three or more times a week. Using this definition, the PAC is able to determine that 94.8 million Americans age 6 and older, or 33 percent, are active to a healthy level.

"Having a third of the U.S. participate in activities to a level deemed healthy is encouraging," said PAC Chairman and SFIA President & CEO Tom Cove. "It also means that two-thirds of the country is not active to a healthy level and we as a society need to find ways to get America moving. I know the PAC is exploring ways in which this can be done, but the need for more activity needs to be on our national agenda as obesity and health care costs continue to rise."

The PAC study also shows that 80.4 million Americans age 6 and up, or 28 percent, are inactive, defined as those that participate in no sports/activities. This is the first time, dating back to 2007, that the number of inactive Americans has reached over 80 million.

The PAC's annual Participation Report measures overall levels of activity and identifies trends in 119 specific sports, fitness and recreation activities. The Report also examines spending habits, the effect of physical education, and participation interests among non-participants.

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MOVERS & SHAKERS

Land World Limited named a new global executive team to oversee the newly formed **K-Swiss, Inc.** entity. Effective immediately, the K-Swiss Inc. global executive team will be led by **Truman Kim**, chairman; **Larry Remington**, president and CEO; **Barney Waters**, CMO; and **Wim Tuijl**, managing director of Europe, Middle East and Africa.

Cocona, Inc. promoted **Jeff Bowman** to chief executive officer. He replaces outgoing CEO **Brad Poorman**, who is leaving to pursue other opportunities, including selling Cocona products, after helping Bowman in the transition.

Nike, Inc.'s Michael Spillane, currently a VP at the company, will become the VP & GM of Nike's Greater China geography effective June 1.

Respect Your Universe, Inc., the mixed martial arts apparel company, appointed Craig Brod, Ph.D. as CEO. He replaces **David Campisi**, who resigned to join **Big Lots, Inc.** as its president and CEO.

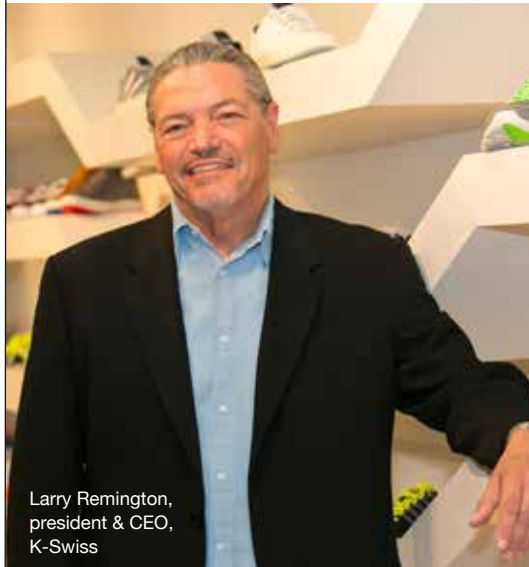
Sports Authority announced that **Paul M. Okimoto** has joined the company as chief marketing officer.

Black Diamond Equipment promoted **Brian Mecham** to VP of North American wholesale as part of a broader reshuffling of its top sales executives.

Bill Sinoff, Black Diamond's apparel line sales manager, will move into Mecham's former role as North American director of wholesale. **Chris Grover** was named to the newly created position of global go-to-market director.

ModCraft welcomed **Kevin Burnette** as co-founder and partner. He will lead sales and business development while managing client accounts and implementing strategic media buys.

REI announced that **Steven Hooper** and **Anthony Truesdale** were elected by REI members to three-year terms on the co-op's board of directors.



Larry Remington,
president & CEO,
K-Swiss



Barney Waters,
CMO, K-Swiss

K-SWISS APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE TEAM

K-Swiss, Inc. last week completed its merger with Korea's E.Land World, Ltd. and unveiled a new management team. The global executive team will be led by Truman Kim, chairman; Larry Remington, president and CEO; and Barney Waters, CMO.

Remington, who most recently served as president of the company's Palladium brand, succeeds Steven Nichols, K-Swiss' CEO since 1987, and David Nichols, president since 2012. A 30-year industry veteran, Remington's former posts include heading up Skechers' international division and CEO of Lady Foot Locker and Kids Foot Locker.

At Palladium, Remington worked alongside Waters, who headed up Palladium's marketing, and the two helped to triple the French fashion footwear brand's growth since its re-launch in mid-2009. Waters was formerly VP of marketing for Puma North America.

Kim, who is relocating to K-Swiss's headquarters in Westlake Village, CA, to help steer the new acquisition, is director of the Sports Business unit of E.Land. He gained credit for expanding the New Balance brand in Korea over the last four years, and helped Puma gain a foothold in the country previously. Established in 1980, E.Land is the largest integrated fashion and retail company overseeing close to 200 brands and operating more than 10,000 stores worldwide. Its revenues were approximately US \$8 billion in 2012.

Other key members to the team include Wim Tuijl, managing director of Europe, Middle East and Africa; and Ed Flora, who continues as incumbent COO. Additional appointments and key hires will be named in the weeks and months to follow.

"We believe that with its authentic heritage and global brand equity, K-Swiss can once again be one of the world's leading athletic brands," said Remington. "Palladium has great momentum and we want to continue to fuel this growth. In addition, we will look for opportunities to grow the brand portfolio under the group umbrella."

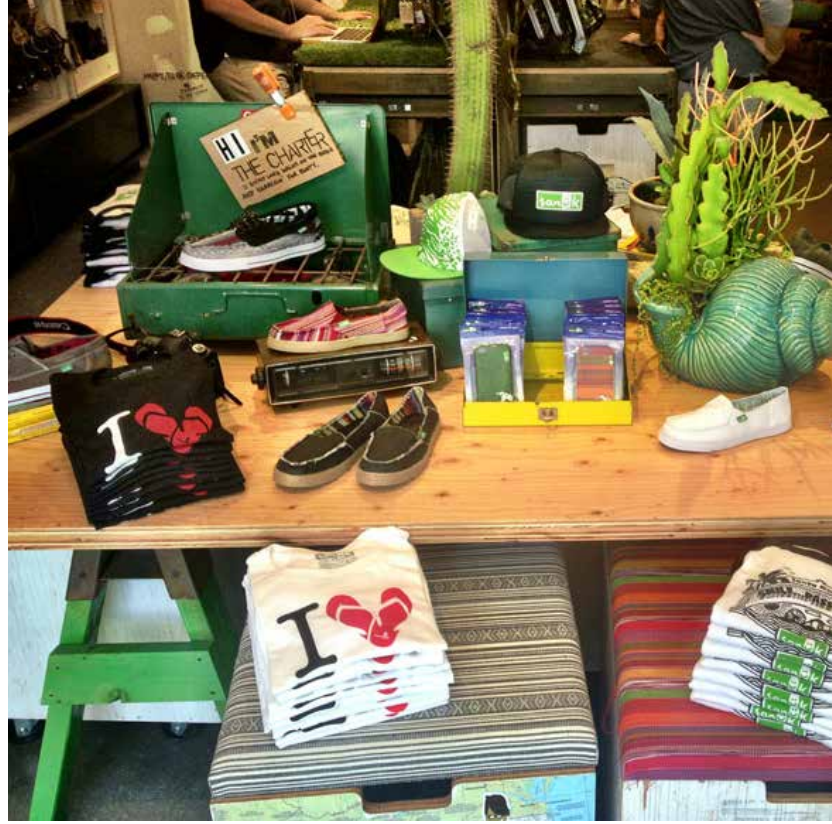


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SANUK CELEBRATES FIRST FLAGSHIP STORE OPENING

By Thomas J. Ryan

Photos courtesy Sanuk

Sanuk, the surf sandals brand acquired by Deckers Outdoor in July 2011, celebrated the grand opening of its first company-owned store at the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica on April 20.

The 1,000-square-foot store features unique elements, a lo-fi design look and feel and offers exclusive products only available at the Santa Monica location. Upon entering the space, a collage installation featuring a collection of outdoor and indoor items creates a decor of items that harken to a sense of fun but with a twist and turn that has everyone looking for hidden nuances.

"We wanted to bring the Sanuk brand experience to life in a great shopping destination that represents what we stand for here at Sanuk - fun, humor and smiles. I think we've found a great balance here at Santa Monica," said Jake Brandman, Sanuk president. "As our first brand-owned store, we were able to bring the humorous aspect of the brand to life and create that deep connection with existing and new customers. We see this store as a place for us to explore alongside with our customers and showcase our innovative Sidewalk Surfers and absurdly comfortable Yoga Mat and Beer Cozy sandals. This opening represents a great step in the evolution of Sanuk."

The store's concept, a "Space to Play" is inspired by an unfinished

basement or garage, that place where people sit back, relax and enjoy moments with their friends. The store brings the brand's emotion to life, featuring floating stud walls and many raw finishes, letting shoppers fill the space with their imagination. Creative solutions that will make the shopping experience unique are sprinkled throughout the store; one notable feature is the modular cleat system that will house many of the sandals and a pantry-style cabinetry that turns a traditional shoe wall into a self-service system.

Exclusive merchandise such as branded sweatshirts, T-shirts, hats and accessories showcase the breadth and growth of the brand's collection. Like the Sanuk brand, the store's music selection will be an eclectic mix of everything from bluegrass, to reggae to old-school funk.

To celebrate Sanuk's first flagship store, Deckers and Sanuk executives kicked it off with an official opening ceremony and topped off the evening with a jam session by California-based musical artist and Sanuk ambassador Lukas Nelson and Promise of the Real.

"The whole goal for this store was to create a space where we could play - we've taken all the classic Sanuk ingredients and stirred them up into a fresh recipe that we believe will set the tone for future Sanuk stores," said Michael Minter, Sanuk global director of marketing. "The Santa Monica store offers an irreverent take on our brand and we're excited to evolve the brand into an immersive experience."

For years, Sidewalk Surfers and other Sanuk shoes were sold via other retailers, such as Jack's Surfboards, REI and Zappos, and specialty shops. Some 65 shops dedicated to Sanuk products - most of them in Asia - are owned and operated by licensees.

Sanuk's sales reached \$89.8 million in 2012. Founded by Southern California native and surfer Jeff Kelley, Sanuk sponsors a spectrum of premier athletes, including surfers Donavon Frankenreiter and Dave Rastovich, and rock climbers Chris Sharma and Daniel Woods, as well as artists and musicians. ■

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Ambit2 S
Photos courtesy Suunto

SUUNTO INTRODUCES NEW GENERATION OF GPS AMBIT WATCHES

Suunto App Zone and MovesCount.com
get accompanying facelift

By Aaron H. Bible

Suunto - global leader in precision sports instruments - announced the launch of its next generation of Ambit outdoor GPS watches: the new Ambit2 and Ambit2 S line, now offering a GPS watch for every sport from triathlon to mountaineering.

"We believe that in 2013 and beyond, the outdoorsy multi-sport segment is the fastest growing sub-segment of the performance market and in a few years will become the biggest sub-segment in the \$250 and up price range," said Markus Kemetter, product manager, Ambit family, in an interview with *SGB*. "Suunto is committed to offering the best value for the money

for the consumers in the Exploring and Multisport sub-segments of the Performance Sports watch market. With Ambit-family we had a great start in 2012 and with this expansion of the Ambit family we aim to offer the best products within these sub-segments in 2013."

"The Ambit received tremendously positive responses from consumers last year," said Suunto president Mikko Moilanen. "To meet the needs of performance-sports oriented users even better, we felt that a lighter, slimmer GPS with more sports-specific features was needed to complement the Ambit family."

The new Ambit2 S is a lightweight, sleek GPS watch built specifically to optimize cycling, running, swimming and multisport training. The GPS feature provides pace, route navigation and tracking. The heart rate monitor helps athletes train within the ideal zone. Sophisticated multi-sport features allow users to switch hassle-free between all three sports.

In Cycling the new Suunto Ambit2 S supports power meters (ANT+), offers various power measurement values and provides numerous in-depth analysis options. For swimmers the Ambit2 S offers comprehensive functionality including precise pace and distance, automatic interval recordings, stroke rate and swimming time related to different pool lengths. Additionally the 2 S recognizes swimming style, making performance analysis easier. Runners benefit from accurate pace and distance thanks to FusedSpeed, the Ambit's accelerometer integrated GPS. An interval timer and autolap function make training even easier.

According to Kemetter, who was in Boulder, CO, last week to personally introduce the new product to about a dozen national journalists, the market has four main sub-segments: Outdoor Exploration, Multisport, Running and Biking. "We launched the Ambit-family in Spring 2012 for the Outdoor Exploration - offering functionality for both outdoor adventures and exercising," Kemetter said. "The feedback from our customers has been incredibly good, and based on this feedback we are now expanding both the functionality and the offering to meet the most demanding sports specific needs in running, biking, swimming and multisports."

Building on the success of the award-winning Suunto Ambit, the Ambit2 includes not only all the original Ambit's hallmark outdoor functions such as route navigation, barometric information, altimeter with FusedAlti, 3D compass and other outdoor specific features, but also boasts all the Ambit2 S' training features. A glass fiber reinforced casing with a max 50-hour battery life in GPS mode, the Ambit2 is the ultimate watch for adventurers, explorers and multi-sport athletes. It charges through any USB port - convenient when you are downloading data or uploading custom apps.

"With our offering Suunto is targeting the mid/high-end of the performance sports watch market. We estimate the size of this target market (price points at \$250 and higher) is globally \$400 million in 2013 and growing at an annual pace of 15 to 20 percent," said Kemetter. "We estimate the U.S. market being roughly 35 percent of this global market."

He points to two performance trends working symbiotically with the brand. "Firstly, more consumers want to do their exercising outdoors. Secondly, more consumers want to have versatility in their exercising," he said. And while outdoor specialty was the main retail channel in 2012 in the U.S. market, Suunto is expanding to running and triathlon specialty in 2013.

Suunto has also upgraded the App Zone, the Suunto community forum that allows users to find and create free Apps for Ambit GPS watches. Since it launched in November 2012, users have created over 5,000 apps. The upgrade provides Ambit owners the ability to



create and share more advanced apps, creating a unique training tool. Suunto's online sports community MovesCount.com, which hosts the App Zone, will now provide more in-depth workout analysis, enhanced navigation and improved sharing opportunities.

Kemetter describes three factors for success in this latest Suunto iteration: one, the combination of outdoor and performance features; two, great designs for both action and everyday use; and lastly, the unique Suunto AppZone, which offers consumers the opportunity to create sport specific, personalized features to meet their individual needs like no other product in the market. The Ambit2 and 2 S are available worldwide now.

Tuomas Vohlonen, a Finnish orienteer and inventor of the liquid-filled field compass, founded Suunto in 1936. Since then the brand has been a design leader and innovator for sports watches, dive computers and other instruments. Suunto's headquarters and manufacturing plant is in Vantaa, Finland, and with more than 400 employees worldwide, its products are sold in more than 100 countries. The company is a subsidiary of Amer Sports Corporation along with its sister brands Salomon, Arc'teryx, Atomic, Wilson, Precor and Mavic. ■



Photo courtesy of BenThourad.com

STAND UP PADDLING IS HERE TO STAY

Growing at a constant rate, Stand Up Paddling is a proven force to reckon with. Putting tradition first never hurts, and the lifestyle will persistently follow.

By Brendan Bradley

The sport of surfing has always intrigued but never gained the notoriety it deserved, and commercially we have feared for this old Hawaiian pastime. A handful of deeply rooted ambassadors of the sport pioneered a less-explored style of surfing unaware of its true potential. Little did they know they had stumbled upon the most entry-level friendly sport this generation has seen – Stand Up Paddling (SUP).

On the western shores of Oahu in 2002, SUP sparked an interest in Todd Bradley, CEO and co-founder of C4 Waterman, Brian Keaulana, co-founder of C4 Waterman and Stuntman, and Dave Parmenter, co-founder and Gran Torino shaper of C4 Waterman. Likewise, Maui locals such as Laird Hamilton, Dave Kalama and Archie Kalepa (names that speak for themselves as legends of



surfing) were also pioneering the sport and pushing the limits on Maui and Oahu for the pursuit of surfing's evolution.

Some believed the future of surfing was a jet-propelled board, but the trends just needed a tweak in the right direction, and stand up paddleboards quietly re-emerged from surfing history. Bradley, Keaulana and Parmenter saw the opportunity and ran with it when they created C4 Waterman in 2006 as the only SUP company in the world.

Although quickly blurred by the rush of new companies like Surfttech and BIC Sports, who joined the market, it became apparent that the surf industry had found its new lease on life.

As quickly as the innovation surfaced, skeptics were there to combat the change. For a sport as deeply rooted in Hawaiian culture as surfing is, changing it is like messing with Grandma's apple pie recipe - you just don't do it. The majority of the naysayers misunderstood that SUP actually originated in the 1900s; but due to its rapid rise to fame, and having avoided the limelight for so long, it had such a foreign look that to constitute it as surfing was blasphemy.

With SUP there's an appeal that goes beyond the ocean. With "exercise" being the common theme, it gravitated toward the mainland coasts, the Mid-West and inland rivers. "Stand Up is just like anything that shows up at Outdoor Retailer," said Darren Bush, owner of Rutabaga Paddlesports in Madison, WI, an avid paddling evangelist, and active member of the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA). "In the first year you're saying to yourself, 'Yeah, that's interesting,' then in the second year you're surprised that it's still there. The third year rolls around and then you realize, 'Okay, this is obviously a force to be reckoned with.'"

Bush said it's just as true as *Step Into Liquid* portrays it, yet SUP gives users the ability to embody the thrill that surfing provides with the versatility to be applicable virtually anywhere, for anyone. "Surfing and everything associated with it is inevitably cool to people," Bush said. "If

you're driving around Wisconsin with a surfboard on your car, you're instantly cool." And with new technology supplying the market with inflatable boards that can be rolled to the size of a sleeping bag, no one can argue that a clunky surfboard serves no purpose in your condo during the dead of winter.

It may be the enticing aspects of SUP's relation to surfing that are leading the masses to the sport, but the ability to retain the enthusiasts, who are still unsure of the sport's capabilities, is where the appeal truly lies. Innovations in inflatable boards are setting the sport apart from surfing, but only in the sense that it has new frontiers to conquer - from river running in the Pacific Northwest to those who have never paddled before experiencing lakes and rivers first-hand. "Being able to surf a short board on river waves is few and far between, while SUP is the opposite, and even if they're small waves, they are still fun," said Aaron Pruzan, owner of Rendezvous River Sports in Jackson Hole, WY.

"Ever since Gidget and foam-cored surfboards in the early 1960s lit the fuse on the surfing youth craze, every inventor and company from Hobie to Quiksilver has tried to parlay the sport of surfing and its lifestyle to middle America," Parmenter said about the expanding migration of the sport inland.

The stand-up community will continue to see a solid growth in paddlers and fitness enthusiasts. Incorporating these discoveries with the traditions that resonate through the sport is the key. "The next step for SUP is up to the Millennial generation to take it to the next level; it's different, cool, and has ties to Hawaiian tradition which is why I think it will retain appeal," Bradley added. As the movement strengthens, enthusiasts must build upon the foundations to keep the appeal, especially with hard-core river runners who are pushing the limits exploring rapids as intense as Class 5.

With the creation of the Supsquatch, a 16' x 6'1/2" x 8" monster inflatable by C4 Waterman for multi-person fun, a new subculture gives even less experienced paddlers the ability to get on waves and share an experience with others. Or perhaps the future of SUP is in Class 5 rapids where hard-core paddlers like Dan Gavere and Charlie MacArthur are pushing their limits, testing waters that were, until recently, reached only by kayak.

It's rare to find a sport that is so friendly to beginners and also offers a broad spectrum of difficulties. "The trio - of inventors, watermen, and businessmen - that made this a reality, were able to do so because stand-up paddling is relatively easy to learn," Parmenter said. "It is simple and has few moving parts; it is fun and can be done at any level; it can be practiced on nearly every body of water from a paddle tank to an open-ocean, cross-channel race; but most important to its success in the world's inland waterways is that stand-up paddling came from Hawaii and thus the host culture is both Polynesian yet inclusive."

So while we're still unable to foresee the full potential of the sport, it is a growing notion that it is here to stay. ■

FRANKLIN SPORTS CELEBRATES BATTING GLOVE'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Franklin acknowledges a milestone with a unique contest and series of instructional videos

By Fernando J. Delgado

Franklin batting gloves have been a visible part of baseball for quite some time. Ever since Mike Schmidt, the Philadelphia Phillies legendary third baseman and Franklin's first-ever MLB endorser, became the face and best-known user of the gloves in the early 80's, an impressive number of All-Stars and eventual Hall of Famers have stepped into the batter's box wearing gloves with the Franklin name. It's been 30 years, to be exact.

As Major League Baseball kicks off its 2013 season, Franklin will be celebrating its batting glove milestone with a special 30th Anniversary celebration. Originally founded in 1946, Franklin Sports got its start as a regional brand of sporting goods products and expanded to offer a complete line of products centered around NFL star Joe Namath. The company established a strategy of aligning itself with star athletes, something that helped its batting gloves take off. In 1983, Franklin collaborated with Schmidt to create the original Franklin Batting Glove. Thanks to its performance, it grew to become the official batting glove of MLB, and Franklin will be marking the legacy of its glove with a promotion that will give aspiring young players a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, in addition to rolling out a series of instructional videos intended to improve fundamentals for a new generation of hitters.

"We were trying to find a way of celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Franklin batting glove and the history of our association with Major League Baseball, with hitting, and of course helping make hitters hit better," explained Larry Franklin, president of Franklin Sports.

"We kicked around a number of ideas, and we ended up with the concept of bringing a hitting clinic to the ballpark to the ultimate user and consumer. We had to figure out how to do it in a way that would be organized and work."

The leadership at Franklin came up with the idea of holding hitting clinics in 18 major league ballparks during the summer. At the clinics, about 50 individuals would spend an hour with Franklin athletes and coaches learning how to hit. In order to determine the clinic participants, Franklin will run a national contest that individuals can enter online: the "Learn From a Pro" Promotion. Winners will receive two tickets to a batting clinic at an MLB ballpark hosted by a Major League Baseball professional, and two tickets to attend the game later that day. The batting clinics offer the winners a unique opportunity for young players to learn under the instruction of pro players and coaches, providing access to major league facilities and interaction with pros that many kids may never otherwise have the chance to experience. The "Learn From A Pro" Promotion began December 1, 2012 and runs through May 30, 2013. All batting clinics will be held between June 24 and August 30.

"It's a great way to expose the Franklin brand to the user community, and give something to the community that has tangible value that they will enjoy," said Franklin. "They will get tickets to the game, and whether it's father and son – or whoever wins – we hope they will have a great day at the ballpark and have an experience that they will remember for a long time."

Harold Reynolds, a former MLB second baseman who played from 1983-1994 and a current MLB Network analyst, serves as a spokesman for Franklin and was instrumental in coming up with the idea for the “Learn From a Pro” Promotion. Reynolds is also featured in a series of instructional videos – also called “Learn From a Pro” - designed to help kids learn the fundamentals of hitting. Known for his upbeat style as a broadcaster and analyst, Reynolds’ enthusiasm for the promotion – and baseball in general - was clear in a conversation with *SGB*. “The 30th anniversary of the Franklin batting glove is something that is special, not only to myself, but to anybody in baseball because of the longevity of the company and the impact of the gloves,” said Reynolds. “The anniversary is also going to affect fans in a positive way with the clinics. This is family-oriented, and it’s about giving back to the fans.”

Reynolds credited Franklin’s batting glove for helping improve his hitting and swore by them early in his career. “I wore Franklin’s batting gloves when they were just getting started,” Reynolds shared. “They were a known name, but not nearly to the level that they’re known now. I consider myself one of the early guys who wore the gloves.”

Reynolds was originally drawn to the look of the gloves, and some of the fellow players who had experienced success wearing them. “Don Mattingly had been wearing the Franklin batting glove, and Mike Schmidt had been the original endorser, so when the opportunity came for me to wear that glove, I wore it because it looked great,” he said. “And then after wearing it because it looked great, I realized the performance level of the glove was outstanding. After a year of wearing the glove, I continued to be a loyal supporter.”

According to Reynolds, the fit of Franklin’s batting gloves is the most important feature for players, both for kids learning to play the game and major league veterans. “One thing that they’ve done so well is that they customize the gloves to fit each customer properly,” he stated. “The key to a batting glove is that it fits snug on the hand and prevents you



Justin Upton,
Left Fielder for the
Atlanta Braves

Hitting How-To's

from getting blisters. For the 12-to-15 years I wore a Franklin batting glove, I never got a blister. That in and of itself is a lifesaver. I can't guarantee the same for everyone, but because they've been in the business so long, they've figured out a way to minimize blisters on the hand. I also like how you can strap gloves on any way you want to. There are a lot of great features."

The promotion and the clinics will help winners take advantage of a rare opportunity. "The cool thing is that you're going to have the chance to be within 10 feet of a major league baseball player or hitting coach talking to you about how to hit," Reynolds said. "Winners will have a chance to be in the actual batting cage at the ballpark. You're just not going to have that kind of fan experience or interaction ever – to have access to a major league hitting tunnel or have access to being around the players as close as you're going to be."

For anyone who isn't fortunate enough to win a spot to one of the clinics, Reynolds and Franklin have worked together to produce a series of instructional videos to teach players the fundamentals of hitting, with Reynolds as host. In the series, he offers tips on the fundamentals, including proper batting stance, swing techniques, strength training, proper batting grip and how to swing off a tee.

According to Franklin, the instructional videos were a result of Reynolds' passion for the game. "Harold's idea was to focus on every aspect of hitting, and talk about what we can do and what the right tips are," stated Franklin. "Harold's passionate about getting kids to play and improve at any level, whether it's a college kid or a player who's just starting out. For him, these tips were designed for everybody that plays baseball." He added that the company previously had success with a similar project led by Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn, so he has no doubt that the videos will be helpful for those that see them.

The company will be posting the instructional videos on YouTube as well as its own website, in addition to tying them in with future products. "These videos are going to get wide exposure, and it's great for the baseball community," said Franklin. "As much information that's out there on hitting, and as many tapes and videos that have been produced over the years, we're excited about these because Harold's a good instructor and he's a student of the game. He's on TV every day so he knows how to present ideas; these videos are going to be great."

Reynolds told SGB that the instructional videos, which are about two minutes each in length, will be a valuable tool for anyone who is learning the game or who wants to get better. "The educational value is tremendous," he stated. "We shot them in Studio 42 at the MLB Network and we used all the Franklin tools, including the hitting tee. In one of the videos we talk about how to use the donut, in another we talk about how to use the on-deck circle to your benefit. All the keys and aspects that you might need to become a pretty good hitter. That's what they're about. They're hitting how-to's."

Franklin believes the promotion in general will be a great opportunity for team dealers. "Any dealers that qualified through certain programs that we ran have an opportunity to re-market this in ways

Harold Reynolds, former MLB second baseman, and spokesman for Franklin, was instrumental in developing the idea for the "Learn From a Pro" instructional video series designed to help kids learn the fundamentals of hitting. The two minute videos, (click below to view), are a valuable tool for anyone who is learning the game or who wants to improve.

video 1



video 2



video 3



that will be beneficial to them," he said. "It's helped us in sell-in, and I'm sure it will help dealers in sell-through."

"We hope that will be a positive experience for everyone who attends," offered Franklin. "We hope they go back and tell their family and friends about it, and we hope they'll think of Franklin in a positive light. We think it's a great way to market to our customers, and give something back to the consumer. Only about 1,000 will attend around the country, but hopefully the kid goes back to wherever he plays, whether it's Little League or Babe Ruth League, and tells his friends and teammates that it was a cool experience and that the gloves are great." To find out more about the Learn From a Pro Contest, visit franklinsports30thanniversary.com. ■

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MAY

- 5-8 N.S.G.A. Mgmt. Conference
Palm Beach Gardens, FL
- 8-9 ASI New York
New York, NY

JUNE

- 18-20 Licensing International Expo
Las Vegas, NV
- 26-28 TAG Spring/Summer Show
St. Charles, MO
- 27-29 Sports Inc. Athletic Show
Denver, CO

JULY

- 9-11 TAG Spring/Summer Show
St. Charles, MO
- 10-12 BCA International Billiard & Home
Recreation Expo
Friedrichshafen, Germany
- 11-14 European Outdoor Trade Fair
Friedrichshafen, Germany
- 12-14 A.D.A. Spring Show
Milwaukee, WI
- 16-18 ASI Chicago
Chicago, IL
- 17-19 NBS Specialty Outdoor Market
Fort Worth, TX
- 18-19 NBS Athletic Market
Austin, TX
- 31 Outdoor Retailer Open Air Demo
Salt Lake City, UT

AUGUST

- 1-4 Outdoor Retailer Summer Market
Salt Lake City, UT

- 1-4 SGB Active Lifestyle Investors
Conference
Salt Lake City, UT
- 8-10 Sports Inc. Outdoor Show
Denver, CO
- 17-19 Atlanta Shoe Market
Atlanta, GA

SEPTEMBER

- 8-10 NBS Fall Semi-Annual Market
Fort Worth, TX
- 18-20 Interbike International Trade Expo
Las Vegas, NV
- 25-26 Sports & Fitness Industry Assoc.
Industry Leaders Summit
Baltimore, MD
- 30-2 OIA Rendezvous
San Diego, CA

OCTOBER

- 7-8 The Retailing Summit
Dallas, TX
- 15-17 SGB Sports & Technology
Convergence
Palo Alto, CA

NOVEMBER

- 5-7 TAG Fall/Winter Show
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- 15-17 A.D.A. Fall Show
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- 24-26 Sports Inc. Athletic Show
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