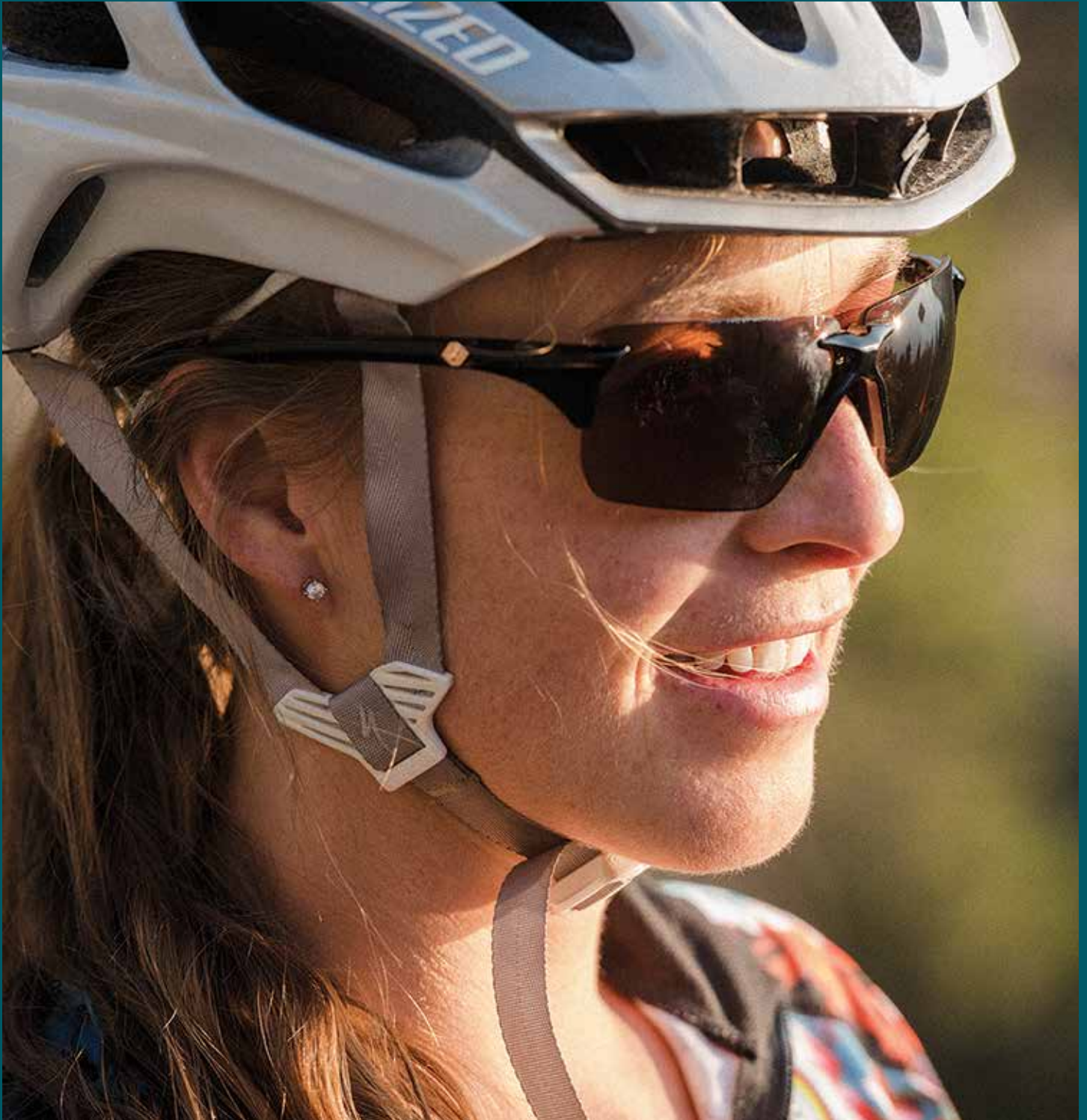


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MARCH 31, 2014

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THIS PAGE: Photo courtesy Sundog Eyewear
COVER: Photo courtesy Zeal Optics



MOVERS
& SHAKERS

Backcountry appointed **Bradford Shellhammer**, former founder of Fab.com, to the position of chief design officer.

Donald Brennan, chief merchandising officer, **Kohl's Corp.**, is resigning from his position, effective April 1.

Eagle Creek hired **Tim McGuire** as senior national sales manager. McGuire has held executive leadership positions most recently at Keen, Nike, and Jansport as well as Eagle Creek from 1988-1995.

Mizuno USA signed a multi-year partnership as the official glove provider for Atlanta Braves shortstop, **Andrelton Simmons**.

Reef said Hawaiian former Association of Surfing Professionals World Tour surfer **Roy Powers** has come onboard as a sales rep for the Oahu territory.

SOG Specialty Knives & Tools hired **Tim Bailey & Associates, Inc.** to cover sales representation duties in seven additional states in the western U.S.

Under Armour announced that **Fritz Taylor** has joined the organization's footwear leadership team as VP, run. Taylor will be directly responsible for guiding the merchandising and development of all running footwear, including men's, women's, and youth. He was formerly VP and general manager of Running at Mizuno.

XENITH

BECOMES AN OFFICIAL SUPPLIER OF THE NFL

Xenith, LLC announced that it has become "An Authorized Supplier of Helmets to the NFL." Xenith football helmet technology has been on the field since 2009 at all levels of play and a growing number of NFL players have chosen to wear Xenith helmets.

The deal will enable Xenith to promote its new X2E and EPIC football helmets, which feature Xenith Adaptive Head Protection.

"We are pleased to become an authorized supplier to the NFL and believe in the overall mission to provide advanced helmet technology to players of every level," said Chuck Huggins, Xenith's president and CFO. "We are also pleased that our continuing relationship with the NFL will further the efforts of USA Football and other football-related initiatives to continue to help make the game of football a fun and safe athletic activity."



Photo courtesy Lululemon

LULULEMON ATHLETICA, INC.

REPORTS FLAT Q4 EARNINGS

Lululemon Athletica, Inc. earned \$109.7 million, or 75 cents a share, about even with \$109.4 million, or 75 cents a year ago. Results slightly ahead of a forecast of 71 to 73 cents a share given on mid-January. Before the update, the yoga-themed retailer had expected earnings in the range of 71 to 73 cents a share.

Net revenue for the fourth quarter increased 7.3 percent to \$521.0 million. Comparable same-store sales decreased by 2 percent on a constant dollar basis. Gross margins decreased to 53.5 percent for the quarter from 56.5 percent a year ago.

In the full year, earnings rose 3.3 percent to \$279.5 million, or \$1.91 a share. Sales climbed 16.1 percent to \$1.59 billion with same-store sales rising 4 percent on a currency-neutral (C-N) basis.

"As we move into 2014, we are reflecting on our learnings with humility, and are entirely focused on our future," said Laurent Potdevin, who was brought in as Lululemon's new CEO late last year. "2014 is an investment year with an emphasis on strengthening our foundation, reigniting our product engine, and accelerating sustainable and controlled global expansion. Lululemon's magic has been built by creating technical beautiful product and sharing our distinct culture with our communities. The emotional connection that Lululemon creates is at the heart of what we stand for, and we are being relentless in our commitment to delivering a distinct and authentic experience that is unlike any other."

For the first quarter, Lululemon expects net revenue to be in the range of \$377 million to \$382 million based on flat total combined comparable sales on a constant dollar basis, up from \$345.9 million in the 2012 first quarter. EPS is projected to range between 31 to 33 cents, which compares with 32 cents last year.



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NIKE

PARTNERS WITH U.S. YOUTH SOCCER

U.S. Youth Soccer, the largest youth sports organization in the nation, announced a long-term agreement between U.S. Soccer and Nike. The partnership will give Nike a presence at all major US Youth Soccer events - including the U.S. Youth Soccer National Championship Series, the U.S. Youth Soccer National League, the U.S. Youth Soccer Olympic Development Program (U.S. Youth Soccer ODP), the U.S. Youth Soccer Presidents Cup and more.

"Nike and U.S. Soccer share a vision to further grow the sport in the United States and what better way than to extend our partnership to U.S. Youth Soccer," said Nike Soccer GM Aaron Barnett. "We look forward to further building this important relationship as we continue to deliver game changing innovation on the pitch."

U.S. Youth Soccer consists of 55 member State Associations and more than 3 million players, 900,000 volunteers and 5,000 youth soccer clubs in the United States. Through various programs at all levels of the game, U.S. Youth Soccer impacts the American soccer landscape from earliest days of play through the collegiate, professional and National Team ranks. As U.S. Soccer prepares for the 2014 FIFA World Cup this summer in Brazil, U.S. Youth Soccer is also celebrating a milestone.

"This year marks the 40th anniversary of U.S. Youth Soccer and today we write another page in our history with this partnership between U.S. Soccer and the world's leading sports brand Nike," said U.S. Youth Soccer President John Sutter. "We expect this relationship to benefit our association today and well into the future."

RIDDELL

ENTERS NEW AGREEMENT WITH NFL

FOR COLLECTIBLES

Riddell signed a new agreement with the National Football League as the exclusive licensee for collectible helmets. Riddell also secured promotional rights as part of the deal including the ability to use NFL marks on approved retail advertisements and marketing materials. The new five-year agreement extends Riddell's relationship with the NFL into 2019.

The new deal comes less than two months after the NFL chose not to renew a deal with Riddell mandating that any players wearing non-Riddell helmets during games could not show that company's logo or name on the exterior. Riddell was the official NFL helmet for 25 years.

"Riddell values its ongoing relationship with the NFL, and we are proud of our longstanding history as the helmet of choice for the majority of NFL players," said Dan Arment, president of Riddell. "We remain steadfast in our pursuit of developing innovative products to meet the protective needs of NFL players and the broader football playing community. With this new agreement, we are confident that the conversation surrounding our work with the NFL will remain on player protection."

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SUNGLASSES THAT DO IT ALL

By Thomas J. Ryan

Photo courtesy Smith Optics

Remember when the purpose of sunglasses was to help you stop squinting in the sun and look cool at the beach? Those days are long over with most now offer UVA/UVB protection and many consumers are just learning about the benefits of polarized and photochromic lenses. Scratch-resistant, impact resistant, anti-fog are among other performance features consumers are looking for – all in a lightweight package.

A big trend continues toward interchangeable lenses with many athletes are looking for one frame to tackle multiple activities. Alas, sunglasses

still have to help you look cool with colors and retro styles in fashion. Consumers are also increasingly looking for performance and style to come in just one frame.

At Smith Optics, Eric Carlson, VP product and design, said today's sunglass customers are gravitating to some very specific directions: true performance interchangeable eyewear that offers multiple condition-specific lens tints, or a strong direction toward vintage and 'archive' designs, or a frame that can "do it all" from casual sports to all day cruising.

“With performance eyewear, customers are looking for, and should be able to find, great fit and comfort for their sport, amazing lens options based on conditions and personal preference, and great value,” said Carlson.

For performance, the Approach Max, \$159, includes not only three sets of lenses for a variety of light conditions but Smith Optic’s latest two-position adjustable nose pad system. Placed at the nose and at the temple, the hydrophilic Megol nose and temple pads gently grip the skin to keep the frame in position. The power of the grip increases when the glasses come in contact with moisture.

Other key technologies include Carbonic TLT lenses, engineered to be the most impact resistant material available on the market while also optically corrected to maximize visual clarity and object definition. Smith features styles with 6, 7, 8, and 9-base lens curvature. Over 75 percent of all Smith’s frames and 100 percent of its injection-molded frames feature its Evolve frame material that is over 53 percent bio-based for an eco-friendly option.

For outdoor adventures, the ChromaPop, \$179 to \$239, represents Smith’s new proprietary color optimizing lens technology that increases visual clarity. When light passes through a traditional lens, there are two points where light waves intersect and the brain has to work to decipher whether its seeing red, green or blue. With ChromaPop, the color intersections are blocked so the brain immediately recognizes true vibrant color, as it should be seen with increased depth and detail of objects, while it reduces eye fatigue.

Carlson also said vintage or “archive” frames continue to drive mass market trends for casual wear and this is affecting the customer’s expectations of ‘do it all’ sunglasses. Smith Optics is reinterpreting many of its classics with updated performance features. An example is the Marvinne, \$80 (non-polar); \$119 (polarized), that harkens back to the introduction of Dr. Bob Smith’s first line of sunglasses in 1979.

“The combination of these design directions creates one frame that allows a customer to enjoy a lunch-time run or Saturday on the water,” added Carlson “Features like rubber nose pads, ergonomic frames, and lightweight high impact frames allows for any activity.”

Richard Walker, Maui Jim’s director of product development, sees fashionable protection as a strong trend in sunglasses. For instance, many of Maui Jim’s styles in its new Vintage Collection features MauiPure lenses that offer superb clarity for a non-glass lense and are also scratch- and



Smith Optics Approach Max



Smith Optics ChromaPop



Smith Optics Marvinne



Maui Jim Kawika



Maui Jim Maliko Gulch



Maui Jim Kahului Harbor



Costa Hamlin

impact-resistant. They are wrapped with Maui Jim’s PolarizedPlus2 lens technology that has up to nine layers of protection against 100 percent of UVA and UVB rays and 99.9 percent of glare on both sides of each lens. Examples include the Kawika, \$289, and the Holoholo, \$279.

“This technology also brings out the colors in the world around you, like you’ve never seen,” noted Walker. “The protection is so good that The Skin Cancer Foundation just gave us a Seal of Recommendation – we are one of only three sunglass companies to receive the seal worldwide.”

The trend in lightweight footwear and gear is also working in the sunglass category. Maui Jim addresses that trend with its PureAir series that combines MauiPure lens technology with an ultra-light frame that makes the sunglasses feel like “pure air.” The Bamboo Forest, \$219, will be the first style with a frame incorporating Grilamid TR90LX, a thermo-plastic known for its durability and ability to retain its shape, even when the material is thin or flexed. Added Walker, “This material also has the ability to be clear and transparent and to be colored in transparent or opaque applications, allowing for a wide range of creativity in eyewear design.”

Maui Jim is also finding success with retro styling with the return of its classic aviators, oversized round or square shapes, and ‘70s motorcycle-inspired looks with a tech-update. For instance, its MauiFlex collection has eight styles of aviators such as the Maliko Gulch (Style #324) and Kahului Harbor (Style #325) made from a flexible metal that bends and twists, then bounces back into shape.

At Costa Sunglasses, the big focus is on lens technologies. Said Terri Ossi Hannah, senior marketing manager, “We have field-tested the sunglasses in the harshest salt water environments and are proud that our sunglasses will withstand all other outdoor elements.”

Costa offers two lens technologies: Costa 400 and Costa 580, with 580 being its premium, patented, color enhancing lens. Added Ossi Hannah, “In addition to blocking yellow light at 580nm, which enhances red/green/blue primary colors, Costa 580 reduces high-energy blue light which cuts haze. The result is greater visual clarity and sharpness than other sunglass lenses.”

Costa sunglasses are 100 percent polarized and offer 100 percent UV protection.

For spring 2014, Costa introduces the Hamlin, \$169, named for Captain Ron Hamlin, the legendary angler who’s released more than 27,000 billfish throughout his career and has helped to revolutionize sport fishing through his early adoption of circle hooks. Along with



Photo courtesy Julbo



Costa Blenny and Goby



its 580 lens technology, the Hamlin features co-injected nylon molded frames, sturdy integral hinges and no-slip Hydrolite nose pads and temple tips. The extra-large fit features a wrap shape to protect against incoming glare.

For women, the Blenny, \$169, takes its cue from the colorful fish that live in the crevices of the ocean's coral reefs. Featuring a large fit, flexible spring hinges and a bold,

round eye, Blenny's frame color options include tortoise, shiny black and coral, pomegranate fade and white and topaz. A stainless steel decorative Costa logo plaque adds a jewelry element. Goby, \$149, also named after a colorful reef fish, brings a medium fit to a rounded eye frame.

Nick Yardley, CEO of Julbo USA, said with people now more active at a pretty high level in multiple sports, they see their eyewear as an essential piece of "equipment" with some customers looking for eyewear that can be used across multiple sports.

"Folks are really catching on to the idea that interchangeable lenses are not the answer to dealing with changing light conditions in an activity," said Yardley. "We are seeing an increased understanding and interest in the power of quality photochromic lenses that really do adjust quickly and efficiently to a wide range of light conditions, our Zebra and Zebra Light lenses are getting most attention here."

For Spring 2014, Julbo is introducing two new women's-specific performance models for the active female. The Groovy and Stony are designed specifically for smaller faces and offer style as well

Julbo USA Groovy



Julbo USA Stony

as excellent hold and comfort. They feature Julbo's new Universal Clip Nose, an interchangeable system enabling the user to switch from a standard nose shape to a thinner one by a single, simple click.

Distinguished by a slightly different design and style, the Groovy has a wide field of view with a semi-rimless frame and larger lens. It will be available with either Julbo's Spectron 3 lens, \$100, or the photochromic Zebra lens, \$170. The Stony offers a versatile wrap-around design and rectangular-shaped frame and is available with Julbo's Zebra lens, \$170, or Spectron 3 at \$100.

Yardley commented that Julbo is finding success with brightly colored frames with contrasting lenses, showing that whether off the trails or slopes, "more and more folks seem to want to stand and show they are not afraid to be different and show their own personal style."

An example is the Stunt with the Zebra Light lens, \$170, a lightweight, multisport sunglass with a GripNose and slim GripTech temples that can be worn under a helmet for super stability in all situations. The Zebra Light lens darkens extremely quickly to protect the eyes when they are exposed to full light levels.



Julbo USA Stunt with the Zebra Light lens

Zeal Optics is also finding that many people are looking for high quality sunglasses that can be used for a wide variety of activities.

"Basically, a sunglass that looks good while not compromising on quality or style," said Jamie Normandin, Zeal's marketing and event coordinator. "At Zeal, we have both. Our lenses and frames are very high quality, and our sunglasses are designed to be used in almost any condition."



Zeal Optics Rival

For performance, the Rival, \$169, features a lightweight Z-Resin frame that allows for all-day comfort and the straight-line lens. Finished with adjustable temples and nose pads, the frame is made to custom fit all faces. It also features hydrophobic and oleophobic coatings added to its e-llume lens for clarity in all conditions.

The cycling inspired frame, Rival Team Edition, \$169, features hand sculpting in the mold for venting and airflow to support the TE as a true performance frame.

“I think we are seeing a slow swing away from the six- and four-base fashion look and back to a product that delivers more protection to the customer against sun, wind and dirt,” said Lonergan. “Four- and six-base do not offer the same side protection and backlight concerns that are the norm in that base. People are looking for more protection with wrap glasses.”



Oakley Eyewear Crankshaft

For spring 2014, a highlight from Oakley is the Crankshaft, \$120 to \$180, featuring lightweight O Matter frame material with lenses of Plutonite that filter out ultraviolet light. Thanks to Polaric Ellipsoid geometry, all angles of vision are razor sharp, and Oakley’s three-point fit holds the lenses in alignment while eliminating uneven pressure points.



Photo courtesy Zeal Optics



Oakley Eyewear Tinfoil

Oakley’s Tinfoil, \$190 to \$240, reinvents the idea of wireless frames with a semi-rimless design matched with ultra-low weight, sure-grip Unobtainium earsocks, and snag-free nosepads. XYZ Optics offers clarity across the entire lens, not just the area directly in front of the eye.

Tifosi has built a commanding position as the number

one selling brand in independent bike and running shops in just its eleventh year. The brand continues to benefit by offering a value option in the marketplace between cheap sunglasses with limited features and those with fully-loaded features and technology at a high price tag.

“Many people these days want affordable options,” said Erin Dahlquist, Tifosi’s director of marketing.

For spring 2014, Tifosi will introduce the Clarion reflective lens eyewear collection, featuring consistent color to eliminate lens distortion. The glasses are also hydrophobic so that water and sweat roll off, and filter a high level of blue light, sharpening contrast. The reflective properties cut glare and the lenses shield the eyes with 100 percent protection from UVA/UVB rays. All have hydrophilic rubber pads on adjustable nose and ear pieces for a custom, non-slip fit.



Tifosi Lore

The Lore, Crystal Clear, \$70, an interchangeable lens style, includes Clarion blue, AC red, and clear, vented lenses to prevent fogging. Hydrophobic Clarion lenses bead water and sweat. Tifosi is also offering a

frameless option with the Podium XC, \$70, an oversized lens style with the Rumor, \$70, and aggressive styling in the Tyrant 2.0 at \$80.



Zeal Optics Range

The Range, \$139, offers handcrafted sculpting, accelerated venting on the temples, and an 8-Base to handle outdoor adventures.

On more of the lifestyle side, Zeal’s Crafted Collection is made from 100 percent biodegradable

materials but the feel and the look are with flashy colors, unique frames and some retro takes. The oversized frame with fun colors on the Dakota. \$169, is built for a little attention but teardrop lens allow for maximum coverage in all conditions. The sculpting of the frame reduced the weight to ensure that the oversized lens doesn’t mean a heavy frame.

Declan Lonergan, Oakley Eyewear’s brand manager, sees less of a focus on frame design, materials or look, and an overall stronger focus on lens technology, which is being played up with imagery and catchy phrases on the marketing side.

In design, after many years of a trend for large men’s sunglass frames, Lonergan has noticed a swing to smaller or medium-size frames across youth lifestyle and fashion brands. High-wrap products, of which Oakley has a strong assortment, are also making a comeback.



Zeal Optics Dakota



Tifosi Podium XC, Rumor and Tyrant 2.0

Beyond cycling and run, Tifosi also makes sport-specific eyewear for golf and outdoor, and is adding tactical and shooting sports eyewear in 2014. It also recently introduced “readers” sunglasses with built in bifocals for reading the cyclometer or GPS, and overall has greatly expanded its Rx options to those looking to play in prescription eyewear.

Native Eyewear is offering more color than ever before with blues, pink tones and greens all included the 2014 collection. The brand also sees a shift to include more lifestyle frames, with consumers asking for a pair of shades that does it all - performance, style and protection.

“This year we took a long, hard look to identify holes in the eyewear industry and recognized the need for better color and style along with superior protection,” said Al Perkinson, VP of marketing. “After all, we are consumers too. It doesn’t take much time on the trail before you start developing a wish list of features that would make life better.”

The 2014 models are led by the Roan, available in six frame colors (including Glacier Frost and Midnight) and four lens colors, and the Linville, available in six frame colors (including



Native Eyewear Roan and Linville



Photo courtesy Sundog Eyewear

Metallic Fern, Snow, and Metallic Rose) and five interchangeable lens options.

The primary selling point for Native Eyewear is its N3 lens technology, which blocks four times more infrared rays than most polarized lenses. Additional benefits include state-of-the-art blue-light filtering and superior ultraviolet protection to ensure that eyes are completely protected from damaging rays.

“Native Eyewear’s N3 lenses are to eyes what sunblock is to skin,” said Perkinson. “Yet, unlike skin that gets hot when exposed to infrared rays and ultraviolet light, eyes do not have an immediate reaction. Instead, it’s after exposure, when eyes are dry and burning, that damage is recognized. Long-term exposure to the sun’s detrimental rays may lead to irreversible harm to the eye, including premature cataracts, deadening of the eyelid skin, and corneal ulcers.”

The Anti-Ocular Intrusion System prevents lenses from dangerously shooting toward the eye on impact, while eliminating glare. Other performance highlights across Native’s 2014 lineup include a venting system that eliminates fog and condensation, Mastoid Temple Grip for a secure and comfortable fit, Rhino-Tuff Air Frames that are durable enough to withstand collisions and extreme temperatures, yet light-weight, and Co-Injected Cushionol Nose Pads and Temple boots to keep glasses in place during even the most adventurous activity. Suggested retail prices range from \$89 to \$179.

Building on the introduction of its original Mela-Lens over four years ago, Sundog Eyewear is bringing out TrueBlue, which incorporates Ocular Lens Pigment, another natural sunscreen, to enhance vision protection and performance.

While also providing UVA/UVB protection, TrueBlue reduces “veiled glare” caused by high energy light or blue light, which relieves eye fatigue in the short term and protects against vision damage as well as physiological damage long term. Because blue light is filtered and not blocked, colors are seen in true balance.

“Sundog’s Mela-Lens, melanin lens technology has been extremely popular with runners, golfers and outdoor enthusiasts because of its ability to filter blue light and provide extreme viewing comfort with minimal eye fatigue,” said Gary Makar, Sundog’s marketing manager. “TrueBlue represents the next evolution of our melanin lens technology and is exclusive to Sundog Eyewear in plano sunglasses.”

Sundog also sees strong appeal for its ContourFLex Megol co-injected inner temples and tips for non-slip performance and comfort that mold the temple tips to custom fit face shapes for improved comfort. The frames are all made from MaxFlex RILSAN with metal-core adjustable Megol nose pads.

The TrueBlue collection includes the Pace, a one-piece lens providing the classic sport wrap look-and-feel with open side vents that help aid in fog and moisture reduction. Other options include the Prime, a classic sport frame profile with



Sundog Eyewear Pace and Prime



Sundog Eyewear Bolt

top and side lens vents designed to fit smaller to medium face shapes, as well as the ultra-lightweight Bolt that fits small to large faces. All frames retail for \$70.

Optic Nerve's new Interchangeable Lens Technology, SideSwipe sunglasses directly address consumers looking for an easier way to change their lenses on performance eyewear. It features a small switch-like gadget so that wearer can quickly change lenses with minimal handling.

"The SideSwipe function was designed with the everyday consumer in mind," said Optic Nerve co-founder and VP of research and development Tom Fox. "At events and races I talk with consumers, and over and over again I hear about struggles and apprehensions when it comes to swapping lenses on their interchangeable sunglasses. We wanted to give these people something that is functional and simple to use."



Optic Nerve Amino

SideSwipe arrives with two different styles: Amino and Sequence. Both styles come with four lens options - polarized smoke, copper, orange and clear. All the lenses will have Optic Nerve's hydrophobic coating that wicks

away water, oil and dust. Both will retail at \$109.

Relatedly, the other trend Optic Nerve sees is that consumers are getting more educated on the eyewear category.

"They are learning that a \$100 difference in price does not mean a \$100 difference in quality," said Fox. "At Optic Nerve, we don't spend much money on endorsements or advertising. It allows us to pass our savings onto our consumers."

Photo courtesy Croakies



For accessories, Croakies has seen a need for eyewear retention to accommodate different frame sizes, said John Scott, EVP. That's why Croakies has come out with the Plug n' Play Re-Attachable End Technology for the ARC System, \$15, and the Terra System, \$8. For Croakies, and the Suitersour woven retainer, the company has introduced XL sizing to accommodate larger temples on frames. ■



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BLAME TOM CRUISE IN RISKY BUSINESS

By Thomas J. Ryan

Photo courtesy Tifosi

While the category has a host of trends working in its favor, sunglasses can be challenging to sell at retail since many buyers place too high a priority on how the sunglasses look on them. But even for the devoted athlete, store associates often have to plod through the technology benefits to offset the sticker shock on many frames.

Nick Yardley, CEO of Julbo USA, said that basically, there are two types of sunglass customers who walk into a store.

“The first are those who just pick up a pair and put it on their face and take it because the look works for them,” said Yardley. “The second is the serious customer who is looking for a pair of glasses that certainly looks good - but that meets a specific need. This is the customer who needs to be catered to.”

For the athlete, the associate should learn what they want to use the sunglasses for, which should quickly narrow down the choices on the rack.

“For example, if the customer is looking for a sunglass for fishing, a polarized lens is key,” said Yardley. “If it’s a trail runner, avoid the polarized models.”

But the sales person then has to know what each lens offers and their performance benefits. With many shades looking all the same on a sunglass rack, the point-of-purchase display, (POP), can tell each lens story with bulleted selling points that can be especially beneficial when trying to explain the differences and the benefits.

“The more the sunglass company can tell its story in-store, the more effective the sell through will be,” said Yardley. “Photochromic lenses are a classic hard sell - if you look at them, they look no different than any other lens, but the price is higher. How do you get the customer excited? A simple UV box or hand-held light allows you to show the transformation of the lens right in the store, and this is always an impressive demonstration for a skeptic.”

Consumers often have to be convinced of the importance of technologies such as polarization and infrared protection.

“Many consumers know about polarization but they don’t understand why it is vital to eye health,” observed Al Perkinson, VP of marketing, Native Eyewear. “Instead, consumers seem to think that it’s more a premium option - a “nice to have,” not a “have to have” when the opposite is true.”

Maui Jim is launching a major international advertising campaign that directly aims at the problem of people testing the ‘look’ of the sunglasses rather than what they can see through them.

“The new campaign flips this notion and focuses squarely on the enhanced color, clarity, and detail that can be seen through Maui Jim lenses, rather than on how people see you,” said Richard Walker, Maui Jim’s director of product development. “We help retailers demonstrate this notion by being the world’s only company to provide retailers with a Polage, a handmade piece of art

that demonstrates the effects of PolarizedPlus2 technology to reveal what you can see when you remove glare and other damaging rays.”

At the store level, Eric Carlson, Smith Optic’s VP product and design, said customers are bombarded with information and messages and all too often stores are trying to say too many things to too many people. With all the tech and usage messages around sunglasses, he believes, that it’s more important than ever to dedicate space for easy viewing.

“Simple things like putting similar colors or similar frame shapes together greatly helps the customer’s decision process,” said Carlson. “Most customers know the brands, but most cannot easily tell one frame design apart from three-to-four others. This is great in many ways because it gives them options, but the merchandising needs to help guide them to an area of frame design that they are comfortable with. From there it is up to the sales person to help find the frame that provides ‘just the right fit and look.’”

Smith also creates in-store merchandising, like shelf liners, that ‘speak’ the messaging to set the technology or collection story apart from its competitors.

Costa Sunglasses provides 24/7 web-based training and also printed counter cards to visually show the difference between wearing Costa 580 lenses and standard sunglass lenses. In addition, Costa offers another in-store counter

card which shows the seven different lens colors to assist the sales associate in determining the appropriate lens for his customers based on their outdoor activities. Costa, like several other brands, also comes with a lifetime warranty.

“The best suggestion that we can give the sales associate is to let their customers go outside and demonstrate a pair of Costas in a natural environment,” added Terri Ossi Hannah, Costa’s senior marketing manager. “The sunglasses speak for themselves.”

Gary Makar, Sundog Eyewear’s marketing manager, said Sundog likewise provides laminated PK sheets for its retailers which include points on its product line-up and technology but also basic fitting tips. These include not only making sure the frame fits the user’s facial profile (small, medium, large), but also making sure to check for fit snug to top-of-face and not too much light is being let in near eyebrows and several fit details.

Jamie Normandin, marketing and event coordinator, Zeal Optics, said that beyond eye protection and the benefits of a polarized lense, another selling point for Zeal Optics is most of its sunglasses are Rx ready. A brand’s story can also be an essential selling point, noted Normandin. She added, “A big one for us in Boulder is that we are the only sunglass and goggle company with our roots planted in Colorado — a huge industry for both sun and snow.”

Declan Lonergan, Oakley Eyewear’s brand manager, believes that the customer has to feel comfortable with a sales associate first and the only way for that to happen is for the staff to be knowledgeable about the product and the brand. He added, “Confidence and three selling points on any product will put an unsure consumer at ease.”

After assessing what purpose the glasses will be used for, the next step is exploring fit, feel, and “of course the most important factor is if they like the glasses on their face.”

Fit and overall comfort is essential since the customer may have to wear the product for hours a day. Fit issues to look into include where the product touches the face, how the nosepiece feels, and how sensitive the skin is to metals, plastics or rubber-based materials.

Lonergan added, “Lens tint guidance is also critical to help the customer with, polarized or not, base tints – rose, grey and brown are the three main tints across 90 percent of all glasses sold, so some people need to know what they like best to look through.”

For Tifosi, a primary selling point is their affordability, with most of the frames priced between \$50 to \$80, and also that they include a zippered case and cleaning bag with every pair.

“We can never stress enough the importance of matching up the Tifosi pair with the right box/packaging,” added Erin Dahlquist, Tifosi’s director of marketing. “Don’t let your customer walk out the door without the correct interchangeable lenses, zippered case, cleaning bag, and lens changing instructions.”

Add-on purchases are always an option, such as Croakies’ eyewear retention gear. John Scott, EVP, said eyewear retainers not only protect against the loss of expensive glasses but help protect them from getting scratched, sat on, etc.

“It is really a no brainer if you are buying quality glasses and are the least bit active,” said Scott. “This is a perfect ad-on sales opportunity for sales staff, and you almost always get a positive response from the customer.” ■

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SPRING

SUMMER

FALL

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From the Spring 2014 Collection the UA Captain Storm features an ArmourFusion Titanium Grilamid frame and Under Armour's signature three-point grip for fit and comfort

UNDER ARMOUR EYEWEAR

PROTECTION, COMFORT
AND FASHION

By Thomas J. Ryan

Under Armour Eyewear, a division of EyeKing, LLC, recently introduced its new sunglass collections for men, women and kids that are designed for the consumer who appreciates a technical product with modern styling and design point of view. Stemming from several years of Under Armour Eyewear research and development and hands-on testing from the Under Armour athlete roster, the sunglasses offer protection, comfort and fashion.

Finding more of its sunglasses on the faces of professional athletes, Under Armour Eyewear now looks to the water and is proud to launch UA Storm Lens Technology as part of its first outdoor-focused eyewear collection. The technology was developed in collaboration with optical leader Carl Zeiss. The new lenses are not only impervious to oils, insect repellent, and sunscreen but more importantly repel salt water, which can erode coatings on lenses causing the surface to peel.

Other key features of the UA Storm Lens Technology include: elite performance polarized lenses that provide maximum glare reduction and true color recognition under bright sunlight - ideal for use where heavy glare is a factor and that could affect performance; all lenses block 100 percent of UVA, UVB and UVC rays; hydrophobic, antistatic and scratch resistant hard coating that's easy to clean; and ANSI Z87.1 impact resistant rating.

"Thanks to our collaboration with Carl Zeiss, there isn't anything in the market that has the same optical quality in a polarized lens that is also hydrophobic and saltwater resistant," said Jarrett Bockler, director of marketing for Under Armour Eyewear.

The Spring 2014 collection includes new shapes for different face types like UA Keepz Storm and UA Captain Storm. All of the styles feature an ArmourFusion Titanium Grilamid frame and its signature three-point grip for fit and comfort. Lens tints range from gray for true color recognition



Under Armour continues to collaborate with PGA golfer Hunter Mahan and presents its newest style Fire. The new shield silhouette offers a wider field of vision for greater sightlines on the course.

Photos courtesy Under Armour



Under Armour youth eyewear offers little league players a broad selection of impact resistant shields for small faces proven to protect delicate bones and eye sockets during play.

under bright spotlight, brown for optimal depth perception, amber for low-light fishing such as fly fishing, blue mirror for sunny days and open water fishing, and green mirror for sunny days and on-shore fishing. The collection ranges in price from \$145 to \$160 and debuted in March at Cabela's, Bass Pro Shops, Sportsman's Warehouse, and underarmour.com.

Seeing a demand in the marketplace for innovative eyewear, the designers at Under Armour created additional product ranges that support the brand in the outdoor retail category. Strong trends such as camouflage patterns, previously limited to the hunting world, have become more pervasive not only in sporting goods distribution points but at other mainstream retailers. This gain also comes amid several consumer trends supporting the sunglass category.

The importance of UV protection has become an integral selling point that grows every year. Said Bockler, "Twenty years ago, consumers went to the beach and rarely put on any sunscreen. Now people cover themselves head-to-toe. The same thing is happening with sunglasses. Wearers know they've been outside their entire life and they need to protect their eyes."

Like sneakers designed for each athletic activity, sunglasses have become equally sport-specific with users owning a wardrobe of styles. With this in mind, Under Armour Eyewear created new styles for the consumer that enjoys multiple outdoor activities, who want a sport-specific silhouette, and demand enhanced lens and impact protection. For example, Under Armour youth eyewear offers little league players a broad selection of impact resistant shields for small faces proven to protect delicate bones and eye sockets during play. Under Armour Eyewear is seeing strong growth in youth frames at Academy, Dick's Sporting Goods, Hibbett Sports and The Sports Authority after a soft launch in 2013. The youth versions offer the same performance level of frame and lens design as the adult collection at retail prices ranging from \$50 to \$70.

Knowing that their female customer was settling for smaller men's frames, Under Armour Eyewear has also been working with frame designers to develop product specific to a woman's facial structure. The Marbella, launching this year, is offered in both a rimless and shield style and retails for \$90 to \$110.

On the field, Under Armour Eyewear was inspired by UA's Spine footwear technology and for its sophisticated Phenom design. The shield style worn by baseball player Bryce Harper, includes a co-molded temple technique that self-adjusts for an articulated, comfortable fit. The Phenom retails for \$149 and \$155 for the Bryce Harper signature frame. Features include an anti-bounce cap gripper, AirFlow technology, adjustable nose pad, multiflection lens and a three-point grip.

For the fairways, Under Armour continues to collaborate with PGA golfer Hunter Mahan and presents its newest style Fire. The new shield silhouette offers a wider field of vision for greater sightlines on the course. Co-molded rubber



Under Armour Keepz Storm and Captain Storm

temples can fit comfortably under a hat for a firm fit. AirFlow technology prevents lens fogging in hot weather play.

Under Armour Eyewear also offers ANSI and military specification-rated ballistic shields for law enforcement and hunting enthusiasts. Prices range from \$100 to \$120. The new Freedom Interchange comes in gray, yellow and clear exchangeable lenses so the shooter can best focus in all light conditions. Under Armour Eyewear also has new styles that benefit the national Wounded Warrior Project. Through December 2014, Under Armour will make a donation of more than \$1 million to the Project to benefit injured service members and their families. Also launching in this collection are youth and adult frames that feature a Realtree Camo print from \$60 (child) to \$130 (adult).

Under Armour Eyewear has also launched a new selection of updated, classic American silhouettes with a performance twist for men and women. Featuring the same lens and frame technologies developed for their performance styles in a fashionable, modern aesthetic. The new lifestyle silhouettes are available at Dillard's, Apex By Sunglass Hut, Sanibel Sunglass Company and other specialty chains ranging in price from \$80 to \$150. ■

STORM

CLEAN LENS, CLEAR SIGHT

*ELITE POLARIZED
ANSI Z87.1 IMPACT RESISTANT
HYDROPHOBIC
IMPERVIOUS TO SALT WATER*



UNDER ARMOUR.



UA CAPTAIN STORM



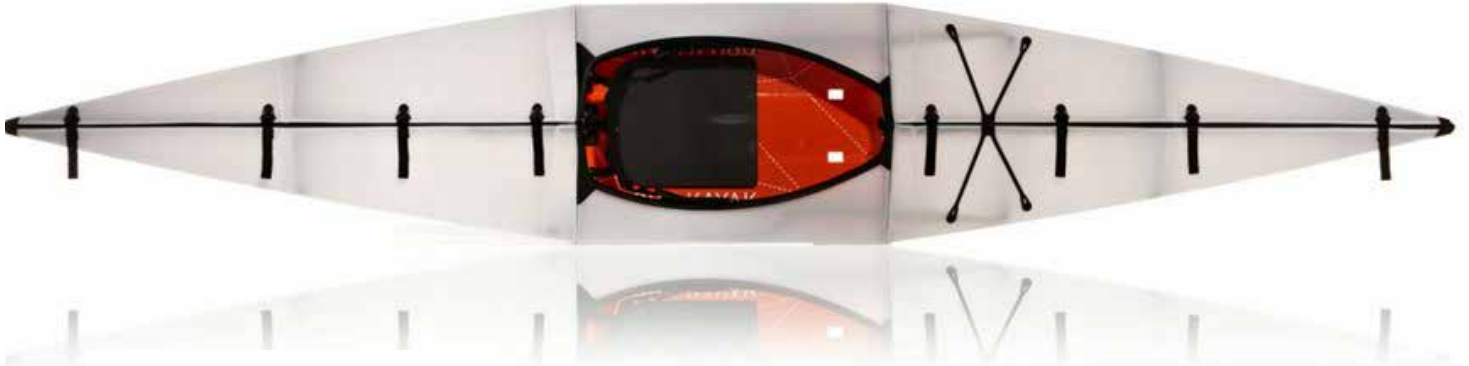
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CALENDAR

For full year calendar go to
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Photo courtesy Smith Optics

APRIL

- 7-8 SFIA Litigation & Risk Management Summit
Phoenix, AZ
- 22 SFIA/NFHS/NCAA Rules Committee Meeting
Indianapolis, IN
- 27-30 N.S.G.A. Mgmt. Conference
Indian Wells, CA

JUNE

- 11-12 Atlanta Shoe Market
Atlanta, GA
- 17-19 Licensing International Expo
Las Vegas, NV
- 26-28 Sports, Inc. Summer Team Dealer Show
Nashville, TN

JULY

- 8-11 NBS Summer Market
Austin, TX
- 10-13 European Outdoor Trade Fair
Friedrichshafen, Germany
- 15-17 ASI Chicago
Chicago, IL
- 18-20 A.D.A. Spring Show
Reno, NV

AUGUST

- 6-9 Outdoor Retailer Summer Market
Salt Lake City, UT
- 14-16 Sports Inc. Outdoor Show
Nashville, TN

SEPTEMBER

- 3-8 NBS Fall Semi - Annual Market
Fort Worth, TX
- 4-6 Imprinted Sportswear Show (ISS)
Orlando, FL
- 10-12 Interbike International Trade Expo
Las Vegas, NV
- 16-17 SFIA Industry Leaders Summit
Chicago, IL

OCTOBER

- 7-9 OIA Rendezvous
Asheville, NC

NOVEMBER

- 15-16 A.D.A. Fall Show
Palm Springs, CA
- 23-25 Sports, Inc. Fall Team Dealer Show
Las Vegas, NV

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 f 321.242.7419
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 Flintlock Ridge Office Center
 11 Mile Hill Road
 Newtown, CT 06470
 t 203.426.1320
 f. 203.426.1087
nssf.org

National Sporting Goods Association
 1601 Feehanville Drive / Suite 300
 Mount Prospect, IL 60056
 t 847.296.6742
 f 847.391.9827
nsga.org

Nation's Best Sports
 4216 Hahn Blvd.
 Ft. Worth, TX 76117
 t 817.788.0034
 f 817.788.8542
nbs.com

Outdoor Industry Association
 4909 Pearl East Circle / Suite 300
 Boulder, CO 80301
 t 303.444.3353
 f 303.444.3284
outdoorindustry.org

Sports & Fitness Industry Association
 8505 Fenton St., Suite 211
 Silver Spring, MD 20910
 t 301.495.6321
 f 301.495.6322
sfia.org

Snow Sports Industries America
 8377-B Greensboro Drive
 McLean, VA 22102
 t 703.556.9020
 f 703.821.8276
snowsports.org

Sports, Inc.
 333 2nd Avenue North
 Lewistown, MT 59457
 t 406.538.3496
 f 406.538.2801
sportsinc.com

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 590 Fishers Station Drive / Suite 110
 Victor, NY 14564
 t 585.742.1010
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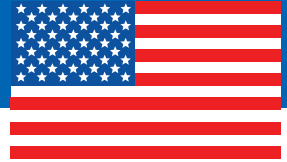
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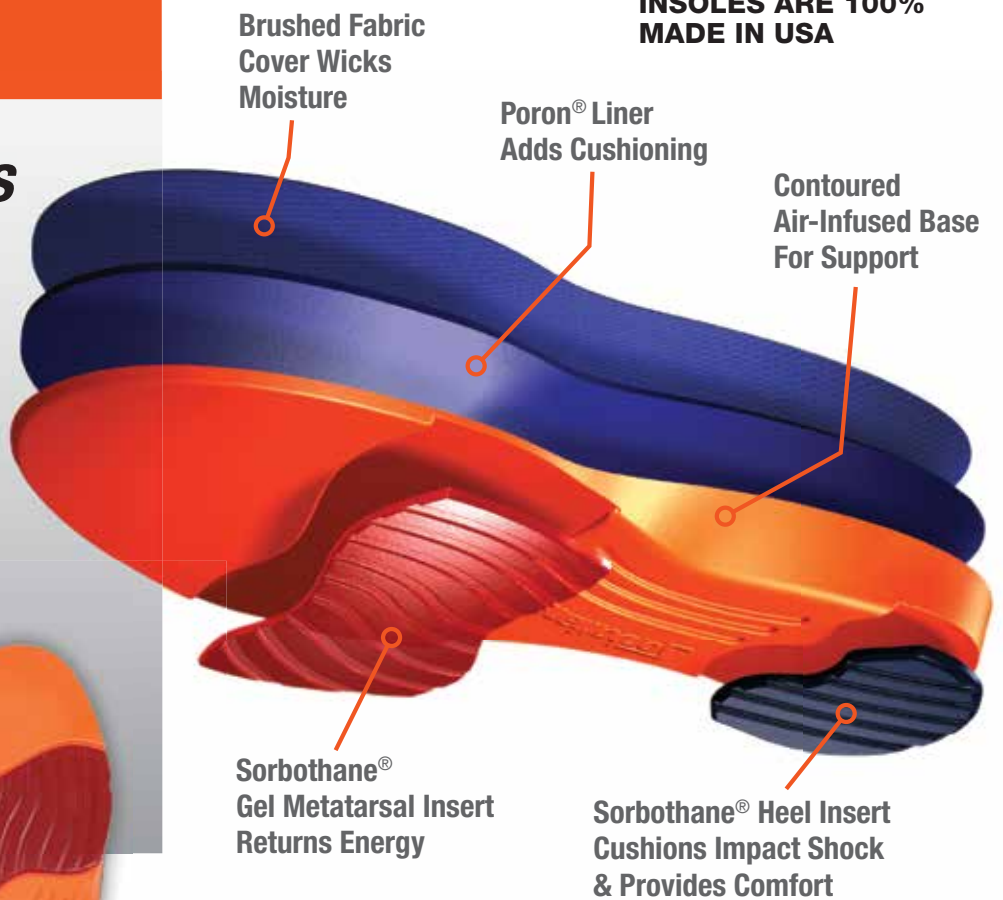
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