

# SGB

ISSUE 1429  
JULY 21, 2014

# WEEKLY

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# SGB WEEKLY

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Photo  
courtesy  
Rider

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Spring 2015 sandals see more athletic  
influence merged with smart design and  
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## MOVERS & SHAKERS

**Adidas** has signed sponsorship agreements with **Joel Embiid**, the Number 3 pick by the Philadelphia 76ers, and **Marcus Smart**, the Number 6 pick by the Boston Celtics.

**Jordan Brand** has signed an endorsement deal with **Jabari Parker**, the second pick in the NBA draft selected by the Milwaukee Bucks.

**Klean Kanteen** hired **Martin Stokes** as director of operations and quality.

**Longstreth Sporting Goods** hired **Ali Lowe** as softball manager.

**Nixon**, the Southern California-based watch and accessories brand, appointed **Philippe Gouzes** as the brand's newly appointed vice president of sales and general manager, EMEA. He was most recently at Burton.

**Nordica USA** appointed former U.S. Ski Team Coach **Kyle Darling** at its new National Race manager.

**Unequal Technologies**, a provider of customized, concealed sports protection, signed Cleveland Browns All-Pro defensive back **Joe Haden** to a multi-year endorsement agreement.

**Wigwam** appointed **Jill Skarda** as the director of human resources

**Wolverine Brand** named **Linda Brunzell** VP of global marketing. She was most recently vice president of international strategy & business development for Wolverine Worldwide.



## ADIDAS AND NIKE

### BOTH CLAIM WORLD CUP VICTORY

With both declaring victory in touting their fútbol (soccer) leadership through their marketing schemes during the widely covered FIFA World Cup, Nike and Adidas might need a penalty shootout to figure it all out.

In separate statements, both highlighted their successes by pointing to how many players wore their products on the playing field during the tournament but also detailed the many ways they reached soccer fans through advertising and social media outlets.

Adidas, the official sponsor of the tournament, claimed to be “the most talked about brand” with an increase of 5.8 million followers across all major social media platforms, “more than any other sports brand.”

Other key figures supported by its “All In Or Nothing” campaign included:

- » 1.59 million conversations during the tournament;
- » +38 million most viewed sports brand on YouTube - based on videos published during the tournament period;
- » 2.98 million (603 percent) growth of @brazuca Twitter handle in the tournament period. The Twitter handle recorded 530K7 user interactions; and
- » 917K most used brand hashtag on Twitter (#allin).

Adidas also noted that Adidas Soccer had the largest social media community growth across sports brands throughout the tournament, showing a 14.5 percent increase.

For its part, Nike said its popular #RiskEverything campaign series around the World Cup – including “Risk Everything,” “Winner Stays” and “The Last Game” - racked up 397 million online views by the day after the tournament ended. Twenty-three million people engaged with the content by liking, retweeting or commenting, making “The Last Game” one of Facebook’s most shared posts.

Nike’s animated shorts featuring comments from Swedish soccer star Zlatan Ibrahimovic – at the handle #AskZlatan – drew 20.6 million online views and 12 million consumer engagements. Overall, Nike Football gained 6.2 million new followers during the tournament across different social platforms, around 1.5 million per week throughout the tournament. That brought the cumulative total of Nike Football’s social channels to 78.8 million followers.

On the field of play, Nike boasted that it started the tournament with 10 sponsored teams out of 32 teams, more than any other brand. (Adidas had nine and Puma had eight.) Fifty-three percent of all players selected for their squads wore Nike boots, more than for all other brands combined. Throughout the competition, Nike-sponsored players scored 76 goals, in-

cluding the winner in the final from German striker Mario Gotze, and the goal that took Germany’s fellow striker Miroslav Klose to all-time tournament goal scorer, breaking the cumulative record previously held by Ronaldo of Brazil.

Nike said in its statement, “These numbers show an unprecedented level of engagement with the brand. Alongside 21 percent growth in Nike Football’s business over the fiscal year leading up to the tournament (June 1, 2013 - May 31, 2014), the figures demonstrate why Nike is the sport’s leading brand globally.”

Not to be outdone, Adidas noted that the two finalists - Germany and Argentina - were Adidas sponsored teams, and another one of its teams, Colombia, earned the FIFA Fair Play Award. Among its players, Leo Messi was the Golden Ball winner, James Rodriguez was the Golden Boot winner, Manuel Neuer was the Golden Glove winner, and Juan Cuadrado racked up the most assists in the tournament. Adidas sponsored eight players out of 11 on the FIFA Team. Adidas also noted that its adizero F50 was the highest scoring cleat of the tournament with 46 goals.

Adidas Group CEO Herbert Hainer commented in a statement: “This World Cup has been an outstanding success for Adidas and clearly underlines our position as the world’s leading football brand. From having both finalists, the winning team and all three Adidas golden award winners to being the most talked about brand in social media, we were able to dominate the tournament on and off the pitch.”

The statements came amid reports that Nike was gaining ground on Adidas in the soccer category, including Germany’s core markets in Western Europe.

In May, Hainer delivered a bullish projection for Adidas’ worldwide soccer revenues to reach a record-breaking €2 billion euros (\$2.8 billion) in 2014.

In its fiscal year-ended May 31, Nike’s global football sales reached \$2.3 billion, rising 21 percent on a currency-neutral basis.

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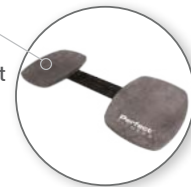
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## M&A BLOTTER

**Active Ride Shop**, which operates 21 retail locations throughout Southern California, has received an undisclosed investment from **Tengram Capital Partners** to help add more than 30 stores over the next few years. As a part of Tengram's investment, Rick Mina, the former Foot Locker executive, will join the company's board and advise the Active management team.

**LaCrosse Footwear** has acquired White's Boots, Inc., makers of custom boots for logging and other commercial applications. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. Gary March, president of White's, will remain in his position. Said Craig Cohen, a LaCrosse Footwear VP, "White's tradition in U.S. manufacturing complements the Danner brand. We believe (LaCrosse) can help extend the reach of the White's brand and infuse the necessary resources to grow globally."

**K2 Sports**, a subsidiary of Jarden Corporation, entered into an agreement to acquire **Squadra**, the designer and manufacturer of a full line of custom cycling and triathlon apparel. K2 Sports currently owns Zoot Sports, which sells triathlon gear to individual athletes.

**Hardy Capital Partners**, along with a small group of prominent Canadian investors, has acquired 100 percent of **OnlineShoes.com**, a \$140 million profitable online footwear retailer based out of Seattle. Hardy Capital Partners also acquired 100 percent of **ShoeMe.ca**, a Vancouver-based online footwear retailer. Roger Hardy owns Hardy, founder and former CEO of optical giant Coastal Contacts, Inc. Hardy intends to consolidate the two companies, creating the largest online footwear operation headquartered in Canada.

**The Schawbel Corporation**, the parent of Thermacell Heated Insoles, formed a new business entity, Schawbel Technologies, LLC, following the sale of the Thermacell Mosquito Repellent business to **Kinderhook Industries**, a New York equity-based firm.



Photo courtesy Wolverine

## WOLVERINE WORLDWIDE ANNOUNCES THE CLOSING OF 140 STORES

Wolverine Worldwide announced plans to close 140 stores - largely Stride Rite locations - as part of its new "strategic realignment plan." The closures are expected to take place over the next 18 months and by the end of 2015, with 60 occurring by the end of this fiscal year.

The realignment of the consumer-direct business is intended to optimize the fleet of retail locations, right-size the supporting infrastructure, address a fundamental shift in consumer shopping behavior and allow for greater focus on important omni-channel initiatives.

The realignment also includes key components of the plan including the consolidation of certain consumer-direct functions, specifically store operations and field support teams, intended to allow for a more effective and efficient management of the retail fleet as well as implementing organizational and infrastructure changes to realize further synergies.

The company estimates pretax charges related to the plan in the range of \$30 million to \$37 million, and expects to record these charges between now and the end of fiscal 2015 as it executes each component. Approximately \$13 million to \$15 million of the estimate represents non-cash charges, primarily asset write-offs related to closed retail locations and restructuring charges related to the remaining retail store fleet and international operations. Of this non-cash amount, \$3.4 million was recorded in the second fiscal quarter.

Once the plan is fully implemented, the company expects annual pretax benefits of approximately \$11 million and intends to redeploy a meaningful portion of these benefits to further build out consumer-direct, omni-channel capabilities and accelerate growth in its wholesale operations.

"The Strategic Realignment Plan announced today is an important step in the evolution of the company's consumer-direct operations to meet the changing behavior of today's consumer," said Blake Krueger, chairman and CEO, Wolverine Worldwide. "We are confident that these actions will set a new foundation for our consumer-direct business, help position our company for future growth and increase shareholder value."

The company made the announcement while reporting second-quarter earnings reached \$27.5 million, or 27 cents a share in the quarter, up from \$17.9 million or 18 cents last year. Revenue in the quarter reached \$613.5 million, an increase of 4.4 percent versus the prior year.

"We are extremely pleased to deliver a record quarter in what continues to be a volatile global retail environment, particularly in the U.S.," Krueger said. "All of our operating groups achieved a revenue increase in the quarter, which was spread across nearly every region of the world. Our Saucony, Keds, Caterpillar Footwear, Chaco and Wolverine brands posted very strong year-over-year results, and double-digit revenue gains in EMEA, Latin America and Asia-Pacific highlight the broad geographic reach of our portfolio."



## CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW TO LAUNCH SPORTS TECH MARKETPLACE

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) plans to launch the Sports Tech Marketplace, a showcase of the latest in sports technology set to debut at the 2015 International CES (Consumer Electronics Show.) Presented by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), the Sports Tech Marketplace will highlight how technology is being incorporated into sports and how it is affecting the participant experience.

The marketplace will feature the most recent products, services and

trends in sports technology, placing a global spotlight on this fast-growing category. The Sports Tech Marketplace will be located within the Sands Expo at CES Tech West.

Owned and produced by CEA, the 2015 International CES is scheduled to run January 6-9, 2015, in Las Vegas, NV.

“Technology is being used more and more in sports, and the 2015 CES will be the ‘can’t miss’, best place to experience the wide range of these products and solutions,” said Karen Chupka, senior vice president, International CES and corporate business strategy, CEA. “Sensors, wearables and mobile technologies are revolutionizing sports by providing real-time information that enables us to better achieve our athletic goals. CES is at the forefront of this emerging category and we’re pleased to partner with SFIA to bring it to life.”

“Technology has driven some of the greatest innovations in our industry,” said Tom Cove, president and CEO, SFIA. “We’re proud to partner with an organization like CEA to launch the Sports Tech Conference and Marketplace. We see technology revolutionizing the current sports landscape and we’re only at the tip of the iceberg. The combining of these two storied associations to produce the conference and marketplace ensures that it will be of the highest quality. We hope Vegas and the tech industry is ready for the sports industry, because we’re ready for them.”

The Sports Tech Marketplace will be part of CES Tech West; which includes the Sands Expo (Sands), The Venetian and Wynn/Encore exhibits. Tech West will also feature leading companies and the newest innovations in lifestyle technologies, including fitness and health tech, smart home, the Internet of Things, sensors, startups and other high-growth technologies changing the way we work, live and play. The 2015 CES will feature more than 3,500 exhibitors.

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## BEST PRACTICES

# IT'S SHOW TIME

To maximize your return on investment for time on task for attending and working trade shows, you need to know and implement some basic fundamentals.

By William F. Kendy

While some people may think that attending a trade show is just an excuse to get out of the store and take a mini-vacation, successful retailers recognize how beneficial expos can be.

Where else can you get all of the major manufacturers and players condensed in one spot for a short time period with the goal of doing business? It is not all cocktail parties, leisurely and aimlessly wandering the aisles looking a cool stuff and glad-handing. Working a trade show is hard work and necessitates planning and execution.

Here are some tips and insights for having a successful and profitable experience at whatever trade show you attend.

### Why and What?

Your very first task is to determine why you are attending the show and what you want to accomplish before, during and after it.

What are your goals and objectives? Buy merchandise? See new products? Cement relationships with vendors and explore new business opportunities? Attend seminars and network with other retailers? Most likely it is a combination of all of them. Rank them by order of importance.

### Know Your Inventory and Show Budget

Determine your “Open to Buy” by category and what your inventory needs are. Set your priorities and establish a show-buying budget. Earmark at least 10 to 20 percent of your budget as a contingency fund to take advantage of show specials, closeouts and trade-show deals offering special terms and dating. If you don't buy well you can't sell well.

Identify the “Must See” accounts and prepare a secondary list of “Like to See” companies.

Most large trade shows publish a guide that is available pre-show and has a map of the floor plan, exhibitor listings, booth locations and a host of other information. You can find out who is where, what is going on when and all sorts of neat stuff.

Do your homework and match the floor plan against your account hit list and develop a logical and efficient walking trip itinerary. Don't waste time (and exhaust yourself) bouncing all over like a ping-pong ball and clocking miles of walk time.

### Pre-Show Execution

Pre-register for the show, reserve your hotel and make travel arrangements.

Don't leave the details for the last minute and get things done. You will have enough on your plate without having to worry about last minute details.

*Insider Tip:* Call the hotel and find out what shuttles or buses are available, taxi costs and pay upfront for hotel fees and hidden costs. You may have all of your staff for rooms covered on a master account but does the hotel charge a fee for internet access or “incidentals”? Make sure you are covered. You want your staff to attend and perform and it is your obligation to pay the freight.

### Make Appointments

Appointments at trade shows are like appointments with your doctor and there is a trickle down effect. If a doctor's first patient arrives 20 minutes late then the appointment schedule changes for everyone. Plan ahead and try to “cluster” exhibitors, both the “must see”



and “like to see” in sectors of the show floor. That way if you have an appointment with a “must see” exhibitor and he is running behind schedule, you can fill in the dead time and drop in on a “like to see” company before the meeting (without walking a half mile back and forth) and still keep your rescheduled “must see” appointment.

Once in your appointment, depending on how booked the exhibitor is, cut down on the niceties and get right to the point of the meeting and get business done. Trade shows schedules are brutally hectic and structured and it is not the time for idle chatter, unless that is the direction the exhibitor wants to go. The time you spend also depends on how heavily scheduled you are.

### Train the Troops

If you are taking staff, assign each of them accounts to visit and make sure that they know the reason for the interviews and what you expect from them and the accounts. Tell them what functions and seminars to attend and to take notes to share with the staff at meetings after every show day and back at the store.

*Insider Tip:* Sometimes staff members view attending shows as paid party time. Reinforce that this is business as usual. Sure they can have fun and get away from the daily grind and routine, but it is work and they are your front line. It is all about time on task, completing objectives and presenting your store’s image in a professional manner.

### Dress Smart

If you want to show up looking like a third world country, so be it. Even though you may be talking to old buddies, your appearance is a reflection on the professionalism of your business and what type of operation you run. Business casual attire, meaning a pressed pair of slacks and golf type shirt, is acceptable.

*Insider Tip:* Wear comfortable walking shoes or presentable athletic footwear. Nobody at a trade show will judge you by your shoes...they are also in them.

### Always on Display

As soon as you arrive at the airport or walk into your hotel, it is “Showtime”. You never know who may be a client, prospective client or exhibitor. Regardless of whether you are sitting in an airport, on a plane, in an elevator, at a restaurant or even in the restroom, you and your staff are in the public eye so be careful of what you say and how you behave. Remember that you have a name badge on. You can run but you can’t hide.

### Expect and Inspect

Take time after the show closes or before it opens to go over what you and your team accomplished, who you need to stop back and see and how and when to fit in new meetings. If your schedules allow, take a break during the day to evaluate.

### Take Time for You

After a few hours of working the floor sit down, relax, have a snack, get some fresh air and evaluate. Drink lots of water. While alcohol is more fun, it dehydrates you.



If you “Cold Call” exhibitors, don’t spend too much time at each booth. You won’t be able to see everyone. Develop a respectful “exit strategy” to disengage yourself from a chatty Cathy or someone who you need to move on from.

Reserve time for “walking the floor” to explore what’s available in the marketplace. Earmark at least a few hours to go over all the new products.

### Networking and Schmoozing

Be brave, outgoing, open, and friendly and remember to smile. Don’t be intimidated by suited exhibitors standing in groups in their booths talking. Half of the time they are doing that because they are as nervous as you are about initiating new conversations. They are at a show to talk to people and you are as important as anyone else.

### Follow up and Evaluation

Collecting stacks of business cards may make you feel like you accomplished something but they are not worth anything if you do nothing with them. Commit to following up on the important contacts within a week or two and enter all of them into your database.

Determine if all of your show objectives were met and whether the cost, time and effort of attending the show was a good investment and will have a positive long-term effect on your business. Not all shows are equal and each needs to be judged on its individual merits.

Then...change your game plan for your next show. ■

SPRING 2015

# Sandals Seek Versatility

Sandals see more athletic influence merged with smart design and quick-dry materials.

By Thomas J. Ryan

Consumers have a wide range of choices when it comes to sandals, including flips, slides, full-foot sandals, and shandals (part shoe, part sandal).

“Generally, consumers are looking either for an inexpensive, relatively disposable pair of sandals – such as a cheap pair of flips to wear to the beach – or they are looking for a legitimate pair of footwear – a quality sandal to wear much of the year,” said Chip Coe, general manager of Chaco. In terms of quality sandals, consumers look for smart design and quick-dry materials, among other stepped-up features.

“The more serious sandal buyer is looking for additional characteristics more than just individual features,” said Coe. “Among those desirable characteristics are all-day arch and foot support, versatility in design and construction, and quality in materials and craftsmanship. For many, life is too short to wear cheap sandals.” In many cases recently, they’re looking for more performance features.

“The marriage between athletic and outdoor is not about to end any time soon,” said Jeff Dill, Keen’s outdoor business unit director. “There is so much good that can be borrowed from athletic and crossed with outdoor that customers, and therefore brands will be cross-pollinating these for a long time.”

He pointed to low, light midsoles with the protection of a traditional midsole. Super light, but indestructible upper materials taken from running and even basketball that have found their way into uppers of hiking and sandal products. And a host of edgy colors that have arrived in the past few years and “shocked outdoor out of the brown and green rut we were in.”

The resulting product is often “Faster, more competitive, and in many cases younger,” with consumers “happy to accept a compromise of durability for weight, and precision over protection.” He added, “It’s a pretty fun and exciting evolution.”

Beyond lightweight construction and more sporty colors stemming from athletic design, a very large part of the sandal business continues to be influenced by classic outdoor elements – ruggedness and durability, muted colors, serious outsole traction design across a range of terrain, and security in the lacing or webbing systems, according to Coe. But in many cases, he sees more sophisticated approaches around sandal design.



“There is an increasing market for higher-end (primarily leather) flips and sandals,” said Coe. “Premium materials and treatments and a handmade look and feel are very important here. These styles have been around for a long time in the southern climates, but are making their way north and west.”

Interest in rich leathers is leading to a comeback in the brown category for **Timberland**. “For us, it’s about using the leathers Timberland is known for its sandals,” said Don Desalvio, senior director of Sport Leisure Footwear at Timberland. “We’re seeing much nicer, more refined sandals on the rise where in the past few years it has been mostly rugged trail sandals or casual flip-flops in the market. This allows for more versatility in wearing occasions and outfits. Women’s styles with closed-toes and heels are coming back – we’ve designed a very refined fisherman style that plays on this trend.”



Timberland  
Earthkeepers  
Hollbrook

For the first time, Timberland is putting its proprietary anti-fatigue technology into its sandals with the men’s Earthkeepers Hollbrook, \$120. The technology, first introduced in the Timberland Pro line of industrial boots, features

very small cone shapes that help rebound shock for standing all day.

The Hollbrook also updates the midsole, wrapping it in polyurethane and inserting Vibram rubber pods to high-wear areas in the back heel and forefoot. Said Desalvio, “This allows for durability when pushing off and traction when walking. We’ve packaged this with premium full-grain leather uppers in a range of silhouettes including a closed-toed style, ankle-strap, slide and flip.”

For women, a Spring 2015 highlight is the Earthkeepers Tilden, \$120, a crafted wedge with chunky details like metal studs and contrasting leather straps that can transition from day to night. An anti-fatigue, leather-covered footbed provides comfort and support.



Timberland  
Earthkeepers  
Tilden

Desalvio said that for Timberland, it’s all about “quietly expressed features” – more than techy bells and whistles. But often tapping the same technology seen in its boots, Timberland aims for all-day versatility – offering sandals that can carry consumers from the city to the trails. “This means better traction, and comfort features all in refined silhouettes that can be styled multiple ways,” said Desalvio. “This season we continue to feature beautiful leathers throughout our line, including our sandals. Heritage details can be found in our men’s closed-toe sandals and flip-flops to women’s crafted wedges, comfortable ankle straps and ultra-stylish fishbone style sandals.”

At **Chaco**, the Outcross Evo collection launch will be the largest in the brand’s history. An evolution of its 2014 Outcross styles, the collection ranges from a very open, breathable, water and trail-friendly style the Outcross Evo 1, \$110, to the slightly more protective yet highly breathable and water and trail-friendly Outcross Evo 2, \$110, to the unisex trail-capable Outcross Evo 3, \$115. The women’s collection also includes the Outcross Evo MJ, \$100 – a classic Mary Jane updated for today’s active outdoor consumer.



Chaco  
Outcross  
Evo 1

The collection features gender-specific fit and design, and delivers performance and versatility across a wide range of uses and environments.

Chaco’s Z/Volv collection, \$100 for sandals and \$65 and \$60 for two flip sandals, mirrors the styles in its Classic Z collection but adds an athletic-inspired midsole/sidewall design, a gender-specific EcoTread rubber outsole, with 25 percent recycled rubber content, a softer topsheet/footbed design, and a softer polyurethane material that is used in the entire footbed/midsole. The combination, according to Coe, leads to a “softer underfoot feel than our Classic Z collection, but with the same webbing adjustment system, the same all-day arch and foot support, and the same quality and durability.”

Chaco is also introducing for Spring 2015 the unisex Chill leather flips and sandals collection, \$80 to \$110, and many new colors and designs to its popular Classic Z sandal collection, \$80 to \$110.

As far as genders, Chaco finds women prefer a “slightly lower profile, lighter weight product where possible,” but he finds both genders look to Chaco for “quality, durability, fit, functionality, and versatility.”

For Spring 2015, **Keen** has a revamped lineup for 2015 that includes no less than 10 new models in the water category alone. That is in addition to its popular lineup of Newport, Clearwater, Whisper, Venice, Rose sandal and others that have made Keen a dominant sandals resource for the last 10 years.

“New products like the Zambezi, \$100, and Gorgeous, \$150, feature a one strap Z-Pull mechanism to wrap your foot



Keen Zambezi



securely and snugly, but remain comfortable no matter what water you are in or around,” said Dill. “Lightweight water shoes like the 7oz Class 5 Tech, \$80, and women’s Cypress, \$90, mean options for people who need sandals, water shoe protection, all day comfort and sticky rubber traction. Keen was born in and around the water, and we aim to serve every outdoor athletes no matter what they plan to get into.”

Dill said that even with the core athlete, color has shifted this spring from all over neon bright to more subdued color and blackings complimented by a bright pop or technical callout. But fans appreciate Keen’s comfort and durability regardless of its end use.

“Having a bomber go-to for every activity from travel to light hiking to rafting is a highly desirable product and is what the original Newport and Keen were originally built around,” said Dill. “On the other side is a more athletic and pure performance driven consumer that demands low, light weight, and innovation that is specific to the activity they practice. For them, elements like sticky rubber traction, maximum drainage and lightweight are more meaningful than durability. At Keen, we have entire collections of product aimed at providing solutions for both groups - and some for those in between.”

At **Teva**, its Originals collection, \$40 to \$75, is expanding to its most comprehensive range with a mix of materials, colors and details for Spring 2015.

“The consumer response to this collection in 2014 has been extraordinary,” said Lorie Pointer, director of product and design at Teva. “These silhouettes provide the perfect blank canvas for unexpected materials and elements of discovery. We haven’t scratched the surface with what we can do with these silhouettes.”

Teva’s women’s Cabrillo collection, (sandal, \$90; crossover, \$80), focuses on feminine styling with built-in comfort. For men, the Berkley, \$100, is a leather casual sandal at home in a variety of environments.





Photo courtesy  
Sperry Top-Sider

In its active sandal collection, Teva's women's Verra, \$60, is functional with feminine styling and a range of bright colors.

"Across our line, we focused on the craftsmanship that goes into each style and the finishing details that really make a difference in the end product," said Pointer.

Forecasting trends, Pointer sees a move away from super-bright neon colors to colors with a "chalky, even retro feel." She added, "We're also seeing 'new neutrals' that aren't as pastel or as soft as those in past seasons. This season they have a chalkier feel and are a bit more unisex."

For **Sperry Top-Sider**, the aesthetics focus is on nautical sport colors and heritage styling. Beyond the use of lightweight materials, in both outsoles and midsoles, Sperry is applying its successful technologies to sandals. These include Adaptive Wave-Siping and SON-R technologies used to promote grip and accentuate proprioception and its ASV (Anti-Shock and Vibration) for all-day comfort.

"For Sperry it is all about comfort and grip," said Lee Baxter, VP of performance product at Sperry. "Versatility is a must which is where styling and color can influence. Our line of performance sandals provide best-in-class grip, and offer a wide variety of colors to please the masses while maintaining classic Sperry styling."

Highlights for Spring 2015 include the unisex Voyager Sandal, \$65, with a closed upper design that provides support and protection with breathability and comfort of a sandal. The shoe is designed to tackle paddling, boating, fishing and other rugged activities.

For women, the Point Breeze collection includes the Sport Slide, \$75; Strap, \$75; and Sport Band, \$65, and offers ample cushioning and strong traction. Said Baxter,



Sperry Top-Sider Voyager Sandal (top), Point Breeze Strap (middle) and Sport Band (bottom)

"Comfortable uppers, sport styling and colors make these sandals must have footwear for the active woman."

**Hi-Tec** will debut the Galicia Strap, \$50, featuring adjustable hook and loop fastening for a custom fit, like its popular Waimea Falls and Waimea Slide. It also offers extra support at the heel. But what makes the Galicia Strap a standout is the pattern; which makes the sandal look less like a traditional walking sandal and gives it a more fashion-forward appearance.



Hi-Tec Galicia Strap

Said Ian Little, marketing manager of Hi-Tec, "The colorful fabric on the inside gives the sandal a very summer-like look."

Little said customers who purchase Hi-Tec sandals value customized fit made possible with its adjustable fastenings, and also care about comfort. He added, "[They] want a sandal that looks both casual, offers all-day comfort and can be used on light hikes."

At **Spenco**, best known for its insoles, the focus is on fit and function with its Total Support Technology in all of its new sandals. Said Jeff Antonioli, global sales director at Spenco Medical Corp., "Outsole, mid-sole, insole and upper work together to achieve a perfect fit."

Spenco continues to add flourishes of fashion. Its core Yumi sandal, \$50 to \$60, is expanding with new synthetic upper materials, enabling a gold foil croc emboss version for women. Other introductions include the Andi, \$80, a simple gladiator style; and the Tora in Synthetic Nubuck, \$90, with back strap and contrast colored linings. The Rose, \$100, presents a refined, floral-embellished toe-post dress style. The men's style stays consistent with its classic designs in addition to new materials, performance features and benefits.



Spenco Yumi sandal (top), Tora (middle) and Sand (bottom)

Overall, Antonioli said Spenco's Beach/Active line uses bright colors, is lightweight, and offers textured printing and embossing on the uppers. Its Casual/Lifestyle line features new upper materials, leathers and suedes with toned-down trendy colors. The Outdoor line comes in natural earth tones, is water resistant, and made of mesh and synthetics. "Spenco's sandals shine when it comes to style, proving orthotic sandals can be attractive, too," stated Antonioli.

The North Face has found success extending some of its best-selling franchises into the water. "We've taken some of the elements from our successful hiking and light hiking styles like Storm, \$60, and Hedgehog III, \$85, and built sibling styles adept for use in and out of the water," said Patrick Anderson, senior product manager, footwear. "By sharing a similar design aesthetic, color palette, and feature set, we've been able to leverage our success on the trail into more amphibious end-uses."



The North Face Storm (top) and Hedgehog III (bottom)

The North Face, top of a sandal buyers lists are: quick-drying uppers, anatomically shaped, comfortable footbeds and straightforward, no-fuss strapping systems. Added Anderson, "Several years ago, we saw the 'barefoot' category eat up a lot of open-to-buy dollars in the sandal category, as consumers flocked to brands like Vibram FiveFingers for their multisport, amphibious footwear. That trend came and went quickly, and we're now seeing consumers come back to the category in a much more traditional way."

Birkenstock is introducing sneaker-inspired outsoles on two of its well-known sandal silhouettes – the Arizona, \$160, and the Gizeh, \$160. An EVA midsole and rubber outsole gives the classic styles a fresh, athletic look to go with the famed wellness benefits of Birkenstock's signature footbed.



Birkenstock Arizona and Gizeh

Matt Hundley, public relations and events manager at Birkenstock USA, said athletics continue to influence the sandal category, but the brands that are successful are those that can integrate those performance attributes without deviating from their identities.

"We're driven to provide unmatched quality, comfort and support through the authentic footbed in every Birkenstock sandal, clog and shoe," said Hundley. "And it's paramount that we stay true to our DNA while delivering fresh, new products that achieve these high expectations."

With Birkenstock going through another revival in the



U.S., the brand is clearly seeing more women paying attention to function, durability and comfort.

"Without a doubt, women are seeing footwear differently," said Hundley. "It's ok to buy sandals on the merits of comfort and functionality, and it's ok to wear sandals that deliver health and wellness benefits. It's happening thousands of times each day with Birkenstock."

For Spring 2015, Sanuk, known for its signature yoga mat footbeds built for maximum comfort, will introduce the Beer Cozy Light, \$34, a slimmer take on its classic Beer Cozy Sandal. It features a flexible synthetic upper with jersey lining, a no-rub toe post and arch support.

The women's Yoga Slung Up, \$44, is based off of the Yoga Sling 2 and represents Sanuk's version of the gladiator sandal with its signature asymmetrical stretch knit ankle strap. It's offered in a variety of solid colors and seasonal prints. Across its women's line, Sanuk's spring color palette features pastels, faded and dusty hues and traditional metallic basics.



Sanuk Beer Cozy Light and Yoga Slung Up

"We use a mix of on-trend bright colors like watermelon, berry and sea foam to create color schemes for a variety of styles to take you on and off the beach," said Trisha Hegg, global director of product, Sanuk. "We have created timeless metallic classics within our Yoga Mat sandal offerings, which include gold, rose gold, silver, pewter and bronze. Sanuk's Yoga Sling Collection continues to dominate our women's sandal momentum, and has evolved this season with new stylish silhouettes and renewed colors."

Sanuk is also offering for men a Party Wave Collection and for women the Shore Things Collection featuring a variety of sandals that are water-friendly and adventure-ready. The men's Latitude and women's On The Rocks styles both have contoured molded rubber outsoles for better grip and arch cookies for added comfort.

Hegg said that while the brand doesn't cater to the athletic market, a big part of Sanuk's appeal is that they can be used for multiple purposes. Said Hegg, "Whether you need a pair of sandals for the beach, the barbeque or when you're on the move, Sanuk has created footbeds and silhouettes to suit those needs."



Reef Rover

For Spring 2015, **Reef** is unveiling its Swellular Technology, built around three layers of innovative material: a soft, contoured Swellular foam deck for comfort; a medium-density Swellular midsole for support; and a high-density rubber outsole featuring an ocean-inspired aesthetic for traction, protection and durability. The Reef Rover, \$50, adds the technology to make it one of the

brand's most versatile sandals.

"We believe that consumers want a sandal that looks great, feels great, and is adaptable to different environments," said Reef's VP of footwear Tom Cooke. "In other words, if you could only have one sandal, what would it look and feel like?"

The color palette includes neutral options and two bright, trend options. The Rover's synthetic nubuck upper is complimented with a moisture-wicking, odor-managing treatment liner with added padding for instant comfort. The strap is designed to perfectly blend support and comfort.

**OluKai** enters the adventure sandal market with the introduction of the Hokua Pahu and 'Ohana Pahu for men. The Hokua Pahu, \$90, is a multi-sport full-foot water sandal emphasizing comfort and functionality. Features include water-resistant, quick-drying adjustable straps for a custom fit, enhanced multi-surface outsole, and an anatomical EVA midsole. The 'Ohana



OluKai Ohana Pahu

Pahu, \$90, offers the fit of a three-point sandal, drawing inspiration from the classic 'Ohana, with added security of a heel strap. Benchmark tested against the leading competition concluded the adventure sandals are 39 percent lighter with higher slip resistance on both wet and dry surfaces.

"OluKai's entry into the adventure sandal market is a very natural one as we continue to push the envelope for what an OluKai sandal can do," said Kerry Konrady, director of marketing at OluKai. For women, a standout is the Wana, \$110, which features a premium soft full-grain or metallic leather, compression-molded EVA, leather wrapped footbed, hand-sewn leather toe post, and laser-etched design details.

At **Speedo**, the big story is the expansion of its popular Exsqueeze Me collection, which

debuted in 2014 and features dual density injection molded EVA construction for performance, flexibility and comfort.

"It's our most comfortable, athletic inspired collection with vibrant colors, FluidFlow technology that provides drainage from the upper sole down through the outsole, and S-Trac technology to streamline water away from the outsole and enhances direct surface contact to improve traction and slip resistance," said Barry McGeough, VP hardgoods for Speedo USA.

New Exsqueeze Me styles for 2015 include the Exsqueeze Me Inflow, \$30, a women's sport casual sandal that's hydrophobic and ultra-lightweight with an adjustable strap for a comfortable fit and comes with an upper in a range of bright colors.



From left to right: Speedo the Exsqueeze Me Inflow, Exsqueeze Me Yagi Slide and Upshifter

The Exsqueeze Me Yagi Slide for men, \$28, enables Speedo to enter a rapidly growing subsector of the sandal market with a hydrophobic and ultra-lightweight option at a strong price point. For both genders, the Upshifter, \$65, features a full grain leather upper that's breathable, durable and waterproof. The EVA topsole is wrapped in full grain leather while the S-Trac rubber outsole offers water management and flow dispersion for maximum traction. Said McGeough, "It's a great sport sandal, perfect for the active consumer, updated with full grain leather styling."

McGeough said that with brights, neons, saturated jewel tones working in the athletic space, Speedo has been able to bring more color into its sandal line. But believes "comfort is king" when it comes to sandals. He added, "What's happening now in foams and cushioning systems allows us to be able to make comfortable sandals and going to market with a compelling comfort story, like our Exsqueeze Me dual density injected EVA foams, is table stakes in the sandal world."



Top to bottom: Rider USA Smoothie II, Monza and The Next

Brad Gruber, national sales manager at **Rider USA**, also believes "comfort above all" is what consumers look for in a sandal, and that Riders new Dry Eco Foam "is leading the evolution of foams coming to the market." While remaining 100 percent recyclable, the foam is both non-porous and water resistant. The perpetually dry foot-bed raises comfort levels and reduces the chance of fungal growth.

"Dry Eco Foam also offers cushioned insoles and longer cushion memory, creating fantastic feeling sandals and unwavering support," said Gruber. "We tested the foam in several of our sandals in 2014 and the results were impressive. For 2015, Dry Eco Foam will be included in every sandal in our line."

For Spring 2015, the Brazilian-based company's lineup includes the Smoothie II, \$25, which is designed to compliment the arch of the foot. The Flexpand sole and Dry Eco Foam cushioning technology combine to make it a versatile, stable sandal. Adding flair are the dual colored outsoles and gradient upper straps available in a range of vibrant colors.

Inspired by vintage auto and motorcycle racing trends, the Monza, \$32, features a two-toned racing stripe across its exclusive Dry Eco Foam insole. The Flexpand Sole wraps around the upper portion to hug your foot for a high performance feel.

The Next, \$40, features an orange upper, a waterproof material that also supports durability, and unique 3D printed insole features comfort arch accents with stitched detailing. Said Gruber, "The brilliant blue woven nylon lining has been added for comfort under the straps, on the top of the foot and between the toes."

From **Cushe** for Spring 2015 comes the Radiance and Glimmer, \$90, and the Coquira, \$80, for women. Said Alyssa Ruedisueli, associate marketing manager for Cushe, "These three styles feature Cushe Mellow Comfort, a super spongy PU footbed with arch support that



Cushe Coquira



Cushe Coquira

forms to your foot and is supportive in all the right places. Cushe Mellow brings the vibe of the beach under your feet closer than it has ever been.”

Ruedisueli said Cushe’s team believes minimal and clean design profiles that incorporate color pop are giving this category a spark. She added, “Utilizing premium materials that mix different textures and colors in a seamless and fresh way.”

For Spring 2015, Cudas expands its water sandals range for women to include the Yancey, \$60, and the minimal ShastA, \$25, as well as the men’s Lanier, \$60. On the flip side, Cudas is offering the Jackson, \$32,

for men and the Juniper, \$30, for women. The lineup will continue to feature its signature, thick cushioned anatomic footbeds, heel cups and arch supports for stability and thin lace toe-pieces that won’t create blisters between toes.

“Our consumers appreciate the Cudas’ flexible, grippy sole, as seen in the Shasta or Yancey, that helps keep them connected to their SUP so they can go from kneeling to standing seamlessly,” said Jenny Howren, brand director, Cudas. “Our consumers also benefit from our shoes offering plenty of toe and heel protection for canoeing or kayaking.”

Also drawing praise is Cudas’ vent system that moves water out of the shoe quickly. Howren noted that consumers “rave about our ‘no break in time’ - we build styles (like the men’s Jackson



From top to bottom: Cudas Yancey, ShastA and Lanier



Cudas Jackson and Juniper

and the women’s Juniper) with day- one comfort as a priority.”

From an aesthetics viewpoint, Cudas has seen its female consumer move away “from embellished, fussy sandals to a clean-lined Juniper with just a flash of color,” said Howren. She added, “Our new styles, as well as our enduring favorites, are designed for versatility that look great with sundresses or with shorts, season after season.”

Oofos is one of the pioneers in after-sport footwear. Said Duncan Finigan, VP of marketing, “The awareness of recovery footwear has been a growing trend over the past three seasons and we expect that as more athletes and fitness enthusiasts rely on recovery footwear as part of their workout routine, recovery footwear will become a must have in everyone’s closet.”

Oofos is made with proprietary foam, called OOfoam, which absorbs 37 percent more than EVA. Because of this, almost 40 percent less of your body impact is going back up through your body. To many, a big part of its appeal is that Oofos is “180 degrees from most sandal companies that offer a flat, compact EVA slab.”



Oofos OOriginal Thong

For Spring 2015, Oofos will further update its OOriginal Thong, \$40, and Ooahh Slide, \$40, with an expanded range of colors. While tones are expected to soften, the brand sees more demand for bright, summer colors for women while navy is working as an alternative for men. Said Finigan, “One of our biggest requests is for more styles so people can wear Oofos with all of their outfits, all day long and into the evening.” ■

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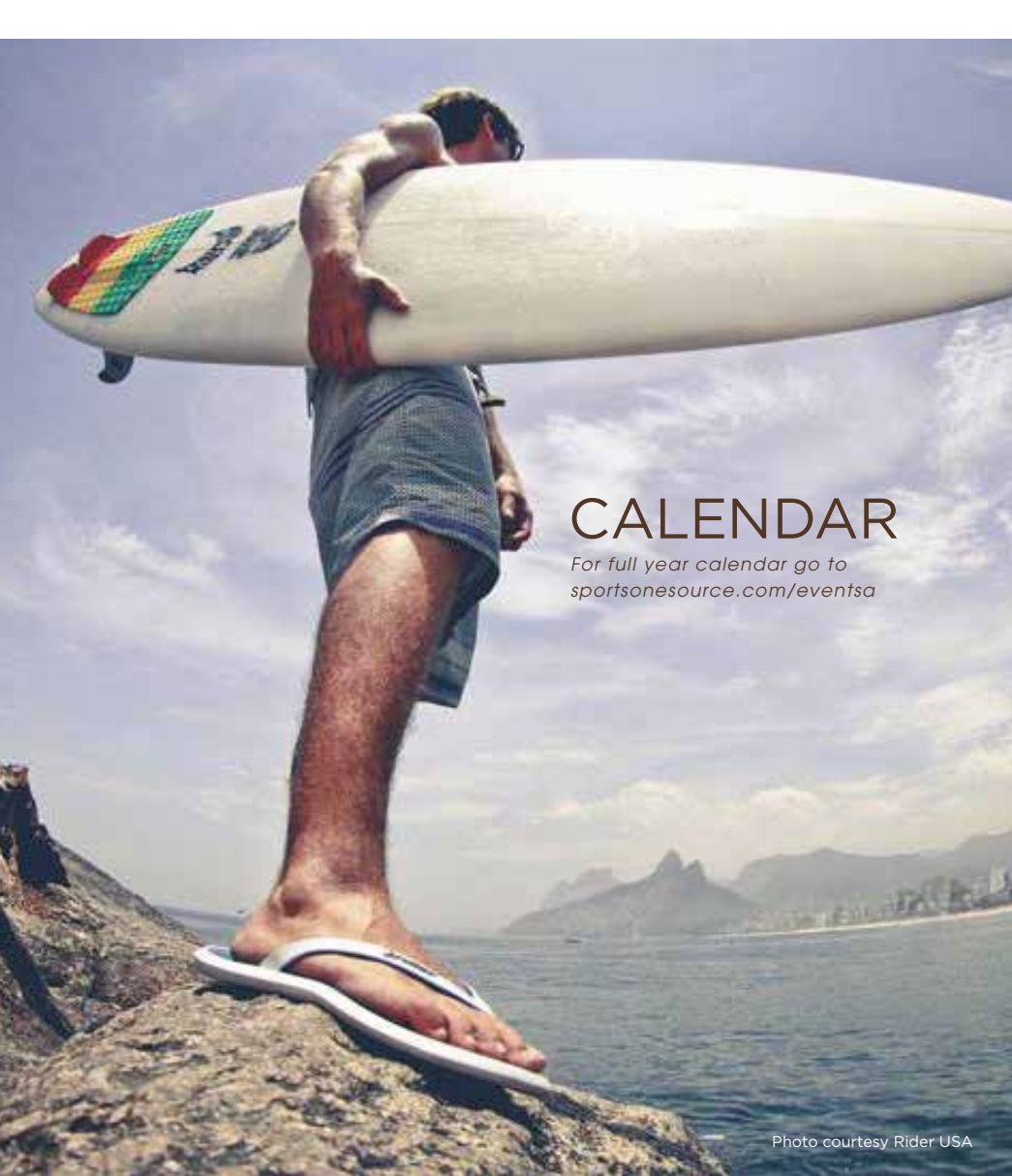
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# CALENDAR

For full year calendar go to [sportsonesource.com/eventsa](http://sportsonesource.com/eventsa)

Photo courtesy Rider USA

## JULY

- 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
- 24 Tennis Industry Association  
The Tennis Show  
New York, NY

## 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

- 3-5 NBS Fall Athletic Market  
Ft. Worth, TX
- 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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