

# SCB WEEKLY

ISSUE 1512  
MARCH 23, 2015

THE WEEKLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE ACTIVE LIFESTYLE MARKET





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**CEO**  
**Group Publisher**  
James Hartford  
jhartford@sportsonesource.com  
303.578.7004

**Managing Editor**  
Aaron H. Bible  
ahbible@sportsonesource.com  
303.578.7017

**Senior Business Editor**  
Thomas J. Ryan  
tryan@sportsonesource.com  
917.375.4699

**Creative Director**  
Teresa Hartford  
teresa@sportsonesource.com

**Senior Graphic Designer**  
Camila Amortegui  
camila@sportsonesource.com

**Advertising Sales**  
Buz Keenan  
Northeast  
buz@sportsonesource.com  
201.887.5112

Katie O'Donohue  
Southeast | Midwest  
katieo@sportsonesource.com  
828.244.3043

Matt Tucker  
West Rockies  
mtucker@sportsonesource.com  
303.578.7031

**Circulation & Subscriptions**  
admin@sportsonesource.com  
303.997.7302

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courtesy Gore-TEX

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## MOVERS & SHAKERS

**Balega International**, the performance sock brand, hired **Tyler Matthews** as brand manager.

**Chuck Roth**, the designer of **Oboz Footwear** since the company's inception who has long worked as an outside consultant, has joined Oboz as an employee for the first time.

**Deckers Brands** promoted **Dave Powers** to the role of President where he will lead the company's omnichannel organization as well as its Ugg, Teva, Sanuk, Ahnu, and Hoka One One brand teams.

**Gander Mountain** hired **Jay Tibbets**, formerly at ATK Sporting Group, as VP of Hardlines Merchandising.

**Holloway Sportswear** hired industry veteran **Ken Rood** as Regional Sales Manager.

**Patagonia** promoted **Bruce Old** from Senior Director of Global Wholesale to VP of Global Wholesale.

**POC**, manufacturer of skiing and cycling helmets, apparel and accessories, appointed longtime marketing team member and former All-American collegiate ski racer **Willie Ford** as Managing Director for North America.

**PrimaLoft** promoted **Victoria Lee** to Manager of Creative Services.

**Two Ten Footwear Foundation** elected three new board members: **Kevin Bailey**, President of VF Action Sports and Vans; **Joel Oblonsky**, President, Lauren & Polo Footwear & Accessories; and **Rob DeMartini**, President and CEO of New Balance.

**Vans** promoted **Lance Eddy** to Director of Sales, overseeing the core footwear channel.

**Vista Outdoor** appointed **Michael Pici** VP of Investor Relations.



## ADIDAS WON'T RENEW 10-YEAR NBA APPAREL CONTRACT

Adidas said it would not extend its deal as the official apparel sponsor of the NBA after the 2016-17 season.

"While we have enjoyed a successful long-term relationship with the league, we continually review our partner agreements to ensure they are meeting our investment and delivering on our brand and business needs," Adidas said in a statement.

"We are re-imagining and reshaping our business and have evolved our strategy to look at new, cutting-edge ways to drive our brand and support our business over the long term. We will invest more in telling stories that matter to our consumer, building category-disrupting innovative products, reinvigorating youth basketball with our new Next Generation programs and doubling our roster of professional athletes to authenticate our brand on-court."

This announcement comes nearly a week after the NBA informed Adidas that it would open the bidding to other companies. Both Nike and Under Armour have reportedly expressed interest in becoming the next official apparel sponsor.

A source told the *Portland Business Journal* that the NBA is concerned about Adidas losing ground in the global athletic and apparel industry and leadership instability.

Last year, Adidas fell to the third largest seller of sporting goods in the U.S. behind Under Armour and dominant frontrunner, Nike. Global brands chief Erich Stamminger, who drove the initial NBA deal, left the company last year. In February, Adidas' board started the search for a successor to long-time CEO Herbert Hainer amid shareholder unrest.

For Adidas' part, Chris Grancio, Adidas' global basketball general manager, told the *Portland Business Journal* that the sponsorship hasn't been as lucrative as hoped.

"We haven't been able to elevate our brand for the basketball consumer that we're targeting," Grancio said. "We ultimately decided that we would change our investment strategy and invest more in players on the court."

On its fourth-quarter conference call, Hainer said turning around its Americas business was its highest priority this year and that it is planning to ramp up investments to sign NBA, NFL and MLB players as well as college teams. Adidas' NBA roster includes Damian Lillard, John Wall, Derrick Rose, Dwight Howard, Andrew Wiggins, Tim Duncan and Joakim Noah.

Nike was the NBA's official apparel sponsor until 2004. The majority of NBA players have deals with either Nike or its Jordan brand, including stars such as LeBron James, Kevin Durant, Kyrie Irving, Kobe Bryant, LaMarcus Aldridge, Anthony Davis, Carmelo Anthony, Kyle Lowry, Chris Paul, Blake Griffin, Chris Bosh, Marc and Pau Gasol and Paul George.

Under Armour could also be a contender to take over sponsorship, showing its determination to become a major player in basketball with its failed bid to take Kevin Durant away from Nike. It has recently gained significant traction in the basketball category with the Curry 1, Stephen Curry's first shoe. It also counts Brandon Jennings and Kemba Walker on its NBA roster.

The NBA expects to announce a new partnership sometime around its board of governors meeting in April.

## MAJESTIC ATHLETIC EXTENDS MLB SPONSORSHIP DEAL

Majestic Athletic and Major League Baseball Properties have reached an extension of their contract that makes Majestic the official on-field uniform of MLB through 2019.

Through the new agreement, Majestic will retain exclusive rights to design, produce, and distribute on-field uniforms, Authentic Collection apparel, replica jerseys, along with a broad assortment of men's and women's fan apparel.

Majestic will continue its long-term commitment to producing all on-field uniforms in the U.S. at its facility in Easton, PA. Majestic made its MLB on-field debut in 1982 with batting practice jerseys. Since 2005, Majestic has expanded its presence to include uniforms and outerwear for all 30 clubs.

Said Noah Garden, Major League Baseball EVP, business. "The Majestic brand has become synonymous with Major League Baseball uniforms and apparel and it's important we continue one of the most successful and tenured partnerships in licensed sports."

Said Jim Pisani, president of Majestic Athletic. "We have achieved strong historical results due to our associates' tremendous passions and commitments to the business. Their efforts have resulted in elevated product design and development, marketing, and distribution of MLB products."



Photo courtesy Majestic

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## BY THE NUMBERS

+2.9%

**Tilly's, Inc.** reported fourth-quarter earnings climbed 31.5 percent to \$7.1 million, or 25 cents per share. Revenues grew 9.2 percent to 152.8 million. Comparable store sales, which include e-commerce sales, increased 2.9 percent.

+5.4%

**Hibbett Sports, Inc.** reported earnings increased 18.1 percent in the fourth quarter to \$19.9 million, or 79 cents a share, handily exceeding Wall Street's consensus estimate of 68 cents a share. Sales increased 9.9 percent to \$239.3 million. Comparable store sales increased 5.4 percent. Footwear comps grew high-single-digits. The performance running business continued to be outperformed by the lifestyle category and basketball offerings.

+9.5%

**Shoe Carnival, Inc.** reported its fourth-quarter earnings to \$2.97 million, or 15 cents a share, up from \$598,000, or 3 cents, a year ago. Results easily topped the off-price shoe chain's guidance calling for earnings between 6 to 10 cents. Boots overall posted comp increases in the mid-20s. Helped by favorable weather, athletic shoes delivered a high-single-digit comp increase for the quarter.

+10%

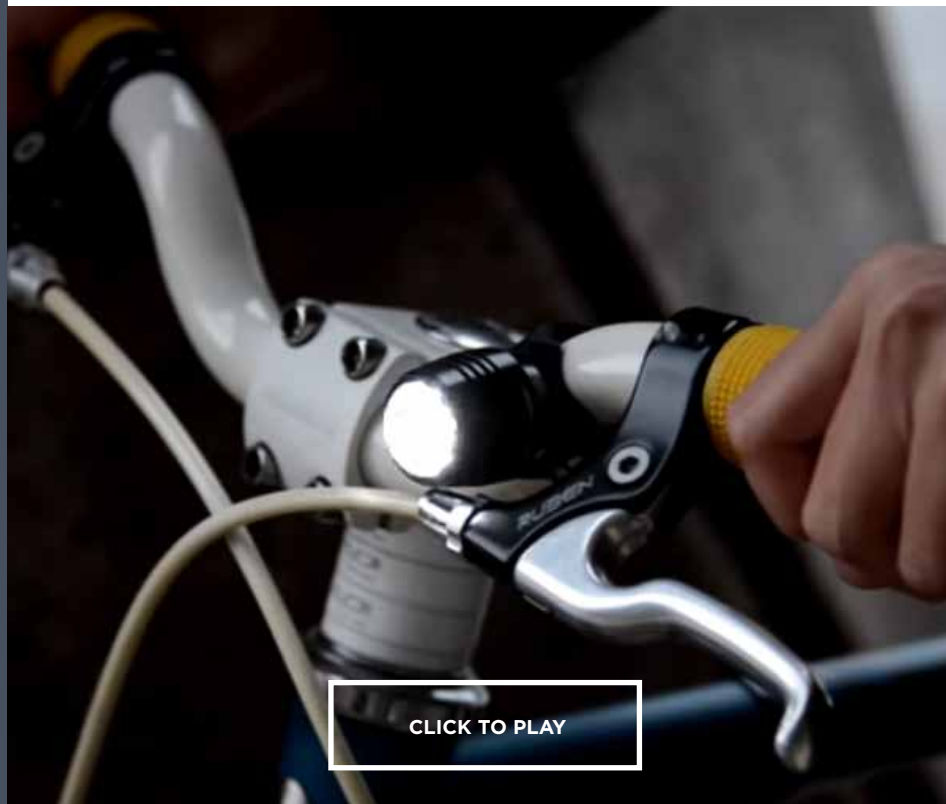
**Genesco, Inc.** reported its earnings came in below expectations in the fourth quarter ended January 31, 2015 as gross margin pressure and currency exchange rates offset 10 percent growth in comparable store sales. Comps increased 16 percent at Journeys Group and 7 percent at the Lids Sports Group.

6.0%

**Revenues at Dorel Sports** reached \$260.1 million in the fourth quarter ended, up 6.0 percent from the same quarter a year earlier. Organic sales - excluding the impact of foreign exchange and acquisitions - grew approximately 8 percent. Pacific Cycle led the sales growth with sales to mass merchants increasing in both bicycles and electric ride-ons.

24.9%

Samsonite International S.A. reported that 24.9 percent currency-neutral growth at High Sierra, and the acquisition of Gregory Mountain Products, helped fuel a 25.1 percent increase in sales in its casual product category in 2014.



CLICK TO PLAY

## BIOLOGIC MAKES BIKE LIGHTS EASIER FOR COMMUTERS

Urban cycling gear specialist BioLogic is introducing a set of small bike lights that are going to make safety even easier for commuters: the Revue USB rechargeable compact front and rear safety lights, \$20.

"We're always on the hunt for ways to reduce waste," said Eric Mah, BioLogic brand manager. "Revue lights are bright and simple to use, but most importantly, they free riders from the cycle of buying and disposing of batteries."

The front Revue light delivers 40 lumens and the rear puts out 15 lumens. Each offers 25 hours of illumination in flashing mode, six hours in low steady, and 3 hours in bright steady mode. The lights recharge in 2.5 hours from any USB port and include a USB to micro USB cable.

The lights feature a precision-machined aluminum body with water resistant seals. They operate simply by clicking the front lens for on/off and for stepping through available modes. A flexible mounting strap allows easy placement on handlebars, seatposts, helmets and bags.

They are available through BioLogic dealers worldwide and at [premiumbikegear.com](http://premiumbikegear.com). BioLogic will show the Revue lights at the Taipei Cycle Show 2015 at booth M1019a. The company is also introducing a new AnchorPlate for mounting mobile devices to bicycles and the new SportCase for device protection.

BioLogic's mission is "to get more people cycling for everyday transport by developing gear that makes cycling safer, more comfortable, and more convenient." BioLogic emphasizes its commitment to sustainable systems and donates at least 1 percent of net profits every year to social and environmental causes. Visit [thinkbiologic.com](http://thinkbiologic.com) to learn more.



Justin "Trauma" Lichter and hiking partner Shawn "Pepper" Forry

## "TRAUMA" AND "PEPPER"

### COMPLETE FIRST EVER WINTER THRU-HIKE ON THE PACIFIC CREST TRAIL

At 1 p.m. on March 1, 2015, accomplished thru-hiker Justin "Trauma" Lichter and hiking partner Shawn "Pepper" Forry finished the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), making them the first to complete the 2,660 mile PCT from Manning Park on the U.S.-Canada border, to Campo, CA, about a mile north of the U.S.-Mexico border, during winter months.

From October to March, Lichter and Forry battled frostbite, frozen water sources, frozen ski bindings, blinding whiteouts, 80 mph winds, negative temperatures and sundry other unpleasant hiking conditions. The pair has more than 55,000 miles of trail experience between them. Lichter is a Granite Gear athlete and an ambassador for Fitis socks.

Detailed packing and preparation played a major role in the safety and completion of their trek, and the duo are pros at packing the latest ultralight backpacking gear. On the trail, Lichter and Forry carried various Granite Gear backpacks and stuff sacks. View Lichter's full list of gear and packing strategies at his blog, [justinlichter.com/gear-selection](http://justinlichter.com/gear-selection).

"We set out on this adventure to challenge ourselves and test our physical and mental limits and skill sets," said Lichter. "We also want to open the door and hopefully show people that the winter can be a beautiful and amazing time to experience the outdoors."

Lichter and Forry worked closely with the PCTA along their trek and plan on acting as stewards to protect and preserve the trail, viewing the PCT as a capstone for America's value of wilderness and conservation.

Lichter has hiked the equivalent to almost one and a half times around the Earth, and in one year hiked over 10,000 miles. In total, he's racked up over 35,000 miles. His accomplishments include hiking unsupported end to end through the Himalayas, through the Southern Alps of New Zealand, through Iceland and Norway, across the United States six times, and over 1800 miles through Africa. He is a ski patroller and enjoys backcountry skiing, biking and surfing. He is the author of Trail Tested and Ultralight Survival Kit.

Since 2003, Forry hiked more than 20,000 miles through 26 states and seven countries, including Nepal and New Zealand and most of Europe. He is currently residing in Truckee, CA, winter and Midpines, CA, and works as an Outward Bound Lead Instructor and Wilderness Adventures Musher.

For 28 independent years, Granite Gear has brought cutting-edge products to the outdoor marketplace. Their award winning backpacks, adventure travel gear, storage sacks, lifestyle accessories and canoe gear offer excellence in design and construction. Located in Northern Minnesota, minutes from the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the Superior Hiking Trail, they have a rugged product testing ground out their backdoor.

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### SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER UNDER ARMOUR EYEWEAR Eyeking, LLC.

The Senior Product Manager is responsible for driving and developing the product strategy of Eyeking's branded eyewear collections to maximize sales and profit performance. The goals of the

Product Development team are to analyze each collection and their competitive landscape, understand the demographic of each brand, balance the collection for each brand...



### STRATEGIC ACCOUNT MANAGER, APPAREL Under Armour

Under Armour is looking for an independently motivated Strategic Account Manager to service and drive its men's athletic apparel business with Dick's Sporting Goods to include product presentations,

assortment planning, order bank management, inquiries regarding orders, shipments and products, inventory management, forecasting...



### WOMEN'S PRODUCT LINE MANAGER OluKai

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long-term strategies; tactical product executions and innovations...

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## HUMANX BY HARBINGER

### ADDS PINK LINE WRIST WRAPS TO WOMEN'S CATEGORY

Over the next few months, HumanX by Harbinger is introducing a variety of fitness tools and products to support functional training, kicking off with their Pink Line Wrist Wraps.

HumanX by Harbinger is a line of high performance gear from Harbinger – widely considered the “go to” brand for weightlifters for over 25 years. Harbinger launched the HumanX program to meet the demand for functional training tools in today's evolving fitness market, with a focus on high intensity, multi-discipline workouts.

The HumanX product line includes X3 Competition Gloves, CoreFlex Belts, Speed Ropes, Kettlebell Arm Guards, Red Line Wrist Wraps, 20# Weight Vest, Pull-Up GRIPS, AbX, Chalk Balls and more. HumanX gear is found in gyms and sporting goods retailers worldwide.

Harbinger has been making wrist wraps for 25 years. The distinctive Pink Line Wrist Wraps, \$15, are “the ultimate tool” for female weightlifters looking to maximize wrist stability, reduce wrist fatigue/injury, and increase lift weights.

Features include: competition grade elastic; extended 18” length for more wrist support; thumb loop; and an extended, enlarged closure system that widens range of tensioning and stays stuck until released.

Currently the Pink Line Wrist Wraps are sold in Modells and Sports Chalet and online at [humanxgear.com/strength/straps-wraps/pinklineww](http://humanxgear.com/strength/straps-wraps/pinklineww).



## GATES CORPORATION

### CARBON DRIVE LAUNCHES LOWER PRICED BELT DRIVE FOR CITY BIKES

Denver's Gates Corporation is launching a “value oriented” product line designed for lower-mileage pavement and city bikes called the Gates Carbon Drive CDN System.

The Gates Carbon Drive CDN system has the same carbon fiber tensile cord technology and CenterTrack sprocket design as Gates' premium CDX system, but at about half the cost.

Consisting of two lightweight sprockets and a high-strength belt embedded with carbon fiber cords, Gates Carbon Drive is a low-maintenance, chain-replacing technology from Gates Corporation, global leader in automotive and industrial belts. Clean, quiet, light, and strong, Carbon Drive requires no lube, weighs less than a chain drive and doesn't stretch. Gates Carbon Drive is featured on more than 200 bike models from more than 100 brands in 2015.

“CDN is our value-oriented belt drive for people who want a clean city bike for getting into town or around the neighborhood,” said Todd Sellden, director of Gates Carbon Drive. “It's for bicyclists who ride in jeans or skirts and casual shoes, not spandex and race gear.”

Five years in development, the CDN belts are manufactured at the Gates plant in Dumfries, Scotland, a leading producer of automotive belts and the center for Gates' belt development group in Europe. CDX and CDC belts are still manufactured in the U.S. at the Gates plant in Kentucky. CDX remains the application for mountain biking, cyclocross racing and long-distance bike touring.



The CDN belt has nine carbon cords embedded within an engineered polymer belt with a patented 11 millimeter tooth pitch profile optimized for lower tension. The front sprocket is made from reinforced composite embedded with glass fibers and comes as an integrated crank assembly for easy factory installation. The rear sprocket is wear-resistant steel.

Gates will launch CDN at the Taipei Bike Show. “Interest is high,” said Frank Scurlock, global sales director for Gates Carbon Drive. “Brands have been asking for this, with the goal of using it on high volume bike models for the general public.”

Due to its low maintenance and ease of use, Carbon Drive is a technology that can get more people on bikes.



## RECCO REFLECTORS

### SEEN IN NEW BRANDS FOR FALL

Recco (RECCO) Advanced Rescue Technology is currently integrated in products from more than 200 brands, and next winter nine additional brands will be integrating reflectors into their product lines.

The new brands joining Recco ranks include, Marmot (apparel), Head (helmets), Pret (helmets), Cebe (helmets), Arva (back protectors), Beal (climbing harnesses), Cairn (helmets), NuDown (apparel), and Isbjörn (apparel).

Recco reflectors make customers wearing the device searchable by professional rescuers to faster locate and rescue victims caught and buried by avalanches, using a hand held Recco detector. The two-part system consists of a detector used by organized rescue groups, and reflectors that are integrated into apparel, helmets, protection gear or boots. Together they enable directional pinpointing of a victim's location using harmonic radar but are not a substitute for a transceiver. Complementary in function, the system is an additional tool that does not interfere with avalanche dogs, transceiver searches or probe lines.

Recco also announced it had signed French snowboarder Xavier De Le Rue and Austrian freeskier Sandra Lahnsteiner as



ambassadors. Their position as role models and their commitment to snow safety and avalanche awareness work lead to the partnership.

The company is a global avalanche rescue system for professional rescue and is currently utilized by more than 800 ski resorts, mountain rescue teams and rescue helicopters world-wide. The Recco system facilitates a faster organized search and increases the chance of being found in time.

Recco AB was founded in 1983 and is owned by its founder Magnus Granhed and the publicly traded investment company Traction AB (listed on OMX Nordic Exchange Stockholm). Visit [recco.com](http://recco.com).



Verge X20



Verge P9

## CUSTOM TERN BIKES

### FOR THE EKOCYCLE BRAND ADD FUNCTION TO FASHION

Urban transport specialist Tern announced it is creating two limited-edition folding bicycles for EkoCycle – an initiative championed by The Coca-Cola Company and global music artist and entrepreneur Will.i.am. EkoCycle has teamed up with some of the globe's most desirable brands to create an innovative lifestyle collection driven by the ambition of using recycled materials to create consumer products.

The Tern bikes will be available at Harrods UK along with more than 150 EkoCycle lifestyle products including clothing, accessories, home interiors, technology, and active lifestyle products from more than 10 brand partners. The EkoCycle Shop-in-Shop opened at Harrods on March 5, 2015.

According to Tern, EkoCycle began when Will.i.am looked out on a stadium after a Black Eyed Peas concert and was inspired to turn waste left behind into recycled objects. He later joined with The Coca-Cola Company to start a mass-scale initiative to encourage recycling.

The Tern bikes feature hydroformed frames made from a minimum of

10-percent recycled aluminum. Other components also include recycled content including rims made by a factory that is solar powered and nearly grid neutral. They fold in under 10 seconds to go on trains, buses and subways or fit under a desk. The limited edition Verge X20 includes lights powered by a dynamo hub that generates its own electricity while riding.

"Sustainability is at the heart of The Coca-Cola Company and we are always looking at innovative ideas that link the vision of sustainability with our business. The EkoCycle brand is about helping consumers understand that waste can actually be a valuable resource to create desirable lifestyle products," said The Coca-Cola Company Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer Bea Perez. "We're delighted that the Tern bicycles are part of the EkoCycle Shop-in-Shop at Harrods."

The Verge X20 will retail for \$3,765 and the Verge P9 for \$1,395. Tern will show the Verge X20 for EkoCycle at Taipei Cycle Show March 18-21, 2015. In April, Tern will give away a Verge X20 for EkoCycle on Facebook as part of an online event celebrating sustainability.



Photo courtesy Las Vegas Ski & Snowboard Resort

## Bucking Ski School Convention To Drive Business At The Las Vegas Ski & Snowboard Resort

By Aaron H. Bible

Las Vegas Ski & Snowboard Resort (LVSSR) dumped the traditional ski school model for the second season in a row, offering its guests instead the chance to work one on one with an instructor - for free. In doing so the resort went from serving 2,200 resort visitors per season to 18,000 in one year, bucking the industry status quo model of shoe horning skiers into set lesson groups that can cost upwards of \$200 dollars per day.

And although 2013/14 was the worst snowfall year on record, LVSSR's ski school had its biggest year in the resort's 52-year history; and is on track beat that this season.

The program is called Complementary Coaching, and LVSSR has seen more than a 50 percent increase in private lesson sales as a result. Its per-visit ski school yield is up 30 percent and youth program enrollment is up seven times over 2011. Multi-week programs are sold out.

Ski school is typically one of the top three revenue centers for a ski resort, having shifted from mom and pop ski schools to a single, resort-operated model over the last 30 years. The motivation behind LVSSR's "sampling ski-school" approach was not to generate more revenue, however.

"We believe the industry has migrated too far to one direction where ski school is looked at solely as a revenue center. As an industry we've lost sight of what our true mission is: to create lifelong skiers and snowboarders," said Kevin Stickelman, LVSSR's president and general manager, who along with Dan Hooper, director of skier/rider services, and Chris Lange, director of ski school, make up the brains behind the unique complimentary coaching service.

Another benefit: lift ticket usage went up 50 percent; meaning people are actually staying at the resort and on snow longer. The resort does still offer

a traditional full-day kids lesson, and those numbers have gone up as well.

Through its research, LVSSR found that its guests didn't want long structured group lessons. Guests wanted the freedom to decide when they arrived at the resort, whom they worked with, and when they wanted to learn. As often happens, people were trying to self teach, parents were trying to teach their kids, and spouses and friends were trying to teach one another. "In those scenarios, people left the hill unhappy," said Stickelman. "They didn't have fun, so they didn't come back. If we are doing this to create lifelong skiers and riders, we had to change the model."

"We were trying to internally identify hurdles to driving skier visits. And as everyone in the industry is beginning to recognize, if we aren't creating the next generation of skiers, in a tradeoff for higher margins, that's not a sustainable model," Stickelman said. So far, LVSSR's gamble has paid off both in profitability and in returning skiers. "We're casting a wider net. We're getting more people involved in the sport, more families involved in the sport, more younger families involved in the sport."

LVSSR said it is the only ski area in the U.S. to offer unlimited free coaching to its guests. Arapahoe Basin in Colorado and Perfect North Slopes in Ohio have both offered a free lesson or a free run with an instructor to new skiers. But will others take note of this unusual strategy in the most unlikely of places? Let's hope we have plenty of snow next year to find out.

The resort is located about an hour from downtown Las Vegas and typically runs from Thanksgiving to early April, depending on weather. It is operated by Powdr Corp., in partnership with the USDA Forest Service. LVSSR sits at 8,510 feet at its base, has an average snowfall of 212 inches, and 445 skiable acres of terrain (195 acres served by four lifts). ■



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## Fighting For a Cause at SFIA's 16th Annual National Health Through Fitness Day

Leaders from the world of sports and fitness banded together for the 16th National Health Through Fitness Day to promote physical activity and health in America's children

By Fernando J. Delgado

More than 100 leaders from the sporting goods and fitness industries convened on Capitol Hill earlier this month to promote physical activity and ensure a brighter future for the nation's kids at the 16th Annual National Health Through Fitness Day organized by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA).

Senators and congressmen spoke to groups led by a record 21 celebrity star athletes from MLB, NHL, NBA, and USA Swimming, as well as representatives from prominent manufacturers and sports organizations. Advocates met with more than 100 members of Congress and participated in staff meetings with an additional 60 Congressional offices.

Efforts focused on promoting three key legislative initiatives: The PHIT (Personal Health Investment Today) Act, which encourages improved health through increased physical activity for all Americans utilizing tax incentives to make it more affordable to participate in sports and engage in physical fitness and recreation activities; the Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP), which provides grants to school districts and community-based organizations to support innovative physical education and activity methods; and the Physical Activity Recommendations (PAR), which promote awareness of the types and amounts of physical activity that Americans of all ages and physical abilities should perform to gain essential health benefits.

"Going in, we had one of our biggest sets of meetings ever," SFIA President & CEO Tom Cove told SGB. "We were scheduled to meet virtually one third of Congress, which is enormous for us. It's enormous for any kind of



lobby day to have that kind of impact. What we heard back throughout the day, and even since, is that our message is resonating, and we're getting a variety of folks looking for more ways that they can help us – helping the cause and the movement. And we are also making progress specifically on the PHIT Act in terms of getting sponsors."

Events kicked off the evening of March 3, as SFIA hosted the National Health Through Fitness Day Reception inside the U.S. Capitol Visitor's Center. SFIA presented retired Major League Baseball pitching great Tommy John with SFIA's Lifetime Achievement Award "in recognition of his lifelong commitment to promoting physical education and active lifestyles in America."

The lobby day started with a breakfast with Tom Cove thanking the audience for their support and involvement, especially the 21 celebrity athletes who committed to spending the day lobbying for the cause. Cove emphasized the importance of the sporting goods industry working together toward the single goal of improving physical activity rates for America, particularly for the country's children. He offered data points detailing the problems caused by childhood obesity, inactivity and sedentary lifestyles while extolling the benefits of sports and physical activity.

SFIA Vice President of Government and Public Affairs Bill Sells detailed key points of the PHIT Act; and PHIT America Founder Jim Baugh lauded the merits of the PEP Program and encouraged the audience to support physical education in schools.



"The results we got back were very positive. They always are," Sells said. "It doesn't surprise me, because we're talking about something that's so basic and so simple, and so obvious. When you have kids getting athletic scholarships to play a video game, we're heading in the wrong direction. We need to change the culture of America so that kids can get healthier. Diet and exercise is the secret to a healthy life. The exercise part is the easy side, because no one's really opposed to that. The trick now is following up to make sure that the message is heard with members of Congress actually signing onto the bill and supporting the PEP Program."

Continued Sells, "We were faced with some challenges, the weather being the biggest one. The schedules of members of Congress were changed so that no votes were to be held the following day, prompting some members to leave early to get in front of the oncoming snowstorm. Despite the issues with the weather, it still turned out well. Of the 162 meetings we had scheduled, I would say that we held about 140 of them. We have some following up to do, and that's the next step of the process."

Despite the threat of bad weather, the groups consisting of celebrity athletes and industry representatives enjoyed productive meetings. "The connections that these athletes can make with members of Congress based on their backgrounds is always very gratifying to see," Sells said. "Take Tommie Smith. Every person that met with Smith was in awe of him, because of what he had done [famously making a Black Power salute on the medal podium during the 1968 Summer Olympics] back in a very challenging time for America. He took a stand and he put himself out there. Him being there in support of physical activity helps with the members of Congress that have heard his story and admire him. And the same can be said for [former NBA player] Jason Collins, who took a forward position on a social issue. It's great to see these celebrity figures come in and get the overwhelming support that we got."

One of the most important developments was Senator John Thune (R-SD) agreeing to be the lead Republican sponsor of the PHIT Bill. Two separate groups met with the senator throughout the day, one led by former U.S. Olympian Carl Lewis, and another which included SFIA's Cove and former NFL star Herschel Walker.

Cove said that Thune will be a valuable advocate for the PHIT Bill and the overall National Health Through Fitness Day effort moving forward, not only because of his growing stature within the Senate, but also because of his connection to sports. "He played basketball [at Biola

University] and he's a physically active guy," said Cove. "Senator Thune is someone who is clearly moving up in the Republican leadership. He's on the Finance Committee. His young daughters competed in sports and ran track in college, so they went through the whole process of youth sports. And as a well-respected leader, he's perfect for us as we look toward the process of getting a vote [on the PHIT Act], passing it through Congress, and getting it signed into law."

Ever since the first National Health Through Fitness Day in 2000, SFIA has made considerable progress with the lobbying effort. "I've been doing this now for 10 years, and the mood in Congress has changed," said Sells. "They're more receptive to our message on physical activity, and they're more willing to support policies that improve health by getting people to be active. I think we're in a good spot because we have a good message and we are presenting good solutions."

SFIA saw immediate returns on their hard work. It was announced that Representatives Charles Boustany (R-LA) and Ron Kind (D-WI) of the powerful House Ways & Means Committee introduced the Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Act. The introduction marks a key first step towards Congressional passage of the PHIT Act, a major priority for the SFIA and PHIT America, the year-round, educational, advocacy and grassroots cause and campaign.

SFIA's current legislative initiatives require year-round dedication, but the organization is already looking forward to next year's event, scheduled for March 8-9, 2016.

Cove said SFIA hopes to bring members of Congress to SFIA member company facilities within the next 6 to 12 months so that employees can interact with members of Congress, and also so members of Congress can get a first-hand look at the economic ramifications of the initiatives that National Health Through Fitness Day promotes.

"For 2016, we're really looking to make tangible, measurable progress," said Cove. "And hopefully we can pass the PHIT Act and the PEP appropriations this year. We've really changed the environment on Capitol Hill in terms of appreciating the importance of physical activity. Years ago people would just focus on obesity. We continue to build on the need for a culture of activity to keep every child physically active and to make the youth sports experience a positive one." ■

# Let's Get Social

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# FIELD TESTING THE NEW C-KNIT GORE-TEX BACKER TECHNOLOGY

By Aaron H. Bible

Released at ORWM and at ISPO in January, W.L. Gore has introduced a third tier in its waterproof-breathable lamination technology for makers of performance outerwear.

Hailed by Gore as more than just an incremental innovation, the new Gore-Tex C-Knit features a hosiery-knit, ultra-lightweight woven backer construction that will roll out in more than a dozen Gore-Tex brand partners in Fall 2015.

SGB was with Gore in Yosemite National Park in November 2014 when the company announced its latest innovation to an international corps of journalists, and our editor has been testing the new product for several months in real world conditions. The new patent-pending





technology is proving to be not only noticeably softer to the touch, but the company says it is up to 15 percent more breathable and 10 percent lighter than 3-layer Gore-Tex laminates with traditional Tricot backers.

According to Gore Product Specialist Chris Mayer, the goal was to develop a robust yet softer laminate that could be used for multiple activities by outdoor enthusiasts “who rate comfort as high as functionality.” The softer feel is achieved through a backer (the inner, third layer of a three-layer garment) constructed of an extremely fine nylon, and a lamination procedure engineered to complement it. C-Knit is made on a specific circular knitting machine – only one of which currently exists, in Japan, but Gore said it will build up to four more to support production.

#### GORE® C-KNIT™ Backer Technology



Targeted with the new product are hikers, trekkers and free riders who Gore found through its research to be missing some versatility and comfort that previous Tricot backing fabrics may not have provided. According to Gore Fabric Marketing’s Tom Boyle, the company sees a global hiking market of 166 million people, trekking with 13.3 million participants, and 8 million freeriders, all whom participate at least seven days per year.

Those 166 million hikers also help explain Gore’s massive push into the waterproof-breathable footwear space, going big with its Gore-Tex Surround Technology in 15 global partner brands, including standouts La Sportiva, Salewa and Ecco.

Gore will offer 22 different textured nylon outer fabrics, ranging from thin to robust, which brands will choose from to manufacture garments. Gore said all finished material combinations will have a breathability rating (RET score) of less than 6 (2.0 – 5.8), landing it in the middle of its Active and Pro laminates already in its offerings. The new backer is also more “snag-proof.”

The company launched Gore-Tex Active in 2011; followed by Gore-Tex Pro in 2013. To put it simply, C-Knit will be less crunchy, but more breathable, than Gore-Tex Pro, but slightly less breathable than Gore-Tex Active.

And as promised, the versatility and the suppleness, and therefore comfort and wearability, is delivered, without losing durability. Gore said long-term durability is part of its environmental strategy as well. As early as 1992, Gore introduced its Life Cycle Assessment to better understand the influence its outdoor apparel had on the environment.

Gore product developers are calling C-Knit “the most versatile 3-layer fabric ever,” while “maintaining the Gore-Tex guarantee of being 100-percent windproof and waterproof.” Product development began in 2012 and international guides and athletes tested more than 100 samples. The new backer material is 30- to 50-percent lighter as a raw material (garments may only be 10-percent lighter); and Gore is developing a new seam tape for this product, designed to stretch more easily around curves.

“The product speaks for itself, especially for the softness, hand and drape the new product provides,” said Mayer. “This is the first time in years that there is an innovation on the backer technology; we are able to offer this innovation next to our Tricot products - the products are softer, lighter and offer overall a higher breathability rate compared to similar garments to the consumer, which adds up to more comfort and protection when needed.”

Early C-Knit adaptors include Arc'teryx, Armada, Berghaus, Burton, Dynafit, Eider, Haglöfs, Maloja, Marmot, Millet, Outdoor Research, Patagonia, Peak Performance, Salewa, Tilak, The North Face, Volcom and Ziener.

“The great brands we work with like Arc'teryx, Patagonia, Peak Performance or Haglöfs will ultimately decide on the price in store, as the garment price is also influenced a lot by all accessories and details going into a garment,” said Mayer. “Most likely it will be positioned below the retail price of Gore-Tex Pro. It looks as quite a few of the brands we work with will keep the Tricot backer and introduce C-Knit in additional styles. This shows they value the innovation before it's even out on the market.” ■

# INDUSTRY CALENDAR



Photo courtesy Gore-Tex

## TRADE ASSOCIATIONS BUYING GROUPS

Athletic Dealers of America  
1395 Highland Avenue  
Melbourne, FL 32935  
t 321.254.0091  
athleticdealersofamerica.com

National Shooting Sports Foundation  
Flintlock Ridge Office Center  
11 Mile Hill Road  
Newtown, CT 06470  
t 203.426.1320  
nssf.org

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

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

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

Sports & Fitness Industry Association  
8505 Fenton Street | Suite 211  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
t 301.495.6321  
sfia.org

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

Snowsports Merchandising Corp.  
235 Cadwell Drive  
Springfield, MA 01104  
t 413.739.7331  
Snowsportsmerchandising.com

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

Sports Specialists Ltd.  
590 Fishers Station Drive | Suite 110  
Victor, NY 14564  
t 585.742.1010  
sportsspecialistsltd.com

Team Athletic Goods  
629 Cepi Drive  
Chesterfield, MO 63005  
t 636.530.3710  
tag1.com

Tennis Industry Association  
1 Corpus Christi Place | Suite 117  
Hilton Head Island, SC 29928  
t 843.686.3036  
tennisindustry.org

Worldwide  
8211 South 194th  
Kent, WA 98032  
t 253.872.8746  
wdi-wdi.com

### APRIL

- 14 SFIA/HFHS/NCAA Rules Meeting  
Indianapolis, IN
- 16-19 The Sea Otter Classic  
Monterey, CA

### MAY

- 3-6 NSGA Management conference  
and Team Dealer Summit  
Austin, TX

### JUNE

- 25-27 Sports Inc. Athletics Show  
San Antonio, TX

### JULY

- 10-12 A.D.A. Spring Show  
Minneapolis, MN

### AUGUST

- 5-8 Outdoor Retailer Summer Market  
Salt Lake City, UT
- 13-15 Sports Inc. Outdoor Show  
San Antonio, TX

### SEPTEMBER

- 9-10 SFIA Industry Leaders Summit  
New Orleans, LA

### OCTOBER

- 29-31 A.D.A. Fall Show  
Baltimore, MD

### NOVEMBER

- 22-24 Sports Inc. Athletic Show  
Las Vegas, NV



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