

SCGB

ISSUE 1519
MAY 11, 2015

WEEKLY

THE WEEKLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE ACTIVE LIFESTYLE MARKET





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Photo courtesy Adidas

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I AM...SGB

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CEO, Craft Sportswear North America

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MOVERS & SHAKERS

Big 5 Sporting Goods Corp said that as part of an agreement with its largest shareholder, **Stadium Capital Management LLC**, it would nominate **Dominic DeMarco, Nicholas Donatiello, Jr.**, and **David Jessick** to serve on its board at its upcoming annual meeting and expand its board to eight members.

Eddie Bauer appointed **José Cabaço** as VP and Brand Creative Director. Cabaço most recently held the position of global concept creative director of C.O.D.E. (Center of Design Excellency) at Nike Inc.

Fleet Feet Sports promoted **Jason Jabaut** to Senior Manager, Digital Marketing and Communication. Jabaut will lead e-commerce business integration.

Gildan Activewear named **Rhodri J. Harries** EVP, CFO and Administrative Officer.

Mission AthleteCare, the maker of thermoregulation apparel, has partnered with racing champion **Jimmie Johnson** and **Lowe's**, kicking off the start of a national awareness campaign focused on heat safety.

Nixon, the watch and accessories brand, promoted **Megan Brunner** to the newly created role of Director of Marketing, North America.

Patagonia hired **Dean Carter** as VP Human Resources and Shared Services. He held a similar role at Sears Holdings.

Puma appointed **Martyn Bowen** as General Manager of EMEA.

Saxx Underwear Co. hired **Adam Greene** as Marketing Director. He had been at Smith Optics.

Under Armour sponsored-athlete **Stephen Curry** won the NBA's MVP award.

Vibram announced that CEO **Antonio Dus** has resigned. Vibram President and Chairman of the Board **Marco Bramani**, the grandson of founder Vitale Bramani, takes over as interim CEO.

M&A BLOTTER

Amer Sports acquired **Sports Tracker**, a digital sports application and online service. Sports Tracker will be an integral part of Amer Sports Digital Ecosystem, which consists of connected devices, smart sensors, connected Preva network, services such as Movescount, and brand websites and e-commerce.

Implus Corp., a leader in insoles, shoe care and other sports accessories brands, announced that Boston-based investment firm, **Berkshire Partners LLC**, entered into a definitive agreement to acquire a majority position in the company - alongside management - from Trilantic North America.

Kanders & Co. Inc. bought all the assets of **Mountain Khakis** through an affiliate for an undisclosed sum from shareholders including Remington Arms Co. Remington acquired a 75 percent stake in Mountain Khakis in 2010. Kanders & Co. is controlled by Warren Kanders, who is the largest shareholder of Black Diamond Inc.

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SCHUYLKILL VALLEY SPORTS

INTRODUCES NFL JERSEY INSURANCE PROGRAM

With the uncertainty surrounding today's NFL team rosters and players increasingly on the move, Schuylkill Valley Sports has developed a buyer's insurance program to make customers feel more secure before purchasing their next favorite player's jersey.

Player trades, cuts and roster changes made due to the salary cap have become much more frequent in recent years, leaving many fans frustrated and hesitant when deciding what fan gear to purchase for the upcoming season. Schuylkill Valley Sports is seeking to ease those concerns through its new NFL jersey insurance program.

Here's how it works: Schuylkill Valley Sports (SVS) customers can purchase jersey insurance for \$10 when purchasing a new jersey. If the player is traded or cut from their team, the insurance will allow the customer to purchase a new jersey at 50 percent off. The insurance is valid for 18 months after the original purchase date and does not include retired or injured players. Customers do not need to turn in their original jersey to receive the discount.

"SVS strives to provide excellent customer service, the highest level of merchandise and incredible deals," said Phil Baumgardner, marketing director for the 18-unit chain located largely in eastern Pennsylvania. "SVS hopes the new NFL jersey insurance will allow their customers the peace-of-mind they're looking for when purchasing fan gear to root on their favorite teams and players."

BY THE NUMBERS

+17%

Adidas Group reported sales rose 17 percent in the first quarter, or 9 percent on a currency-neutral basis. While Western Europe and China grew faster, a highlight was North America, which rebounded to show a gain of 7 percent on a currency-neutral basis. Among brands on a currency-neutral basis, Adidas grew 11 percent and Reebok advanced 9 percent, while TaylorMade fell 9 percent.

-30%

Puma reported first-quarter profits fell 30 percent despite a 13 percent revenue gain. Sales grew 4.4 percent on currency-neutral terms. The company said its profit would be lower than expected in 2015 after the strong U.S. dollar hit its first-quarter earnings, adding plans to compensate through higher prices and more local sourcing were taking longer than expected.

+10%

Led by a 10 percent gain at its Outdoor & Action Sports coalition, **VF Corp.'s** sales on a currency-neutral basis grew 8 percent in the first quarter. Dinged by the strengthening dollar against most foreign currencies, revenues on a reported basis increased only 2.0 percent to \$1.61 billion over the 2014 quarter. Companywide earnings slipped 2.8 percent to \$288.7 million, or 67 cents a share, in line with Wall Street's consensus estimate. On a currency-neutral basis, earnings climbed 13 percent.

+0.4%

Delta Apparel earned \$3.6 million, or 46 cents a share, in its fiscal second quarter ended March 28, boosted by the sale of The Game business in early March. The company earned 3 cents a share from ongoing operations, which still marked a turnaround from a net loss of \$763,000, or 10 cents, in the same period a year ago. Sales inched ahead 0.4 percent to \$115.0 million. Adjusting for the sale of The Game, sales advanced approximately 2 percent. Growth came in all of its business units except Soffe.

+34%

While product availability issues stemming from the West Coast port slow down impacted its Retail segment, **Nautilus Inc.** reported earnings soared 99.7 percent in the first quarter, to \$10.7 million, or 34 cents a share. Revenues jumped 33.8 percent, to \$96.2 million.

Congratulations SGB 40Under40 2015 Award Honorees

Stay Tuned For Event Details!



From Top Left to Right:

Dan Abrams, Linda Balfour, John Barrett, Lauren Blanda, Todd Bronson, Brian Burnett, Margaret Chesebro NewHard, Tammy Christensen, Drew Davies, Guillaume DeMonplanet, Jonathan Degenhardt, David Feld, Brendan Gibbons, Fynn Glover, Joel Grabenstein, Matt Helbig, Jason Hill, Ted Kushion, Wendy Lee, Lauren Mallon, Sarah Matt, Kent McKeaigg, Michael Meyer, Kelly Milazzo, Stephanie Militello, Tai Neal, Sara Parker, David Polivy, Danielle Quatrochi, Michael Rossi, Chris Sackett, Matthew Schultz, Josh Shaw, Katie Swenson, Neal Taylor, Megan Tompkins, Tina Wade, Matt Weiss, Gavin Whelan, Laura Wolf Stein.

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SAUCONY SPONSORS

“RUN FREE: THE TRUE STORY OF CABALLO BLANCO”

On the Thursday before the 119th running of the Boston Marathon, Saucony, in partnership with *Runner's World*, hosted the U.S. premiere of the award-winning film documentary, “Run Free: The True Story of Caballo Blanco.”

April marked three years since the passing of American ultra-runner Micah True, nicknamed Caballo Blanco, and mythicized in the 2009 best seller “Born to Run” by Christopher McDougall.

Living in the remote Copper Canyons of northern Mexico among the Tarahumara Indians, reputed to be the greatest natural runners in the world, True created a unique 50-mile footrace, now called the Ultramarathon Caballo Blanco (UMCB), to help the Tarahumara preserve their legendary running culture. Filmed over the course of five years, the 90-minute documentary tells the story of this amazing race through the eyes and voice of True.

A special guest attending the premiere event was Maria Walton, executive producer of Run Free and Micah True's girlfriend at the time of his death. Also on hand were Sterling Noren, director of Run Free; Johnathan Beverly, *Running Times* editor in chief and *Runner's World* shoe editor; Saucony president Richie Woodworth and *Runner's World* publisher Molly O'Keefe.

Noren met Micah True in 2009 and most of the material for the film was filmed in the weeks leading up to the 2012 race. Shortly after that race, True died of an apparent heart attack in the Gila Wilderness of New Mexico during his daily run.

The story touches on his death but largely explores True's life, including his quirky and secretive personality, his reclusive lifestyle in Copper Canyon, and runs with his dog, Guadajuko. The film celebrates the running life and culture shared between the Raramuri and the international runners who run in the UMCB, and the spirit of running shared among runners everywhere in the world.

“In 2009 I set out to make a movie that was about the joy of traveling solo on a motorcycle,” said Noren. “I rode into the heart of North America's largest wilderness - the Copper Canyons of northern Mexico. I met Micah by chance when I arrived in a small village at the bottom of one of the canyons. Micah invited me to not only film the race, but trusted me to document his life.”

Now in its 13th year, the UMCB attracts hundreds of local Tarahumara to the village of Urique to compete alongside some of the best ultrarunners in the world. All race finishers receive 500 pounds

of corn, which the international runners traditionally donate to the local Tarahumara, commemorating the spirit of sharing, or kórima, which is a way of life among the natives of Copper Canyon.

“We made this film to share Micah's vision of hope for the Tarahumara culture and inspire people everywhere with his joy of running,” said Walton, who now also serves as director of the UMCB. “Micah had an immense respect for his friends at Saucony and their generosity to help support his life's mission truly honors that friendship.”

Other stars in the film include Scott Jurek, the legendary American ultramarathon runner; Barefoot Ted, the philosopher, athlete and founder of Luna Sandals; and Luis Escobar, the acclaimed photographer, race director, accomplished ultra runner. All three were also featured in “Born to Run.”

Run Free has been named winner of the 2015 Bud Greenspan Memorial Film and Video Award presented by the Track and Field Writers of America, and just earned Best Documentary Award at the Arizona International Film Festival. The film has also received an Award of Excellence from the IndieFest Film Awards, an avant-garde, worldwide film competition.

A national, multi-city screening tour is currently taking place. More information is available at runfreemovie.com.



NEW BALANCE SPONSORS BOSTON MARATHON SURVIVOR TEAM - TWICE

New Balance this year stepped up to sponsor the “Boston Marathon Survivor Team,” a group of survivors of the bombings tragedy. Unfortunately, they had to step up twice.

The organizers of the group spent the anniversary of the Boston Marathon attack, April 15, 2015, with fellow survivors. “We all had a city sponsored breakfast at the library, did a community service project together, and then headed over for a day of socializing together at Old South Church,” said Doug Julian, one of the core organizers of the group along with his girlfriend, Lynn Crisci. “This event was organized and sponsored by the Massachusetts Resiliency Center, of which we are both volunteer board members.”

The couple which were both injured in the blasts two years ago, eventually went to their car to retrieve the New Balance sneakers and

t-shirts to present as gifts to their survivor group. However, when arrived, they discovered the car had been robbed. The police were immediately called and a cameraman heard the call on his scanner and showed up with a news reporter. The story soon earned heavy play across Boston media outlets.

“We felt violated by the break-in and embarrassed that we would not be able to deliver the sneakers from New Balance,” said Julian. “In true ‘Boston Strong’ fashion, fellow survivors checked every trash can for blocks, the police did their best to find the thief and the entire city showed their love and support.”

He added that as soon as New Balance heard the news, they immediately offered to replace all the sneakers, for every survivor runner, in person at the Boston Marathon expo that Saturday.

“The news reports we gave were shared so much that the story went international,” said Julian. “We were thrilled to be able to share with the world that New Balance is such a wonderfully generous, supportive, local company.”

The “Survivor” running team unofficially formed this year as a result of survivors feeling left out of the initial “4.15 Strong” running group, of which Julian and Crisci were participating members. Julian, who still suffers from hearing issues from the explosions, noted that “4.15 Strong,” which is still part of the “Survivor” group, is focused on training for the Boston Marathon, but not all the survivors are physically able to run a marathon.

“Many voiced to us that they felt left out when they’d see the team leaders at fun events to which the team was not invited,” said Julian. “Some events were only for marathoners and we wanted everyone who wanted to be involved.”

The more-inclusive “Survivor” group also addresses what psychological experts describe as “invisible injuries” stemming from such tragedies. Julian said many bystanders and runners suffered but felt guilty seeking help since they didn’t lose a limb or suffer any other obvious “physical loss.”

The One Fund Center was launched last September to address anxiety, stress and other unseen wounds including eyesight and hearing problems but only a portion of 240 qualifying survivors have tapped the services. The Massachusetts Resiliency Center has also been offering behavioral health services to people affected by the attacks but only a few hundred have used the services since it opened last October.

“The ‘Survivor’ team is for all survivors, first responders, and their families that want to participate in a group, weather it be running a 5K, marathon or



Boston Marathon attack survivor's Frank (Doug) Julian & Lynn Crisci (Julian), along with her Service Dog, "Lil Stinker" who may be the only animal survivor. Photo credit Dear World

other event,” said Julian. “We started with a small group of a dozen but now it has exploded and keeps growing everyday.”

The group also recently launched a website, BostonNextStep.com, for the entire “Marathon Family” to meet-up throughout the year, instead of just April. Besides training runs, meet-ups will include fun outings and field trips. The Boston Celtics have already sponsored an outing to a game.

But the Boston Marathon remains the focus. Around this year’s race, the group all ran the BAA 5K on the Saturday before the marathon. While an easy, fun romp for some, “for others, it is a huge victory to conquer. One survivor completed it for the first time this year...with his cane,” said Julian.

Many survivor runners also conquered the Boston Marathon, some for the first time. Others cheered them on from the bleachers, at the finish line, through the cold and rain. More than a few members managed to persevere through the conditions, including one who arrived at 8:00 p.m. just as the finish line was being broken down. Said Julian, “The strength of spirit of our ‘Marathon Family’ could not be dampened.”

Julian and Crisci both had to drop out due to injuries and severe weather, “but we will both be back stronger than ever for 2016,” Julian promised. Julian hopes that his “Survivor” team and other efforts will help the city and Marathon community further recover but he also admits that the 118th Boston Marathon in 2014 will likely always mean the most to the survivor community.

Both Julian and Crisci were watching the marathon when the explosions occurred and came back to complete the race the next year. Crisci, who still suffers from a frontal lobe brain injury, hearing loss, a lower back injury and post-traumatic stress disorder, finished the 2014 Race with Nike athlete Sarah Reinertsen and was recently recognized by *Self Magazine* as one of the most inspirational women to have run the Boston Marathon.

“That was the year we chose to band together, as a ‘Marathon Family’ and as runners, and show the world our brave face,” said Julian of 2014. “Most of us were spectators at the 2013 Boston Marathon, not runners. We trained every weekend, finishing longer and longer runs, in order to show our resilience to our beloved city. At the 2014 Boston Marathon we proved, to ourselves and the world that evil did not win. Love of running

BOSTON MARATHON

Boston Marathon Running on the Mend

By Thomas J. Ryan

Nicole DeBoom, CEO, Skirt Sports

Like many categories, running was disrupted this year by snowstorms and an extended winter in the Northeast and Midwest. But discussions with stores and vendors at the Boston Marathon Expo found that the arrival of warmer weather in the latter part of March and April has revived the top-line.



John Rogers, Owner, Fleet Feet Maine Running

A few accounts reportedly delayed spring shipments to clear through some inventories, but vendors are likewise hearing April bounced back.

“We’ve heard mixed reports in general about weather across the country,” said Brent Hollowell, Nathan’s VP of

“Specialty running has to fight for every customer acquisition that we can get but the winter in the Northeast I know had a profound effect this year, particularly in February and part of March,” said John Rogers, owner of Fleet Feet Maine Running. “But our sales have really picked up in April.”



Brent Hollowell, VP of Marketing, Nathan's

Marketing. “But for the most part over the last month our business has really picked up in both hydration and lighting.”

Michael Martin, the finished goods business unit director for Vibram, agreed that with the unseasonably high snowfalls, long cold spells, and then heavy rain throughout the northern part of the country, “the typical March thaw that we get really didn’t materialize.” While warm weather has arrived, however, he noted that another challenge has been securing goods with the West Coast port strike.

Said Martin, “We anticipate things picking up during the warmer months to come but for sure, there’s been something of an adverse impact due to the weather in Q1.”

Vic Addaday, owner of Addaday, maker of massage rollers, said his firm has caught up and was well stocked beforehand but still had to air freight some product to fill orders. Said Addaday, “I think everybody more or less was somewhat caught up in it.”



Michael Martin, Finished Goods Business Unit Director, Vibram



Addaday Massage Roller



Keith Hanson, Co-Owner, Hansons Running

Keith Hanson, co-owner of Hansons Running, said his business this spring is up significantly with his four stores in the metro Detroit area facing easier comparisons. Last year, an extended winter crushed spring sales and it took until December 11 for sales to recover and start being up slightly for that year.

Still, the running specialty channel is facing a number of newer disruptions.

On the trend side, a *Wall Street Journal* article in mid-April quoted SportsOneSource retail point-of-sale data (SportScanInfo) showing that sales of running shoes priced above \$125 fell 18 percent for the 12 months ended April 11; while sales of running shoes under \$125 rose 8 percent over the same period. The decline was attributed to a shift away from technical shoes toward more casual shoes, driven at least partly to the athleisure trend with many people wearing running and fitness wear as everyday wear.

Nicole DeBoom, CEO of Skirt Sports, who was promoting its line with Kathrine Switzer (the first woman to run the Boston Marathon), believes the athleisure trend has been happening for a decade. Said DeBoom, "Women want products that carry them through their whole day. They don't want to change five times and that was the case 10 years ago and still is today."

Still, she believes the expansion of Lululemon, Athleta and other women verticals clearly impacted the women's apparel



Nicole DeBoom, CEO, Skirt Sports

category at run specialty over the last few years. Competition inside the run channel in the category has also significantly picked up in recent years. Said DeBoom, "Everybody makes cute stuff so you have to find your niche."

Skirt Sports focuses on fit and DeBoom still believes specialty stores need to stand out with unique brands. She



Kathrine Switzer, the first woman to formally enter and complete the Boston Marathon, began running as a young girl in Fairfax. At 65, she is still running marathons.

also believes there will be a line between "high performance wear" and the likely "dumbed down" athleisure apparel. Said DeBoom, "If you're running a 20 miler, you're probably not going to want to wear your athleisure product."

One footwear executive who couldn't be named believes his company is somewhat immune to the athleisure trend because the brand doesn't do fashion and its price points are above \$100. He was also comforted that running participation rates are still rising. "As long as participation rates are climbing, we're real bullish," he said.

David Spandorfer, president of Janji, the charitable running-apparel company that supports clean water initiatives in



David Spandorfer, President, Janji

Africa, Peru, India and elsewhere, said the larger focus on fitness, especially with younger people, is the encouraging side of the athleisure trend. But he agreed that with fashion designers, department stores and Old Navy all chasing the running category to some degree with athleisure, the industry is grappling with how to adjust to the new competition. Said Spandorfer, "Many people in the running industry are exploring what are the next steps. How can we get ahead? How can we be different and fresher?"

The other disruption facing the run channel is ongoing consolidation, led by Running Specialty Group (RSG), which is owned by The Finish Line. After snapping up a host of shops across the country in building a 76-unit chain, RSG last month said it wasn't planning to add more as it focuses on improving profitability and efficiencies.

Regardless, RSG's shift to centralized buying is particularly impacting the specialty channel. In some cases, local reps are finding fewer accounts to service in their area.

Newton Running is among those that have had to restructure its sales force from a geographic standpoint to support more centralized buys and still service the stores. Said Craig Heisner, Newton's president, "I think we've put some really good programs in place that are going to help not only sell in but support the pull strategy on the ground with each of these retailers. But the landscape of run specialty is changing fast."



Craig Heisner, President, Newton Running



Tony Post, CEO of ToPo Athletic

Although some believe it's lessening, concern continues over whether the consolidation will somehow dilute the channel's focus on top-notch service. Said Tony Post, CEO of ToPo Athletic, "I don't necessarily like the idea of the self-service shoe concept. I like to be able to go to a store and get information, educated and properly fitted. So I hope we don't lose the premium independent specialty retailer."

Rogers at Fleet Feet Maine Running believes running specialty shops have to continually up the ante in differentiating themselves with service, selection and outreach with the crop of newer competitors inside and out of run specialty. His store is particularly benefiting from shifting more focus toward recovery products and downplaying some apparel. Said Rogers, "People come to our stores for injury prevention and recovery when they look for knowledge about shoes so why not tell that story much better with a complimentary component?"

With more outlets carrying running shoes, product differentiation becomes more important. While controversial, the success of Vibram's FiveFingers is being credited for inspiring innovation from established brands as well as entry for newer brands such as Newton, Hoka and Altra.

Altra Founder Golden Harper believes his brand's television ads on ESPN are attracting customers who never shopped at run specialty. Harper said, "I tell running stores all the time we're not replacing your Asics customer, we're bringing a new customer to your door."

But with the heightened competition, Harper also believes running shops should further differentiate by keeping up to date on current research and



Golden Harper, Founder, Altra

upgrading their service. He noted, for instance, that a sporting goods chain can now do a stride analysis with an iPad, but much better techniques - including side as well as from-the-back video views - are much more reliable. Said Harper, "The east seems to be struggling and the west is flourishing comparatively and it's because many of the eastern accounts are doing things the same way they've done them for 20 years."

Hugh Gaither, president at Feetures!, premium sock specialist, said both the consolidation and the companies chasing the athleisure trend point to the strength of the sport of running and the active lifestyle positioning. Said Gaither, "We just try to keep doing our job, which is making really good product that resonates with consumers like the runners here at the expo. So regardless of how the industry shapes up, we're going to continue to be part of it."



Dan Sheridan, SVP and general manager, Brooks

But run industry professionals continue to be most encouraged by healthy participation rates, evidenced by the craze over mud runs and color runs, but also the ongoing popularity of elite races such as the Boston Marathon.

"We consider Boston to be the Super Bowl of this sport," said Dan Sheridan, Brooks' SVP and general manager, at a press conference

that brought out Brooks athletes Desi Linden and Amy Cragg, who both competed in the race. "It's the epitome of the celebration of the run, which is what our brand embodies."

Sheridan added, "At the end of the day, a lot of what we do is work, but this is one of those events where you pinch yourself and say, 'I'm in a pretty good industry.' And our brand sits right in the middle of it."

Participants also seemed relieved that the terrorists' bombings that rattled the race and the industry in 2013 were much less of a topic. The coming rain and windy weather on Marathon Day was much higher on runners' minds.

"I think it's probably significantly less important from a discussion point of view this year compared to last year," said Newton's Heisner, who is from the Boston area, at the expo. "It obviously hit Boston hard and hit our industry hard and it was real important for many to come back last year and support this event. But it will be a nice celebration this year and we won't allow anybody to take this race away from us."

Spandorfer, of Janji, which is based in Boston, believes the tragedy will always be remembered but won't be "at the forefront" when people think of the Boston Marathon. "We want the Marathon to be something special and celebrate runners rather than solely focusing in on a terrible thing that happened one year. So it's going to be part of the history of the Boston Marathon but not necessarily a part of what it means to be a Boston Marathon runner." ■

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Photos courtesy Adidas

BOSTON MARATHON

Adidas Doubles Down on Run Community with RunBase

By Thomas J. Ryan

Timed with the Boston Marathon, Adidas opened its first RunBase in the U.S. in a partnership with Boston Athletic Association (B.A.A.) and Marathon Sports.

Equal parts museum, clubhouse and store, the Boston Marathon RunBase is a celebration of Adidas' 27-year sponsorship of the Boston Marathon and the B.A.A.). But it's also a testament to the recommitment Adidas made to the running category at the start of the current decade and the more consumer-centric approach it plans to bring across all sports in North America in the years ahead.

Adidas already had RunBase locations in Tokyo, Moscow, London, São Paulo, Prague and the Nordics although they all work differently. In Tokyo, the RunBase is more about enabling consumers to try and rent equipment. London's RunBase sells other brands in addition to Adidas.

In an interview at the RunBase location in Boston, Chris Brewer, category director of running, told *SGB* the Boston Marathon RunBase takes many of those approaches and adds the historic element by tapping into the rich history of the Boston Marathon.

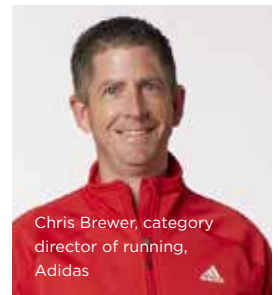
"It was really a coming together of all three of us - the B.A.A., Marathon Sports and Adidas - deciding how can we make the Boston running community even better," said Brewer.

Located just steps from the finish line, the 2,000-square-foot space is part store, selling only Adidas product and operated by Marathon Sports.

But thanks to the partnership with the B.A.A., RunBase is also filled with exhibits and historic photos from the past 119 years of the Boston Marathon, including race bibs, medals, trophies and jackets. The stories of the marathon's history will be rotated seasonally.

"We'll be able to change the theme any time of the year," said Mikal Peveto, global director of running innovation at Adidas. "We could do a women's or "hot days" theme, for instance. With the over 100 years of resources that the B.A.A. has, you can tell a variety of stories all year. Also, before we only told the story of the Boston Marathon during March and April, but now we can share it all year."

A highlight for visitors is the 10-foot 3D topographic animated race map made of reclaimed wood that greets customers, including showing the depth of Heartbreak Hill at mile 20. An official treadmill also enables visitors to run the race route with visuals and terrain that simulates every step of the course. Four interactive screens across the space, known as



Chris Brewer, category director of running, Adidas





Mikal Peveto, global director of running innovation, Adidas

RunBase Central, feature key moments in race history along with an archive featuring every participant since the marathon's inception.

The third part of RunBase is how it works as a community hub for local or visiting runners. The space will offer community runs, expert speakers, visits from elite

athletes, training plan assistance and nutrition education. A changing room with lockers and showers are available for informal runs.

A key element to RunBase is having it operated by Marathon Sports, the leading run specialty store in Boston.

Peveto noted that Adidas could have easily run the store itself but decided to partner with Marathon Sports "to further demonstrate" its commitment to specialty and also because of Marathon Sports' strong reputation with local runners.

"The key is authenticity," added Brewer. "If you're going to be in a market like Boston, it's a much better to way to go with the retailer that means the most to the city. Marathon Sports is legendary for their service."

RunBase opens as Adidas has been steadily regaining shelf space in the run specialty channel with the aid of numerous hires with specialty experience brought in since the start of the decade. A major effort was made around customer service, with Peveto noting the team was "hearing horror stories on how bad our shipping was."

Adidas had to change its approach to how it was working with smaller accounts. Said Peveto, "As a \$17 billion brand, it's easy to work with a group that has 500 stores. For a sole proprietor, you're going to have to really pay attention."

While bringing sophisticated processes to the back-end, Adidas also now has 15 sales reps as well as 28 tech reps, called Gazelles, roaming the country.

Once service issues were fixed, Adidas recognized that it had to come up with some standout product to compete with the entrenched and newer brands on run specialty's shoe walls. That arrived with the Boost, a TPU-based midsole material instead of the customary EVA foam. The range has proven to be more durable, responsive, and resistant to temperature changes than EVA midsoles. An Ultra Boost version was recently launched with even more cushion.

"You feel the cushioning and comfort immediately," said Peveto. "There's nothing like it. And we really feel we've only scratched the surface with Boost. We felt it would do two things better than anything but it does so much more."

Adidas running in the U.S. will also benefit from Adidas' parent company's renewed investments in the U.S. As part of its recently-introduced 2020 strategic plan, the "largest brand investment ever" for the Adidas Brand is planned this year in the U.S. Priorities include deepening connections with consumers in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami and Atlanta.

"It's critically important to make sure we're in touch with the U.S. market," said Brewer. "You're going to see us invest heavily in U.S. football, baseball and sports like that and running is a training element for all those sports. So we'll also be investing more in running and that will not only help us in run specialty but across the entire running category."

Noted in its decision not to renew its uniform license with the NBA, grassroots efforts to reach athletes will be more emphasized under the plan across sports, with RunBase serving as an example. Boston will serve as a "blueprint" for RunBase's in other cities.

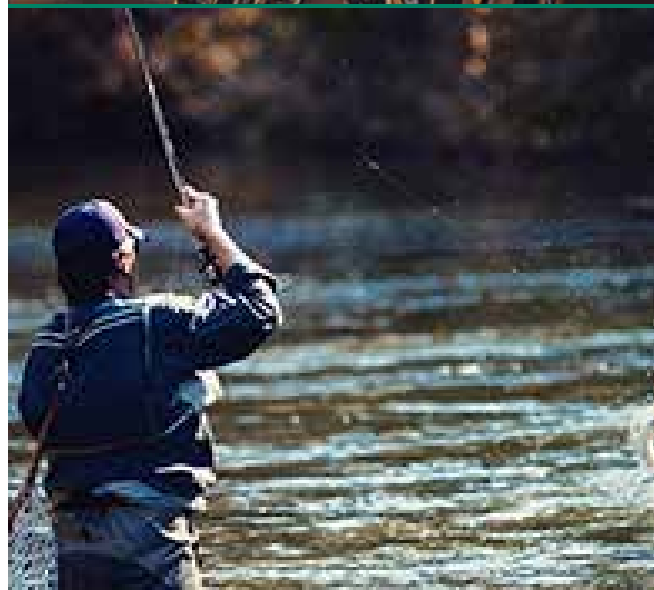
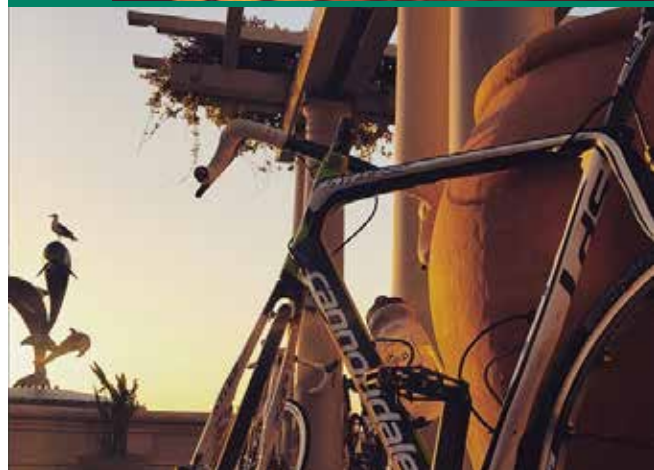
"We'll learn and fine-tune," said Peveto. "The plan is the evolve it but also adapt to different cities. Not every city has a running history like Boston. That's a big plus here."

Brewer said that with Adidas reestablishing connections with run specialty stores, RunBase and other outreach efforts would focus on better connecting with runners.

"We're going to have more meaningful conversations with the consumer as we go forward and offering experiences versus 'times to sell to them,'" said Brewer. "It's going to be a more consumer-centric approach for sure." ■

Let's Get Social

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Boston Marathon Expo Showcase: *Recovery*

By Thomas J. Ryan

While a variety of running shoes, t-shirts, running jackets, nutritional supplements and other accessories were also being exhibited, the Boston Marathon Expo again underscored how the recovery category continues to gain more traction in the running space, often in surprising ways.

OOFos, which has quickly established itself as a leader in the emerging recovery footwear category, returned to the expo and brought out its new fashionable OOlala collection. OOFos are made from a proprietary material called OOfoam, which is 37 percent more impact absorbent than EVA, and have a biometrically designed footbed for superior arch support.

Duncan Finigan, OOFos' director of marketing, told SGB at the expo that the brand doubled sales last year and expects to double them again in 2015. This past year, many stores even found success carrying the styles during the winter season. Said Finigan, "Obviously it dips a little bit because we have sandal styles but people understand that it's a recovery style as opposed to a sandal so a lot of our accounts found success selling our product year-round."

A strong response is also being seen for OOlala, which is two-toned and bold to add some fashion flair for women. It features OOFos' black and steel footbed but is designed specifically for women on a slimmer silhouette.



OOlala costs \$60, \$20 more than OOFos' first line, but saw quick sellouts as it hit the market earlier this year. Finigan said the recovery footwear market is getting crowded with many sandal and casual slip-on makers telling more of a recovery story. She added, "We don't see anything coming at us directly, but we expect that to happen."



OOFos OOlala

Nathan showcased its The SpeedDraw Plus Insulated, \$35, which features an ergonomic hand-held 16-ounce water bottle with a reflective-striped hand-held carrier and pouch big enough for an iPhone.



Nathan SpeedDraw Plus Insulated

"Proper hydration is an essential component to fully recovering from a run," said Brent Hollowell, VP of marketing for Nathan. "Your body needs fluids before, during, and after a workout so that it can deliver nutrients to your muscles. This is especially important for efforts greater than one hour, when your body needs electrolytes to keep you going, and to speed up recovery. Insulated handhelds, such as the SpeedDraw Plus Insulated, are ideal for these long runs, as they keep water cooler, longer, meaning you're more likely to drink more and stay hydrated throughout the activity."



Hyland's Leg Cramps Ointment and Muscle Therapy Gel with Arnica

In the medicinal space, Hyland's, a division of Standard Homeopathic Co. and a specialist in homeopathic medicines, sampled its award-winning Hyland's Leg Cramps product, \$13 for 40 tablets, with a promise to provide relief for those conquering Heartbreak Hill. With a tagline, "Hyland's is here for you every leg of your race," the quick dissolve tablet formulation quickly stimulates the body's natural healing powers to stop the pain. Hyland's Leg Cramps ointment, \$11 at 2.5 oz., as well as its popular topical gel, Muscle Therapy Gel with Arnica, \$8 at 3 oz., was also on hand.

Moji, provided its own take on the massage space with its rollers driven by independent ball bearings, and saw a busy booth at the expo.

"Several years ago, recovery wasn't even a recognized product category," said Brian Anderson, Moji's interim CEO. "But now elite and casual runners understand the benefits of massage, recovery and myofascial release. If muscles are sore, breaking them up helps the healing and recovery process, reducing the time it takes to get past the pain and hit the road again. I wish I knew the benefits of massaging sore muscles when I starting running races years ago."



Moji Foot Pro (left) and Curve (right)

Items gaining attention included the Moji Foot Pro, \$40, featuring stainless steel rotating massage spheres that work to target plantar fasciitis, heel and toe pain. Featuring four wide omni-directional spheres and slotted handles, the Moji Curve Pro, \$50, gives users multiple massage options – elongation, cross-friction or trigger point – to easily treat quads, hamstrings, IT bands, calves and hips with varied hand and finger grip placements. Both items can be tossed in ice or the freezer for ice-cold treatment.

Roll Recovery, founded in 2013 in Boulder, CO by a former runner and cyclist, showcased its signature RH deep tissue massage tool, \$119. Registered as a medical device with the FDA, the R8 has all the force built into it to flush out the legs, break up muscle adhesions and improve blood circulation. A variable torsion spring applies more force to larger muscle groups and less to smaller muscle groups.



Roll Recovery Deep Tissue Massage Tool

Addaday, whose Type A Roller has taken the run specialty world by storm over the last several years, showcased the Boomerang Roller with Surface Skin Technology (SST), \$46, which is part of the Addaday and Robert Forster P.T. collaboration.



Addaday Boomerang Roller with Surface Skin Technology

The roller contours around the body allowing it to reach hard-to-access areas like the back and shoulders. The direction of the rollers also allows for extensive cross-fiber friction massages. The Boomerang has two different density gears, one with SST and the other without SST for a harder massage.

Zensah showcased its Recovery Tight, \$100. Pinpoint compression targets quads, glutes, hamstrings and knees for support while overall ankle to hip compression improves circulation for faster muscle recovery. It also features seamless design for comfort as well as moisture-wicking and anti-odor properties.



Zensah The Recovery Tight

2XU, which is pushing to become Australia's next billion-dollar brand and is making quick inroads in the U.S., showcased its new MCS gear, including its Elite MCS Compression Tights, \$150. For targeted compression, MCS (Muscle Containment Stamping) is an innovative fabric support system traced over key muscle, tendon and fascia groups to focus greater compression power to wrap precise areas and reduce muscle oscillation and damage.



2XU Elite MCS Compression Tights

Bringing out some style for women, CW-X's Stably Tight with Polka Dots, \$135, uses patented Support Web technology to provide targeted support to the muscles and joints of the hips and legs to improve performance and recovery. Coolmax fabric moves perspiration away from the body and through the fabric for rapid evaporation and cooling and Lycra spandex provides muscle support and four-way stretch. It also features UPF 50+ protection from the sun during outdoor use.



CW-X Stably Tight

Trigger Point, which was acquired by Implus Corp. last year, showed the Nano Foot Roller, \$25, specifically designed to increase flexibility and relieve minor muscular aches and pains associated to the foot. Designed to mirror the feeling of a massage therapist's fingertips, the surface provides a systematic approach to blood flow by channeling nutrients directly to the tissue.



Trigger Point Nano Foot Roller

Other recovery stories came from CompresSport, the Swiss company known for its triathlon gear; as well as NormaTec, which offers a full-length leg compression boot to speed recovery.



The expo hosted a plethora of fun accessories, including several hair-band vendors (Bondi Band, Sweaty Bands, LemonHead Apparel), the major sock players (Thorlo, Wigwam, Features!, Zensah, Balega), and several insoles vendors (Ortholite, DoctorsInsole, Sof Sole, Spenco). A new exhibitor was Apera, which provides travel bags and luggage to hold running shoes and accessories and was founded by the former marketing director at Samsonite. Fitletic, Lifeproof and SPIbelt running belts also offered travel solutions.

In the electronics area, a few of the leading watch vendors (Timex, Garmin, Tom Tom, Polar) attended, but the category expanding at the expo was headphones – both plugged and wireless – with Jaybird, Yurbuds, Red Fox, SnuggBuds, Adidas Originals by Monster and Skullcandy all securing space. Apple's purchase of Beats is said to be highlighting the potential convergence of audio into the wearables space and attracting money to the category.

In the footwear space, one new exhibitor was Salming, a Swedish-company founded by the legendary Swedish ice-hockey player Börje Salming, that's known for its floorball and handball products and has recently found some success extending into running. ■

Shedding Light on Compression Gear

A look at the latest in compression gear and a few of the elite athletes who use this elusive technology.

By Thomas J. Ryan



Photo courtesy 2XU

Compression gear rides a strange duality: the highly visible arm sleeves and tights are often seen on high-profile athletes in both individual and team sports, but many people don't know exactly what benefits compression actually provides.

Even explaining compression apparel can be tricky. For many, it fits into that category between fad and magic beans, as explanations are often limited to what it does (aid in recovery and improve performance) and not *how* it does it.

To put it simply, however, putting a dedicated squeeze on major muscle groups helps "push" deoxygenated blood back to the heart, speeding up

the delivery of fresh, oxygen-rich blood to working or recovering muscles.

"Wearing compression supercharges the heart, elevates the return of blood and speeds up the return to full capability," said Aiden Clarke, founder of compression apparel Company 2XU.

The whole point is to speed up the process by which blood is reoxygenated and circulated through the body, according to Wes Piatt, Crossfit Games competitor and founder of Coast Range Crossfit in Gilroy, CA. "The more oxygen that flows through the body, the faster you recover."

Exactly how much compression an athlete needs varies, Clarke said.

"The compression for exercise and competition is more powerful," he said. "Recovery and long term use compression is more relaxed for more comfort."

Piatt uses different grades of compression shorts for training sessions than he does for recovery. "For workouts, I wear a tighter, thicker pair of shorts from Virus," he said. "On rest days I wear a more relaxed pair."

The tighter compression in performance pieces reduces muscle vibration during repetitive impacts like running or box jumps. A 2011 study published in the Portuguese Journal of Sports Sciences found that muscles



Wes Piatt, Crossfit Games & founder of Coast Range Crossfit in Gilroy, CA



Aiden Clarke, founder of compression apparel Company 2XU



One of the most versatile runners in the world Ultrarunner Max King uses leg sleeves and compression booties for recovery and travel.



1. Most compression gear focuses on the lower body, but **2XU's Men's Elite L/S Compression Top** provides compression on the arms to speed up circulation.
2. For hotter weather, **Zamst's Arm Sleeves** compress the arms, increasing circulation and reducing muscle vibration during workouts.
3. Huntington Beach, CA-based **Virus International** makes the **Cooljade Tech Shorts**, a compression short infused with recycled jade to decrease skin surface temperature during intense workouts.
4. **CEP's Ultralight Calf Sleeves** are lightweight, knee-high polypropylene and polyamide sleeves that offer a graded compression from the ankle to the calf to help facilitate blood flow.
5. **Zoot's Men's Recovery Tights** give a light graded compression from the waist to the toes providing a total lower-body circulation boost.

supported by compression gear experienced less vibration, less tearing, and less breakdown than the control group.

Ultrarunner Max King uses leg sleeves and compression booties primarily for recovery and travel. One of the most versatile runners in the world, this year King won both the 100k World Championship in Qatar and the 5k Warrior Dash National Championship, in Esparta, CA.

King credits recovering with compression sleeves to helping him recover sooner after races and training sessions. "I can get back to training sooner," he said. "It helps with my performance by letting me do more work."

Long-distance travel can also be detrimental to performance, as sitting for long periods of time can lead blood to pool in the lower limbs, resulting in swelling and fatigue. Wearing light compression tights or leg sleeves help to keep the blood circulating in lower limbs. King and Piatt both use compression when they travel.

"I've used passive compression leg sleeves during travel to and from international races," King said. "My legs feel fresher and ready to run when I arrive, instead of swollen and lethargic."

"I definitely notice a difference when I travel," Piatt said. "I wear compression pants on long flights."

It's not just athletes that take advantage of the travel benefits, Clarke said.

"We've received similar feedback from U.S. Navy Seals who travel on long haul flights and then have to perform as soon as they hit the ground," he said.

While runners, basketball and football players are the most prolific users of compression gear, the sleeves and tights can be found everywhere from the golf course to the Crossfit box.

"Anybody with a heartbeat can benefit from compression," Clarke said.

According to Clarke, in the near future we'll be seeing more sport-specific gear and interesting new technologies, including anatomical mapping to target specific muscles and "smart yarns" that will be able to deliver personal performance data from workouts. ■



I AM...SGB

Eric Schenker

CEO, Craft Sportswear
North America

What was your first job? Selling advertising for a talk radio station in Boston, and not even the best one. The first day the sales manager throws a phone book on my desk saying, “Here’s your customer list, now start calling.” That role taught me that there are no gifts and that if you want to succeed, you need to create that success yourself. In this case it was constant cold calling, which can really test a man’s soul. It was not glamorous but ultimately I was successful and it led to bigger and better things.

Proudest athletic moment? Completing the 90km Vasaloppet XC Race in Sweden for the first time in 2001. Not only is it a brutally long race but it also led to my discovery of the Craft brand when I bought my first pair of Gunde Shorts (WindStopper Boxer Short) since it was forecast to be -22C at the start. Year after year I bought more Craft at that race and I finally decided that I was going to work for Craft and here I am 10 years later.

What drove the change that led to you becoming CEO in January? I began with Craft North America in 2005 as their first director of sales and marketing. At that time we were a distributor for both Craft and Karhu footwear. In 2014 we were acquired by New Wave, the global parent company for Craft, and transitioned to a wholly-owned subsidiary focusing 100 percent on Craft.

How is Craft’s U.S. approach changing? We will of course continue to deliver premium cycling, Nordic ski and running apparel to the marketplace but you will also see an amazing evolution of our Baselayer category. This is already underway with the launch of Active Comfort for Fall/Winter 2015 and the launch of a new underwear collection called Greatness for Spring/Summer 2016. In addition, we are entering the Corporate Apparel marketplace starting this fall. Another major investment has been the signing of the U.S. Nordic Ski Team to a three-year deal through the next Winter Olympics in partnership with LL Bean. USA will now join other top teams like Sweden and Finland in having the best racing suits and baselayers in the world - not sure if my bias is coming through or not.

What do you like most about your job? As cliché as it may sound, combining my personal passions with my profession. I’m an avid cyclist,

skier and aspiring runner so to work for a brand like Craft is really something I am thankful for on a daily basis. It’s also a pretty amazing industry when the more common greeting at meetings and tradeshows are bro-hugs and not stale handshakes. How can you not be happy in a job like this?

What do you like least? Samples! I hate the expense, stress, dependence and pretty much everything that surrounds the sample process. Actually, I do like that I am a sample size but other than that, I hate them.

What drives you? In just the past few months I have worked to create a really positive working environment at Craft HQ. With that, I have found my Craft team members to be more productive, so that they feel motivated to come to work, excited by our challenge to succeed and driven to make a good living that will allow them to achieve their goals and support their families. That’s a whole different feeling.

What do you do for fun? I still really enjoy riding and cross-country skiing, albeit not as quickly or competitively as I once was. I’ve also recently “retired” from coaching my kids at their various sports and I am really enjoying being on the sidelines now watching vs. instructing. At times that was more stressful than work.

What are you reading now? The Boys in the Boat by Daniel Brown about the 1936 gold medal winning Olympic rowing team. I was a rower in college and so far this is the only rowing book I have ever read that has been able to capture the essence of the sport.

Favorite motto you live by? The “company guy” in me would say “Enjoy The Hard Work,” which is Craft’s brand statement. I think it’s very appropriate for my role and the industry as a whole. However, one that I try to live by but don’t always accomplish is, “Don’t put off until tomorrow what you can do today,” by Benjamin Franklin. The days are so busy and when you throw travel on top of that, you need to take advantage of every second. If you get some time to knock a few items off your list, you better take them as they come. ■



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A high-angle, action shot of a surfer riding a wave. The surfer is wearing a black wetsuit and is positioned on a bright red surfboard. The water is a deep blue, and the wave is breaking around the surfer, creating white foam. The surfer's right arm is raised, and they appear to be in the middle of a maneuver. The overall mood is energetic and dynamic.

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