

# SGB

ISSUE 1539  
SEPTEMBER 28, 2015

# WEEKLY

THE WEEKLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE ACTIVE LIFESTYLE



# THE EVOLUTION OF THE MASSAGE BALL

Available October 2015



**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

**Associate Editor**  
Jahla Seppanen  
jahla@sportsonesource.com

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

**Senior Graphic Designer**  
Pèju Alawusa  
peju@sportsonesource.com

**Advertising Sales**

Buz Keenan  
Northeast  
buz@sportsonesource.com  
201.887.5112

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

**SportsOneSource Publications**

**Print Magazines:** SGB, SGB Performance

**Digital Magazine:** SGB Weekly

**Newsletters:** Sports Executive Weekly,  
The B.O.S.S. Report

**News Updates:** SGB, SGB Apparel, SGB Footwear, SGB  
Outdoor, SGB Sportsman's, SGB Team Sports

**SportsOneSource Research**

Brand Strength Report, SSI VantagePoint,  
SOS Research, SportScanInfo

**Career Services**

SportsJobSource.com

Copyright 2015 SportsOneSource, LLC. All rights reserved. The opinions expressed by writers and contributors to SGB WEEKLY are not necessarily those of the editors or publishers. SGB WEEKLY is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Articles appearing in SGB WEEKLY may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the express permission of the publisher. SGB WEEKLY is published weekly by SportsOneSource.

**SPORTSONESOURCE**

1075 E. South Boulder Road • Suite 300 • Louisville • CO • 80027  
SportsOneSource.com



# SGB WEEKLY

ISSUE 1539  
SEPTEMBER 28, 2015

THE WEEKLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE ACTIVE LIFESTYLE MARKET



**MAKING NEWS**

- 4** Guerrilla Gravity Bike Makers Win Chase Grant Funding
- 4** Led Lenser Shines New Headlamp Features On Old Favorites
- 6** POW Gloves Unleashes Volume 12 Collection With Gore-Tex
- 6** Cairn Subscription Boxes Surprise Outdoor Lovers
- 8** Wilson Launches Smart Basketball
- 9** Under Armour Doubles Down on Stephen Curry With New Deal
- 18** Industry Calendar

**GIVING BACK**

- 10** Lids Foundation Fourth Annual "Tip the Hat" Program

**MADE IN THE USA**

- 12** Stormy Kromer Heritage Cap and Apparel... Proudly Made in the USA

**FEATURES**

- 14** SFIA Summit Puts Spotlight on Youth Sports Experience
- 16** Equinox Sees Opportunity In Fitness Data

ON THE COVER:

Photo courtesy  
Stormy Kromer Headwear and Apparel

14



From Left to Right: Kristy Anderson, Guerrilla Gravity's Co-Founder, Matt Giaraffa, Chief Engineer and Guerrilla President, Will Montague

## GUERRILLA GRAVITY BIKE MAKERS WIN CHASE GRANT FUNDING

Guerrilla Gravity, makers of highly refined mountain bikes custom built in Denver, CO, for each rider, was chosen from a pool of 30,000 applicants to receive a \$100,000 grant from Chase Bank's Mission Main Street Grant program.

Guerrilla President Will Montague and Chief Engineer Matt Giaraffa are beyond stoked, as the funding will help the shop meet the growing demand for high-performance, hand-built MTBs.

"Getting the call from Chase on a random Tuesday morning will go down as a life changing moment," said Montague.

Montague and Giaraffa hope to grow the company to be the best of its kind, while supporting the Colorado community and building participation in mountain biking via group rides, rider clinics, maintenance classes, and rider education. Guerrilla Gravity's Co-Founder Kristy Anderson also plans to lead an effort to facilitate a non-intimidating environment for more women to get into the sport. She calls it "Ride It Grrrl." They also plan to invest in new machinery and hire three employees to add to its close-knit staff of five.

Also bundled with being awarded the Mission Main Street Grant, LinkedIn, a premier sponsor of the Chase grant, will be flying two representatives from each of the grant recipient businesses to Mountain View, CA, for a Small Business Boot Camp at its headquarters in late 2015. Attendees will learn about topics such as leveraging LinkedIn and other digital content strategies to grow small businesses.

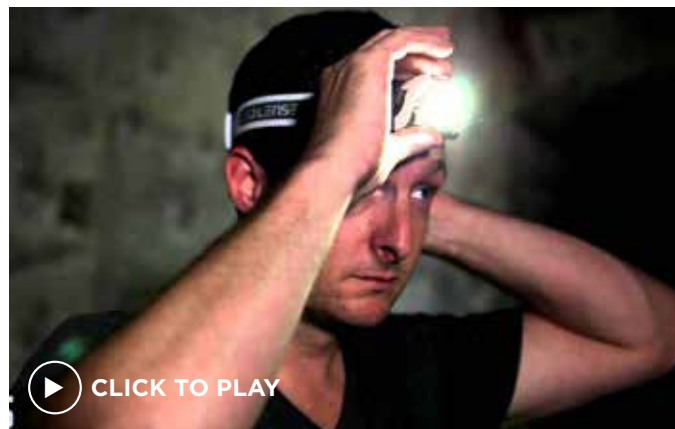
"We spend endless hours as business owners thinking about all of the possibilities of growth. To actually have the resources to begin to implement these ideas and grow in the direction of our dreams is such a game changer," said Montague.

Guerrilla Gravity was the only Colorado-based small business selected by Chase this year, and is the second Denver-based manufacturer to ever receive the grant (the first being Kota Longboards).

In addition to Mission Main Street Grants, Chase is the national presenting sponsor of Startup Weeks and launched Small Business Forward in 2014.

## LED LENSER SHINES NEW HEADLAMP FEATURES ON OLD FAVORITES

It's that time of year when the sun rises later and sets earlier, making it more difficult to drag yourself out of bed for a run or ride. Perfect timing: LED Lenser, a division of Oregon-based Leatherman Tool Group, refreshed its popular line of lightweight SEO headlamps,



adding customer-requested features such as boosted lumen performance and a modern makeover to the award-winning SEO 3, SEO 5, and SEO 7.

The SEO 3, available in a green or orange option, provides 100 lumens on high; the SEO 5 headlamp, which comes in a gray or red option, provides 180 lumens; the blue SEO 7R provides 220 lumens. All three operate on only three AAA batteries, which is impressive considering the SEO 7R, for instance, burns for up to 20 hours.

Refreshed features for 2015/16, like the silver focusing ring that eliminates light loss from the edges of the lens, and new ergonomic headbands, give the existing models a completely new feel. The SEO 3 has been rethought with Advanced Focus System and a new LED chip that boosts lumen performance by 10 percent.

The SEO 7R pioneered a new, patented technology called Optisense, which measures the light level in the user's surrounding in real time. Then the light automatically adjusts its brightness to match, saving battery life and providing the perfect amount of hands free shine. LED Lenser also equipped the SEO 7R with a rechargeable battery pack with the option of charging via conventional plug, USB or AAA batteries.

Furthermore, each SEO headlamp weighs less than 3.5 ounces, meaning minimal weight pressing against the wearer's forehead, and has a carabiner clip for convenient carrying. The model's swiveling head is another cool feature, allowing for moveable light focus.

LED Lenser, the Leatherman Tool Group company, produces lights and headlamps for everything from camping, diving, running, hunting and fishing, to industrial trades, DIY and law enforcement.

# Run-Right Light™

Headlamps designed for runners



NEBULA FIRE



HALO FIRE



BE SEEN.  
RUN LONGER.

nathansports.com

## RunWave™ Technology

The touch-free RunWave™ setting allows the user to cycle through lighting modes while on-the-run without breaking stride.

## Auto-Strobe™

With Auto-Strobe™ sensor engaged, significant changes in ambient light, such as car headlights, activate the safety strobe mode.



SEE. BE SEEN. COMMUNICATE.™

ORDER NOW: 1.800.523.2844

#fireupyourrun



## POW GLOVES UNLEASHES VOLUME 12 COLLECTION WITH GORE-TEX

The POW glove brand marks the return of the winter season in time to save your hands from the impending El Nino storm cycle. Founded in 2002, POW has now been constructing gloves for more than a decade.

A line of freshly designed gloves, mitts and triggers, now viewable on the POW website, offer educated designs made in conjunction with team riders such as Manuel Diaz (HD Mitt/Glove), Dash Longe (Tallac Mitt), and Austin Hironaka (Royal Glove/Mitt).



In 2010 POW was extended a Gore-Tex license that allowed them to feature the material in their products validating the "Built To Last" and "All Day, Everyday" mantras.

Team riders, along with POW company members, extensively tested the new glove materials to ensure technical synthetic fabrics, full-grain Grade A leather and other fabric technologies stood up to the elements over time.

POW designers saw the coming winter season as an opportunity for something new. Having built its foundation with a focus on comfort, fit, durability and functionality, POW was recently granted the license to add Gore-Tex offerings to its line.

The 2015/16 POW Gloves collection includes Gore-Tex Warm, Grip and Active product technologies. The Gore-Tex license was first extended to POW in 2010, however, new products were enhanced to meet the demands and challenges fraught by snow lovers and high alpine daredevils, as well as for less performance-driven folks living in regions that get the most freeze. After all, POW's motto includes the principle of functionality: "All Day, Everyday," POW says, which hints not only to the durability of its gloves but their crossover uses as well - from the slopes to shoveling to snowball fights.

Also new for POW comes a "Built To Last," promise. This two-year manufacturer warranty is another ode to the company's dedication to quality. Based in Seattle, WA, POW has become one of the fastest growing small glove brands with distribution in nearly 40 nations worldwide.



POW Gloves with Gore-Tex



## CAIRN SUBSCRIPTION BOXES SURPRISE OUTDOOR LOVERS

Consumer gift boxes delivered to your doorstep are all the rage. You probably use or have gifted others with subscriptions to StitchFix (women's clothing), BeSpoke (men's upscale) or even BarkBox (for dog lovers).

Now outdoor lovers have the same convenient option, ideally suited for those who like to try new products and be exposed to new brands without having to spend time in the car. Cairn is apparently the first of its kind in outdoor subscription boxes, having shipped its 10,000th box in March 2015, and using the delivery method not only for small-batch product, but helping enable outdoor discovery, community, giving-back, and exploration.

For example, the company has partnered with DrinkFearlessly.com to provide clean water to Congolese refugees living in Gihembe, which has only one well for 15,000 residents. For every six SolarBags purchased (one of about 100 vendors Cairn rotates products from), using a Cairn discount code, a SolarBag water purifier will be donated to a refugee in Gihembe.

Cairn's goal is to find upcoming brands, including camping gear, apparel, food, and more, and help promote products and endeavors to drive innovation and creative thinking in the outdoor industry. Contemporary, technology-enabled shoppers looking for engagement and experiential interaction with brands and community may find this a great solution.

Subscriptions are \$25 per month and include an online profile, points' accumulation, and the monthly delivery of thoughtfully selected products and promotions.

The Bend, OR-based company was the recipient of incubator funds in the inaugural class of the Bend Outdoor Worx in 2013. Also noteworthy, Cairn is utilizing Abilitree - a Central Oregon-based non-profit that empowers people with disabilities with jobs, training, and independent living opportunities -- to help pack the boxes each month.

The company is led by Oregon native Rob Little, an industry veteran (ExOfficio, Nike, Merrell) Bill Inman recently joined the team. And while the initial growth was slow and organic, things are starting to heat up. This new concept in shopping combines data collection and home product delivery in one of the most interesting retail trends right now.



# ***SPORTSCANINFO***

ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

BREADTH OF DATA. DEPTH OF DATA. TIMELINESS OF DATA

SportScanInfo is the only weekly retail sales trend reporting solution for the active lifestyle market.

To learn more call 303.997.7302 or [SSIData@SportsOneSource.com](mailto:SSIData@SportsOneSource.com)

[SportScanInfo.com](http://SportScanInfo.com)



## WILSON LAUNCHES SMART BASKETBALL

Bringing gamification to the chore of basketball shooting practice, Wilson Sporting Goods Co. launched the Wilson X Connected Basketball.

The ball, \$199, and the accompanying app, tracks shots made and missed shots in real-time; features a number of games to improve shooting skills with a focus on clutch situations; and also includes motivational sound bites.

"We wanted this ball to be different than anything available to players and basketball enthusiasts today," said Bob Thurman, head of Wilson Labs, the innovation hub at Wilson, which is owned by Amer Sports. "By combining today's best sensor technology, our highest quality basketball construction and the feedback of thousands of youth athletes and coaches, this experience was born."

Developed in partnership with SportIQ, a sports technology and analytics company, the Wilson X Connected Basketball features a small sensor embedded in the ball that connects to an app on a player's phone; no cords or other attachments are needed. Through Wilson's proprietary Make/Miss Technology, the ball knows when a player makes or misses a shot, and it tracks every shot that player takes so they can see how their personal shooting performance changes over time.

Stats tabulated include shots taken, shots made, two-pointers, three-pointers, and free throws, and users can share the stats with friends or family, via social media, or with their coach. Special badges can be unlocked when a player hits milestones and celebrates shooting streaks.

The Wilson X app features four modes that focus on pure shooting

drills and game-like experiences, like Buzzer Beater, that challenge a player under game-winning countdown pressure. The performance data is delivered to the player's smart phone or tablet in real time.

Eliminating players from "gaming" the score, short shots inside seven feet from the hoop are not tracked.

Finally, the ball includes feedback to inspire the player. A press release states "a rich audio experience surrounds him/her so he/she always knows how they're doing, and full crowd noise and sports commentator observations bring the 'in-game' simulations to life."

The ball, available in official (29.5 inches) and intermediate (28.5 inches.) sizes, works on any indoor and outdoor surface – from the gym to the driveway – with a 10 foot regulation hoop and net. The ball never needs charging, as the sensor has been designed to track every shot up to approximately 100,000 shots (equating to approximately 300 shots a day, seven days a week for 52 weeks).

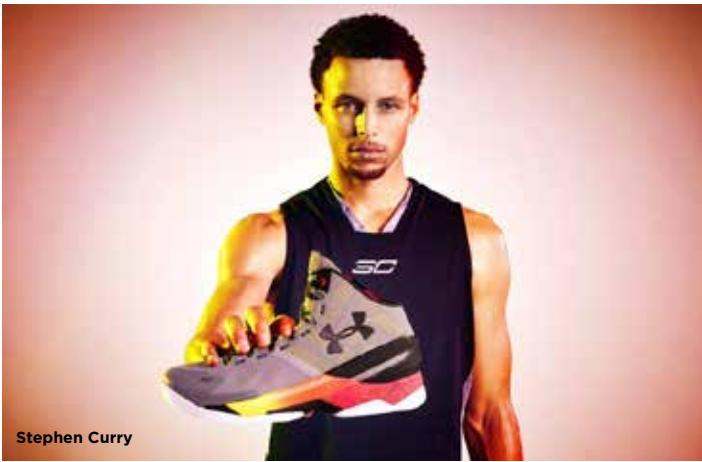
"I can only imagine how much better I would have gotten with this," said Chauncey Billups, the five-time NBA All Star guard who now plays for the Los Angeles Clippers. "I grew up thinking you spend 4, 5, 6 hours in the gym. You're working hard. I started to understand as I got older there's a difference between working hard and working smart. This allows you the opportunity to work smart."

"The best aspect of the ball is the sensor is inside the ball," added Coach Denzel Washington of the 5 Star Basketball Camp. "There's nothing that you have to wear, there's nothing you have to put on the hoop. You just get to shoot the ball."

Said curly Boo Johnson, former Harlem Globetrotter and head coach of skills for Life Basketball Academy, "If you're serious about your basketball game, this is the basketball for you."

The Wilson X Connected Basketball will be sold at [wilson.com/X](http://wilson.com/X), and via select online retail partners during the holiday season.





Stephen Curry

## UNDER ARMOUR DOUBLES DOWN ON STEPHEN CURRY WITH NEW DEAL

Under Armour signed Stephen Curry - the Golden State Warriors star guard that last led his team to its first NBA title in 40 years - to a contract extension that will run through 2024 and includes an equity stake.

“In the first two years of our partnership we accomplished so much both on and off the court, and I’m looking forward to being part of the brand’s story for the rest of my playing career and beyond,” Curry said in a press release. “Together we share a passion for making athletes better and instilling self-belief in athletes everywhere. The entire team has done an amazing job to develop innovative product that performs on the court and build platforms that allow me to connect with athletes all over the world.”

Under Armour launched Curry’s first signature basketball shoe, the Curry One, and his signature apparel collection in February 2015. Since its launch, the Curry One has continued to almost fully sell out across all retail distribution channels. The Curry Two recently launched in Asia as part of Curry’s first-ever Under Armour tour of the region, and it will launch in the U.S. and globally on October 24.

Under Armour signed Curry in 2013 after Nike passed on matching its competitor’s offer. Nike reportedly originally pitched a deal worth approximately \$2.5 million before Under Armour offered a contract worth close to \$4 million per year.

“His work ethic, uncompromising self-belief, and commitment to the community are characteristics that make Stephen the perfect partner to ignite the growth of Under Armour in the sport of basketball and around the world,” Under Armour CEO Kevin Plank said in the statement. “We are extremely proud to call Stephen family and we are excited to write the next chapter of our shared story.”

Curry will continue to play a central role in global brand marketing campaigns, including training, lifestyle offerings and Under Armour’s Connected Fitness platforms. Curry’s integration into the brand’s suite of Connected Fitness apps, which will help elevate his game and enhance his fitness regimen, will include designing new training programs that will be available for all consumers.

The extended partnership with Curry is the latest reflection of Under Armour’s fast-growing momentum in basketball. In August, the brand announced a new 10-year partnership with the NBA, designating the brand as the title partner of NBA Draft Combine, presenting partner of the Jr. NBA program in the U.S. and partner of the NBA Fit App, which will be powered by Connected Fitness. The partnership also extends marketing rights to Asia, allowing Under Armour to promote Curry and other athletes on its NBA roster in greater China using NBA uniforms and league marks.

# SLEEVES

GRADIENT 20-30MM HG COMPRESSION

ULTRA-THIN, LIGHTWEIGHT AND BREATHABLE

RIBBED BANDS AT ACHILLES AND ARCH

FIGURE-EIGHT SUPPORT

RELIEVES HEEL AND ARCH PAIN AND PLANTAR FASCIITIS

SLEEVE DESIGN

NEW  
CALF  
LENGTH

ANKLE  
SLEEVE

1-888-237-3668  
WWW.POWERSTEP.COM

©2015 Stable Step, LLC



**LIDS FOUNDATION**  
LAUNCHES FOURTH ANNUAL  
“TIP THE HAT” PROGRAM

By Aaron H. Bible

The LIDS Foundation, a charitable 501(c)(3) organization and the philanthropic support arm of LIDS Sports Group, is now accepting applications for the fourth annual “Tip the Hat Award.” Five charitable organizations will be awarded.

This year’s “Tip the Hat” campaign is being launched in conjunction with LIDS Foundation Month being celebrated across all LIDS and Locker Room by LIDS locations in the U.S. The nationwide campaign is targeted to charities across the country that share the LIDS Foundation’s passion of encouraging and facilitating healthy and active lifestyles for American youth.

“The Tip the Hat Award’ is the LIDS Foundation’s largest annual grant and we are proud of the impact we have made on past recipients,” said Scott Molander, LIDS Foundation President. “We look forward to having a positive impact on more charities from around the country in the future.”

With a mission to support healthy and active youth programs, the LIDS Foundation is in search of charitable organizations with a similar focus. The following grants will be awarded to the top five grant applications:

- First place: \$125,000
- Second place: \$75,000
- Third place: \$50,000
- Fourth place: \$25,000
- Fifth place: \$25,000

The deadline for entries is December 6, 2015. Nonprofit organizations interested in applying for a LIDS Foundation “Tip the Hat Award” should visit [lidsfoundation.org/tip-the-hat](http://lidsfoundation.org/tip-the-hat) to review the official entry rules, learn more about the submission process and submit an application.

The LIDS Foundation works to engage young people in the communities where LIDS Sports Group operates to become active in sports-related activities that promote healthy lifestyles as well as leadership and growth opportunities. It accomplishes its mission primarily through offering resources – time, expertise, funds or materials – to nonprofit organizations with goals and values that align with those of the LIDS Foundation.



Scott Molander,  
LIDS Foundation President

---

“We look forward to having a positive impact on more charities from around the country in the future.”

---

The LIDS Sports Group, operating within Hat World Inc., a subsidiary of Genesco Inc., is comprised of the LIDS retail headwear stores, the Locker Room by LIDS specialty fan retail chain, the LIDS Clubhouse retail stores, the LIDS Team Sports wholesale team sports business, and the Internet businesses [lids.com](http://lids.com), [lidsclubhouse.com](http://lidsclubhouse.com), [lidsteamsports.com](http://lidsteamsports.com) and [lids.ca](http://lids.ca).

Operating out of Indianapolis, IN, the retail businesses make up more than 1,200 mall-based, airport, street level and factory outlet locations nationwide, and in Canada and Puerto Rico. LIDS retail stores offer officially licensed and branded headwear of collegiate teams, major professional sports teams, as well as other specialty fashion categories. Locker Room by LIDS is a mall-based retailer of sports headwear, apparel, accessories, and novelties, which also operates under the Sports Fan-Attic and Sports Avenue retail concepts. LIDS Clubhouse operates team-specific professional sports and university athletics retail stores and e-commerce sites. LIDS Team Sports is a full-service team uniform and apparel dealer, custom screen printer, embroidery and sporting goods distributor.

# SSI OUTDOOR VANTAGEPOINT

SHARPEN YOUR PERSPECTIVE  
START SEEING CLEARLY

SSI VantagePoint is the only weekly retail point-of-sale reporting platform exclusively for the active outdoor lifestyle industry that swiftly delivers critical trends and detailed business data to brands and retailers.

SSIVantagePoint.com | ssidata@sportsonesource.com

Powered by  
The SportsOneSource Group



LifeStraw®  
PERSONAL WATER FILTER

## DRINK FROM THE SOURCE

Filter your water as you drink with LifeStraw®. Use a bottle, or sip straight from a stream.

- > Filters 1,000 liters (264 gallons)
- > Removes 99.9999% bacteria
- > Removes 99.9% protozoa
- > Weighs only 2 oz. (56 g.)

BUYLIFESTRAW.COM | 1-888-451-6752



### BUY ONE: GIVE ONE

With our "Follow the Liters" program, for every LifeStraw® water filter sold, we provide a child in Africa with clean water for an entire school year.



Photos courtesy Stormy Kromer

## Stormy Kromer

Local support for a regional heritage cap leads to the resurrection of an iconic Upper Midwest brand.

By Jahla Seppanen

Although united as a whole, American culture can differ greatly from region to region. In the case of Stormy Kromer, Michigan-makers famous for the Stormy Kromer Cap, the brand was born, raised and resurrected by its northern-Midwest roots. These roots continue to be a driving force for the brand, as they build on more than 100 years of Made In the USA manufacturing and regional acclaim.

In 2001, Stormy Kromer was on its way to becoming a footnote in Midwestern history. Nearing the century anniversary since



Bob Jacquart, who acquired the rights to the Stormy Kromer brand in 2001, with his daughters Kari Jacquart and Gina Jacquart Thorsen.

the company's founding in 1903, the company reflected on its slim one-cap, one-color offering and figured it was time to call it quits. Discontinuing the iconic Stormy Kromer six-panel cap would mean the end of a style icon.

Even as early as 1909, the cap—a newly-fashioned baseball style cap with a higher crown, flap-down ears, and a soft cloth visor—sold like wildfire throughout the upper Midwest. Three women in a dilapidated brick building made, by hand, the 1,200-plus caps sold that year. However, between 1930 and 1967, sales of the Original Kromer Cap declined.

As fate would have it, the 2001 threat of derailment would make a U-turn when a businessman by the name of Bob Jacquart, who owned a cut and sew operation in Ironwood, MI, acquired the rights to the Stormy Kromer brand upon hearing rumors of its impending closure. Why? Because Jacquart saw the brand and its manufacturing as a regional landmark to Upper Midwest culture.

Stormy Kromer Mercantile remains in Ironwood today. Gina Thorsen, president of Stormy Kromer, said, "Ironwood is over ten hours from Lansing and we get a little forgotten by the rest of the state. As a result, we are independent, free spirits up here."



George Stormy and wife Ida Kromer

When asked how Stormy apparel managed to embed itself into regional culture, Thorsen said, “Domestic manufacturing has a long heritage in our region, especially with the automotive industry. So our regional culture relates to the working class and this aligns well with Made in the USA brands. When you think of Made in the USA for work you think Carhartt and Wolverine, two strong Michigan brands, and in our region we are included in that conservation.”

Stormy Kromer has also been awarded Kokatat’s American Made Outdoor Gear Award, in 2013. More recently, Stormy was named a finalist by Martha Stewart in her American Made Awards.

The brand has ramped expansion since its acquisition in 2001, with new apparel products, lifestyle lines, design inventions and industry partnerships. “We are in the process of expanding our manufacturing capacity with the addition of a new partner in the greater Detroit area who we expect to have on line in the next three to six months,” said Thorsen.

But however large Stormy becomes, local origins will always lead. Thorsen explained the brand’s styling always reflects on its founders, George “Stormy” and wife Ida Kromer, who invented the first cap based on practical functionality for the outdoors. Kromer invented the first cap after losing his on the locomotive he worked on. After seeing its usability, his friend asked for one, and so it went. And still today, Stormy Kromer is made in the northern Midwest, with operations in Michigan and Wisconsin. Losing the century-plus heritage of local manufacturing would mean losing the spirit of the brand.

And this spirit is the foothold of the outdoor industry, as we have to ask ourselves why we keep coming back to the small underdogs. Among the reasons, heritage is high on the list. History matters. And more so, remaining true to the virtues of business for the outdoors, as opposed to business for business sake.

“There is a deep feeling of satisfaction when you actually make something and see the pleasure it brings to all those around you,” added Thorsen. “It would be far easier for us to have our caps made overseas, but they would no longer be Stormy Kromer’s.”





## SFIA Summit Puts Spotlight on Youth Sports Experience

By Thomas J. Ryan

While some kids become coach potatoes due to preoccupation with digital devices, video games or TV, many are increasingly led there due to frustrations finding their way onto the playing field.

The challenges facing youth sports participation took center stage at the third annual SFIA Industry Leaders Summit held last week in New Orleans. A rock star panel – including Roger Goodell, the NFL’s commissioner, Jennie Finch, the legendary softball pitcher, and Dr. James Andrews, a nationally renowned orthopedic surgeon, tackled the underlying causes of kids walking away from sports. Those include sports specialization,

overuse injuries and excessive competition, and “pay-to-play” trends.

The event also explored the burgeoning opportunities the industry is seeing with the overall athleisure and health & fitness trends as well as the stubborn challenges around phys. ed. funding. Other panels delved into many issues facing all retail, including how technological advances are waylaying the way business has been traditionally done.

But the fact that youth sports has become overly “serious” was given extra attention, given its side-effect result of driving up high obesity rates among kids.

“I think there’s more pressure on kids to commit to a particular sport at an earlier age,” remarked Goodell. His twin daughters, who are 14, were encouraged to commit to playing lacrosse all year round but wound up deciding to play multiple sports. Although he



left the decision up to his daughters, Goodell’s in favor of kids playing multiple sports and believes a greater emphasis needs to be placed on accessibility and having fun.

“All of us believe the more active you are, the more you learn life lessons that will stay with you for a lifetime,” said Goodell. “I worry so much about putting pressure in kids that if you don’t commit to a sport by 4th grade or 5th grade, you’re out of luck. There’s a lot of a pressure we’re putting on our kids, whether it’s coming from coaches, leagues or parents.”

Finch lamented that with tightening budgets, many schools are cutting physical education classes, which traditionally provided an introduction to sports for many kids. As a parent of a 9-year old, she also said her kids are being impacted by sports specialization. Her kids want to play different sports in each season but many coaches want them to play year-round and aren’t open to saving positions when they can play. Coaches don’t want “to open up that spot up and then close it again,” she noted.

Finch added that while the goal of specialization may be to gain scholarships and launch a professional career, less than 1 percent of high school athletes go on to play collegiate sports and far fewer play professionally. Said Finch, “The focus should be on those life lessons, building character, building that self confidence and determination, and benefiting from all those things you get from team sports. Unfortunately, the focus is on that small percentage.”

### Playing multiple sports beneficial

The panel agreed on the benefits of playing multiple sports in creating better all-round athletes and better preparing kids for life.

Goodell said of the 256 players drafted last year, only 32 did not play multiple sports. Of 128 first, second and third string quarterbacks in

the league in a study completed a few years ago, 95 percent played two sports and 70 percent played three.

Said Goodell, “I think our scouts are looking for kids who have the athletic experience of multiple sports. They’re better athletes. They probably aren’t as close to the burnout issue you get an awful lot in playing some of these sports so much. And they’re also better prepared for their professional careers.”



On the positive side, the panelists agreed that sports are generally safer than they’ve ever been due to education efforts for parents, certification for coaches and other steps taken by many organizations.

Still, the panel appeared to agree with Tom Cove, president and CEO, SFIA, that many kids aren’t “winning the DNA lottery,” in being able to simultaneously excel at multiple sports.

With the promise of a scholarship to offset ever-escalating college costs, parents were seen as under enormous pressure to encourage their kids to specialize at being best at one sport.

Goodell said it shouldn’t be what the parents or coach wants, but what the kid wants.

“You have to start with what the child wants in my view,” said Goodell. “They are people. If they want to play soccer all year round, good for them. I personally think they’d be a better soccer players if they play multiple sports. But I understand it. I also think the statistics tell you less than a percent are going to make it to the high level of sports. So they better be well rounded and prepared for life beyond sports because not many people make a living on sports.”

“I think it’s about balance,” said Finch. “it’s got to come from the kids. If you take the adults out of the equation, these kids are going to be out there playing some kind of ball and having a blast. And that’s what it’s got to get back to.”

Dr. Andrews believes that with sports specialization focusing so early on young athletes, the trend hurts the many “late bloomer who may very well be the best athletes in the end.” But he believes more support has to arrive for recreation, church and local high school leagues alongside the many road or travel leagues to provide play opportunities for kids at many skill levels.

Dr. Andrews stated, “A number of our kids can’t compete at the so-called elite level and they drop out and stop participating in sports. We need to open the doors and make sure everybody has an opportunity to participate at whatever level they can participate.”

## Solving the Inactivity Pandemic



The issues facing sports participation were complemented by an SFIA Increase Participation Plan (IPP) Update by leaders at SFIA and PHIT America, which explored the challenges surrounding the “inactivity pandemic.”

Jim Baugh, CEO and president, PHIT America, noted that inactivity among Americans continues to grow

every year, reaching an all-time high of 82.7 million in 2014, according to the Physical Activity Council. Ten million children were found to be totally inactive with 33 million not active to health standards.

With an overall goal of making a million kids active by 2020, the IPP program was launched last year with a three-pronged focus around Go! Grants, supporting PHIT legislation and the many grassroots initiatives being pursued by PHIT America.

Besides making kids healthier, the initiative holds promise to help the country’s healthcare crisis and ultimately support the industry. Studies show that kid active in school are three times more likely to be active as adults.

GO! Grants, which provide school-based programs up to \$5,000, were launched last year. Baugh said securing sponsors “was slower than expected” but applications came from 358 schools across 42 states. Ultimately, 20 sponsors signed on and \$420,000 Go! Grants were handed out. Most impressively, the program, done in a partnership with Kids in the Game, had an initial goal of having an impact on 10,500 kids but wound up reaching over 50,000. With the help of sponsorships and donations, the cost of per child was reduced to \$10 from an estimated \$40.

Cove discussed ongoing progress on the PHIT (Personal Health Investment Today) Act. The pending bill allows Americans to use Pre-Tax Medical Accounts to pay for physical activity expenses. A big coup was the recent commitment by the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) of \$100,000 to the PHIT Act lobbying coalition.

Another major score was securing pro-bono ads from BBDO Atlanta to raise awareness on the pending bill. One ad shows a bunch of manikins at a party and asks, “What kills more Americans than drugs and alcohol?” A couch then crashes on the manikins and soon the answer appears: “Inactivity....Pass the PHIT Act.”

Cove encouraged the industry to spread the ads via social media and other ways. He adds, “We are at a moment in time when we can make a huge difference and really change the culture of our country.”

For its part, PHIT America continues to push its grassroots advocacy efforts with a goal of educating parents. Later this year, a PHITpact Playtime app will launch that will enable parents to disconnect kids from using their apps if they haven’t exercised enough. In April, PHIT America plans to introduce a 30-minute documentary to educate parents on the issues. It’s set to run on network TV and be pushed through social media.

Baugh believes kids’ mobile-phone obsessions are hurting their interpersonal skills as well as keeping them unhealthy. He half-joked, “Google, Apple, Comcast - you can have them 22 hours a day; I want them two hours a day.”

Bob Puccini, chairman, SFIA and president, Mizuno USA, said that while the industry will clearly benefit from more active Americans, getting kids active will ultimately be vital for future generations.

“I come to you with this issue in three ways: as the chairman of the industry, as president of Mizuno USA and personally as a father and grandfather,” said Puccini. “It’s genuine. And I really look it as: ‘If not it’s not us, then who’s going to do it.’ It’s in our hands.” ■





Sarah Robb O'Hagan, President, Equinox

## EQUINOX SEES OPPORTUNITY IN FITNESS DATA

By Thomas J. Ryan

"...Everyone has untapped potential within us...it's all about how we serve up those motivations to get them there."

- Sarah Robb O'Hagan

In the most upbeat presentation of the annual SFIA Industry Leaders Summit, Sarah Robb O'Hagan, president, Equinox, the parent of Equinox, SoulCycle, Blink and Pure, celebrated how technology giants, grocers and several other industries are all trying to capitalize on the robust trend around healthy living.

Said Robb O'Hagan, "Everyone wants to be in our industry. It's such a big macro trend."

Among the signs of momentum around fitness are sales of athleisure growing "easily double digit" while denim sales are shrinking. Organic foods are seeing increases at a 14 percent clip while the rest of the food industry is growing at 2 percent. She also pointed to interest in adventure travel as a "huge macro trend."

Aspirationally, Robb O'Hagan, who prior to leading Equinox was president of Gatorade and held posts at Nike, Atari Entertainment and Virgin Atlantic, noted that Posh Spice, Sex in the City and luxury cars used to be status symbols but now it's more about the fitness experience. For gals, it's about "workout dates" with each other rather than drinking martinis in a bar. For guys, it's spending a weekend tackling a Tough Mudder rather than the trip to Vegas.

She also pointed at the explosion of fitness wearables in the marketplace as a sign that "people are more engaged in health and fitness than ever."

Robb O'Hagan said that with this trend, consumer goods companies and service providers have significant upside potential from rising demand for healthier options, even at a greater cost. To capitalize on the trend, companies need to recalibrate their offerings to make them more personalized, convenient, accessible, and relevant for their customers.

With reams of data around workouts, steps, sleep patterns and more, the big opportunity for fitness clubs as well as the overall sports & fitness

industry is to help fitness enthusiasts understand that data. She noted that many people have already stopped using their Fitbits or get frustrated over their poor sleep patterns because they don't know what to do with the data. Said Robb O'Hagan, "We're data rich but knowledge poor. No one's connecting the dots."

The goal is finding a way to turn that data into "highly personalized motivation" and subsequently improve people's lives. Robb O'Hagan said that while Equinox recognizes it's essential to recognize the unique needs of each fitness enthusiast, the underlying push for all members is to get them to embrace three factors: Movement, Nutrition and Regeneration.

Said Robb O'Hagan, "A lot of people come to the gym to do their hour or 90 minutes a day. But if you're eating and sleeping badly, the whole thing falls apart."

The 'Movement' bucket urges athletes to focus on intensity, volume and variety in their workout. Many gym rats focus just on volume, or putting in their allocated time on the treadmill or cycle. But changing the intensity of the workout can be instrumental to overall health. Said Robb O'Hagan, "You need to mix up that steady run with high intensity sessions. You don't want to be doing the same 45-minute treadmill run every day. Some days you'll want to a 30-minute sprint. Other days you'll want to a 100 minute adventure."

Variety is key to an optimal workout, whether for runners or those dedicated to cycling, swimming or some other activity. She offered herself as a prime beneficiary of adding multi-dimensional movements when she joined Equinox as president in 2012. Robb O'Hagan stated, "I used to be runner like Forest Gump but I took up Pilates and cross-functional training and I've personally seen many breakthroughs. I thought I was fit before but I'm much better now."



# SGB JOBS

THE INTERSECTION OF  
CAREER & LIFESTYLE



THE RIGHT TALENT  
IS EASY TO FIND  
IF YOU LOOK IN THE  
RIGHT PLACE

SportsJobSource reaches the most  
connected, best informed, and highest  
caliber professionals in the active  
lifestyle market.

For more information, call 303.997.7302 or  
email [SportsJobs@SportsOneSource.com](mailto:SportsJobs@SportsOneSource.com)

**SportsJobSource.com**

The next two buckets – Nutrition and Regeneration – are much less discussed in training sessions at fitness clubs or part of the discussion by the sporting goods industry in general but equally important to an athlete's fitness makeup.

Robb O'Hagan, for example, said that at Equinox, the company's mission is to help its members "maximize the potential within themselves." And that involves not only understanding your performance on a treadmill, but, "What's the rest of your life approach? What's the rest of the 23 hours of your day like?"

Nutrition is about getting members to "stop counting calories" but focus on the quality of foods, getting a healthy variety, and "getting the right nutrients at the right time."

Regeneration focuses on sleep, recovery and mindset. Robb O'Hagan said "chronically-underslept" is a "really big issue" across the U.S. and getting a minimum of seven hours of sleep a night will "change your performance in life." She noted that trying to sleep five hours a night is "equivalent to driving with alcohol in your system."

Sleeping better can be as simple as keeping your bedroom as dark as possible and reading from a book rather than a lit-up iPad before bed. She said a studies direct links to sleeping well and achieving better workouts.

Recovery involves putting more focus on myofascial release and the benefits of foam rolling and other massage tools. Adds Robb O'Hagan, "It does make a huge difference."

Finally, mindset deals with brain health. The issue is just starting to receive more attention with Alzheimer's increasing given the aging demographic of the American population. Said Robb O'Hagan, "It's about really focusing on things that engage your brain deeply and avoid doing very-routine activities."

The key is using the increasingly accessible data around an individual's health, food intake, sleep and other metrics to motivate members to embrace all the three buckets: Motivation, Nutrition and Regeneration. But Robb O'Hagan also noted that individuals are motivated differently.

Equinox breaks its members into three types:

- The Mayor: Members who are very social in the gym and like sharing their experiences, including around fitness, on social media and elsewhere;
- The Routine User: Members who "want to get in and get out" and would want information around how to improve the efficiency of their workouts;
- The Lone Wolf: Members who are "incredibly competitive" and are "all about their personal best."

As such, Equinox may offer Mayor members points for checking into group fitness classes and other prizes to motivate them. Routine User members are more open a simple breakdown of their health & fitness data to determine the best path to improve their results. Aimed at the Lone Wolf member, Equinox earlier this year launched "The Pursuit by Equinox," which Robb O'Hagan compared to a "giant video game." Bringing gamification to the indoor-cycling class, participants compete on their own or in teams to improve their mileage, speed or other performance metrics.

Robb O'Hagan believes many retailers and other vendors have the opportunity to tap personalized data to engage and form tighter relationships with customers.

"We believe everyone still has untapped potential within us," said Robb O'Hagan. "But it's all about how we serve up those motivations to get them there."

Powered by

 SPORTSONESOURCE



# INDUSTRY CALENDAR



**Stormy Kromer Waxed Cotton Hat**

## SEPTEMBER

- 1-3 WDI Worldwide Fall Show  
Reno, NV
- 8-10 SFIA Industry Leaders Summit  
New Orleans, LA
- 10-12 Imprinted Sportswear Show  
Orlando, FL
- 10-12 Surf Expo  
Orlando, FL
- 16-18 Interbike International Trade Expo  
Las Vegas, NV

## OCTOBER

- 5-7 OIA Rendezvous  
Seattle, WA
- 5-7 Shop.org Digital Summit 2015  
Philadelphia, PA
- 8-9 The Retailing Summit  
Dallas, TX
- 15-17 Imprinted Sportswear Show  
Ft. Worth, TX
- 27-30 NASGW Annual Meeting & Expo  
Reno, NV
- 29-31 ADA Fall Buying Show  
Baltimore, MD

## NOVEMBER

- 4-6 NBS Athletic Show  
Ft. Worth, TX
- 22-24 Sports, Inc. Athletic Show  
Las Vegas, NV

## DECEMBER

- 1-3 MRA December Lansing Market  
Lansing, MI
- 2-4 FFANY  
New York, NY
- 8-9 MRA December Cincinnati Market  
Cincinnati, OH

## JANUARY 2016

- 4-6 ASI Orlando  
Orlando, FL
- 5-7 Archery Trade Association Show  
Louisville, KY
- 6 Outdoor Retailer Winter Market Demo Day  
Salt Lake City, UT
- 6-9 CES Show  
Las Vegas, NV
- 7-10 Outdoor Retailer Winter Market  
Salt Lake City, UT
- 11-13 MRA January Novi Market  
Novi, MI
- 12-15 NBS Winter Show  
Ft. Worth, TX
- 14-16 Surf Expo  
Orlando, FL
- 17-20 NRF Retail Big Show  
New York, NY
- 19-22 SHOT Show  
Las Vegas, NV
- 22-24 Imprinted Sportswear  
Long Beach, CA
- 24-26 Sports Licensing & Tailgate Show  
Las Vegas, NV
- 27-29 PGA Merchandise Show  
Orlando, FL
- 28-31 The SIA Snow Show  
Denver, CO

## 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 I 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](http://nbs.com)

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

Sports & Fitness Industry Association  
8505 Fenton Street I 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 I Suite 110  
Victor, NY 14564  
t 585.742.1010  
sportsspecialistsltd.com

Tennis Industry Association  
1 Corpus Christi Place I 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

# SGB WEEKLY


Subscribe today  
The Weekly Digital Magazine for the  
Active Lifestyle Market



Follow us  
@sportsonesource



Powered by

 SPORTSONESOURCE  
sgbweekly.com



MAX AIRFLOW LIPGUARD

**TAKE A DEEP BREATH.**

INSTANT FIT. MAXIMUM BREATHABILITY. LOW PROFILE COMFORT.