

JAN 2010 VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 1

PSR

NEWS & INFORMATION FOR THE RUNNING & TRIATHLON MARKET



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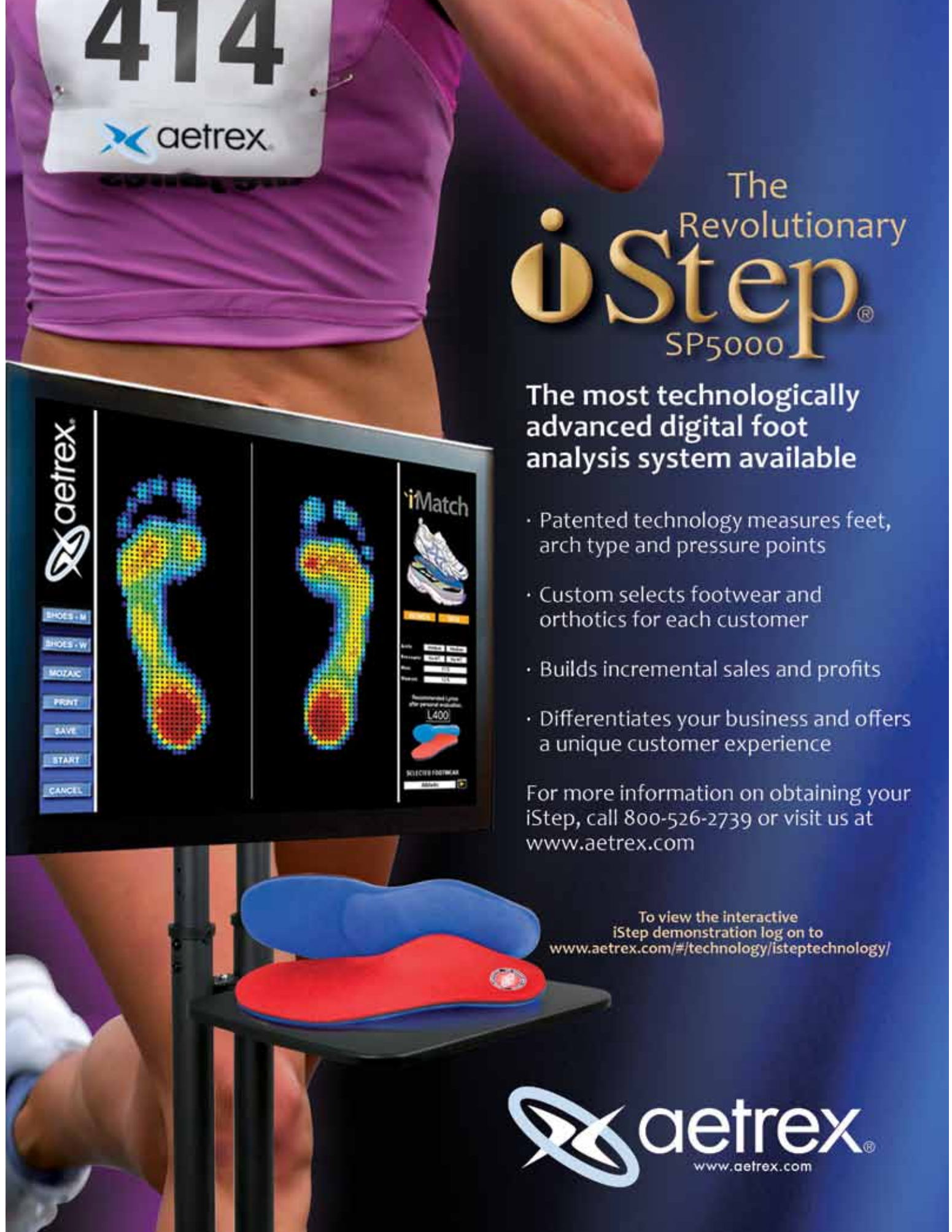
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OIA VantagePoint™ LAUNCHES AT OUTDOOR RETAILER WINTER MARKET

When Outdoor Industry Association selected The SportsOneSource Group to develop and manage a new retail point-of-sale tracking system designed specifically for manufacturers and retailers in the active outdoor lifestyle market, OIA established an avenue for the timely delivery of its information needs for the next 10 years -- and beyond.

When Outdoor Industry Association selected The SportsOneSource Group to develop and manage a new retail point-of-sale tracking system designed specifically for manufacturers and retailers in the active outdoor lifestyle market, the trade association set in motion their vision for the delivery of the information needs and requirements of their membership over the next 10 years.

OIA VantagePoint™ powered by SportScanInfo provides the active outdoor lifestyle market with the data, functionality and relevance to support its business objectives for the future faster, broader and with more depth. These three primary pillars of the SportScanInfo model provide members with ACTIONABLE information, not an autopsy of missed opportunities.

The **Timeliness of Data** is critical for today's retailers and vendors to enable each to assess trends as they happen,

not weeks or even months after the fact. Data is compiled and distributed weekly, generally within four days of the close of the retail week, providing the retailer with information they can react to before the next weekend.

The **Breadth of Data** available for the U.S. market is achieved by the widest available group of reporting retail channels, from outdoor, running and snow sports specialty retail to full-line sporting goods, mid-tier department stores, family footwear stores and discount/mass stores. The categories covered by the data are the broadest available picture of products sold through outdoor specialty stores or outdoor products sold through all channels of distribution.

The **Depth of Data** is achieved through product/color/size data that is compiled for every sale reported by our retail partners, down to the store level. Internet sales are generally reported for the location of the delivery of the product, not the origination of the sale, providing the user with the actual market opportunity for a region or DMA, regardless if the product was purchased at a brick 'n mortar store or via the Web.

SportScanInfo has been providing point-of-sale data to retailers and manufacturers in the sporting goods, footwear and apparel markets for over ten years. Members of the outdoor industry

can now leverage the SportScanInfo reporting platform to gain visibility of retail sales from smaller, single-store specialty retailers and specialty chain retailers to national footwear, sporting goods, department stores and discount/mass chains.

OIA VantagePoint™ powered by SportScanInfo will provide member-benefit data access for all regular OIA members and offer expanded data services for those companies requiring more in-depth information on brands and products.

The SportsOneSource Group will be conducting two research seminars based on OIA VantagePoint™ data at Outdoor Retailer Winter Market on Friday, January 22 and Saturday, January 23, both scheduled for a noon session in Salon A-C at the Marriott across the street from the Salt Palace. The company will also be conducting demos at its booth #56034 at OR Winter Market, which is adjacent to the OIA booth.



FLEET FEET MAINTAINS DOUBLE-DIGIT COMPS IN 2009



Wrapping up yet another stellar year, Fleet Feet Inc. reported fourth-quarter comparable store sales grew 11%. For the full year, sales reached \$96 million on a 10% comp gain. The

2009 gain comes on top of a 12% hike in 2008 and a 15% surge in 2007.

Fleet Feet, Inc. President Jeff Phillips said the franchisor, which held its annual Winter Franchise Conference in New Orleans, said its 2009 results were helped by new customer acquisition. Particularly beneficial has been the success of its No Boundaries program, which had over 10,000 participants in only its second year. "That's all new customers!" said Phillips.

He also said Fleet Feet's franchisees benefited from their commitment to Fleet Feet's FIT process and the overall custom experience, as well as a renewed focus on financial and inventory management amid the downturn. Toward that end, Fleet Feet initiated a new service called CFO in a Box that allows Fleet Feet to manage individual stores financials through software and a remote server.

"We already have about one-third of our stores up and running on this system," said Phillips. "This allows our operations staff to review information on an ongoing basis to ensure we make good financial decisions and ultimately drive profitability."

But Phillips also noted that top-line sales continue to benefit from strength in running even though the running specialty channel has become more challenging for some.

"The running category is definitely healthy," said Phillips. "I think the bigger question is how healthy are running retailers? There is a definitive segmentation taking place across the specialty channel. There are stores that are innovative and have a constant stream of new ideas and initiatives to improve their business. These stores tend to do well regardless of what's happening in the macro economy. There are other stores that are doing the same things they have always done and they are at risk."

Among brands, Saucony racked up 18% growth in units sold for the year, driven by improved product and strong service and support to stores, said Phillips. The brand also earned Fleet Feet's 2009 Footwear Vendor of the Year award. "This solidified its number three footwear market-share position and closed the gap on the top two brands, Asics and Brooks," said Phillips.

Another standout was Nike, up 18.5%, which Phillips felt reflected the footwear giant's "commitment to a relationship with our brand and improved products."

New Balance saw marginal growth while restructuring for success in running specialty channel, according to Phillips. "Their commitment to the channel and support for our No Boundaries program has positioned them well for growth in 2010," added Phillips.

Mizuno maintained its market-share position in 2009 while adidas reversed a downward trend with 20% growth off a relatively small base. Pearl Izumi was another brand that saw significant growth off a small

base, moving into the number eight market share position at the retailer.

But Phillips noted that while smaller footwear brands continue to enter the market, few have made a significant impact on its shoe fitting floors.

"All of the major brands are trending towards minimalism which we anticipate will put great

pressure on brands with limited resources that are trying to play in this limited space," said Phillips. "Great product is the common factor amongst the top brands today. The difference is being made in support and service initiatives and specifically [impact] customer acquisition."

On the apparel side, Nike, Brooks and Moving Comfort are still Fleet Feet's major resources. Phillips did note that Asics saw some "significant movement" in apparel off a small base.

Accessories were a particular bright spot with healthy growth and profitability in 2009, according to Phillips. Superfeet inserts grew 34.5%, driven by Fleet Feet's FIT Process and the training of staff in the fundamentals of biomechanics, anatomy and gait. With the ramping up of resources against its FIT training, another strong year in inserts is expected for 2010. Balega socks saw 18% growth, fueled by growing staff and customer confidence in the brand.

"All brands supported in our sock and accessory areas are experiencing growth thanks to our stores mindset transition from viewing these products as add-ons to an integral part of the FIT equation – a viewpoint strongly supported in our customer feedback," said Phillips.

For 2010, Phillips expects growth occurring in electronics driven by training and education and the introduction of new products such as Nike Plus and Soleus watches to go along with an established Garmin and Timex business.

Regarding real estate, Fleet Feet transitioned ownership in five existing stores and opened two new stores. Three stores were closed. Said Phillips, "While the business as a whole continues to grow and thrive, we have not been completely immune to individual store challenges."

Specialty Retail Development Company (SRDC), a separately run company set up to acquire and open Fleet Feet stores, acquired three existing Fleet Feet stores. SRDC also acquired and converted two independents and opened its first new store in Huntersville, NC.

Looking to 2010, Phillips said new store growth will continue to be driven by SRDC acquisitions and conversions.

"We will continue to focus on supporting the growth and development of our existing stores," said Phillips. "Specifically we're looking to make our store owners lives easier and increasing their profitability."



**Fleet Feet, Inc. President
Jeff Phillips**

FOOT LOCKER CONSOLIDATES U.S. OPERATIONS UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

Foot Locker, Inc. announced plans to consolidate the management team that oversees its Lady Foot Locker business with the team that currently manages the Foot Locker U.S., Kids Foot Locker and Footaction businesses. As a result, Dick Johnson, former head of the company's European operations, became president and CEO of Foot Locker U.S., Footaction, Kids Foot Locker and Lady Foot Locker.

Keith Daly, president and CEO of Foot Locker U.S., Kids Foot Locker and Footaction, has left the company. Marla Anderson, president and CEO of Lady Foot Locker, remains at the company, but her role is still being determined.

"We expect the consolidation of our Foot

Locker businesses under the direction of one management team to help us clarify our Foot Locker family of brands' position in the retail marketplace," stated Ken Hicks, the former JC Penney executive who became Foot Locker's president and CEO in August 2009. "It will allow us to sharpen our focus on the female consumer as we look to improve the coordination of our women's merchandise assortments and marketing strategies across each of our Foot Locker brands. This move is a component of a new, comprehensive strategic plan that we expect to complete and announce early in our 2010 fiscal year."

The reorganization, as well as some

corporate staff reductions made to improve corporate efficiency, will lead to annual savings of approximately \$10 million in FY10. An after-tax charge of \$3 million, or 2 cents per share, will be taken in Q409 to reflect the costs associated with the elimination of approximately 120 home office and field management positions.

The company also said 117 stores are expected to be closed during the fourth quarter, a large percentage of which are Foot Locker and Lady Foot Locker stores in the U.S. In all, Foot Locker, Inc. estimates that for the full year it will open 37 new stores, close 190 under-productive stores and remodel or relocate 160 stores.

ADIDAS LAUNCHES MICOACH RUNNING TRAINING DEVICE

In its latest answer to the Nike+iPod, Adidas launched the miCoach Pacer and Zone running training tools. The Adidas miCoach Pacer is designed to coach a person through running workouts and keep track of progress by syncing with an Adidas' website that records data and offers advice.

The miCoach Pacer package, which costs \$139.99, includes the miCoach Pacer device, a heart monitor and sensor that either fits inside certain Adidas running shoes or on the shoelaces of any kind of shoe.

Much like the Nike+iPod, the miCoach offers a microsite, www.adidas.com/us/micoach, with exercise information, advice and systems to track workouts as well as other interactive features, such as ways to share music lists or share workout progress.

The miCoach offers "an audio feedback box, heart rate monitor, and stride sensor (or the MiCoach Zone, which pairs the heart rate sensor with a visual feedback wristband) to receive color-coded workout guidance that tells you when to speed up, slow down, hold steady, or end your workout," according to the microsite.

"miCoach makes it easy for anyone at any level to get personal coaching. The instant progress reports help you get the most out of your run and achieve your personal goal," said Bernd Wahler, chief marketing officer of adidas Sport Performance. "The audible coaching feature of the miCoach Pacer provides a new dimension to any workout experience allowing users of any level to discover their true potential. This product is really about offering our consumers a personal way to train."

BRIEFS

New Balance announced a sponsorship agreement with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) that will ensure that area runners, joggers and walkers have clear running paths along Boston's Charles River during the 2009-2010 winter season. New Balance has pledged to provide funding to support snow removal efforts along the 17-plus mile Charles River path spanning from the Museum of Science area in Cambridge to the Galen Street Bridge in Watertown. The snow removal will be performed by DCR within 24 hours of the completion of a storm. New Balance will also host consumer events along the path during the winter where the company will showcase new products, provide giveaways, and interact with area athletes.

Mizuno signed an extension with the ING Georgia Marathon and Half Marathon to remain as the "Official Footwear and Apparel Supplier" for the March 21 race. The ING Georgia Marathon has served as one of Mizuno's integral running sponsorships over the last three years since the race debuted in March of 2007. Mizuno has also partnered with several Metro Atlanta area running specialty stores for the Mizuno "Inspired to Run" Training Programs.

Inside-Out Sports, which operates two triathlon stores in North Carolina, was named the official title sponsorship of the Inside-Out Sports Triathlon Series, one of the largest and oldest statewide triathlon series in the country. Inside-Out Sports will offer in-store registrations for certain events after an event has sold out. In addition, same-day preliminary race results will be posted on the insideoutsports.com website.

Louis Garneau announced the sponsorship of the Bahati Foundation Pro Cycling Team. The Bahati Foundation, founded by Rahsaan Bahati, is a non-profit organization that inspires and empowers underprivileged youth to rise above their circumstances. The partnership with Bahati Foundation Pro Cycling Team also includes a strong affiliation with Colorado Premier Training.

MOVING COMFORT INVESTS IN BIOMECHANICS RESEARCH

Moving Comfort formed a partnership with Progressive Sports Technologies LTD, a sports innovation consultant based at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom, to add biomechanics research to its sports bra development.

Through the partnership, Moving Comfort is conducting extensive testing and analysis of its current sports bra assortment and bras in development. In particular, the company is analyzing women's gait and body movement to determine the ideal bra materials and construction, the degree of support each bra offers and the corresponding impact level rating by cup size. As testing continues, Moving Comfort expects to be able to provide consumers with the first-ever, standardized, impact level rating system based on their cup size and activity of choice.

"Our testing has confirmed that Moving Comfort sports bras support women of all shapes and sizes," says Julie Baxter, vice president of Moving Comfort. "As we continue to develop 'best in class' sports bras, ongoing testing of our products along the way will enable us to create the most innovative, supportive and comfortable products in the marketplace."



Glycerin 8 MSRP \$130.00.

BROOKS SPORTS INTRODUCES BROOKS DNA SYSTEM

Brooks Sports, Inc. has launched the Brooks DNA cushioning system. Available in the new Brooks Glycerin 8, the DNA system automatically and physically adapts with each foot strike to the ever-changing amount of force placed on the foot during each run.

When examined through a microscope, the patent-pending Brooks DNA is comprised of polymer chains, individual molecules connected in strands. These strands and chains react to the amount of force placed on the foot and allow Brooks DNA to disperse pressure and provide resiliency as needed. Such molecules don't break down or wear out in normal use.

"Brooks DNA is a game-changing technology in the world of running," said Jim Weber, president and CEO of Brooks. "Traditional cushioning systems attempt to work for runners of all shapes and sizes, even though each person's weight and gait are vastly different from the next. DNA offers a real solution to this challenge; it continuously tailors the levels of cushioning and resiliency to each runner's specific, changing needs throughout his or her run."

Brooks DNA also solves common fit issues for women. Brooks' director of footwear merchandising Andre Kriwet noted that with traditional cushioning systems, a shoe that works for a male runner will be too firm for a female runner with the same shoe size because she weighs on average 10 to 15 percent less.

"Because Brooks DNA adapts to accommodate the different forces these two runners produce, it delivers both genders a customized ride," said Kriwet.

Brooks noted that due to the excitement generated by the DNA and the Glycerin 8, which also features the eco-friendly full-length BioMoGo midsole, Spring 2010 bookings of the Glycerin 8 in the specialty running and national account retail channels are up 27 percent and 43 percent, respectively, relative to that of the Glycerin 7 for Spring 2009.

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Photo courtesy of Pearl Izumi

FALL 2010

Running-Specific Softshells Take Shape

By Brian Metzler

In a perfect world, runners would be able to pick and choose the times they wanted to run depending on the weather. Of course, if that were the case, we'd all run when it was sunny, dry and cool.

But that's not possible, thanks to both the unpredictability of weather in certain geographic regions and the obligations that come with work, family and school.

With the quick pace of life nowadays, more people are trying to squeeze a run in during the early morning or late evening hours: when inclement weather is at its worst. That's one of the trends that has led apparel designers to create Fall/Winter 2010 cool-weather running clothes with versatility, reflectivity and high-aerobic performance in mind. Just as urban fashion and outdoor apparel started to cross over categories in the early 2000s, there are hints of both the fashion and outdoor worlds being incorporated into sport-specific running apparel in 2010.

Inclement weather running jackets have finally started to come of age in recent years. No longer does a runner have to choose between limited protection (a lightweight wind jacket), excessive protection (a not-very-breathable waterproof, seam-sealed jacket that becomes a sauna after 20 minutes), not enough warmth (a long-sleeve fleece jacket sans wind protection) or too much warmth (first-generation softshell jackets without running-oriented performances qualities).

Dynamic new fabrics and construction techniques have helped transform running jackets into the ultimate performance/protection tools.

"We definitely see outerwear evolving quite a bit - especially with lighter-weight jackets that still offer all that protection with laminates that have more stretch and better breathability," says Kelly Emich, associate product line manager for running and triathlon apparel for Pearl Izumi.

Running-specific softshells are three-layer, light to mid-weight jackets constructed from dynamic fabrics that allow just the right amount of warmth, breathability and protection from rain and wind. They're light enough to wear on long runs and sturdy enough to combat rain, snow and bitter cold. They can be worn with just a base layer shirt underneath in a variety of climates and weather conditions.

Poised to stand at the front of the pack is Pearl Izumi's Fly Softshell Jacket, a mid-weight jacket that strategically combines a variety of softshell fabrics and construction techniques in all the right places. It combines a waterproof, windproof front body with a lighter-weight, waterproof, windproof back panel for optimal cold-weather protection, moisture management and agility, plus an insulating soft interior for comfort. With pit zips, a full-length internal draft flap, an internal hand mitt and reflective details, the Fly Softshell Jacket is ideal for high aerobic running in cool-to-



Patagonia 4.4 oz Nine Trails Jacket **MSRP** \$100

Photo by Nick Onken

cold weather at any time of the day.

Other key examples of high-performance running softshells are The North Face's Apex Climate Block and Stormy Trail, along with Brooks' Utopia Softshell Jacket. The Apex Climate Block Jacket is both rugged and very run-friendly, offering high-energy athleticism for all types of running. The Stormy Trail is somewhat of a hoodless hybrid with welded seams and unique in/out shoulder vents (allowing air to pass through the shoulder at the front, while allowing hot, damp air to vent through the back).

The softshell fabric of the Utopia jacket from Brooks excels at moisture management, which means a runner won't get overly sweaty during a long run on a cold day. It also has 360° reflectivity and extended cuffs that can transform into a lightweight mitt. Ultimately, it's more stylish (with more colorways and more design details) than the Wanganui Softshell Jacket it replaced in Brooks' Fall/Winter line.

"It offers a really nice protection level, above what most of the outdoor market would say is the highest level of wind, rain and water protection," says Michelle Ave, product line manager for Brooks running apparel. "It also has better stretch, it's a softer fabric than previous softshells and it has a really good runner's fit."

Lighter-weight jackets have also evolved with greater emphasis on protection and moisture management. The lightweight New Balance 360 Degree Jacket is a highly-reflective, wind- and water-resistant shell with 3M Scotchlite reflective taping, hi-visibility color treatments, a mesh-lined back vent and an "in case of emergency" identification tag. The jacket packs into a front zipper pocket and is also equipped with a music-friendly internal chest pocket.

Many brands, including Brooks, Saucony, The North Face and New Balance, are upping their after-dark running apparel with new high-visibility colors, greater reflectivity and other unique built-in safety details and features. Brooks is adding a high-visibility green to its line, while New Balance is introducing high-visibility yellow and pink, plus adjustable gussets (zippered on the men's version) that can be stowed during daylight running or everyday use. The North Face will have glow-in-the-dark zippers on its highly reflective Torpedo Jacket.

Patagonia has revised its Wind Shield Jacket, a 9.7-ounce shell made from a stretchy knit-poly laminated, to a soft polyurethane film to provide full windproof protection. It has poly/spandex panels under the arms for breathability and a neckline that wicks moisture. Two zippered front pockets and a

zippered rear pouch pocket add versatility without bulk.

Two ultralight water-resistant jackets for Fall 2010 include Patagonia's 4.4-ounce Nine Trails Jacket and Sugoi's 3.4-ounce Hooded Helium Jacket, notable for its athletic cut, four-way stretchiness and run-friendly agility.

As with jackets, tights and softshell pants will be designed to provide improved combinations of breathability, performance and moisture-wicking qualities. Pearl Izumi's Fly Softshell Pant, like its matching jacket, features a mid-weight waterproof, windproof upper front panel combined with a lightweight waterproof, windproof bottom and back panel. It's geared for optimal movement, while still offering protection from the cold, as evidenced by its vented, articulated knees. Pearl Izumi's Fly Evo Tights combine waterproof, windproof front panels with warm thermal back panels, with lightweight softshell fabric running $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down the front side and one-quarter of the way up the back side for protection of the "splash back" effect that occurs on wet and wintery runs.

Aiming for ultimate comfort in next-skin wear, New Balance has incorporated more welded seams in its top-tier NBx line than ever before. From the company's "designing from the inside out" initiative

comes the NBx Welded Tank, the NBx Welded Half-Zip and the NBx Windblocker Tights. "It's a consistent story throughout our whole NBx line," says Tara Linafelter, women's running apparel product line manager at New Balance. "It's about function and comfort. You want everything to look fantastic aesthetically when it's on the shop floor, but we also need to ask 'what does it look like when you turn them inside-out?' We want a runner to look at these pieces and see how they're made and realize they'll be totally comfortable and they're not going to have chaffing on their entire run."

Like many brands, New Balance has also revamped its sports bra line with more technical design details and updated fit and comfort. The new NBx Welded Bra has a racer back design that incorporates welded seams to eliminate chaffing and irritation issues and also features molded cups, which help create shape and support for a wide range of sizes from A to DD. It efficiently moves moisture from key hot spots and was designed so as to not cut into the trapezius muscles. "It truly is a high-impact bra that doesn't look like an 'iron maiden'," Linafelter says.



Brooks Utopia Soft Shell MSRP \$120

Patagonia has redesigned its Capilene base layer collection with improvements in next-to-skin comfort, durability, wicking and dry times. One of the ideal running-oriented pieces is the Cap 2 Lightweight Crew top, with a two-tone color scheme.

The new Adapt Glove from Brooks allows a

runner to peel back an outer windproof shell mitt and tuck it into the base of the cuff, which allows the fingers to remain covered with a lightweight breathable fabric.

New Balance has completely overhauled the inner brief on its men's running shorts for Fall 2010. The new construction includes greater use of flat-lock seams, an improved waistband with a clean-finished top, strategically placed mesh panels for breathability, side panels to provide additional stretch and provide comfort on a wide variety of body types and thin lingerie elastic around the leg openings for comfort and agility. Some of those changes will be carried forward to women's shorts and briefs in Spring 2011 and beyond.

As consumers continue to seek versatile and adaptive apparel to complement their outdoor exercise routines, manufacturers will also look to bring new technological advances into their products to meet these needs. Those that are able to provide the most comfort, durability, and fashion-forward elements will certainly see success into the new decade.

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THE HEROES OF 2009

There's no question it's been a tough year for specialty retailers. Despite the daily grind of news about the poor economy, there have been some bright spots. Specific models from traditional leaders in footwear and apparel continue to drive consumer interest and sales. Offerings from accessory, nutrition and up-and-coming product categories also contributed significantly to retailer's bottom lines.

Performance Sports Retailer brings you a selection of products that can be called the "Heroes of 2009."



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The Fiona is designed for C-DD cup women who need the extra support. Molded cups encapsulate each side, while stretch powermesh limits up-and-down movement. Easily adjustable straps in the front are combined with Moving Comfort's signature hook-and-loop system. Three plush-backed, hook-and-eye rows are featured on the band, while a fourth row is added to size 40-44 bands. **MSRP \$44**
www.movingcomfort.com

"The Moving Comfort Fiona bra was one of our strongest sellers. It fits a wide variety of women; including new mothers who are breast feeding. The ability for a sports bra to be necessary equipment instead of just another workout garment goes a long way."

-Melanie Pastrana, apparel and accessories buyer, Snail's Pace



GU

What began with the original GU Roctane Energy Gel, has grown into an entire line of products that provide revolutionary and effective methods to keep athletes fueled during exercise. As the recipe has continued to improve, GU has added Electrolyte Brews, Recovery Brews, Chomps Energy Chews, and now the Ultra Endurance Energy Gel to its Roctane line. All of these products share the same goal: to help athletes go faster and longer than ever before.
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"GU for us is 50-60% of our gel business. The entire food department consisting of gels, chews, bars, and canisters is huge and we have 12-20 feet in our stores."

-Garry Gribble, owner, Garry Gribbles Running Sports LLC

Saucony

Available in both men's and women's sizes, the ViZiPRO SonicLite HD Jacket features luminous neon orange color to ensure runners are visible in the darkest environments. An LED holster on the right sleeve with an accompanying LED light can be used for increased visibility. **MSRP \$90.00**
www.saucony.com

"Saucony and Nathan have really been leaders in reflectivity and making safety products comfortable to use for runners."

-JP Huseby, general manager, FootWorks Miami

Recovery Socks

The Recovery Sock uses patented Graduated Compression Technology (GCT). GCT provides tighter compression in the foot and ankle area, along with a gradual decrease in compression as it travels up the leg over the calf. GCT causes an upward flow of blood to aid in getting un-oxygenated blood out of the leg and replacing it with fresh oxygenated blood. This technology dramatically reduces swelling and speeds recovery after workouts and races. Athletes in long-distance competitions, especially marathons, have found them particularly beneficial during races as well.

MSRP \$34.90 www.recoverysock.com

“We’ve sold more Recovery Socks in one month than we have with other brands in six months. That’s going to be a big product for us next year.”

Brian Morrison manager, Seattle Running Company



Vibram Five Fingers

Visually unique, Vibram uses advanced materials to create the Five Fingers line. The upper is made with a thin, abrasion-resistant, stretch polyamide fabric. The patented Vibram sole is crafted from the company’s TC1 performance rubber compound. The sole is sniped to improve grip in wet conditions. **MSRP** from \$85. www.vibramfivefingers.com

“Vibram Five Finger has benefited from a great deal of awareness and has been tied into the discussion of minimalist running. Great sellers.”

-Matt Mossman, Boulder Running Company

Nathan

Nathan’s Reflective Belt is an all-in-one belt keeping runners and their valuables safe. The belt features a Power Stretch Mesh outer pocket that expands to hold items tightly in place, along with 360-degree reflectivity, 3M Scotchlite reflective detail, high-visibility ANSI yellow material, and an incorporated, waterproof I.D. card. **MSRP**. \$24.95 www.nathansports.com

Zensah

Zensah sleeves can be worn during training or for recovery to increase oxygen blood flow to the muscles of the lower leg. Increased oxygen allows for quicker recovery, enabling athletes to push the envelope in their training. The Zensah Calf Shin sleeve is ideal for runners, cyclists and triathletes. **MSRP** \$40 www.zensah.com

“Zensah compression calf sleeves are going as fast as we can get them in. They are offered in a variety of colors and people are really drawn to that.” -Brian Morrison manager, Seattle Running Company





ROB DEMARTINI

PRESIDENT & CEO | NEW BALANCE

Rob DeMartini joined New Balance as president and CEO in April 2007. Previously, his career at Procter & Gamble spanned 18 years, including management roles with the Gillette Company, North American Snacks, and Millstone Coffee. He also served as group vice president, consumer products for Tyson Foods

WERE YOU A BIG SPORTS NUT BEFORE JOINING NEW BALANCE? As a kid, I was involved in baseball, soccer, track and golf. As an adult, I started to become more focused on new challenges and figured out that I like learning new sports and activities more than sticking with the sports of my youth. This has led me to barefoot waterskiing, wakeboarding, skiing and snowboarding, and most recently kite boarding. I have had the chance to heliski in Alaska and climb Mt. Rainier – both real highlights!

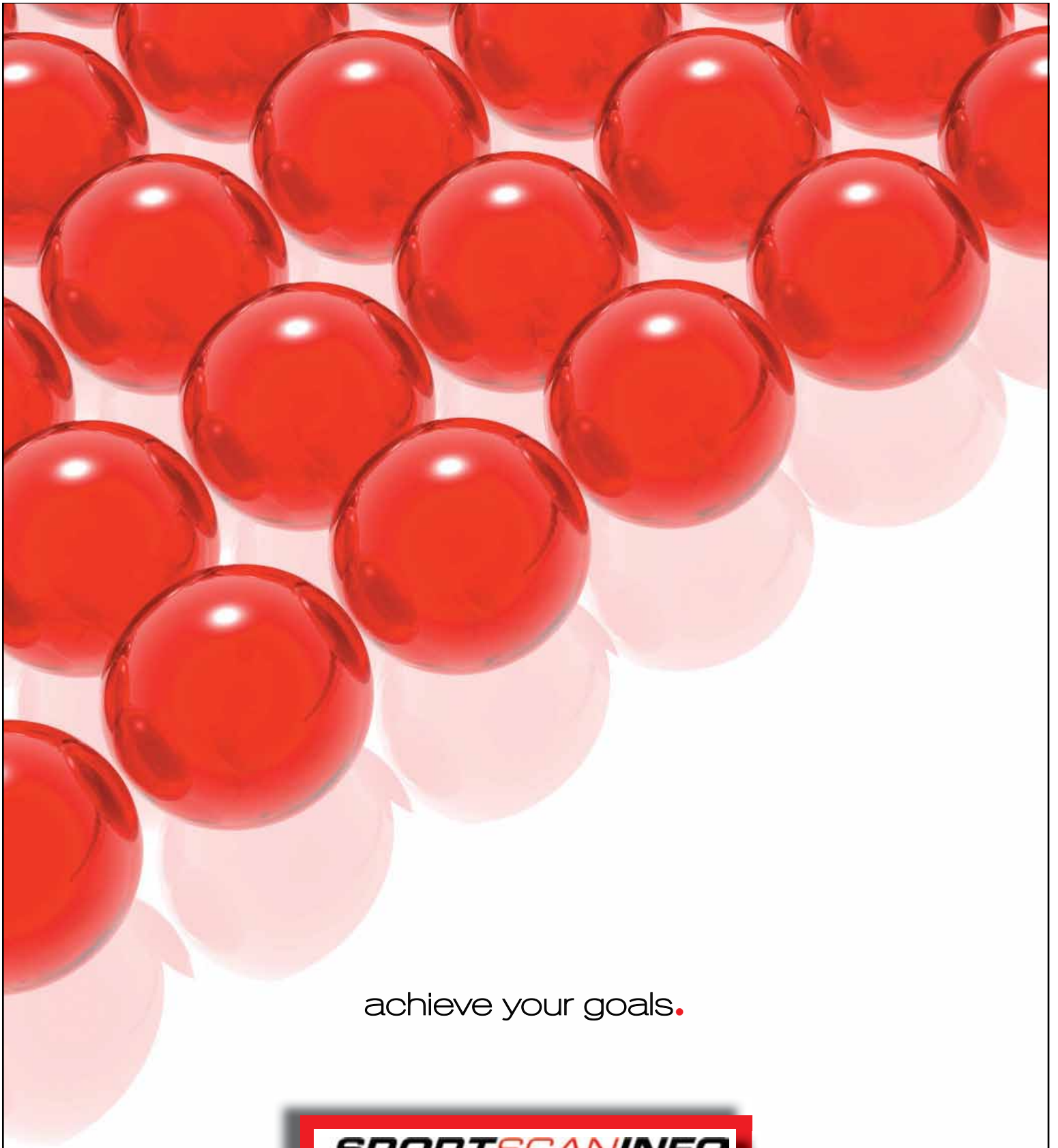
WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB? I had early morning paper routes where my dad taught me the importance of a strong work ethic and the ability to increase my tips by “porching” the paper and collecting on rainy nights. I remember the struggle to get up every morning and I am sure my memory underestimates the times I convinced my mom to drive me around to throw the papers.

WHAT DID YOU GAIN FROM YOUR YEARS AT PROCTER AND GAMBLE? I spent over 20 years at Procter and Gamble, a huge company that promotes 100 percent from within. This taught me the value of a “shared culture” as well as the limitations of too little diversity of thought. P&G has a very strong business process, extremely talented associates and a long track record of understanding consumers’ needs. At the same time, as an \$80 billion company, they can be slow to respond and I discovered I needed to find an environment that is committed to moving quickly. New Balance has a great balance of lasting values and a strong willingness to decide and act.

WAS THERE ONE KEY MOMENT THAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO TAKE THE JOB AT NEW BALANCE? While I don’t think there was one “key moment,” I do know that my discussions with Jim and Anne Davis over a number of months convinced me that the opportunity at New Balance was unlike any other I had seen. It was clear that New Balance held on equal level, both the desire to get great business results AND how those results were achieved. I talked with partners of New Balance and, in every case, I was told that our company was a trusted partner that could always be counted on to do the right thing. I have had the opportunity to work for some great companies and New Balance is certainly at the top of that list.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN? I ski as much as I can. The more backcountry and the deeper the powder, the better! I also ride and run fairly often and this summer I competed for the third year in a two-day, 200-mile bike event called the Pan Mass Challenge – a 6,000 participant fundraiser that has generated \$270 million for cancer research. I also had the chance to join 11 other NBER’s for a 12-person, 207-mile, 24-hour running relay across New Hampshire called Reach the Beach. In total NB had 36 associates run on three teams - it was a great and surreal event.

WHO’S THE BUSINESS PERSON YOU MOST ADMIRE AND WHY? My dad has always been a real influence on my business career. He taught me the value of hard work, being decisive and always valuing great customer service. I have also always been inspired by the leadership lessons and writing of Colin Powell. Years ago he published the 10 lessons of leadership and I still refer to them all the time.



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