

JULY 2010 VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 7

# PSR

NEWS & INFORMATION FOR THE RUNNING & TRIATHLON MARKET

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**FEATURE**  
PAGE 10

**NEWS**

- 4 Saucony** Looks To Boost Performance with New Apparel Line
- 5 Icebreaker** Introduces Running, Cycling Specific Lines
- 6 Ortholite** Partners with Level Field Fund Running For A Cause  
**Dick's** Donates \$50,000 to Team Fox  
**In Brief...** They Said It, The Numbers Game, Did You Know

**WHAT'S HOT!**

- 7 Wrist Watches** – More Sales For Your Store?

**FEATURES**

- 8 Barefoot To Lightweight** - Barefoot Running Controversy  
Is Supporting A Much Larger Appeal Around Lightweight Footwear
- 10 Merrell** Moves Into Barefoot

**I AM PSR**

- 14 Robyn Goby** Director Of Marketing And Communication, Fleet Feet, Inc.



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**AMP PRO 2 Training** offers the benefits of higher compression technology, including enhanced muscle support and reduction of energy lost to excessive pounding and muscle vibration during workouts. Featured are the Training Short Sleeve and Training Long Sleeve tops, engineered with AMP PRO2 LT, a lightweight option that allows for thermoregulation during the highest level of activity. The Training shorts and tights also offer more compression to reduce muscle vibration and tissue damage during training.

Olympic Sprinters Lauryn Williams and Wallace Spearman

## SAUCONY LOOKS TO BOOST PERFORMANCE WITH NEW APPAREL LINE

Nothing is more important than the run. And as today's runners look for ways to run faster, train harder and push further, Saucony is offering them an extra boost – AMP PRO2 Training and Recovery Collections available in men's and women's sizing.

AMP PRO2 combines the benefits of compression with a specially formulated responsive fiber that improves oxygenated blood flow up to 32 percent more than compression alone. Both factors are critical to boosting athletic performance and enhancing recovery.

More than just compression, the line features Celliant, an innovative fiber that absorbs energy emitted by the body. Celliant acts as a catalyst that recycles energy back through the skin and causes circulation to become more efficient, increasing oxygenated blood flow in the body.

The AMP PRO2 line also features accessories, compression socks, calf sleeves and arm warmers, each of which deliver muscle stability, increased circulation and enhanced recovery benefits. All are available in unisex sizing.

**AMP PRO2 Recovery Suit** is made to be worn for long periods of time and engineered for maximum comfort with strategically placed seams. The suit can also be worn while sleeping or under clothes during downtime.





## ICEBREAKER INTRODUCES RUNNING, CYCLING SPECIFIC LINES

Icebreaker has people talking again. The innovative brand, which has pioneered categories such as outdoor merino wool apparel, is debuting its first line of technical cycling and running apparel - both geared toward today's running and cycling enthusiasts.

Icebreaker is making commuting by bike easier. Their **Commuter** line regulates temperature, protects against UV rays, is breathable and includes gripper elastic around the hems to prevent fabric from riding up and exposing the riders' lower back to weather. Reflective tape for visibility, hip pockets that can be easily accessed by commuters wearing a messenger bag and ergonomically-designed zip pulls round out the styling.

The **GT Run Range** is a technical sports line featuring sleeveless tees, crews, tanks, shorts, tights and a racer-back bra. The line includes classic and fashion-forward garments and targets fitness and elite runners. Run-specific features include eyelet panels for breathability, reflective details for visibility, zippered stash pockets, and cord management systems for listening to music.

The **Technical Cycling** Apparel line features shorts and two different tops – one for road cyclists and one for mountain bikers. Styles feature a slim, sleek, race fit construction to minimize air drag, drop tail hems and a gripper at the back hem to keep jerseys in place. Reflective rear details for visibility, a three-panel back pocket for storage and reinforced stress points on tops are also featured. The bike shorts and bibs are 85 percent merino wool with spandex and nylon for durability, strength and resistance to pilling.



## ORTHO-LITE PARTNERS WITH LEVEL FIELD FUND

OrthoLite and Amazon are teaming up to help today's young athletes. As part of the program, OrthoLite has become the founding partner of

the Level Field Fund (LFF) – a grant-giving program that provides funding to athletes who would otherwise be limited by their financial situation. As part of the program, OrthoLite will donate \$1 directly to LFF for every pair of their new Fusion style insoles sold.

Ross Powers, founder of LFF and president of the Ross Powers Foundation, says OrthoLite's commitment helps make the goals of young athletes possible. "For many young athletes, talent, drive and determination are simply not enough; financial support at key stages of development is critical. OrthoLite's commitment is a major step forward in our effort to provide grants to talented athletes with financial needs."

## Did You Know?

- Running Footwear sales for the 2010 year-to-date period were up in the low teens
- Sport Specialty channel experienced the highest percentage of dollar growth for 2010 year-to-date period of any tracked channel for Running Footwear up in strong double-digits
- Lightweight and Hybrid Running Footwear sales for 2010 year-to-date period tripled compared to the same period last year

\*data provided by sportscaninfo.com

## RUNNING FOR A CAUSE

### Dick's donates \$50,000 to Team Fox

Dick's Sporting Goods capped its first National Runners' Month with a \$50,000 donation to charity partner, Team Fox. The two worked together to promote running while helping raise awareness and funds to benefit Parkinson's disease.

During the month of May, Dick's sponsored 10 premiere running events across the country pulling in 75,000 registered runners, all of whom received a \$10 Dick's gift certificate.

As part of the campaign, the retailer also launched the RunnersUnite! iPhone app, to help runners connect with each other and find nearby running routes. Nearly 35,000 people to date have downloaded the application.

52

Percentage of Running Footwear dollar sales for the 2010 year-to-date period made in the Athletic/Urban Specialty channel

99

Average selling price for Reebok's top selling running shoe for the 2010 year-to-date period

70

Percentage of Running Apparel dollar sales for the 2010 year-to-date period made in the Full-Line Sporting Goods channel

\*data provided by sportscaninfo.com



## THEY SAID IT

"Fleet Feet Sports has evolved from a place to buy running products to a brand that is changing the lives of individuals by creating a culture of inclusiveness and belonging where each person can live a more fit life."

– President, Jeff Phillips, on what the brand means to their customers

"The Brooks Cavalcade of Curiosities brings to life our passion for running and our 'Run Happy' ethos in a new and captivating way. Ultimately, runners receive expert advice on their running technique and are recommended the perfect shoe for their stride, but in a celebratory and fun way."

– VP of Marketing, Dave Larson, on the running-inspired carnival experience visiting running shops, events and expos over the next several years

## WHAT'S HOT

# WRIST WATCH

**DOES THE RETURN OF THE ACTIVE CONSUMER MEAN MORE SALES FOR YOUR STORE? ALL SIGNS POINT IN THAT DIRECTION.**

By Kyle Conrad




**1. Suunto**, which has a history of manufacturing quality instruments for training, has introduced its T3d. The watch features a dual heart rate monitor that utilizes ANT and Analog functions, and allows it to be paired with gym equipment as well as a wireless wristop device. Registered heart rate is used to calculate training effect, which monitors heart-beat performance on a scale of 1-5 to display improvements in aerobic conditioning. It also works in conjunction with Suunto's cycling, running and GPS packs. **MSRP \$189**

**2. Garmin International's** Forerunner 100 sports watch is an entry-level device designed to easily track progress and goals for exercise and training. In addition to displaying time and distance, the watch shows pace in one of two ways: averaged out either over-the-current lap/mile (if auto-lap is enabled) or over the duration of the run. Runners can monitor how hard they're working while exercising as the watch displays current heart rate data and features heart rate-based calorie computation. The Forerunner 110 utilizes a high-sensitivity SiRFstarIV™ GPS receiver with Garmin's HotFix® technology to quickly acquire and sustain satellite reception. **MSRP \$250**

**3. Polar's FT60** is an advanced product that helps users stay motivated with the new Polar STAR training system, which adapts to personal exercise habits and provides weekly feedback and updated goals. The FT60 syncs with the G1 GPS sensor and S21 Foot Pod for those who want to track speed and distance and with PolarPersonalTrainer (PPT), an online exercise community that provides guidance, tracks progress and allows users to challenge friends. **MSRP \$240**

**4. Timex's Ironman®** Global Trainer Bodylink® System is a GPS-enabled training tool that boasts real-time speed, pace and distance data and features SiRFstar GPS and ANT+™ wireless technology. In addition to its performance and multi-sport modes for training and events, the watch syncs with an athlete's computer to download detailed workout and route information to online software powered by TrainingPeaks. The Global Trainer system is compatible with Timex heart rate and bike speed/cadence sensors and can display data from third-party bike power meters using ANT+ technology. **MSRP \$250 - \$300**



# BAREFOOT TO LIGHTWEIGHT

**THE BAREFOOT RUNNING CONTROVERSY IS SUPPORTING A MUCH LARGER OPPORTUNITY AROUND LIGHTWEIGHT FOOTWEAR.**

By Thomas J. Ryan



Photo Courtesy of Vibram FiveFingers



For over the past year, the running world has been rocked by a barefoot vs. shoes debate. The brouhaha started with 2009's arrival of Christopher McDougall's best-selling book "Born to Run." In January 2010, a Harvard study traced many common running injuries to the jarring impact of shoe-clad runners. Meanwhile, Vibram's Five Fingers quickly became the running community's hippest shoe. But running vendors for the most part claim to be relishing the barefoot debate.

#### IN THE SPOTLIGHT

"It's a very confusing time but it's also a good time because people are talking about running, about shoes, how to train, etc." says Andre Kriwet, director of footwear merchandising at Brooks Sports. "And we've talked about stability for the last 20 years. So people are just craving a news story."

For designers, it's opened the door for more experimentation. In the past, the focus had been primarily on neutral/cushion running shoes established in the seventies since those were the only marketable ones. "It's kind of taken the handcuffs off and allowed us to really explore the foot's natural motion and how can we let the foot do all the things that it's naturally built to do while still giving protection from the road," says Patrick O'Malley, senior vice president of global product, Saucony. "Consumers are now willing to try other options. So especially for our designers, it's actually very liberating to be able to explore different biomechanics within shoes that maybe we weren't able to before because the consumer maybe wasn't as open to it."

But from a commercial standpoint, it's fed a burgeoning opportunity around lightweight footwear. "The opportunities this discussion opens allows manufacturers more product options to sell to the consumers,



Vibram FiveFingers will expand on its road running collection with the Bikila LS featuring an off-center speed lacing system **MSRP \$100.**

and allows for more fragmented categories in which additional models can be added to the line," says Jim Monahan, vice president of footwear, ASICS America.

Indeed, vendors are quick to note that minimalist running shoes aren't new. Racing flats have long been used for track & field and many long-distance runners mix in lightweight shoes as part of their training regimen. But with advancements in foams and meshes, running shoes in the U.S. have been getting lighter and lighter over recent years, and consumers are responding.

"You're seeing a lot of innovation coming in and people are bringing a lot more to the table in lightweight shoes overall," says Katherine Petrecca, SBU manager at New Balance. "But the barefoot and super minimal side of it is also very consumer-driven. So you're kind of seeing it from both sides. The consumer is reacting and has been over the last two years toward better-engineered, lightweight product from lots of people. It's opening up the spectrum as to what's acceptable in terms of performance footwear in the running category."

Michael Peveto, head of running for adidas America, believes the minimalist trend has been building up for awhile and believes its part of a "societal shift toward kind of pairing down" seen across phases of life, partly resulting from reassessed priorities due to the downturn. In footwear, it's also showing up in simpler shoes such as adidas Superstar, Nike Dunk and Chuck Taylors. But the minimalist push in running may have stronger roots since the "Born to Run" book brought the discussion around performance. Peveto likens lightweight's potential to trail running.

"In 1992, we introduced a shoe called the Response Trail, which at the time was really the first trail running shoe in the industry," Peveto

says. "And over the course or the following 10 years, trail went from this little niche thing to a major segment. So I hope that this has a similar reach."

#### THE ULTIMATE ADD-ON SALE

Moreover, lightweight has the potential for add-on sales for the running category. More runners are expected to see racer-type models as training tools but long-distance runners are also expected to view lightweight as a way to bring a healthier balance to their running routine.

"What we're seeing is consumers are finding a nice benefit to wearing the shoe like the Kinvara four days a week and their traditional shoes on the other days," Saucony's O'Malley says. "If you think of the activity of running, it's the same motion over and over again and if there's even just a slight inefficiency, all that repetition can lead to injuries. So a minimalist shoe may reduce the amount of that impact over time while also allowing you to build strength in all those different muscles and joints in the foot."

Opportunities are also expected around lighter versions of traditional neutral/cushioning models. At the same time, vendors don't expect any backlash against traditional running shoes since most runners will want that support and the shoes work for them.

But don't expect the barefoot debate to end any time soon, especially on how minimal a shoe will work for the majority of runners. Ian Adamson, director of product development and education at Newton Running Co., says the human body has not evolved to run barefoot on hard surfaces such as concrete and asphalt. But he believes modern running shoes effect gait in a harmful way and more minimalist styles are healthier. "We believe that a well-designed shoe should allow for you to run as if you are barefoot, in other words allow your natural running gait, and provide protection from the external environment – cold, heat, hard surfaces, etc. Minimalist shoes can do this to some extent."

Still, shifting to running barefoot isn't easy as being shod. Accordingly, being shod can weaken connective tissue and structure. "Runner's today, by and large, have deconditioned their feet over years or decades and need to strengthen them to withstand the forces of barefoot running," Adamson says. "Ultimately a runner who takes the time to condition themselves for barefoot running will have much stronger and healthier feet and more protective running form."

But some believe only the most agile athletes with perfect midfoot-to-forefoot form can withstand minimalist shoes. Stress fractures and other injuries have been occurring as runners try leaner, barefoot-inspired footwear. While some say this is only because people are rushing the switch from traditional running shoes, others see it as evidence that barefoot running is only suitable for certain body types and ultimately a more minimal opportunity. But that also opens up the opportunity around lightweight.

"I honestly don't think Barefoot is the answer to everyone's running woes," says Dave Jewell, footwear category manager, Zoot Footwear. "What I do think is that it will cause people to look at what they are buying. The greatest clinic I ever sat through that guided my running shoe theory is this plain statement from Rick Vandertie of Movin Shoes San Diego: 'You want to run in the least amount of shoe you can get away with.' I think the Barefoot trend is going to cause people to say 'I don't need all that stuff in my shoe.'"

"If anything, the current Barefoot/minimalism debate is perhaps going to speed up that discovery process," says Rod Foley, director of marketing running footwear, Mizuno. "The lasting effects of some of the more subtle contentions of barefoot/minimalism activists (e.g. running shoes should have lower heel/forefoot offsets) will likely sort themselves out after some of the product built specifically to address these contentions has a chance to cycle through the running population."



MERRILL

# MERRELL MOVES INTO BAREFOOT

By Thomas J. Ryan

Through a partnership with Vibram, Merrell will enter the barefoot category for spring 2011. The two are collaborating on an exclusive outsole design that aids in multi-directional movement and adaptability.

"We look at this category and the excitement around it in the way it provides a choice for the consumer and we feel that it's a perfect Merrell category," said Jim Zwiers, president of Wolverine World Wide's Outdoor Group.

Zwiers said that while Vibram has had success with Vibram Five Fingers, Merrell will bring the barefoot opportunity to market in a more commercial way for a broader appeal. He also said Merrell has been good about designing shoes that are capable for a lot of different purposes.

"We may design a Moab and call it a multi-sport shoe but we know that some consumers will trail run in it and others will use it for a variety of purposes – both outdoor and urban," Zwiers adds, "they find their way. And what barefoot is really offering that consumer is a choice. It's putting a product out there that is truly minimalist and some may use it to truly train in, some might do yoga in them, some might grocery shop."

As such, the tagline to the barefoot collection is "Let Your Feet Lead You." It includes a trail running option as well as multi-sport styles.

Tony Post, president and CEO of Vibram USA, says the partnership extends the benefits of barefoot alternatives in the outdoors. "For feet to



Jim Zwiers

be healthy, we believe they need to be stimulated and exercised, which will in turn improve the body's balance and agility."

While the line will aim at run specialty and bring the barefoot opportunity to outdoor specialty, Zwiers believes the story has broad appeal. "Not only are the shoes high performance but they look amazing. I think we'll be surprised at the channels that want to pick up this product because of

the strong aesthetic and the strong lifestyle appeal."

And while Merrell has explored toning, it's not necessarily right for the brand, Zwiers says. Barefoot is more closely aligned to Merrell's sensibility. "It gets them outdoors, gets them active, gets them feeling the ground and the earth and their environment around them and we think it will encourage much more outdoor participation, so we like that angle a lot better."

# I AM PSR



## ROBYN GOBY, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION FLEET FEET, INC.

**WERE YOU ALWAYS INTO RUNNING?** I was a runner beginning in elementary school because I could beat all the boys in the 100 meters. That was fun!

**PROUDEST ATHLETIC MOMENT?** Finishing 5th in the 400 meters in the NCAA Division III Outdoor Championships as a senior at Brandeis University. It was a personal record and it's nice when you get a personal record during your most important race. Plus I made my coach, Mark Reytblat, proud and coaches work so hard for so little. It was his race just as much as mine.

**YOUR CHILDHOOD DREAM:** To perform on Broadway.

**FIRST REAL JOB?** Customer Service at New Balance. Does anybody really know how hard those jobs in customer service are? I only lasted a year.

**WHEN AND WHY DID YOU JOIN FLEET FEET?** My first job with Fleet Feet Sports was working part time on the floor at a store on the East Coast in 1993. I met Tom Raynor and J.D. Denton when Tom purchased Fleet Feet, Inc. and Tom actually offered me a job (after a month long interview in Sacramento). I believed in what they were doing and it was such a huge opportunity to work with both of them. I will never forget their giving me a chance.

**BIGGEST MENTORS?** Tom and J.D. taught me an incredible amount early on, from buying to inventory management to staffing. There was some serious on-the-job training. Jeff Phillips, the current President of Fleet Feet, Inc., has taught me a lot about business but even more as a person. He's taught me how to make smart decisions and what's important and what's not important. He always takes the high road. He and Tom have created a great culture in this building. It's a great place to be.

**MOST IMPORTANT THING LEARNED OVER THE YEARS:** Things don't always go exactly as you plan but it usually works out in the end.

**HOW HAS FEET FLEET EVOLVED SINCE THE EARLY DAYS?** We've always focused on finding the right people and not just opening another location. Our owners are the faces and personalities of the stores. They've always been about supporting our local communities, creating store cultures that focus on inclusiveness, and establishing a welcoming environment. But we're a bigger company so we're much better now at supporting our stores and creating initiatives to make the owner's life easier. Running a store is really hard!

**DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN TWO WORDS:** High Energy

**FAVORITE BOOK:** Time and Again, Jack Finney

**FAVORITE MOVIE:** Fried Green Tomatoes

**FAVORITE VACATION SPOT:** Any place with a pool and a lot of guacamole.

**FAVORITE SPORT & TEAM:** All NFL football

**FAVORITE HOBBY:** Piano

**WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR LEGACY TO BE?** Professionally, that I supported the people around me and was a good person to work with.

**FAVORITE QUOTE:** "It's always something." – Gilda Radner

pushing the limit

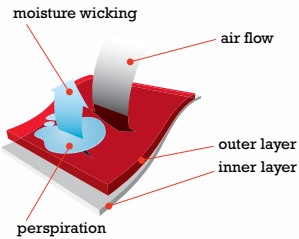
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