Business Week
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Jack Wolfskin adds new sole units to sports footwear range

24 July 2006

German outdoor specialist Jack Wolfskin will introduce two new sole units developed for hiking footwear and outdoor sandals at Outdoor Retailer's Summer Market.

The Active Trail and the Dos Tierras soles deliver cushioning at a low intrinsic weight. The core component of these soles is the Motion Guide, which is integrated into the sole to provide improved stability. The Motion Guide is a 3D shaped, 'skeleton' structured TPU (thermoplastic polyurethane) element implanted between the outsole and midsole. This guides the natural biomechanical movement of the foot without significantly adding to the weight and stabilises the strike and roll-off phases.

The Active Trail hiking sole also benefits from a light and flexible rubber compound outsole unit that offers optimised traction and grip, durability and comfort. The anatomically pre-shaped midsole provides cushioning and features an integrated shock absorbing element in the heel section. This is enhanced by a removable footbed, which incorporates an additional shock pad in the heel region. The footbed features an anti-bacterial circuliner plus lining that limits the formation of unpleasant odours.

Three of the company's models for the summer 2007 collection feature the Active Trail sole while the Dos Tierras sole will be featured in four new models of outdoor sandals designed for both water and land-based activities.

Sales figures up at Oakley in Q2

24 July 2006

Performance apparel, footwear and accessories company Oakley, Inc. has posted improved financial results for the second quarter ended June 30. Second quarter net sales increased by 19.4%, to a quarterly record of $203.6 million compared with $170.5 million in the same period of 2005.

Net sales of Oakley optics totalled $158.5 million in the second quarter, an increase of 20.9% compared with $131.1 million in the same period of 2005. This growth was driven by the successful launch of its first women's eyewear collection; incremental sales from the acquisition of Oliver Peoples and OSA; and strong contribution from the prescription eyewear business.

Second quarter apparel, footwear and accessories net sales of $30.5 million represented an increase of 2.5% compared with net sales of $29.8 million in the second quarter of 2005.

As a result of strong sales growth in the second quarter, the company increased its 2006 net sales growth guidance to approximately 13% from its previously stated expectation of at least 10%.

Lotto turns its attention to tennis

24 July 2006

Having seen three of this year's World Cup winners wearing Lotto football boots, the Italian footwear and technical clothing company is now focusing on its tennis business.

The company recently signed a sponsorship deal with Spanish tennis player Juan Carlos Ferrero, ranked 27th in the ATP ratings. He will be wearing Lotto footwear, apparel and accessories in all his tournaments and will also contribute to the development of performance products.

Mr Ferrero has enjoyed world-wide success: a dominating figure at the Davis Cup in 2000; victory at the Dubai, Estoril, Barcelona and Rome Tournaments in 2001; winner in Hong Kong and Montecarlo in 2002; 2003 winner at Roland Garros; a finalist at the 2003 US Open and, in the same year, number one ranking from ATP.

The company has also become the Official Technical Sponsor of the Juan Carlos Ferrero Equelite Tennis Academy, a tennis school for young tennis players. The sponsorship deal, which will run until 2009, will supply footwear, apparel and accessories for all of the school's instructors.

The company will also be the Official Technical Sponsor at the Valencia ATP Tournament in April 2007 and will supply staff, referees, linesmen and ball boys with products for the next three years.

Tanning and textile belts boost Albany International Q2 results

24 July 2006

Custom-designed paper machine fabrics and process belts provider Albany International Corp. has reported

higher sales for the second quarter period ended June 30.

Net sales increased $14.2 million, or 5.7%, compared with the same period in 2005. Excluding the effect of changes in currency translation rates, net sales increased 4.6%.

Full-year net sales increased $24.4 million, or 5%, compared with the same period last year. Excluding the effect of changes in currency translation rates, net sales increased 5.6%.

Second quarter Applied Technologies net sales increased 9.5%, benefiting from strong performances in PrimaLoft, Engineered Fabrics, and industrial belts for tannery, textile, and corrugator applications (Albany Industrial Process Belts).

Eschler and T.M.F. to highlight new products at Eurobike 2006

24 July 2006

Swiss fabric manufacturer Christian Eschler and Italian shorts pad specialist T.M.F will exhibit together again at Eurobike, Friedrichshafen on August 31- September 3.

One new product to be highlighted for winter 2007 is Gamex Compact Thermo, an enhancement of Gamex Compact, which offers all the proven qualities of its predecessor as well as being brushed on the inner surface.

After its success in 2005 with 'Bodymapping', which came away with one of the Eurobike awards, Eschler hopes to be successful again this year with a functional Gamex Compact Thermo jacket for colder temperatures and cycling shorts with the latest T.M.F. padded inserts.

Textile manufacture increases in euro area in May

24 July 2006

The euro area industrial new orders index increased by 2.3% in May compared with April. The index decreased by 0.8% in April and 1.3% in March. EU25 new orders rose by 1.5% in May, after remaining stable in April and falling by 1.1% in March.

In May, manufacturing of textiles and textile products rose by 3% in the euro area compared with April and by 2.9% in the EU25. Chemicals and chemical products grew by 1.8% and 0.9% respectively. Machinery and equipment dropped by 0.6% and 0.3% respectively.

Year-on-year, textiles and textile products gained 8.1% in the euro area and 6.9% in the EU25. Manufacturing of machinery and equipment rose by 19.2% and 17.8% respectively and chemicals and chemical products increased by 11.5% and 11.3%.

Nocona to rebuild headquarters following fire

24 July 2006

American baseball, softball and football equipment supplier Nocona Athletic Goods Company has decided to rent 20,000 square feet of the former Nocona Boot Factory and it is hoped that full-time production in the temporary facility will begin soon. A new facility will be built at the site that was burnt down on July 18.

The company stated that no one was injured in the fire and all employees will remain on the staff and continue to be paid their full wages during the transition period.

The fire is estimated to have caused $5 million in damage and fire officials are investigating the cause. Employees were able to save some of the memorabilia, corporate files and computer equipment.

The company has set up a temporary office in Nocona, where the day- to-day business operations are continuing. Other Nokona facilities have stepped up production and will continue to provide product.

JETRO launches business support centre in India

24 July 2006

Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Kamal Nath has inaugurated the Japan External Trade Organisation's (JETRO) Business Support Centre in India. He said that the BSCI will help Japanese SMEs by providing them with rental office space, free consultation from experienced advisors and access to appropriate information on industrial structures, market shares and business practices in India. It will provide information on regulations and incentives from central and state governments and on procedural requirements for establishing a business, such as company registration and tax and labour procedures. It will also offer SMEs help in finding a location for office or manufacturing bases using a nationwide network of real estate companies.

The minister expressed the hope that an increasing number of Japanese SMEs would find opportunities in the Indian market and noted areas such as chemicals, textiles, R&D, biotechnology and food processing as key industries.

Bangladesh and Chile to improve trade relations

24 July 2006

Bangladesh's commerce minister Hafizuddin Ahmed and visiting Chilean vice minister of economy and executive vice president of foreign investment Carlos Eduardo Mena have agreed to form a bilateral economic committee to boost trade and investment between the two nations. The agreement was reached during a meeting held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on July 23.

Mr Ahmed said that Bangladeshi entrepreneurs are lagging behind in Chile and that the agreement would help the country to export items such as ready made garments, leather and leather products and pharmaceuticals.

Bangladesh currently exports a small number of items, including woven garments, knitwear, jute yarn and twine, leather and leather footwear to Chile. In fiscal 2004-05, Bangladesh's exports to Chile totalled $2.79 million against an import total of $11.72 million.

Texhong acquires yarn and fabric manufacturer Yizheng Daming

24 July 2006

Chinese core-spun cotton textile manufacturer Texhong Textile Group Limited has acquired Yizheng Chemical Fibre Changzhou Daming Company for yuan 98,577,901 ($12,345,230) to bolster its yarn and fabric production capacity by approximately 16.8% and 14.4% respectively.

Yizheng Daming is principally engaged in the manufacture and sale of yarn, garment and bedroom products and has a total production capacity of approximately 67,000 spindles and 104 air-jet looms.

Upon completion of the acquisition, Texhong's production capacity will be increased to 467,000 spindles and 826 air-jet looms, which will further enhance its economies of scale and increase its operating efficiencies.

Sara Lee apparel spin-off to generate $2.4 billion

24 July 2006

The board of directors at global manufacturer of brand-name products Sara Lee Corporation has approved the capital structure for the planned tax-free spin-off of its apparel business into a separate, publicly traded company called Hanesbrands Inc.

Hanesbrands will borrow $2.6 billion to establish the enterprise as a stand-alone, independent company. In connection with the spin-off, Sara Lee will receive a one-time payment of $2.4 billion from Hanesbrands.

Sara Lee anticipates completing the spin-off in early September, subject to market conditions and regulatory approvals.

Hanesbrands designs, manufactures, sources and markets apparel essentials, including T-shirts, underwear, socks, hosiery, casualwear and activewear.

Record Q2 revenues and earnings at VF

25 July 2006

US-based branded lifestyle apparel company VF Corporation has published record results for the second quarter of 2006.

Revenues rose by 8% to $1,566.8 million compared with $1,452.1 million in the second quarter of 2005, fuelled by growth across its outdoor, jeanswear, imagewear and sportswear divisions. Net income in the current quarter increased to $99 million compared with $96.7 million in the prior year's quarter, which benefited from $7.7 million in special items.

For the first six months of 2006, revenues were up 7% to $3,232.6 million from $3,034.3 million in the 2005 period and income rose 7% to $227.2 million from $211.4 million.

The outdoor division enjoyed another quarter of double-digit growth, with total revenues up 24% to $371 million, with strong gains both domestically and internationally. The North Face brand continued its momentum in the quarter with a revenue increase of 16%, while Vans, JanSport, Reef and Kipling brands each increased revenues by in excess of 20% in the quarter.

Total revenues for the sportswear division, which includes the Nautica and John Varvatos brands as well as the Kipling brand in North America, increased 5% in the quarter, with each brand achieving higher revenues. The Nautica brand men's sportswear business continued to perform well despite recent department store consolidation, and the company is looking forward to the initial test of its new women's sportswear line in the autumn.

Fevest 35% bigger this year

25 July 2006

The 14th edition of the Brazilian Underwear Fashion Fair (Fevest) will be held in Novo Friburgo, Brazil on August 8-11, and is expecting 200 exhibitors and 20,000 visitors to attend.

This year the trade show will be 35% bigger than last

year and plans to generate some $11.5 million in turnover.

As well as the regular stalls, the fair will support a series of parallel events such as the ‘Tendencies Salon’, which will present the latest trends in lingerie fashion. There will also be twelve fashion shows, three each day, and an exhibit documenting the history of lingerie since the seventeenth century.

Kemira increases formic acid capacity in Oulu

25 July 2006

Finland-based formic acid and derivatives producer Kemira is to invest €10 million at its Oulu base. Kemira's total production capacity will be increased by 25,000 tons per annum to over 100,000. The expansion will take place in the present formic acid units and will involve technological improvements and energy savings. The new capacity will come on-stream by the end of 2007.

The main markets of formic acid are the leather, textile, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and agriculture industries. In addition to Oulu, the company also has production sites in Tiel, the Netherlands and in Barcelona, Spain.

Men demand increased freshness

25 July 2006

A report, commissioned by US-based Arch Chemicals, Inc., which manufactures anti-odour textile treatment Purista, claims that a higher percentage of men than women are willing to pay a premium for clothing and textiles treated for long-lasting freshness.

The survey of 2,000 US adults aged 18 to 64 revealed that 81% of adults lack awareness that reshness-enhancing treatments for clothing and textiles are available, yet 48% - including 51% of male consumers reported that, given the opportunity, they would be willing to pay more for clothing and textiles manufactured with freshness-enhancing treatments.

The study found that the freshness-treated garments men would be most interested in purchasing are socks (44%), shirts and tops (44%) and pants and slacks (42%).

Among female respondents, 45% reported they would be willing to pay more for treated versus untreated clothing and textiles, and expressed the strongest purchasing preference toward freshness-treated bed linens (60%), domestic towels (54%) and shirts and tops (48%).

First OutDoor Industry Award at Friedrichshafen

25 July 2006

The presentation ceremony for the first ever OutDoor Industry Award took place at the OutDoor trade fair in Friedrichshafen, Germany, on July 23.

153 entries from 21 different nations were submitted for the competition, dedicated to promoting outstanding design in the outdoor sector. An international jury of experts presented a total of 34 awards, including one gold and six silver awards, for outstanding design achievements.

The competition categories consisted of apparel, shoes, backpacks/travel luggage, mountaineering equipment, camping equipment, sleeping bags, water sports and accessories.

The gold was awarded to Haglöfs Scandinavia AB (Sweden) for its Oz Pullover, a Gore-Tex Paclite pullover, whose innovative cut is said to reduce the number of seams to a minimum. The jury described it as, “The ultimate lightweight rain protection — of truly minimal weight. No other waterproof, breathable jacket is lighter or easier to pack.”

The silver awards were allocated as follows: the SynMat 7 sleeping pad, manufactured by Exped AG (Switzerland) for its heat insulation properties and low weight; the LIV down sweater by Klättermusen Ab (Sweden) which was described as well cut, easy to pack and excellent in terms of thermal performance; the Corsa Nanotech ice pick by C.A.M.P. spa (Italy) which is said to be ultralight; the Tough Skin sleeping pad by Cascade Designs (Ireland) with its rugged underside and interior consisting of two types of rubber. The lower part consists of closed cell foam, which is resistant to damage by thorns and sharp stones. The upper layer consists of a light, open cell foam which fills up with air; the 4477 + 4478 Viking Lady backpack from Bergans of Fritid AS (Norway), a heavy-duty ladies’ trekking backpack; and the Laser Competition tent, made by Terra Nova Equipment Ltd. (England), which weighs less than a kilogramme.

Wilson launches new baseball glove

25 July 2006

Sporting goods manufacturer Wilson has released the A2K baseball glove, the company's first major product line extension to its A2000 series since its introduction in 1957.

Prominent baseball figures such as the Mets' David Wright and the Red Sox's Curt Schilling have already put the A2K into play with apparently positive results.

The leather used for the A2K is hand-chosen from the

top 5% of Wilson Pro-Stock hides and, according to Major League Baseball third baseman for the New York Mets David Wright, the leather is strong enough to maintain the desired shape but soft enough to feel comfortable.

Inside the A2K is a micro-perforated, full-grain leather lining that conforms to the player's hand and wicks moisture away for added comfort and control. On the back of the wrist, perspiration is managed by Dri-Lex lining, a breathable lining which transfers moisture from the skin.

The Pro-Stock Select leather gives the product uniform thickness and density, which is said to deliver low-rebound performance, optimal weight, extended durability and pocket stability.

Kraton expands European operations

25 July 2006

Performance polymer producer Kraton Polymers LLC plans to increase its production capacity for unhydrogenated styrenic block copolymers (USBCs) at its European plants. This 20 kilotons per annum increase comes in response to rising demand from customers in a variety of global markets and is expected to come online by April 2007.

SBCs are highly engineered synthetic elastomers, which enhance the performance of products through greater flexibility, resilience, strength, durability and processability. Applications include labels and footwear products.

National Institute of Fashion Technology Bill passed

25 July 2006

India’s National Institute of Fashion Technology Bill 2006 has been enacted. The act aims at nurturing and promoting excellence in fashion technology. Its object is to grant statutory status to the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), which was set up by the Centre under the Ministry of Textiles in 1986.

NIFT is fully funded and supported by the government as a national-level institute for design, management and technology to train professionals to face the challenges of the global market in promoting India’s exports in textiles, garments, lifestyle products and other fashion goods.

The Institute is already running full-time diploma programmes in fashion design, garment manufacturing technology, apparel marketing and merchandising, accessory design, leather garment design and technology, knitwear design and technology, textile design and development and fashion communication through seven centres located in New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Gandhinagar and Bangalore.

In 2003, its academic programmes were restructured to bring them in line with technical education programmes offered by other professional institutions with international benchmarking.

BASF increases capacity its 2-Mercaptoethanol

25 July 2006

German chemical company BASF is to increase production capacity for 2-Mercaptoethanol (2-ME) at its Verbund site in Ludwigshafen by more than 40% by the end of August, raising the company's annual capacity to more than 10,000 metric tons.

The expansion comes in response to steadily increasing global demand, and significant merchant market shortages in the recent past. 2-ME has applications within PVC, agro chemicals, oil field chemicals, paper coatings, and fibres.

Eastman to sell Arkansas operations

25 July 2006

US-based chemicals, fibres and plastics manufacturer Eastman Chemical Company has entered into a definitive agreement with Viceroy Acquisition Corporation for the sale of its Arkansas-based wholly-owned subsidiary, Eastman SE, Inc., which includes Eastman's Batesville, Ark., manufacturing facility and its related assets and product lines. The purchase price is $75 million. Subject to regulatory approval and customary conditions, the sale is expected to close in fourth quarter 2006.

Eastman SE manufactures specialty organic chemicals products for the company's performance chemicals and intermediates segment, which is part of the chemicals and fibres business group. The facility has approximately 408 employees and also manufactures and markets bio-diesel fuels.

Nahar's net profit jumps 35.34% in Q1

25 July 2006

India's Nahar Industrial Enterprises Ltd., which has interests in spinning, weaving, fabric, garments and sugar has recorded a 35.34% net profit increase, from Rs14.25 crore ($3.04 million) in the first quarter of fiscal 2005-06 to Rs19.29 crore during the first quarter of fiscal 2006-07.

The company attributes the increase to better planning, forward and backward integration of the textile units and better realisation of value addition and working capital management.

The company has plans for expansion in the textile division with total capital outlay exceeding Rs800 crore to enhance spinning, weaving and fabric processing facilities and retail stores.

Under Armour signs new international distribution agreements

25 July 2006

Branded apparel, footwear and accessories company Under Armour, Inc. has signed a series of agreements with international agents and distributors to manage the distribution of Under Armour products on a global level.

The new agents with distribution rights are: Equation Performance in France and Andorra; Main Sport in Germany and Austria; Sportbox SRL in Italy; Fiddes Enterprises in Australia/Pacific Islands; SGA Vanneste in Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands; and MnO International in Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia.

Dickies launches new line of women's workwear

26 July 2006

According to US-based workwear manufacturer Dickies, more than 50% of working women are now work in non-office jobs in fields such as transportation, construction and manufacturing. To cater for these women, Dickies has introduced a new line of professional workwear specially designed for women who need tough, durable work trousers, shirts, shorts and carpenter jeans. Features of the new range include industrial-laundry strength fabric and trim, racheting zipper sliders and reinforced pockets, waistbands and seams which mean clothes will last longer and be more effective.

AAFA disappointed by collapse of talks

26 July 2006

According to a statement, the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) is "extremely disappointed" at the collapse of the Doha Round of World Trade Organisation talks in Geneva, but expressed the hope that talks can eventually be restarted and a meaningful agreement can still be reached.

AAFA President & CEO Kevin Burke said that sticking to its objectives which are "absolutely critical to complete a comprehensive and ambitious agreement that would create real market openings and provide meaningful opportunities for US apparel, footwear and textile companies. We will do everything possible to work toward this end".

Mr Burke pointed out that a lack of flexibility by several of the United States' key negotiating partners contributed to the current stalemate which led to the suspension of the talks.

T3 trend launched at BIFF & BIL

26 July 2006

The Bangkok International Fashion Fair and Bangkok International Leather Fair 2006 (BIFF&BIL) is to return to the Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre from September 27 – October 1.

The joint fair will be the launch pad for Thai Tex Trend's latest trend forecast for the autumn/winter 2007/2008 season together with Thai Cluster's spring/summer 2007 collection.

The Thai Tex Trend (T3) Forum will consist of twelve textile manufacturers, each producing different textiles, such as high-fashion knitted fabrics, wrinkle-free fabrics and CottaZilk. The autumn/winter 2007/2008 T3 Collection, styled by Italian specialist Mitor Textile Consultancy will reflect the theme of 'A New World of Fabulous Fashion.'

The textiles developed from the T3 project are made up into wearable garments by manufacturers from the Thai Cluster, the end-of-stream textile-to-garment project. Both T3 and Thai Cluster projects are supervised and guided by Mitor Textile Consultancy in the whole process from conceptualisation and visualisation to materialisation and marketing management.

Silicann Technologies launches PCS-II perceptive colour sensor

26 July 2006

German-based company Silicann Technologies has launched a new USB-connected perceptive colour sensor, called PCS-II, with a spectral sensitivity which is said to model that of the human eye, designed for high-speed industrial control and measurement applications.

The sensor offers industrial colour recognition for up to 255 user-defined colours and operational modes include colour control, colour recognition, colour classification and colour measurement. Illumination is provided by a white LED with adjustable brightness. Relative accuracy

(according to a sampled reference colour) is better than DE=0.5.

Its integrated photodetector uses filter curves that correspond to visual responses. Internal signals are processed in the sensor's controller, mimicking human colour perception. PCS-II provides a way to accurately simulate the 'visual impression' of the human eye in high-speed (kHz) industrial colour control. Additionally, special functions such as colour grouping, ambient light suppression for luminous objects or master-slave operation allow applications that have previously proved problematic.

Applications include colour sensing emitted light from LEDs, LCD displays and other displays and monitors, as well as sensing reflected light from paint, print, textiles and plastics. Other applications include colour sorting or control in chemicals.

Indian textile industry aims for greater market share

26 July 2006

At a recent conference, Minister for Textiles Shri Shankersinh Vaghela said that the Indian textile industry is expecting a greater share in global markets in the near future.

He pointed out that there has been resurgence and increased investment in the textile sector in the post-quota period. Mr Vaghela briefed participants about the current global scenario, the progress in India's textiles exports and the future vision for attaining the textile export target of $50 billion by year 2010.

Minister for Agriculture, Shri Sharad Pawar said the government has introduced a number of initiatives, such as the Technology Mission on Cotton, which has resulted in increased productivity and quality for the cotton industry. He said that, as India's textile exports are predominantly cotton based, the Indian textiles industry derives its comparative advantage from abundant availability of home-grown cotton.

Union Minister for commerce and industry Shri Kamal Nath called upon state governments to attract investment in the textiles sector by providing a more investor friendly environment in their respective areas. He said that amongst the manufacturing sectors, the textile sector generates the maximum employment with the least investment. However, labour representatives emphasised the need for flexibility in labour laws and reduction in power and transaction costs, pointing out that power costs in India are much higher than in competing countries.

Wellman rescues losses

26 July 2006

US-based polyester products manufacturer Wellman, Inc. has reported a net loss of $15.3 million for the quarter ended June 30. This compares with a net loss of $25.4 million for the same period in 2005. For the first six months of 2006, Wellman reported a net loss of $34.7 million compared with a net loss of $17.8 million for the same period in 2005.

Tom Duff, Wellman's chairman and CEO said that demand for PET resins continued to increase in the second quarter and that the company achieved record shipments and sales of Permaclear solid stated PET resin during the period, utilising the additional PET resin capacity (300 million pounds annually) at the Pearl River facility, as of June 1. He added that, while operating results improved from the first quarter, the company did not achieve acceptable margins as its chemical raw material costs increased at a faster rate than it was able to implement selling price increases.

Avery Dennison reports Q2 earnings

26 July 2006

US-based information management, brand identification and solution-enabling products company Avery Dennison Corporation has reported net income of $112 million in the second quarter compared with $89.4 million in the prior year. Second quarter results included an after-tax benefit of $15.6 million related to the tax effect of a divestiture that partially offset previously recognised losses from discontinued operations.

Net sales for the second quarter were $1.41 billion, approximately even with the same quarter last year. Organic sales growth, which excludes the impact of acquisitions, divestitures and foreign currency translation, was 2%. This increase was attributable to both unit volume growth and positive changes in pricing and product mix.

Admet expands manufacturing base

26 July 2006

US-based integrated materials testing systems company Admet Inc. is expanding in Central and South America and the Caribbean. The company, which sells direct and through qualified calibrators and manufacturer representatives, already has substantial sales in Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua and the Caribbean and is now seeking calibrator partners to further expand its market reach.

The company manufactures universal testing machines that are used to perform a range of materials characterisations using tensile, compression, shear and bend tests. Its machines are used to test plastics, rubber and textiles, as well as bio and biomechanical materials and products.

Reebok teams with Scarlett Johansson

26 July 2006

Reebok has signed a multi-year partnership with actress Scarlett Johansson. The young actress has partnered with the brand to co-create Scarlett "Hearts" Rbk, an athletic-inspired footwear and apparel collection that will debut in spring 2007.

Callaway Golf posts 6% increase in sales

27 July 2006

Callaway Golf Company has published its financial results for the second quarter ended June 30.

Net sales for the quarter were $341.8 million, an increase of 6% compared with $323.1 million for the same period in 2005. Gross profit was $140.1 million (41% of net sales), a decrease of $6.6 million from $146.7 million (45% of net sales) for the second quarter of 2005.

For the six-month period ended June 30, net sales totalled $644.3 million, an increase of 3.3% compared with $623 million for the same period in 2005.

Gross profit was $271.6 million (42% of net sales), a decrease of $7.7 million from $279.3 million (45% of net sales) for the first half of 2005.

DuPont posts positive Q2 earnings

27 July 2006

US-based chemical company DuPont has reported its financial results for the second quarter ended June 30.

Consolidated net income for the period was $975 million compared with second quarter 2005 net income of $1,015 million. Second quarter 2006 net income reflects higher local selling prices across all regions, lower fixed costs, and the impact of higher energy and ingredient costs.

Consolidated net sales for the second quarter were $7.4 billion versus $7.5 billion last year. On a comparable business basis, sales were up 2%. For the quarter, total company volumes increased 1%, reflecting increases in all regions except the United States.

For the Coatings & Colour Technologies sector, second quarter sales were $1.6 billion, up 2%, reflecting higher local prices in all product lines. The Performance Materials sector achieved second quarter sales of $1.7 billion, an increase of 6% on a comparable business basis. Sales increased in all regions and volume growth was strong in most market segments.

Decline in footwear sales leads to losses at Timberland

27 July 2006

Outdoor footwear, apparel and accessories company The Timberland Company has reported a second quarter net loss of $13. These results include pre-tax costs of $0.4 million related to the company's establishment of a European finance shared service centre and the final closure of its Puerto Rico manufacturing facility.

Second quarter revenue decreased 5.7% to $226.6 million as gains in international markets and growth in US casual, outdoor, and industrial categories were offset by anticipated declines in US boots and children's sales. Foreign exchange rate changes reduced second quarter revenues by $1.3 million, or 0.6%.

International revenue increased 1.1%, or 2.3% on a constant dollar basis, supported by growth in southern Europe, distributor markets, Canada and Japan. US revenues decreased 10.9%, primarily due to declines in boots and children's sales, which offset benefits from the addition of the SmartWool brand to the company's product portfolio and strong growth in key expansion categories such as Timberland PRO series footwear and men's casual footwear and apparel.

Second quarter results reflect global gains in apparel and accessories revenue, which offset anticipated declines in footwear revenue. Apparel and accessories revenue increased 20% to $71.5 million supported by growth in Timberland apparel sales globally and the addition of SmartWool. Global footwear revenues fell 15.1% to $150.8 million as strong gains in Timberland PRO series and men's casual footwear partially offset declines in boots and children's.

Ashworth releases 'The Ashworth Perfect Foursome'

27 July 2006

Designer of golf-inspired lifestyle sportswear Ashworth, Inc. is to release four new products for spring 2007. The Ashworth Perfect Foursome will be presented to the golf industry, with first product deliveries arriving in stores by December.

The new 2881M Ez Tech performance shirt is 100% cotton, breathable, offers moisture wicking and resists shrinkage, wrinkling, pilling and colour fading.

The 5593N – Nano_Tex Doeskin Windshirt is said to offer improved stain resistance, water repellency and moisture wicking and its performance properties do not wash out.

The new 3028 Classic Golf Knit shirt is 100% cotton, upgraded to a soft fine-gauge pique with improved breathability for humid conditions.

The AWS 0243 Ottoman Knit Shirt is the base layer in Ashworth's unique AWS 3-layer performance system. The ultra light knit specialises in body moisture management and is said to keep the skin dry and comfortable.

Positive first half results at Hugo Boss

27 July 2006

German-based clothing, sportswear and cosmetics company Hugo Boss Group sales rose by 14% to €712 million in the first six months of 2006 compared with sales of €624 million in the first half of 2005. On a currency-adjusted basis, sales increased by 13%.

In Germany, first half sales increased by 8% to €164 million compared with €152 million in 2005, despite another slight fall in the German fashion market. In the rest of Europe, sales rose by 16% to €327 million from €282 the previous year.

An upward trend was also seen in the USA, where sales in the first half rose 22% in euros (17% in local currency) from €78 million in the same period in 2005 to €96 million.

Boss Womenswear generated sales of €73 million in this period, an increase of 73% compared with €42 million in the prior year period. This was partly attributed to the successful launch of its Orange Womenswear. Net income for the Womenswear segment rose to €2.5 million compared with €0.6 million.

Pre-tax earnings rose by 18% to €79 million in the first half from €67 million in the same period in 2005 while net income increased by 19% to €54 million compared with €46 million the previous year.

Under Armour posts sales increase

27 July 2006

US branded apparel, footwear and accessories company Under Armour, Inc. has posted improved financial results for the second quarter ended June 30.

Net revenues increased 63.3% to $80 million compared with $49 million in the second quarter of 2005. Apparel revenues for its men's, women's, and youth divisions increased 31% to $58 million. Footwear revenues, which consist of football cleats and slides, were recorded for the first time in the second quarter of 2006 and totalled $15.6 million.

Second quarter net income increased 32.5% to $2.4 million compared with $1.8 million in the same period of 2005.

Apparel revenues grew 31% for the quarter following continued strength in the men's and women's business. Growth in men's apparel was driven by the golf, training, running, and compression categories. Revenue growth in the Women's fitness, training, and compression categories also increased.

As a result of the improvement in the the second quarter, the ongoing momentum in its apparel business, and favourable business trends, Under Armour is increasing its outlook for 2006. The company now expects annual net revenues in the range of $400 million to $410 million, a 42% to 46% increase over 2005, and it is now forecasting annual net income in the range of $34 million to $35 million, which represents a 72% to 78% increase from 2005.

Record Q2 results at Sketchers USA

27 July 2006

American footwear designer and developer Sketchers USA, Inc. has reported higher sales for the second quarter ended June 30.

Net sales for the quarter rose 10.7% to $292.2 million compared with $263.9 million in the second quarter of 2005. Net earnings were $17.6 million versus net earnings of $15.9 million in the prior year period.

For the six months ended June 30, net sales were $569.7 million compared with net sales of $510.1 million in the corresponding period in 2005. Net earnings were $34.2 million, compared with net earnings of $26.2 million in the first six months of 2005.

New opportunities for European Industrial Protective Clothing Market

27 July 2006

According to a report by US-based firm Frost & Sullivan, niche products such as chainsaw protective clothing are presenting promising growth opportunities for the industrial protective clothing sector whilst the demand for multi-functional protective clothing is driving sales and harnessing new markets.

The report states that western European markets for industrial protective clothing earned revenues of €1,311 million in 2005 and it predicts an increase to €1,597 million in 2012.

It states that industrial protective clothing that offers higher performance alongside increased comfort and style will drive sales.

However, while European suppliers are increasingly using the Far East as a manufacturing base, they are also being threatened by competition from local companies based within the region.

The company suggests that promoting product features and quality over price will increase the commercial acceptability of products amongst end users. Furthermore, as Eastern Europe emerges as an increasingly important market for European producers—from a production as well as a consumer point of view—companies based in Western Europe will need to identify, develop and secure viable commercial options for producing as well as selling industrial protective clothing in Eastern Europe.

Rayonier reports Q2 earnings and long-term cellulose contracts

27 July 2006

Rayonier, a US-based international company specialising in performance fibres , timber, real estate, has reported its second quarter financial results. Net income for second quarter 2005 was $16.9 million, which included a discontinued operation loss of $24.7 million.

Sales for the second quarter of $312 million were $35 million and $22 million above first quarter 2006 and second quarter of 2005, respectively.

In the performance fibres sector, sales of $166 million and operating income of $16 million were $20 million and $5 million above first quarter, respectively. The results were said to reflect higher prices and volumes partly offset by increased costs. Compared with the second quarter of 2005, sales increased $13 million as a result of higher cellulose specialties volume and prices. However, operating income decreased $3 million as higher raw material and energy costs more than offset increased sales.

The company recently announced that it has secured long term contracts into 2011 with its key customers for nearly 80% of its high-value cellulose specialties production, representing almost two million metric tons and more than $2 billion in revenue at current pricing.

Textile business boosts China Resources Enterprise earnings

27 July 2006

Retail, beverage, food processing, textile and property investment company China Resources Enterprise, Limited has posted increased turnover and profit for the three-month period ended March 31. The group's unaudited consolidated turnover and profit totalled approximately HK$15,377 million ($1.98 billion) and HK$674 million respectively, representing an increase of 26% and 2% over the same quarter of 2005. Core businesses registered a 32% profit growth to HK$556 million with each of them showing overall profitability improvement.

The textile business reported earnings of HK$18m, up 8% as a result of a greater contribution from the spinning and weaving operation. The company's technology upgrade programme has also enhanced product mix towards higher end yarns and fabrics.

Dismissed union leaders reinstated in Nicaragua

27 July 2006

As a result of national and international pressure, six workers who were sacked and two who that resigned from the Istmo Textil plant in Masaya, Nicaragua in April, shortly after forming a union, have been reinstated.

According to International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF) general secretary Neil Kearney, the federation and its affiliate Federación Nacional de Sindicatos Textil, Vestuario, Piel y Calzado made contact with the Korean head company Singsung Tongsang, and sought the involvement of the plant's clients, Gap Inc., Wal-Mart and Target. Other rights' groups also pushed for a resolution.

The ITGLWF also threatened to lodge a formal complaint against the Nicaraguan Labour Ministry, which did not appear to be adhering to regulations for registering the union.

The company reached an agreement with the federation on July 26 for the reinstatement, with back pay, of the six dismissed union leaders and the re-hiring of two leaders who had resigned.

Mr Kearney said, "The ITGLWF will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that good industrial relations are maintained for the benefit of all concerned."

The International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation is a global union federation bringing together 220 affiliated organisations in 110 countries with a combined membership of 10 million workers.

Indian export target $126 billion

28 July 2006

At a meeting between government officials and representatives of the commodity boards covering key export sectors such as chemicals, textiles, sports goods and leather, Indian union minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Kamal Nath urged exporters to increase exports with the hope of hitting the $126 billion mark for this financial year.

If this is achieved, the country's merchandise exports will have doubled in three years – from a level of $63 billion in 2003-04. He assured government support for exporters and said he was confident that exports of $150 billion will be achieved before the target date of 2009. This would increase India's share of world trade by at least 1%.

India's top five export destinations are the USA, the United Arab Emirates, China, Singapore and the UK.

Hanesbrands selects seven new board members

28 July 2006

Following its spin off from Sara Lee, US apparel, activewear and underwear manufacturer Hanesbrands Inc. has selected seven new members to join executive chairman Lee Chaden and CEO Richard Nollas as members on its board of directors.

The new members are Harry Cockrell, director and shareholder of Hong Kong-based Pacific Tiger Group Limited, PTG Investment Holdings Corporation and Pathfinder Investment Holdings Corporation; Charles Coker, former chairman, president and chief executive officer, Sonoco Products Company; Bobby Griffin, president, International Operations, Ryder System, Inc.; James Johnson, vice president, corporate secretary and assistant general counsel, The Boeing Company; J Mulcahy, vice chairman, Energizer Holdings, Inc.; Alice Peterson, founder and president of Syrus Global; and Andrew Schindler, retired chairman, Reynolds American Inc.

Jones Apparel Group posts Q2 decline

28 July 2006

Designer, marketer and wholesaler of branded apparel, footwear and accessories Jones Apparel Group, Inc. reported results for the second quarter ended July 1. Revenues totalled $1,074.1 million versus $1,176.4 million for the second quarter of 2005. The decrease in revenues was primarily attributable to the sale of the Polo Jeans Company business during the first quarter of 2006. Polo Jeans Company contributed $69.3 million in revenues during the prior year comparable period.

Marine accessory sales up 11% in 2005

28 July 2006

The Marine Accessory Sales report indicates that accessory sales were up 11% during 2005 compared with 2004. The results are based on a control group of 77 accessory manufacturers.

Recent data from the National Marine Distributors Association also revealed that sales were up 6% for the nine months ended June 2006. These results were based on a control group of 16 marine distributors.

European Parliament regrets suspension of WTO talks

28 July 2006

The chairman of the European Parliament's International Trade Committee, Enrique Barón has stated that he was disappointed by the suspension of WTO trade talks in Geneva.

He said, "Since the start of the round, we have constantly reaffirmed the need for an ambitious agreement, in line with the initial objectives. As the need for a global framework to relaunch growth and stimulate development in the poorest regions of the globe has never been more urgent, our citizens won't understand how so much effort and resources, both human and financial, could have been deployed to no avail."

Mr Barón said he believes the way negotiations are worked needs to be changed so that positive solutions can be attained. He commented that there should be a parliamentary dimension to the organisation, giving an area for dialogue between representatives of member country parliaments, suggesting that the WTO's Parliamentary Conference, organised by the European Parliament and the Interparliamentary Union, could serve as the basis of a future body for parliamentary dialogue within the WTO.

Columbia Sportswear posts positive Q2 results

28 July 2006

US-based active apparel and footwear producer Columbia Sportswear Company has reported higher sales for the second quarter ended June 30. Net sales totalled $211.6 million, an increase of 13.6% over the $186.2 million reported for the same period in 2005.

Net income decreased 23.8% to $4.8 million from $6.3 million for the same period of 2005. Net income for the second quarter of 2006 included $2 million in after-tax stock-based compensation expense.

Compared with the second quarter of 2005, other international sales increased by 25.2% to $51.1 million, US sales increased by 7.8% to $118.9 million, European sales increased by 14.6% to $29.1 million and Canadian sales increased by 28.9% to $12.5 million.

In the second quarter, sportswear sales increased 9.6% to $112.2 million, footwear sales increased 25.9% to $43.2 million, equipment sales increased 159.3% to $7 million, outerwear sales increased 8% to $43.2 million and accessories sales decreased 11.8% to $6 million.

Deckers Outdoor raises sales guidance

28 July 2006

Footwear company Deckers Outdoor Corporation has reported higher sales for the second quarter ended June 30.

Net sales increased 3.4% to $41.7 million compared with $40.3 million last year, ahead of the company's previous guidance range of $38 million to $40 million.

As anticipated, Teva net sales for the second quarter were $22.8 million compared with $24.8 million for the same period last year. This decrease in the volume of sales was the result of fewer closeout sales, which was partially offset by an increase in full margin sales.

UGG net sales for the second quarter increased 19.2% to $15.9 million compared with $13.3 million for the same period a year ago. Sales were positively impacted by a strong reorder business for the UGG spring line, as well as continued demand for core products.

Simple net sales increased 39.9% to $3 million for the second quarter compared with $2.2 million for the same period last year.

The company has raised its full year sales guidance to a range of $272 million to $278 million compared with its previous expectation of $268 million to $276 million.

Third quarter sales guidance is expected to be between $71 million to $74 million and fourth quarter sales guidance between $103 million to $106 million.

Lectra revenues up in first half 2006

28 July 2006

France-based CAD/CAM equipment and related services for the textiles, leather and industrial fabrics sectors Lectra mixed results for the first six months of 2006.

Whilst second quarter orders for new software licences increased by 6%, new orders for CAD/CAM equipment decreased by 12%. Overall, orders for new software licences and CAD/CAM equipment were down 7% (-€2 million) compared with the second quarter in 2005. However, revenues for the quarter totalled €56.3 million, an increase of 3%.

For the first six months of 2006, orders for new software licences increased by 7%, whilst those for CAD/CAM equipment decreased by 7%. Overall, orders for new software licences and CAD/CAM equipment were down 3% (-€ 1.5 million) relative to the first half of 2005.

Revenues for the six-month period totalled €107.2 million, an increase of 4% compared with the same period in 2005.

European revenues increased 7%, while North American revenues remained stable and Asia-Pacific revenues were down 1%.

DDKS completes its millionth order

28 July 2006

Distribution centre for the Defence Logistics Agency (DLA), Defence Distribution Depot Kuwait (DDKS), Southwest Asia, has shipped more than a million orders to its customers in less than two years, having opened in August 2004.

DDKS's distribution facilities are strategically positioned in Southwest Asia to reduce transportation and customer wait time. To date, DDKS has provided cost avoidance savings of more than $508 million.

Current commodities distributed include repair parts, barrier and construction material, clothing, textiles and tents and tent equipment. DDKS can also consolidate shipments and create containers, and provides other routine logistics support to its military community.

DuPont reaches milestones in Digital Colour Technology

28 July 2006

US-based chemical company DuPont has reached a significant milestone with the sale of its 500th Cyrel Fast system and the launch of the Cromaprint wide format digital printing system and DuPont Artistri 3320 grand format textile printing system.

The company developed the Cyrel Fast, Cromaprint and DuPont Artistri systems for customers who require faster,

more reliable printing with consistent quality and superior colour for use on paper, film and vinyl and all types of fabrics. All three provide or enable on-demand printing and complete system solutions - from colour management to digital workflow to the finished product.

They are also environmentally smart technologies, with no processing solvents to handle, store or recycle And are said to use significantly less water, ink and energy compared with conventional printing systems.

The Cromaprint 22UV fully integrated digital printing system is designed to meet the high volume and high-speed production needs for digital printing onto a wide variety of rigid and flexible surfaces. The recently launched Artistri 3320 digital textile printing system offers 3.3 metre wide roll-to-roll printing and access to new applications for digital printing on textiles. The company's Artistri digital printing systems consist of three main components: digital textile printers, textile inks and colour and control management software. Customers use the systems for applications such as flags and banners, displays, apparel, silk accessories and swimwear.

OutDoor focuses on 'outdoor women'

28 July 2006

The product and service needs of 'outdoor women' was the central theme of the 13th OutDoor show held in Friedrichshafen, Germany on July 23-26.

Some 15,511 trade visitors from 65 nations attended the event, a slight increase compared with 15,137 in 2005. The number of exhibitors increased by 4% to 675 exhibitors, with a 77% foreign contingent.

Special events included the OutDoor Party, a climbing wall, the Tent City with all types and brands, an Outdoor Fashion Show, lectures on current topics and an 'OutDoor Woman' show, organised by the EHI Retail Institute.

The next Outdoor Europe show will be held on July 19-22, 2007.

Barbour introduces new clothing line for children

28 July 2006

UK-based outdoor activity and country sport clothing producer Barbour will present its new children's clothing range at the CLA Game Fair, Hampshire, UK on July 28-30.

The company's new season collection includes a range for youngsters aged between four and 15. Barbour has selected proven favourites from its adult range including the Classic Beaufort, International jacket, Liddesdale Quilt and Polarquilt and produced junior versions, including jackets, caps and scarves.

The company will also present the ladies' Utility jacket in a luxurious 'fur' trim version, and a longer fitting Utility Mac. The Utility jacket is also available this season in a new weather-worked fabric which has the look of worn leather but is a washable fabric composed mainly of cotton.

New additions to the Northumberland shooting clothing range will also be on the stand including the Alpina Cheviot and Ladies Lightweight Cheviot jackets both designed by Lord James Percy.

Dogi invests in elastic fabric plant in Sri Lanka

28 July 2006

Spanish manufacturer of elastic fabric for the underwear, swimwear and the sportswear markets Dogi International Fabrics S.A. is joining with Elastic Fabrics of America (EFA) and Mas Holdings in a $25 million elastic fabric plant in Sri Lanka. The location will be the Asian Apparel & Fabric Technology Park in Thulhiriya.

The technology park specialises in underwear and expects to attract investment of some $100 million for the various stages in the elastic fabric manufacturing and finishing process, with the aim of becoming the new underwear centre for the subcontinent.

CEO of DogiEFA Dhananjaya Rajapaksha believes that the plant has the "global capacity and scope to meet the needs of the world's leading underwear brands". Construction of the factory is to begin in August, and should be in full production by June 2007.

All the elastic fabric used in Sri Lanka is currently imported and Mr Rajapaksha has estimated that by 2008 the plant will be supplying between 20-30% of the country's elastic fabric.