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Gary Allen joins Innovative Designs consulting staff

07 Aug 2006

Dr Gary Allen has joined hunting apparel, swimwear, wind shirts, jackets and sleeping bag manufacturer Innovative Designs, Inc. on its consulting staff. Dr Allen is the founder of Material Innovations, LLC, before which he was vice president of Business Development for Bayer Polymers and vice president of Research for Bayer's Polyurethanes Division.

It is hoped that Dr Allen's background in new product commercialisation will assist the company in identifying new market segments and applications. He will play a role in developing and filing patent applications in new market segments, or for new applications of Insultex.

Perry Ellis launches Gotcha collection

07 Aug 2006

Casual apparel, activewear and swimwear designer Perry Ellis International will debut its first in-house Gotcha collection for spring 2007 at the upcoming Magic trade show in Las Vegas, on August 28-31.

The in-house launch of young men's sportswear includes knits, wovens, walking shorts and swimming trunks with an emphasis on a retro-surf inspired look. Colour combinations include red/black/white and electric blue/black.

Royal TenCate invests in Textiles and Composites sector

07 Aug 2006

In the first half of 2006, Dutch specialty chemical company Royal TenCate's sales rose by 13% to €398 million compared with first half 2005. Net profit increased by 29% to €19.4 million.

Following on from the first quarter, the second quarter continued the positive trend. Sales in the second quarter increased by 18% to €208 million and net profit increased by 26% to €14.2 million, including €3.3 million from the sale of Plasticum.

In the advanced Textiles & Composites sector, sales totalled €150 million, equal with the first half of 2005. There was strong growth in the field of protective fabrics for the American market (Southern Mills).

A major investment activity within this sector relates to the production of protective and outdoor fabrics in the Netherlands. A start has been made on the modernisation and reorganisation of the production process, targeting efficiency improvements and cost reduction.

These developments have been the principal reason for the temporarily increased costs within TenCate Advanced Textiles, which have caused the result to come under pressure. Putting the new pre-treatment line for textile finishing into operation in mid-July was a major operation. The extra costs are linked to the transformation process (logistics, quality), start-up costs and development costs. The new technology is an important step forward and will also have a positive effect on quality, capacity and the reliability of deliveries.

Sales for the Geosynthetics & Grass sector rose by 50% to € 191.6 million in the first half. This increase can be mainly attributed to the acquisition of Polyfelt at the end of 2005. Sales of artificial grass were severely depressed, in part as a result of the sluggish start of the market in the US, where growth of approximately 20% is still expected for the market as a whole. In Europe growth is lower (approximately 10%).

44.6% sales increase at Zumiez in July

07 Aug 2006

Action sports related apparel, equipment and accessories retailer Zumiez Inc. has reported that total net sales for the four-week period ended July 29 increased 44.6% to $19.8 million compared with $13.7 million for the four-week period ended July 30, 2005. The company's comparable store sales increased 8.4% for the four-week period, versus a comparable store sales increase of 12.7% in the year ago period.

The company completed its acquisition of 19 Fast Forward stores on June 24, although these stores are not included in the company's comparable store base.

Gildan reports positive Q3 earnings

07 Aug 2006

Canada-based casual and sportswear company Gildan has reported record third quarter net earnings of US$42.8 million up 25.5% from $34.1 million in the third quarter of 2005. The increase in net earnings was due to

continuing strong growth in unit sales volumes and higher gross margins, partially offset by increased selling, general and administrative and depreciation expenses.

Sales in the third quarter amounted to a record $233.9 million, up 17.6% from $198.9 million in the third quarter of last year. The increase in sales revenues reflected a 15.6% increase in unit sales volumes and the impact of a higher-valued product-mix, partially offset by an approximate 2.5% reduction in unit selling prices compared to last year.

Sales for the nine months ended July 2 totalled $538 million, up 13.7% from the corresponding period of last year, due to an increase of 14.8% in unit sales volumes, partially offset by lower selling prices.

Net earnings for the first nine months amounted to $90 million up 39.3% adjusted net earnings of $64.6 million in the first nine months of 2005, excluding the special charge of $7.8 million after tax incurred in the second quarter of fiscal 2005 for the closure and relocation of the company's Canadian yarn-spinning operations.

Footwear and sportswear lead July sales at Gottschalks

07 Aug 2006

American apparel retailer Gottschalks Inc. has posted a decrease in same store sales of 0.7% for July compared with July 2005. Total sales for the month decreased 0.5% to $43.3 million compared with sales of $43.5 million in July 2005.

For the year-to-date period, same store sales were flat, while total sales increased 0.3% to $296.8 million from $295.7 million for the same period last year.

President and chief executive officer Jim Famalette said that best performing merchandise categories in July were cosmetics, shoes, sportswear and swimwear.

BASF holds talks on bio-inspired materials for the chemical industry

08 Aug 2006

More than 130 scientists from universities in Asia, Europe and the USA met with BASF researchers from August 7-9 at the Institut de Science et d'Ingénierie Supramoléculaires (ISIS) in Strasbourg for the scientific symposium ‘Bio-inspired Materials for the Chemical Industry’. Materials that behave like spider silk or mussel adhesive, structures resembling gecko feet and biominerals, and plastics made from renewable raw materials will be presented.

Many natural systems with complex structures exhibit an astonishingly high level of adaptability, resistance and eco-efficiency. Such observations stimulate the creativity of the chemical industry in developing improved or fundamentally new materials. In these endeavours, interdisciplinary synergies arise between synthetic chemistry, material science and biology.

One of example of how the company has learnt from nature is its response to customers’ demands for stain repellent surfaces that reduce cleaning effort and also contribute to protecting the environment. Looking at natural chemicals, for example from the leaf of a lotus plant, the company was able to identify the necessary structural characteristics for the desired effect. The result was MincorTXTT, a textile coating for fabrics used in making tents, awnings and sunshades.

Leadership changes at Nike

08 Aug 2006

Nike has disclosed management and organisational changes within the company that are set to strengthen alignment of the Nike brand. "We're aligning with our biggest growth opportunities, both geographically in markets such as China, and in core product categories and consumer segments such as basketball and football (soccer)," said Nike Brand president Charlie Denson.

Previously head of US Operations, Gary DeStefano has been promoted to president, Global Operations, with profit and loss responsibility for the brand's four geographic operating regions—the United States, Americas, Asia Pacific, and Europe, Middle East and Africa.

Previously vice president, Global Brand Management, Trevor Edwards has been appointed vice president, Global Brand and Category Management, with added responsibility for consumer and category management, while continuing to lead brand management.

In addition, senior leadership positions have been created for five core product category segments—running, soccer, basketball, men's training and women's fitness—each of which will be headed by a vice president reporting to Mr Edwards. The company expects to fill those positions shortly.

Succeeding Mr DeStefano as head of Nike USA will be Craig Cheek, who joined Nike in 1990 and has held positions of increasing responsibility in the company's US sales and footwear organisations. He was most recently vice president of US Footwear.

Previously vice president, USA Marketing and Brand Management, Joaquin Hidalgo has been appointed as vice president of Global Marketing. In his sixteen years with Nike, Mr Hidalgo has held senior leadership positions in the United States and Americas regions, and has been instrumental in building the company’s global football business.

New organic merino wool from VTOF

08 Aug 2006

Yarn and fabric manufacturer Vermont Organic Fiber Company (VTOF) has introduced its new O~Wool Classic line of organic wool hand knitting yarn, offered in colour-rich hues. This is the first time yarn made with organic wool has been made widely available to the hand knitting market. The worsted-weight O~Wool Classic yarn is made from organic Australian Merino wool and spun at a US mill.

Organic wool is part of the rapidly-growing $160 million US organic fibre industry which grew 44% in 2005, according to the Organic Trade Association 2006 Manufacturer Survey released in May.

For wool to be certified as organic, the US Department of Agriculture requires that the sheep be fed organic feed and forage from the last third of gestation and be raised without the use of synthetic hormones or pesticides (internal or external). In addition, organic livestock producers are required to ensure that they do not exceed the natural carrying capacity of the land on which their animals graze.

VTOF president Matthew Mole said that, with this yarn, "hand knitters can enjoy using organic wool yarn with the knowledge they are supporting organic production and processing both in the US and around the world."

There are 13 new colours available to the nation's 53 million knitters including cornflower, plum, sumac and willow. The yarn is said to give excellent stitch definition and its long staple length helps to prevent pilling.

New emphasis on children's fashion at CIFF

08 Aug 2006

Crown Princess Mary will open the Copenhagen International Fashion Fair (CIFF) on August 10, with a record 1,862 brands on display. Last year's fair attracted 25,383 visitors, and organisers are expecting an even greater turnout for this year's event, which will take place in Copenhagen from August 10-13.

Categories include men's, women's and children's fashion, footwear, bags and leathergoods, swimwear and accessories.

Sales of children's clothing in Denmark have increased by more than 50% since 2000 and are now estimated to total DKK 5-6 billion ($860.2 million – $1.03 billion) and rising. Approximately 180 exhibitors will be showcasing spring/summer 2007 collections at CIFFKIDS.

Under Armour signs new agreement with NFL

08 Aug 2006

US-based branded apparel, footwear and accessories company Under Armour Inc. has signed an agreement with the National Football League (NFL) to supply branded cleats to its players. Reports indicate that the NFL may also take a 1% stake in the sportswear company, whose footwear sector reported revenues of $15.6 million in the first quarter.

Each company will use the other's logo; the Under Armour logo will appear on NFL cleats and NFL logos will feature in its footwear advertising campaigns.

NFL players are currently able to display only Reebok and Nike logos on their football shoes.

The company plans to launch a range of baseball cleats later this year.

Miracle Coatings releases anti-microbial and UV Polymers

08 Aug 2006

Australia-based biotech company Miracle Coatings has released anti-microbial and ultra violet polymers and bio decontaminators.

The polymeric coatings offer low cost, high quality, anti-microbial and ultra violet protection to the textile industry.

With the growth of the lucrative Mould Remediation market in the USA, the company has aligned itself with a number of strategic partners to enter the market. The Indoor Air Quality market is gathering momentum globally with Asia and North America leading the way, and the high levels of competition in the textiles industry of Asia and the subcontinent have generated a demand for high quality coatings to differentiate textile products and add value.

The company expects triple digit growth over the next twelve months following the release of its new product range.

New cyanoacrylate adhesive offers faster fixture times

09 Aug 2006

RiteLok XF100, a new cyanoacrylate (CA) industrial adhesive from UK adhesives manufacturer Chemence, is said to offer faster fixture times than other super glue products on the market, and is capable of bonding difficult materials such as cow and goat leather, paper

and wood.

The adhesive is particularly useful to manufacturers or assemblers of high volume goods such as leather or plastic parts, where bonding is a key part of the process. These companies should benefit from this new product and may be able to increase their line speeds, therefore improving productivity and reducing costs.

It can be used in a variety of applications, including the assembly of plastic and rubber parts; shoe manufacture and repair; luggage manufacturing; sports equipment manufacture; electrical and electronic devices; medical devices; and maintenance and repair.

RiteLok cyanoacrylates retain over 90% of their strength when heated to 80°C for 90 days and then tested at 21°C. They also exhibit excellent chemical resistance to most oils and solvents including motor oil, leaded petrol, ethanol, propanol and freon.

Pure Beginnings launches 100% organic cotton baby line

09 Aug 2006

Supplier of cotton items for babies Pure Beginnings has launched a new line of organic baby clothing, bedding, and personal care products.

The cotton used is produced without pesticides or other harmful chemicals, following concerns over conventional cotton production using 25% of the world's pesticides. Demand for organic fabrics is said to be prompting annual market growth of 15% per year.

In addition to environmental issues related to cotton farming, pesticide and chemically-treated fabrics block the natural balance of the skin by trapping heat and preventing it from absorbing moisture effectively, and can cause rashes and eczema on sensitive skin.

Organic cotton has a softer feel, is more breathable and lasts longer.

Polo Ralph Lauren reports positive Q1 results

09 Aug 2006

Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation has reported net income of $80 million for the first quarter of fiscal 2007 compared with $51 million for the first quarter of fiscal 2006.

Net revenues for the first quarter increased 27% to $954 million compared with $752 million in the corresponding period last year. Excluding the impact of the footwear and Polo Jeans Co. acquisitions, net revenues increased 19%.

Net revenues for the first quarter increased 27% as reported, or 19% excluding the effects of acquisitions, to $954 million compared with $752 million in the first quarter last year. The increase was driven by a 46% increase in reported wholesale sales, or 26% excluding the effects of acquisitions, and a 15% increase in retail sales, slightly offset by a 12% decrease in licensing revenues. Europe drove strong sales across all brands.

Licensing was down compared to the first quarter last year.

Têxtil Tearfil releases new Dri-release Sea-Cell yarn

09 Aug 2006

Portuguese spinning company Têxtil Tearfil, S.A, a partner of Germany-based textile company SeaCell launched a new Dri-release Sea-Cell yarn at OutDoor Friedrichshafen in July.

The cellulose fibre contains seaweed and silver ions and is said to provide active moisture management, breathability and high comfort.

The combination of FreshGuard and silver ions will help to guard against infectious micro-organisms and odour in the garments made with the yarn and these properties do not wash out.

Colombia introduces new rules for the control of imports

09 Aug 2006

Decree 1299 has been issued by the Colombian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism which affects the control of 'textiles materials and textile manufactured goods and footwear and its parts' entering the country. Both individuals and companies who intend to import such goods must now be registered in a general importers' register.

National Director of Customs Juan Pablo Ortiz has urged importers to acquaint themselves with the content of the new regulation in order to avoid damages for violating any of the obligations contained in the decree. The decree includes new rules concerning contraband control and gives the National Customs and Tax Department (Dian) more authority.

Mr Ortiz explained, "The Colombian government considers customs control and risk important enough to justify the need for the registration which means obtaining an import authorisation which has been previously submitted to the rigour of the law."

The law includes information on the minimum assets importers must own, a detailed declaration of the lots to

be imported and the suppliers' name and there are strict sanctions for non-compliers.

EDANA reports on International Nonwovens Symposium

09 Aug 2006

Approximately 250 delegates from the nonwovens and related industries gathered in Vienna to attend EDANA's 2006 International Symposium, according to a recent report.

The Symposium, one of seven EDANA events in 2006, featured fourteen presentations covering nonwovens business, market and technology trends and innovations.

The various papers demonstrated many of the key strengths of the nonwovens industry – a focus on innovation, successful partnerships within its supply chain and the exploration of new opportunities, new geographical markets, new product developments and the application of advanced hybrid technologies.

Amongst these, The Economist Intelligence Unit (CEEMEA) director Nenad Pacek provided an insight into doing business in emerging markets and how to avoid pitfalls by learning from other companies' mistakes. Today there is more corporate focus on emerging markets than ever before, particularly in relation to China.

In her overview of Eastern European markets, vice director, Foreign Trade Department of Polish company TZMO Krystyna Boryk Jozefowicz highlighted some of the potential obstacles that are often not considered by investors. According to Ms Jozefowicz, these markets are already mature and this shift has happened faster than anyone could ever have expected. She also highlighted how logistics, payment problems, safety, unstable law and crises across the region can present pitfalls. She demonstrated that many Eastern European companies are successful players in the global market, with growing export sales and substantial market shares in several countries of the region.

The increase of raw material costs, spurred by high oil prices was a key focus of the Symposium. Polyester and polypropylene now dominate nonwoven markets accounting for around 75% of raw material usage. In Europe, the market is being driven almost entirely by polypropylene in spunmelt form and polyester in carded staple fibre form. In both China and Japan, polypropylene spunmelts are growing rapidly.

The Association's next annual Nonwovens Symposium will take place on June 12-13, 2007, in Stockholm.

Unifi and Consoltex launch eco-friendly fabrics

10 Aug 2006

US-based producer and processor of multi-filament textured yarns Unifi, Inc. and Canada-based specialty textile company Consoltex Inc. have teamed up to develop a new line of high-performance, eco-friendly products. The new line, consisting of four styles, will be sold under Consoltex's Earthwhile brand to meet the needs of customers who require quality environmentally-friendly performance apparel.

The new fabrics feature Unifi's Repreve - a family of polyester yarns made from 100% recycled materials.

Repreve yarns will be included in four of Consoltex's activewear fabrics - Mojave, Energy, Vector and Zircon. Energy, Vector and Zircon are all performance stretch fabrics that can be used in a variety of applications including soft shell garments, trousers, shorts, vests and other performance apparel. Differing in style and weave patterns, these two-way or 'filling' stretch fabrics have been engineered to maximise stretch performance, comfort and durability. Mojave offers odour control and UV protection in a shirt-weight fabric designed specifically for use in travel wear and adventure wear applications.

The two companies are exhibiting at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market, August 10–13 in Salt Lake City, USA.

Amer Sports reports January – June financial results

10 Aug 2006

Between January and June, Finland-based sporting goods corporation Amer Sports' net sales grew 4% to €739.2 million compared with €689.9 million in the same period in 2005.

Net sales by business segment were as follows: Salomon, 27%, Wilson, 46%, Precor, 18%, Atomic, 4%, and Suunto, 5%.

The split of net sales by market area were as follows: the Americas (including Latin America), 54%, EMEA (Europe, the Middle East and Africa), 35%, and Asia Pacific, 11%. Sales grew by 11% in the Americas, by 3% in EMEA and by 6% in Asia Pacific. Net sales growth in local currencies by market area was: the Americas, 4%, EMEA, 3%, and Asia Pacific, 6%.

Net sales of Salomon's winter sports equipment rose by 8% in local currency terms. Net sales of apparel and footwear grew by 11% in local currency terms. The good trend in sales of outdoor footwear was boosted by the new Soft Shell technology. The net sales of the bicycle component manufacturer Mavic grew by 9% in local currency terms.

Wilson's comparable net sales in local currencies remained at last year's level. Of the product groups, the best growth was seen in accessories and footwear. The Golf Division's sales were down 20% in local currencies, and did not measure up to expectations.

Precor's net sales were up 12% in local currency terms. Total growth in the market for home fitness equipment levelled off. However, demand for elliptical trainers has remained solid.

Atomic's net sales declined by 16% in local currencies. Estimating from the level of pre-orders, it is expected that the sales of alpine boots and crosscountry skiing equipment will increase in the 2006/07 season.

Suunto's net sales remained on a par with the corresponding period of the previous year in local currencies. Sales of Suunto's diving instruments increased by 11% during the review period although sales of diving and water sports suits declined.

In the April to June period, the Group's net sales were up 5% in local currency terms and amounted to €321.8 million compared with €304.9 in 2005. In local currency terms, Salomon's sales rose by 6%, Wilson's by 4%, Precor's by 10% and Suunto's by 11%. The Golf Division's sales decreased by 14% in local currencies, and did not meet expectations.

Full the full year, the company's net sales are expected to be €1.8 billion compared with €1,732 million last year.

Tunisia export levels remain positive

10 Aug 2006

Reports indicate that Tunisian exports totalled $10.41 billion in 2005 which included textiles, shoes, leather goods and chemicals.

The country's exports are said to represent 45% of GDP, and it is anticipated that this will increase to around 50% in the next three years.

Officials are expecting an 8.7% increase in exports of goods and services this year.

Tunisia has benefited from preferential bilateral trade with the EU for a number of years and its most significant trade partners—France, Italy and Germany—are said to account for 61.5% of its export sales.

Raymond and UCO NV join forces for new denim production facilities

10 Aug 2006

Indian textile and apparel company Raymond Ltd. and Belgian sportswear, fabric and yarn firm UCO NV have entered into a joint agreement to begin a new global denim operation.

This 50:50 joint venture company, incorporated in India as Raymond UCO Denim Private Ltd. and with headquarters in Belgium, will manufacture and market denim fabrics in the US, Europe and Asia with a combined fabric capacity of 80 million metres per annum.

The global demand for denim today is estimated at around 5.5 billion metres and the global denim fabrics industry in 2005 was valued at an estimated $10 billion.

The market for jeans in India is estimated at 90 million pairs per annum, of which 30% are branded jeans.

Liquidlogic and Milliken introduce mouldable fabric technology for kayaks

10 Aug 2006

US-based textile and chemical firm Milliken & Company has released its first MFT (Mouldable Fabric Technology) offering for the outdoor industry. MFT is a lightweight thermoplastic composite that is suitable for the kayak industry and other manufacturers of recreational equipment.

MFT can be used as a replacement for moulded plastics and for aramid and fibreglass composites. It is made from a co-extruded polypropylene tape yarn with a highly drawn core for strength properties within a lower melt polymer matrix for composite processing. The tape yarn is woven into a fabric, and multiple layers of fabric are stacked and consolidated with heat and pressure to form rigid sheets. The thickness of the sheets depends on the number of layers of fabric in the structure. MFT is available in fabric or sheet stock and is suitable for panel or moulded applications where impact resistance, stiffness and weight are primary concerns. It is fully recyclable.

The first MFT product to be introduced is a kayak in partnership with kayak company Liquidlogic. Liquidlogic's new MFT Sojourn 14 weighs 35 pounds compared with a comparable boat made from acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) materials which weighs 55 pounds. MFT is also said to provide superior impact performance compared with current materials on the market, including polyethylene, ABS, and glass and aramid composites.

The Sojourn 14 MFT kayak will be available for retail next year.

Decline in Italian textile production

10 Aug 2006

Reports indicate that industrial production in Italy

increased by 3.7% in June compared with June 2005.

For the first six months, an increase of 2.2% was shown compared with the prior year period.

Despite this, production growth in June was offset by a 2.8% decrease for leather and footwear, while machinery was up 10.5% and rubber and plastics 7.6%.

In the first six months chemicals and synthetic materials production was up 5.3% while there was a 5.2% decrease in textiles and clothing production.

Andrew Marc names new chief financial officer

10 Aug 2006

Manufacturer of leather, wool and cloth outerwear, women's handbags and men's briefcases and accessories Andrew Marc has appointed Robert Mahan to the newly created position of chief financial officer. Mr Mahan will lead the company's finance and operations staff supporting the growth of its core outerwear businesses.

Mr Mahan served as Group financial director for Liz Claiborne's Special Markets and Accessories Divisions and spent nine years at Tommy Hilfiger, where he last held the position of senior vice president - Finance and Operations.

Milliken provides fabric technology for Harriss & Covington socks

11 Aug 2006

Textile and chemical manufacturer Milliken & Company's VisaEndurance technology is now available in socks made by Harriss & Covington. VisaEndurance is said to combine long-lasting, effective odour control with moisture management and stain release capabilities. New sock stylings are now being developed for national brands and private labels in the outdoor, sporting goods and hunting markets.

The first brand to adopt the new odour-fighting technology is hunting apparel manufacturer Scent-Lok Technologies. The socks combine VisaEndurance's durable anti-microbial finish to help control the growth of odour-causing bacteria with Scent-Lok's odour-adsorbing technology to capture those few odours that do form. The lightweight moisture-wicking socks are ideal for moderate temperatures and will reduce foot odour in hunting situations.

The technology is said to last more than 50 washes while maintaining its positive odour prevention and colour retention qualities.

The technology is available in numerous constructions and weights, and is used in a wide range of base layer garments including technical long-and-short sleeved t-shirts, long underwear, men's briefs and boxers, women's underwear and socks.

Thomas Kötter appointed Igedo spokesman

11 Aug 2006

Thomas Kötter will act as a spokesman for international fashion and lifestyle fairs organiser the Igedo Company GmbH & Co. KG in Düsseldorf with immediate effect.

Mr Kötter will also take over as the division head of Modemedia PR & Events, reporting to general manager Frank Hartmann and marketing director Frank Schneider.

He will be the central contact partner for the media and he and his team will be in charge of all communication activities in the area of press liaison and public relations for the company including the PR-activities for the trade fairs CPD (womenswear & accessories), HMD (menswear & accessories), Body Look (body, beach & legwear), GDS (shoe fashion), Global Fashion (contract manufacturing, sourcing and private-label production), GLS (leather goods) and CPM (Collection Première Moscow).

Previously, Mr Kötter was responsible for Messe Düsseldorf GmbH's corporate communication.

Kraton posts Q2 income decline

11 Aug 2006

US-based performance polymer producer Kraton Polymers LLChas posted its financial results for the quarter and six months ended June 30. Total revenues for the quarter were $285.3 million compared with $269 million in the comparable period of 2005, an increase of 6%. These increases were driven by increased volumes and prices. For the first six months of 2006, total revenues increased 8% to $514.7 million.

Gross profit for the quarter decreased $13.6 million or 21% to $52.5 million compared with $66.1 million in the comparable period of 2005, as raw material inflation outpaced price increases and the company incurred several one-time restructuring charges. Gross profit for the first half decreased $11 million to $104.9 million.

Net Income for the quarter was $3.4 million, compared with $16.2 million in the comparable period of 2005. During the first six months of 2006, net income was $9.9 million versus $21.2 million for the same period of 2005.

Kraton polymers are used in a wide range of applications including adhesives, coatings, packaging, automotive

and footwear products.

Tamfelt reports January to June financial results

11 Aug 2006

Finland-based technical textile supplier Tamfelt Oyj Abp has posted net sales of €79.3 million between January and June, an 18.2% increase compared with €67.1 million in the corresponding period in 2005, the result of increased sales volumes and good productivity development.

Big 5 Sporting Goods Corporation reports Q2 sales increase

11 Aug 2006

Athletic shoes, apparel and accessories and outdoor equipment retailer Big 5 Sporting Goods Corporation has posted its financial results for the second quarter ended July 2.

Net sales increased $13.7 million, or 6.9%, to $211.8 million from net sales of $198.1 million for the second quarter of 2005. Same store sales increased 2.9% for the second quarter, representing the company's 42nd consecutive quarter of positive same store sales comparisons.

Net income for the second quarter increased to $7.4 million from $6.1 million for the second quarter of fiscal 2005.

For the twenty-six week period ended July 2, net sales increased by $30.8 million, or 7.9%, to $419 million from net sales of $388.2 million in the same period last year. Same store sales increased 4.1% in the first 26 weeks versus the same period last year. Net income was $13.4 million compared with $12.6 million in the same period last year.

The company opened three new stores during the second quarter, bringing its store count at the end of the second quarter to 329 stores. A further five stores are expected to open during the third quarter.

Nike extends authorised footwear supplier agreement with NFL

11 Aug 2006

The National Football League (NFL) has extended its agreement with Nike to continue as an authorised supplier of NFL footwear.

An NFL partner since 1995, the company will continue to supply NFL players with branded footwear for use in games and in training. In addition, the agreement allows Nike to continue to use NFL and NFL team logos to promote its footwear products.

Nearly 80% of NFL athletes play in Nike performance cleated footwear. Among the list of endorsers are ‘Most Valuable Player’ Shaun Alexander, ‘Defensive Player of the Year’, Brian Urlacher and Super Bowl XL MVP, Hines Ward.

Sara Lee posts 2006 net sales decline

11 Aug 2006

Chicago-based manufacturer of brand-name products Sara Lee Corporation has reported its financial results for fiscal 2006 with net sales of $15.9 billion, a decrease of 1% compared with fiscal 2005. For the fourth quarter of fiscal 2006, net sales were $4.1 billion, up 2% compared with $4 billion in the prior year's fourth quarter.

The company’s Branded Apparel division designs, manufactures, sources and markets apparel, underwear, socks, hosiery, casualwear and activewear, sold primarily in the Americas/Asia. This business is currently expected to be spun off from Sara Lee on September 5 under the new corporate name Hanesbrands Inc.

For the fourth quarter the division reported net sales of $1.13 billion, down 2% compared with the same period last year.

For the year, Branded Apparel reported net sales of $4.49 billion, a decline of 4%.

Cascade Designs appoints new vice president of European operations

11 Aug 2006

Washington-based manufacturer of backpacking, recreation and medical rehabilitation products Cascade Designs Inc. has appointed James Cotter as vice president of European Operations for its wholly-owned subsidiary, Cascade Designs, Ltd., located in Cork, Ireland.

Mr Cotter will oversee the manufacturing, marketing, distribution and sales subsidiary and help continue to expand Cascade Design’s business in the European outdoor specialty market. He has served as operations manager at the subsidiary since 2003.

New exhibitors at China International Trade Fair for Apparel Fabrics and Accessories

11 Aug 2006

China International Trade Fair for Apparel Fabrics and Accessories is to be held in Shanghai from October 25-28.

Accessories companies such as Swarovski, Coats China and Bemis are all taking part in the show together with long-term exhibitors such as Union Knopf Ltd and RiRi SA.

Swarovski's offerings feature colourful crystal components that are used in the fashion industry on items such as buttons, sew-on and hotfix stones and crystal transfers.

Coats China, another exhibitor at this year's trade fair, is the world's largest sewing thread maker and the world's second largest zip maker. Coats' vast product range includes solutions for jeans, trainers, automotive airbags and even bullet-proof vests.

Bemis is a first time exhibitor at Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics. The company is a major manufacturer of thermoplastic adhesives, coatings, tapes and speciality film products that serve various markets.

Four of the seven halls at Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics will feature forums, forecasted by Interstoff Asia Directions Committee and Fabrics China, illustrating the colours, shapes, textures and patterns that will dominate next season's runways and wardrobe.

EDANA releases 2005 nonwovens production and sales statistics

11 Aug 2006

According to figures released by the international association serving the nonwovens and related products industries, EDANA, production of nonwovens in Europe grew by just over 5% in 2005 to reach 1,403,000 tonnes. This compares with 1,336,000 tonnes in 2004 when annual growth was 3.7%.

Based on a comparison of the same sample of companies in 2004 and 2005, the average price of nonwovens has, for the first time in many years, increased by about 2% from €3.220 to €3.285 per kg. As a result the total turnover of the European nonwovens industry is estimated at around €4,610 million.

Diverging trends are affecting the various bonding processes of drylaid nonwovens. Growth in the hydroentanglement process has been moderate this year at just 3.5% and it is actually the needling process that has recorded the highest apparent growth at 4.7%.

Polymer-based (spunmelt) nonwovens, on the other hand, witnessed an impressive growth with a 7.5% increase in 2005.

General manager Pierre Wiertz revealed, “The most dramatic apparent growth areas for nonwovens in 2005 were protective clothing (29.6%) and medical/surgical (25.1%), closely followed by agriculture (22.4%).”

Polypropylene, either in fibre or granule form, continues to be the most prevalent polymer used in the European nonwovens industry accounting for 692,800 tonnes, 46.4% of the total fibre and polymer chip consumption butpolyester, both in fibre and chip form, has retained the highest growth.

The positive EU balance of exports and imports of nonwovens roll goods has continued to decrease. In 2005 the 25 EU Member States exported 203,140 tonnes of nonwovens (compared with 247 000 tonnes in 2004) at a value of almost €870 million, which represents a 10% decrease compared with the previous year.