Business Week
21 Aug - 27 Aug 06

New export targets set for Bangladesh

21 Aug 2006

The Bangladesh government has fixed a revised export earnings target of $12.5 billion for the current fiscal year (July 2006-June 2007), which is 18.75% or $1.98 billion higher than the previous year's figure.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, export targets for the current fiscal year have been increased for products including woven items, knitwear, footwear, raw jute, jute goods, leather, chemical products, home textiles and textile fabrics. The new target for footwear has been fixed at $113 million and at $290 million for leather.

Delta Apparel to open new offshore manufacturing facility

21 Aug 2006

US designer, manufacturer and distributor of branded and private label apparel Delta Apparel Inc. plans to open Ceiba Textiles, an offshore textile manufacturing plant in Honduras. The 300,000 square foot facility will be located in the Green Valley Industrial Park in San Pedro Sula, where knitting, dyeing, finishing, cutting and sewing processes will be carried out, primarily for the activewear segment.

The company expects the facility to be completed during fiscal 2007 and production will begin during the first quarter of fiscal 2008. Production of 500,000 pounds per week is expected in the first year, increasing to one million pounds per week in fiscal 2009.

The company expects the total capital investment in Ceiba Textiles to be approximately $25 million, which includes the cost of constructing the building.

Polymer Group posts sales increase in Q2 and first half 2006

21 Aug 2006

US producer of nonwovens Polymer Group Inc. has reported net sales of $248.7 million for the second quarter, ended July 1, up $12.8 million compared with the second quarter of 2005. Sales growth was driven primarily by higher volumes, improved mix and the effects of higher selling prices as a result of higher raw material costs. The majority of the volume gains occurred in the Latin American and US nonwoven markets.

Gross profit was $36.5 million in the second quarter compared with $41.9 million in the prior year period.

For the six months ended July 1, sales were $509.1 million, up $28.9 million, or 6%, from the same period in 2005. The company's year-to-date gross profit was $79.7 million compared with $85.9 million for the prior year six-month period.

The company also reported that each of the three new capacity installations initiated in late 2004 and 2005 are complete and at various stages of start-up.

Fire at Lanxess site in Spain

21 Aug 2006

A fire broke out in the early hours of August 18 on the site of German chemicals company Lanxess in Tarragona, Spain, but was put out immediately by the on-site fire department.

No-one was injured and there was no damage to the environment or the local population.

The cause of the fire has not yet been established.

The company's Styrenic Resins Business Unit produces ABS plastics at the site.

BASF concludes sales agreement with IMCD Group

21 Aug 2006

German chemical company BASF Aktiengesellschaft is transferring part of its acrylic monomers business for selected Eastern European countries to IMCD Group (Rotterdam, Netherlands) with immediate effect. The agreement applies specifically to goods supplied in barrels and small containers and also to small volumes transported in tank trucks for the small-sized customer segment.

IMCD Group already sells BASF's acrylic monomers across Europe via its local companies.

Kaj Zackrisson and Sverre Liliequist join POC

21 Aug 2006

Two of the top international authorities in freeride/big mountain skiing, Kaj Zackrisson and Sverre Liliequist, have joined Swedish protective gear company POC's big mountain team.

Mr Zackrisson and Mr Liliequist have skied and competed at world class level for many years.

The agreement with the two professionals is not just a sponsorship deal; the company is hoping that their reputation, experience and expertise will be valuable in the development of new products and product categories. The first results of this collaboration will be unveiled at SIA and ispo 2007, said CEO Stefan Ytterborn.

POC designs, engineers and markets personal protective gear for alpine skiers.

New indoor and outdoor venue for IFMA

21 Aug 2006

Located in the newly opened northern section of the Koelnmesse exhibition grounds, including 40,000 m² of outdoor space, bicycle trade fair, IFMA Cologne, will take place from September 14-17. The fair will include the 'IFMA Bike Race - Ladies' Ride' for pro cyclists, the European Trial Championships, new test tracks both indoors and outdoors, and an Open Space conference entitled 'Velosapiens - Paving the way for future mobility'.

The Open Space conference, an interactive event that has already been used in the IT and automobile sectors, will take place on September 16, as will the professional women's bike race.

At the show itself, there will be a greater emphasis on the subject of cycling tourism this year. A wide variety of topics will be introduced, ranging from the idea of a cycle path in the immediate neighbourhood, to extreme biking holidays around the world. A number of long-distance cyclists have been invited to demonstrate their equipment and to share their cycling adventures.

Another focal point will be the over-50s age group which, according to Professor Ingo Froböse from the German Sports Academy in Cologne, accounts for a steadily increasing share of cyclists. Visitors will be able to find out which bikes and components are designed especially with the over-50s in mind.

India increases FDI

21 Aug 2006

According to Union minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Kamal Nath, foreign direct investment (FDI) into India during the first quarter totalled $1.74 billion compared with $1.18 billion in the same quarter last year, a record increase of nearly 47%. FDI in June surged 102%, increasing to $534 million from $264 million in June 2005.

The minister stated that continual reviews of India's FDI policy and the simplification of procedures have contributed to the steady increase in FDI, in particular the surge witnessed in the first quarter.

"The investment climate in India is highly conducive for investments particularly from Taiwan, Korea and Singapore, who are looking at sites in India to locate their manufacturing facilities. A business delegation is visiting Taiwan later this month to attract investments particularly in electronic hardware, textile machinery and leather goods," he added.

6,443 visitors at Intertextile Pavilion

21 Aug 2006

The rapid expansion of South China's textile industry provided an ideal backdrop for Intertextile Pavilion at Shenzhen International Trade Fair for Apparel Fabrics and Accessories, which ran from July 25-27 and welcomed a reported 6,443 trade buyers from 15 countries.

According to the organisers, buyers were predominately end users, comprising 52% of the overall total, as well as 18% from trading companies, 8% from import and export corporations and 5% from wholesalers.

Delta Apparel to acquire Fun-Tees

22 Aug 2006

Casual and athletic wear specialist Delta Apparel, Inc. has signed an asset purchase agreement to acquire substantially all of the net assets of privately-held Fun-Tees, Inc., a US designer and manufacturer of custom knit t-shirts to major branded sportswear companies.

The acquisition is expected to close on or around October 2, subject to various closing conditions. The purchase price for the transaction is $20 million in cash, subject to certain post-closing adjustments.

Delta Apparel expects to integrate the Fun-Tees textile operations into its Maiden, North Carolina, facility during

fiscal year 2007 and to maintain the Fun-Tees off-shore cutting, sewing and decorating facilities located in El Salvador and Campeche, Mexico.

Delta Apparel expects the acquisition to increase its activewear segment sales by approximately $70 million in sales on an annual basis.

India Wholesale Price Index sees rise in textiles and chemicals

22 Aug 2006

The official Wholesale Price Index for 'All Commodities' (Base: 1993-94 = 100) for the week ended August 5, rose by 0.1% to 204.3 from 204.1 for the previous week.

The annual rate of inflation, calculated on a point-to-point basis, stood at 4.82% for the week ended August 5 (compared with August 6, 2005) versus 4.61% for the previous week and 3.78% during the corresponding week of the previous year.

The index for non-food articles declined by 0.1% to 183.8 from 184 for the previous week due to lower prices of raw jute (2%) and cotton seed and groundnut seed (1% each).

The index for textiles rose by 0.2% to 130.6 from 130.4 for the previous week due to higher prices of synthetic yarn (2%) and hessian & sacking bags (1%). However, the price of hessian cloth (1%) declined.

The index for chemicals & chemical products rose by 0.1% to 195.5 from 195.4 for the previous week due to higher prices of printing ink (7%) and polystyrene (1%).

AATCC and TI sign membership agreement

22 Aug 2006

The American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists (AATCC) and The Textile Institute (TI) have signed an agreement whereby each association will offer 30% discounted membership in its organisation to people who are current members of the other association. The agreement takes effect on January 1, 2007.

The agreement applies to single-year membership fee payments and is not intended for multiple-year dues payments incorporating multi-year discounts.

US-based AATCC is involved in education, technology transfer, and test method development for the textile design, materials, and wet processing industry.

UK-based TI is a registered charity with individual and corporate members in over 80 countries. It awards textile-related professional qualifications that are recognised internationally.

Cannondale & Cocona collaboration for extended apparel line

22 Aug 2006

US-based high-performance bicycles and apparel producer Cannondale recently introduced the Carbon LE garment line featuring Traptek's Cocona fabric which was named one of Time Magazine's 'Most Amazing Inventions' of the year. For the new winter line, the design is now integrated into jerseys, jackets, tights, socks, head gear and gloves.

Cocona technology permanently embeds activated carbon, derived from coconut shells, into fibre and yarns to enhance the performance of fabrics. The new garments not only wick moisture away (45% greater wickability), but also dry quickly to keep cyclists cool and dry.

The knits trap (non-bacterial) odour and UV in the activated carbon pore structure, keeping the finished products fresh and lightweight with added UPF Coconut shells are a waste product from the coconut industry and are well-recognised as providers of activated carbon for filtering impurities from water and air, while absorbing (non-bacterial) unpleasant odours.

The yarns permanently embed particles into the fibre so that they do not wash out and work for the life of the garment.

Asia Outdoor set for success

22 Aug 2006

Asia Outdoor will open its doors on August 23-26 with 174 exhibitors, 55% of which will come from abroad. Brands exhibiting at the event include Asolo, Black Yak, Black Diamond, Cerro Torre, Sigg, Lowa, Meindl, MSR, Osprey, Tatonka, Petzl, Vaude, Nikko and Dentik, which will present their collections for winter 2006 and spring/summer 2007.

New SIDC facilitation centre for sporting goods

22 Aug 2006

Pakistan Sports Industries Development Centre (SIDC), a joint initiative of Small-and Medium-sized Enterprises Development Authority and Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, plans to establish a facilitation centre to boost the sporting goods sector through the provision of common facilities, services, technology transfer and training.

SIDC is looking for a suitable industrial plot in Sialkot City, Punjab Province. This project will be funded by the Pakistan government's Public Sector Development

Programme. The country exported sports goods worth $348 million between July 2005 and June 2006 compared with $307 million in the corresponding period the previous year.

Strong growth in sales and earnings at Cognis

22 Aug 2006

German specialty chemicals supplier Cognis has reported net external sales of €1,715 million for the six-month period ended June 30, a 7% increase compared with the same period in 2005.

Care chemicals, nutrition & health, functional products and process chemicals all posted sales that exceeded the 2005 figures. All regions contributed to this positive development. Despite increased raw material and energy costs, the company was able to reduce its overall costs Adjusted for the effects of currency fluctuations, sales increased by 4.5%.

Sales of process chemicals totalled €130 million, up 5.3%. This unit particularly benefited from strong demand in the Asia-Pacific region, where Cognis has seen double-digit sales growth in both its textile technology and leather technology businesses.

Focus on strengthening employment in India export sector

22 Aug 2006

Indian minister of State for Commerce Shri Jairam Ramesh has called for a greater strengthening of employment intensive export sectors.

According to a recent study conducted by RIS, a Delhi-based group, in 2004-2005, the export sector accounted for nine million direct jobs and seven million indirect jobs. The study estimates that this could double in the next five years.

Shri Ramesh said that greater priority will be given to employment intensive sectors such as leather, handlooms and handicrafts in the ongoing department of Commerce's MDA (Market Development Assistance) and MAI (Market Access Initiative) which involves a total outlay of Rs100 crore ($21.5 million) in 2006-2007.

Leather projects in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh and handicrafts projects in Chattisgarh are being taken up for product development, design and marketing with the help of women's self-help groups.

The Athlete's Foot acquired by Aether Holdings

22 Aug 2006

US-based brand acquisition and management company Aether Holdings, Inc. has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire American athletic footwear and apparel franchisor The Athlete's Foot.

Aether will pay $51.5 million at closing through a combination of cash and the issuance of common stock, less any assumed debt. The company has also agreed to an earn-out arrangement that will entitle the seller to receive up to an additional $8.5 million of cash and stock (in the same proportion as the initial consideration), if The Athlete's Foot's financial results for the year ended December 31 meet specified targets. Aether has also agreed to enter into employment arrangements with certain key executives of The Athlete's Foot. The transaction is expected to close before the end of 2006.

Survey reveals appeal of athletic shoes to Chinese consumers

22 Aug 2006

According to a survey by US-based package delivery company UPS, involving 1,200 middle-class consumers in six Chinese cities, the American products most sought after by Chinese consumers are blue jeans, DVDs, moisturiser and athletic shoes.

More than 70% of consumers said they would like to buy American athletic shoes and 64% said they wanted to buy blue jeans, up substantially compared with 2005 figures.

A large number of consumers (56%) wanted to hear messages about quality ingredients or workmanship in advertising about American products. This number increased to 65% when it comes to advertising fashion and apparel.

Perry Ellis reports 10% sales decrease

23 Aug 2006

Casual apparel, activewear and swimwear designer Perry Ellis International, Inc. has reported total revenues of $171 million for the second quarter, ended July 31, a 10% decrease compared with the $190 million reported in the same period last year.

The decline in total revenues during the quarter was anticipated in the fiscal 2007 plan as, due to the seasonality of the company's business, second quarter results historically result in losses.

Gildan invests $7 million in new US facility

23 Aug 2006

Canada-based sportswear manufacturer Gildan Activewear Inc. has reported that, as part of its overall plan to integrate its recent acquisition of Kentucky Derby Hosiery, it is investing approximately US$7 million in a 400,000 sq ft retail distribution centre in Martinsville, Virginia.

The installation of equipment in this facility, together with associated warehouse management information systems, is expected to be completed by the end of the second quarter of fiscal 2007. Gildan plans to close Kentucky Derby Hosiery's existing distribution centres at multiple sites in Danville, Virginia, and Mt. Airy, North Carolina, during the first half of fiscal 2007 and offer employment at the new facility to all of Kentucky Derby Hosiery's existing employees currently based at these locations.

Philippines and Malaysia represented at Source It

23 Aug 2006

National pavilions from the Philippines and Malaysia have confirmed their participation at Source It 2006 which will be held on October 4–6 in Hong Kong.

With their expertise in designing and manufacturing children's wear, the skills of Filipino textile professionals are increasingly admired world-wide. Demand for Filipino products is growing and the country's textile and garment industry is gaining strength year by year.

In an effort to further boost international trade, the Confederation of Garment Exporters of the Philippines (CONGEP) will bring a group of around 20 manufacturers to exhibit at Source It.

Malaysian exhibitors will also showcase their latest products. Malaysia's exports of textile and clothing remained resilient in 2005, growing by over 6% to reach almost $3 billion, with the main importers being the US, UK, Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan. MATRADE, the Malaysian External Export Development Corporation, will sponsor Malaysian companies to attend Source It in October 2006 including Uprise International Marketing, Nyok Ian Garments, Penfabric and Chongai Knitting Company.

India's textile exports rise

23 Aug 2006

According to provisional figures from the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Kolkata, textile exports rose to $17,079.57 million in the 2005-6 period compared with $14,026.72 million in 2004-5 and $13,496.31 million in 2003-4. Import figures also increased to $2,699.23 million in 2005-6 from $2,266.15 million the previous year and $2,034 million in 2003-4.

The government has imposed a combination of ad-valorem and specific duties on a 'whichever is higher basis' on imports of a number of textile and clothing items to safeguard the interests of domestic industry from cheap imports as well as taking measures to boost textile exports.

Gill launches new high-performance wetsuit line

23 Aug 2006

US high-performance technical marine apparel company Gill North America, a subsidiary of Gill UK Ltd. has developed a new eight-piece line of wetsuits to provide sailors with extra durability, buoyancy, stretch and overall comfort.

Extra durability has been built into the seat, knees and shin areas, where the harness or buoyancy aid sits. With material that provides protection from wind chill, the Gill wetsuit line is made to withstand extreme weather conditions.

Russell Athletic celebrates 80-year-old sweatshirt

23 Aug 2006

To commemorate the sweatshirt's 80th birthday this autumn, US-based Russell Athletic will partner with the Georgia Chapter of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation to host the annual 65 Roses Ball, October 14. Guests at the event will be encouraged to incorporate a favourite sweatshirt into their black tie attire for the evening, when there also will be opportunities for them to decorate and airbrush their sweatshirts.

The company also has plans to celebrate the milestone birthday of the sweatshirt in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the city that made the first sweatshirt purchase order.

The sweatshirt was first created by Bennie Russell, son of Russell Corporation's founder Benjamin Russell, in 1926 and was first used as a 'warm-up' for football and track teams.

Record financial results at Texhong in first half

23 Aug 2006

Chinese core-spun cotton textile manufacturer Texhong Textile Group Limited has reported record results for the

six-month period ended June 30. Turnover increased by 41.7% to RMB1,198 million ($150.4 million) and net profit increased by 40.2% to RMB111.6 million.

According to the group's chairman Hong Tianzhu, sales of spandex stretch yarn and grey fabrics in the domestic market achieved record results in terms of volume and overall gross profit margin, and net profit margin maintained a similar level compared with the same period last year. Overseas sales surged by 75.9% to RMB147 million.

The group's yarn and grey fabrics were sold to over 17 provinces and cities in China, and garment fabrics were exported to numerous countries overseas such as Europe, North America, South Korea, Hong Kong and Bangladesh.

Texhong recently launched new core-spun cotton textile products including Dow XLA stretch.

Focus on 'Innovative Technology' at AATCC international conference & exhibition

23 Aug 2006

AATCC's (The American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists's) 2006 International Conference & Exhibition will be held on October 31-November 2 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. The programme will feature three educational tracks mirroring the Association's three interest groups of chemical applications, concept to consumer (C2C) and materials.

Presentations in the chemical applications track will discuss pre-treatment and preparation; printing and finishing; advances in dyeing; and environmental issues. The C2C track will address quality control and textile care; CAD/CAM technology; product development; colour and trends; and fit/sizing. The materials track will focus on nanotechnologies in textiles; protective textiles; medical/biomedical textiles; and novel fibres and chemical materials.

Sprayway enjoys aftermath of Friedrichshafen

23 Aug 2006

Trade reaction to Sprayway's collection at Outdoor Europe in Friedrichshafen, Germany, was the most promising ever according to the brand's product and marketing manager Neil Dawes. He said, "Response from retailers has been very encouraging especially to our Lifewear Collection, characterised by the pigment print, the method that allows fading through washing and wearing and Energlo, the world's first glow-in-the-dark waterproof and breathable fabric."

Sprayway is the first European outdoor company to utilise the Energlo style textile in clothing.

New products from Páramo

24 Aug 2006

Outdoor apparel and accessories company Páramo has launched a new Torres Smock to its range. Generously sized, and designed to be worn over a Páramo waterproof jacket, its synthetic filling is said to provide a high warmth per weight ratio in a small pack size. The Páramo overlayer, which will launch this autumn, offers a full insulated hood and selection of pockets.

The Analogy fabric system used by Páramo for its waterproofs is based on the principles of mammal fur, to constantly push water away from the body. The Torres smock uses the new Nikwax Insulator fabric to provide extra insulation. Nikwax Insulator uses 133g synthetic fill to give down-like feel and performance, which works when wet and is not damaged when compressed.

The company has also launched a new Torres Gilet which also offers Nikwax Insulator fabric with 100g synthetic fill; a two-way zip with internal storm flap for ease of ventilation and pocket access; and elasticated arm holes and bottom to improve fit and retention of body heat.

93.7% income Q2 increase at Coldwater Creek

24 Aug 2006

US-based women's apparel, footwear and accessories retailer Coldwater Creek Inc. has reported improved financial results for the three- and six-month periods ended July 29.

Net income for the three-month period increased $5.8 million, or 93.7% to $12 million compared with net income of $6.2 million for the corresponding period in 2005. Net sales in the second quarter increased 41.2% to $216.4 million from $153.3 million the previous year.

Net income for the six-month period ended July 29 increased $8.9 million, or 60.5%, to $23.6 million compared with net income of $14.7 million for the six-month period ended July 30. Net sales in the first six months increased 39.7% to $431.7 million from $308.9 million in the same period a year ago.

AAFA to host 'Restricted Substances' Seminar

24 Aug 2006

The American Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA) and its Environmental Task Force will host a seminar on

Restricted Substances in Dongguan, China, on September 21.

Representatives from Nike, Levi Strauss, Puma, BASF and many other companies will be attending and speaking at the event. Topics to be covered include ‘Specialty Chemicals and Dyes used in the Apparel and Footwear industries to Watch’ (BASF) and ‘The Importance of Testing Your Products’ (Puma).

Organic Exchange and Organic Trade Association to co-host at Magic

24 Aug 2006

The Organic Exchange (OE) and Organic Trade Association (OTA) will co-host a booth at apparel sourcing and fabric event “Sourcing at Magic”, in the USA. The booth will introduce brands, retailers and sourcing agents to the rapidly expanding market for apparel, personal care and house wares made from organically grown fibres (primarily organic cotton and organic wool) and facilitate networking.

OE and OTA will also co-host a seminar on the rapidly expanding organic fibre market, ‘The Natural Next Step: Why and How to Integrate Organic Fibre into Your Apparel Lines’.

Attendees will learn about market trends, the wide selection of organic apparel, challenges and opportunities in sourcing, and establishing wholesale and retail lines.

According to the Organic Trade Association, sales of US and Canadian organic fibre sales jumped 40% in 2005, amounting to a $160 million organic product market. In addition, Organic Exchange data shows that global organic cotton product sales increased an estimated 35% annually, from $245 million in 2001 to $583 million in 2005 and are projected to grow to $2.6 billion by the end of 2008.

Moonlight Graham signs licensing agreement with Kellogg's

24 Aug 2006

American sportswear company Moonlight Graham has signed a licensing agreement with Kellogg's to manufacture a line of vintage apparel and accessories.

Eric Joffe, CEO of Moonlight Graham, says, "We are excited to partner with Kellogg's and utilise their great tradition to bring the Kellogg's look, feel, and history to life with our unique interpretation in designing modern vintage sportswear for men, women and children. The addition of Kellogg's to our stable of licences along with others we expect to add in the near future should allow Moonlight Graham to become the industry leader in developing modern vintage sportswear in the apparel industry."

Schmetz launches new NIT needles

24 Aug 2006

Germany-based sewing machine needle company Ferd. Schmetz has added several new needles to its range. As a result of the low friction of the surface, the new Schmetz Nit needle with a nickel-Teflon coating is said to provide a smooth sewing process thus protecting sewing materials and thread and leading to increased manufacturing productivity and lower costs.

Sportswear and protective clothing contains a high proportion of synthetic fibres nowadays such as polyamide, polyester and elastane and the risk of thermal damage is particularly high if too much friction energy is produced at the blade when processing such blended fabrics. In response to this the company has developed the Teflon-coated Blukold needle with a NIT surface which is anti-adhesive and corrosion-resistant as well as wear-resistant.

The needle is said to remain cleaner for longer. As a result of its anti-adhesive properties, there are fewer skip stitches and thread breakages and even heavy and hard sewing materials are penetrated easily which means that a larger needle sizes can be used, as can thicker sewing threads.

Russell Athletic launches mobile marketing tour

24 Aug 2006

Branded apparel and sporting goods company Russell Athletic’s Everyday Performance Tour will hit the road this August, showcasing the company’s history, teams' current on-field uniforms and sideline apparel through the years.

Sports fans will have the opportunity to win prizes and view changes in sportswear, from the earliest woven uniforms to the most exciting new products in the market.

The touring vehicle will feature new products on display inside and outside of the vehicle.

Highlights will include Russell Athletic's latest innovation in fabric technology, Dri-Power Fleece, which integrates moisture management technology with fleece to keep athletes drier and more comfortable.

Leadership changes at DuPont

24 Aug 2006

US-based chemical company DuPont has named Susan Stalnecker as vice president and treasurer, and Barry Niziolek as vice president and controller, effective September 15. They will succeed John Jessup and Daniel Smith, respectively, both of whom will retire later this year.

Ms Stalnecker, currently vice president - risk management, has held a range of finance leadership roles since joining the company in 1976. She served as the company's treasurer for five years before being appointed to lead the government and consumer market businesses in the DuPont Safety & Protection platform in 2003. She has held her current position since May 2005.

Mr Niziolek, currently vice president - controller designate, has served in broad business analysis and finance leadership positions since joining DuPont in 1981. He was finance director for DuPont Mexico and various businesses, including the DuPont Coatings & Color Technologies platform.

Slumberjack expands Go Light, Go Fast, Go Small product line

24 Aug 2006

US-based outdoor specialist Slumberjack has expanded its Go Light, Go Fast, Go Small product line with the addition of two new sleeping bags.

The Solera +15ºF sleeping bag mimics the size, shape and contours of the female body with its hourglass shape. It has extra insulation in the hood, upper torso and footbox for added comfort.

The Solera is filled with Thermolite Extreme insulation, which is a blend of three fibres (denier, thermal and hollow core). All of these fibres, working together, provide warmth and compactability. The exterior of the bag is made from a nylon diamond ripstop material, which is said to be durable and wind- and water-resistant. The interior of the bag features a polyester-taffeta liner.

A double-offset, differential-cut construction is used to enhance the durability of the bag. The construction also helps to eliminate cold spots, providing an even distribution of insulation throughout the bag. The sleeping bag also features an insulated draft tube and adjustable storm collar to keep cold air out and warm air in. It has a fully-contoured hood which is said to wrap snugly around the user’s head which can also be turned inside-out to act as a pillow.

The second addition to the line is the Calypso +25ºF youth-sized mummy sleeping bag. The Calypso is designed especially for children and offers the same high-end features and quality performance.

SATRA appoints new head of equipment manufacture

24 Aug 2006

Derek Holmes has been appointed as head of manufacturing for UK-based research and technology centre SATRA’s equipment sales business centre. Last year the technology centre posted £2 million in revenue from the production and sale of laboratory test equipment.

SATRA produces a range of more than 100 items of equipment, mainly for the footwear industry, and sells to clients in more than 70 countries.

Phillips-Van Heusen records income of $29 million

25 Aug 2006

US-based apparel and footwear company Phillips-Van Heusen Corporation has reported second quarter net income of $29 million compared with second quarter 2005 income of $23.5 million.

For the six months, net income was $77.7 million compared with $48.5 million in 2005.

Total revenues in the second quarter increased by 3% to $458.9 million from $443.5 million in the prior year. Revenue growth was driven by a 13% increase in the Calvin Klein Licensing business, the continued strong performance of the company's outlet retail business and wholesale sportswear business, particularly Calvin Klein men's better sportswear and Arrow. For the six months, total revenues increased 5% to $965.4 million from $915.6 million in 2005.

Textronics names new board member

25 Aug 2006

US-based electronic textiles firm Textronics, Inc. has named John Abeles to its board of directors.

Mr Abeles is founder and general partner of private venture capital partnership Northlea Partners Ltd. A physician and pharmacologist, he also serves as president of MedVest, Inc., a business and financial consulting firm.

Athletic footwear contributes to higher sales at Genesco

25 Aug 2006

Nashville-based footwear, headwear and accessories company Genesco Inc. has reported earnings of $5.9 million for the second quarter ended July 29 compared with $6.8 million for the second quarter ended July 30, 2005.

Net sales increased 11% to $304 million compared with $275 million for the same period in 2005.

According to chairman, president and CEO Hal Pennington, athletic footwear, led by board sport shoes, sandals and women's casuals performed well again, and the company expects these trends to continue in the next quarter.

Slimmer needles for fine knitwear from Schmetz

25 Aug 2006

Germany-based needle manufacturer Ferd. Schmetz GmbH has developed new needles specifically for the processing of fine knitwear. Schmetz KN and Schmetz SF needle types are said to help to ensure a trouble-free manufacturing process and quality end products.

As it has a slim and continuous cylindrical blade without reinforcement, the Schmetz KN needle type produces smaller stitch holes than standard needles and the construction of the needle ensures that the needle penetration force is reduced: the cross-section in the eye area was reduced and the shape from the eye area to the point is very slim. This slim shape minimises damage to the sewing material in the form of burst loops.

For extremely fine knitwear, such as 40 and 42 gauge for lingerie, the company has developed the Schmetz SF. It has an even slimmer shape from the eye area to the point than the Schmetz KN.

125 brands at Prestige 2006

25 Aug 2006

The fourth edition of fashion trade fair Prestige is to take place in Dubai, September 17-19, and will include exhibitions, conferences, seminars and catwalk shows. Collections for spring/summer 2007 will be the focus of the fair and 125 brands are expected to be showcased.

The latest trends in footwear, swimwear, leather goods, sportswear, children’s wear and accessories will be featured with a special emphasis on lingerie for the first time.

Exhibitors include footwear, ready-to-wear and accessories from Bally Golf of Switzerland and leather belts, leisure wear and small leather goods firm Ludwig Schröder of Germany.

Reports indicate that exports of fashion items from the 25 member states of the European Union to the UAE continue to rise steeply, representing a value of €272 million ($326 million) in 2005 and its fashion capital Dubai remains a key target market for European brands.

Asics granted motion against Payless Shoesource

25 Aug 2006

Athletic and technical footwear manufacturers Asics America Corporation and Asics Corporation Japan have been granted a motion for preliminary injunction enjoining discount footwear retailer Payless Shoesource, Inc. from infringing the Asics Stripe Design trademark. The court enjoined Payless from "... importing, exporting, selling, distributing, offering to sell, soliciting orders for, taking orders for, and/or advertising or promoting, footwear bearing a design similar to Asics' Stripe Design trademark and designated as Payless's Champion shoes and/or any and all colourable imitation or variation thereof."

Lectra launches 3D measurement campaign in China

25 Aug 2006

France-based CAD/CAM equipment manufacturer for the textiles, leather and industrial fabrics sectors Lectra has been selected by the China National Institute of Standardisation (CNIS) for the first digital Chinese body measurement campaign.

For this national campaign involving a total of 20,000 children and young adults (aged 4-17) from more than ten Chinese provinces, Lectra has provided its unique 3D measurement solution—based on equipment from its partner, Human Solutions—as well as technical support, training and consulting on measurement methods, protocols and data analysis.

Initiated in 2004, the Chinese campaign aims to formulate various national policies and to provide statistical support for commercial production of apparel, furniture, transportation, and other industries.

Within a few seconds, the company’s BodyScanner solution (consisting of an installation of four columns, each with two CCD cameras and a single eye-safe laser) scans and memorises body volume and calculates the person’s measurements and postures. All measurements are then extracted from the 3D scan and stored for statistical analysis.

Data collection has thus far been completed in China's Shandong and Sichuan provinces; preliminary results will be unveiled at a CNIS press conference in Beijing this month.

Such results could be used to update sizes and patterns for the ready-to-wear industry, with the aim to satisfy consumers by introducing the notion of 'perfect fit' clothing that corresponds with the desires of individual consumers. The results will also benefit other sectors, including the furniture and automotive industries.

Gottschalks posts improved Q2 results

---

25 Aug 2006

American apparel and footwear retailer Gottschalks Inc. reported net income of $486,000 for the second quarter compared with net income of $259,000 for the second quarter of 2005.

Total sales increased 1.2% to $153.4 million compared with $151.6 million for the second quarter last year.

First half net loss was $3.5 million compared with $1.7 million in the first six months of fiscal 2005. First half total sales increased slightly to $296.9 million from $295.7 million for the same period in 2005.

President and chief executive officer Jim Famalette stated, "We experienced strong performances in our core merchandise categories of shoes, accessories, cosmetics and better sportswear across our existing store base and we have begun to see the benefits of the re-fixturing program we are implementing in shoes and accessories."