Details of The Summit 2002, the third international conference organised by the publishers of World Sports Activewear, DuPont ATS and ispo have recently been announced. The venue for the conference is Evian, known internationally for the quality of its water. This June it will be recognised for its impact on the sports activewear industry.

Evian - more than just a watering hole



The Hotel Royal on the South shore of Lac Léman (Lake Geneva).

In 2000, World Sports Activewear launched its The Summit programme in a joint venture with DuPont Cordura. The first conference was held high in the mountains of Austria and set a standard to follow for future events. The approach to building the programme was in line with the philosophy of the magazine: The Summit was to have a wide appeal to the key companies in the worldwide industry, not linked to the promotion of any particular fibre, sport or interest but to open the industry to advanced thinking, technology and innovation. In 2001, while The Summit moved from the peaks to sea level at Tarragona in Spain, the standards set the previous year were once again matched. For 2002, delegates to the third edition of The Summit will be climbing again - on this occasion to Evian, France, with the Haute Savoy Alps as a backdrop to the shores of Lake Geneva.

The seminars being presented make it a racing certainty that The Summit, now also in association with ispo, will again match expectations.

The two-day event (June 6-7) is presenting a four-theme programme: product reincarnation; bringing products to market; the changing face of technology; the future landscape. It is an event that top management and opinion formers in the worldwide sports activewear industry should not miss.

"Sustainable development is one of the mega-trends facing industry. It needs to ensure that today's needs do not jeopardise those of future generations," says World Sports Activewear's Editor-in-Chief, David Buirski. How appropriate therefore that Janine Benyus will be speaking on biomimicry and the art of well adapted design. The title of her address is 'The Lotus and the Peacock'. "The discipline of the market-place has a remarkable ability to unleash creativity," she says, "but these days, it may not be enough." Innovators are turning to a new design influence called biomimicry. In essence, it consults nature for inspiration, advice and standards. The core idea is that life has been on earth for nearly four billion years, adapting to conditions on earth, and today hundreds of scientists and designers are now consciously emulating life's genius.

While fibre specialist Jim Lunt will be speaking on a more sustainable solution for textiles and the environment, Michael Braungart, the founder of EPEA International Umweltforschung, Germany, and co-founder of McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry in the USA, has chosen design for reincarnation as his subject. His expertise centres on establishing a link between chemistry and product design, by which material streams are analysed and optimised to ensure a reduction of costs for liability.

The Summit has a reputation for focusing on innovation in general, as well as branding and the changing world of manufacturing. As has become tradition, top speakers on product development and branding will be providing the audience with guidelines on how success can be achieved in these crucial areas.

The sports activewear industry has always been ready to adopt new technologies and systems; but new technologies over the past decade have hit the industry at vastly increased rates. Consumers themselves have been assaulted with a vast amount of information which must be more than a little confusing. Words such as phase change and nanotechnology are being bandied about on the assumption that the industry players fully understand these concepts which in truth are sufficiently complex to tax Ph.D post-graduates. The whole arena of optimising human performance will come under scrutiny in what promises to be the most stimulating conference yet.

"It's an ambitious programme," says Keith Milne, the European marketing manager for Active & Outdoor at DuPont ATS. "It's important to remember that the industry needs to have opportunities such as The Summit to take an overview of what is happening and hear of the trends and future influences that will impact on the sports business. The routine of business often works against creative thought. It's why World Sports Activewear, ispo and ourselves have created a relaxed networking forum for industry leaders to meet and benefit from the experiences and knowledge of other like minded people in a non competitive environment."

The Royal Parc Evian will certainly provide the right environment.