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Deckers appoints senior vice president

26 August 2005

Deckers Outdoor Corporation has appointed Colin Clark as senior vice president - international, effective September 1, 2005. In this role, Mr. Clark will be responsible for all aspects of Deckers' international business, including sales, product, and marketing, as well as managing Deckers international distributors. Mr. Clark will report directly to the CEO of the Company.

Angel Martinez, president and chief executive officer of Deckers Outdoor Corporation, stated, "Colin brings with him a wealth of international expertise that we believe will be an ideal fit with our organisation and the global direction of our brands."

Colin Clark, 42, has just spent 13 years at The Rockport Company, a subsidiary of Reebok International Ltd., serving most recently as vice president & general manager - International.

ITGLWF tells European clothing retailers to stop complaining

26 August 2005

European clothing retailers have been told to stop complaining about recent trade restraints placed on textiles and clothing imports from China. Their current campaign against EU action was described as verging on the hysterical and devoid of substance" by Neil Kearney, general secretary of the Brussels-based International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF).

The European Union and China opened trade talks after the EU halted imports of Chinese textiles goods which had breached quota limits agreed earlier in the year. As a result, stocks of sweaters, trousers, bras and other garments have been piling up in European port warehouses since July.

Said Mr. Kearney: Like lemmings, European and US retailers rushed headlong into China when trade regulation in the textile and clothing sector ended at the beginning of the year. In the process, they abandoned their long-term suppliers elsewhere, including in some of the world's poorest countries. They knew full well the terms of China's accession to the World Trade Organisation, which included provisions for safeguard action on textiles and clothing trade until the beginning of 2008.

But ignoring all this, they piled order upon order, which resulted in China shipping more in the first few months of 2005 than in the whole of the previous year. In the meantime, many of their previous suppliers were going out of business in countries like Mauritius, Lesotho and Cambodia, leaving workers there destitute. Not a word of regret was heard from those now whinging about the possibility of empty shelves."

Quiksilver exceeds 95% ownership of Rossignol

26 August 2005

Outdoor sports brand Quiksilver, Inc. has announced that it now owns directly or indirectly over 95% of French company Rossignol, with over 96% of the voting rights, and has initiated the mandatory squeeze out to acquire the remaining shares. The company launched a second tender offer period in July that has now settled, resulting in the acquisition of enough shares to push its ownership over the 95% threshold. The company anticipates completing the acquisition of all remaining shares of Rossignol near the end of September 2005.

Delta Apparel reports drop in sales in Q4

26 August 2005

Apparel manufacturer, Delta Apparel, Inc. has reported a drop in sales in the fourth quarter ended July 2, 2005. Net sales fell to $66.3 million from $72.9 million recorded in the prior year's fourth quarter. Net income for the fiscal quarter was $3.2 million compared with the prior year's level of $5.4 million.

However, there was more positive news for the full year results as net sales increased 9.6% to a record $228.1 million compared with $208.1 million in the prior year and net income for fiscal year 2005 increased 15.5% to $11.2 million.

The company has also announced, in a separate release, that it completed the purchase of substantially all of the assets of privately held Junkfood Clothing. The purchase price consists of $20 million of cash, a $2.5 million seller promissory note, and contingent payments with respect to each of the four fiscal years following closing, payable if certain performance targets are met. Delta Apparel financed the cash portion of the purchase price through an amendment to its asset-based secured revolving credit facility.

Junkfood Clothing is a t-shirt manufacturing company owned by designers Natalie Grof and Blaine Halvorson.

Eschler wins Eurobike Award

25 August 2005

Switzerland's Christian Eschler AG has won the Eurobike Award 2005 in the 'Clothing, Equipment for Cyclists' sector.

The award, which was organised for the first time this year, recognises particularly innovative designs for products and accessories in the field of cycling.

Eschler won the award for its Bodymapping" fabric development which uses various structures in one piece of clothing, without the manufacturer having to cut out various fabrics and sew them together.

Tests confirm deficiencies in Zylon Vests

25 August 2005

The US Department of Justice (DOJ), as part of its Body Armour Safety Initiative testing, has announced that test results indicate that used Zylon-containing body armour vests may not provide the intended level of ballistic resistance. As a result, DOJ will adopt new interim requirements for its body armour compliance testing programme, and will add an additional $10 million to the $23.6 million already available to law enforcement agencies through DOJ's Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) programme to assist in the replacement of Zylon-based body armour vests.

NIJ performed ballistic testing on 103 Zylon-containing used armour vests from law enforcement agencies across the United States. Of these vests, 60 (58%) were penetrated by at least one round during a six-shot test series. Of those that passed penetration testing, 91% showed excessive "backface deformation," an indicator of the potential blunt trauma experienced by an officer wearing the armour. Only four used armour vests tested met all performance criteria under body armour standards for new body armour.

In response to the findings, the Japanese maker of Zylon fibre, Toyobo, said that it had not had the chance to examine the underlying data supporting the report but that it was confident that it had acted in a responsible and transparent manner.

Huntsman announces temporary shutdown of PO/MTBE facility

25 August 2005

Huntsman Corporation has announced that has temporarily shut down its PO/MTBE manufacturing facility in Port Neches, Texas for unscheduled maintenance and repairs.

The facility has an annual production capacity of 525 million pounds of PO, 260 million gallons of MTBE and 145 million pounds of propylene glycol. A separate Huntsman subsidiary's MTBE extraction unit, also located in Port Neches, Texas, with annual production capacity of 160 million gallons, remains operational.

Huntsman expects the shutdown to last for approximately 48 days which is likely to negatively affect contribution margins in the Polyurethanes and Performance Products segments by approximately $30 million in the third quarter.

Peter Huntsman, president and CEO, said, "Safety is our top priority.

While we regret the commercial and financial impact, we believe a temporary shutdown is necessary to ensure that this facility continues to operate in a safe manner. We are working very closely with our customers to limit the impact on their operations."

Huntsman is a global manufacturer of differentiated and commodity chemicals. Its operating companies manufacture basic products for a variety of global industries including chemicals, footwear, and textiles.

Alpina opens subsidiary in Ukraine

24 August 2005

Slovenian footwear maker, Alpina, has set up a subsidiary in Ukraine, aimed at increasing its exports

A statement released by Alpina said that it had chosen Ukraine given the low supply of the market by western manufacturers and the rising standard of living in this market, with a population 48 million.

The new company, named Alpina UA, is based in Kiev, and will initially focus on wholesale footwear, with plans for it to open its own stores at a later date.
Alpina UA is the ninth company that Alpina has established abroad, having already set up subsidiaries in Croatia, Serbia-Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Hungary and Bulgaria. It also plans to open a store in Romania in September.

BASF establishes regional service centre in Malaysia

24 August 2005

German specialty chemical company, BASF, has established a regional service centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The new company, known as BASF Asia Pacific Service Centre Sdn Bhd, will provide support services in finance and accounting, information technology and systems, and human resources to BASF subsidiaries and affiliates in 15 countries in the Asia Pacific region.

BASF will invest over €21 million to set up the new operating unit, which will allow the company to standardise processes, leverage new technology, and establish services to support the rapid growth of BASF's business in Asia Pacific.

The regional service centre presently employs more than 130 staff, including over 100 Malaysians. The centre will be fully operational by 2007, and will then employ about 400, mostly local people. BASF will invest more than €500,000 in recruiting and training staff for this office.

By integrating and centralising services that are currently provided on a local basis by more than 53 companies in the region, BASF will continue to establish a learning organisation in Asia. The service centre in Malaysia will increase our flexibility and strengthen our overall competitiveness," said Dr. Andreas Kreimeyer, member of the board of executive directors of BASF. Malaysia was chosen as the location due to the availability of skilled staff with business and language skills – most importantly Chinese, Korean and Japanese – and its stable and competitive economic environment."

Gap launches new chain

24 August 2005

Gap Inc. is to open the first of its new women's apparel stores, Forth & Towne, on August 24, in New York, and will open a further four stores in the Chicago area on August 31. Aimed at meeting the needs of women over the age of 35, the concept offers fashionable clothing designed under four brands tailored to a range of lifestyles. The brands, Allegory, Vocabulary, Prize and Gap Edition, will offer casual, business or formal apparel.

We have a deep understanding of who our customer is, and we believe Forth & Towne will provide her with an experience she's never seen before," said Gary Muto, president, Forth & Towne. Forth & Towne will provide everything in one intimate space: from great style and dependable fit, to a beautiful setting and exceptional service."

Sara Lee names new CFO

24 August 2005

Sara Lee Branded Apparel Americas/Asia has named E. Lee Wyatt Jr. to the new position of chief financial officer (CFO), effective Sept. 6, 2005.

In February 2005, Sara Lee Corporation announced its intent to spin off its apparel operations. In assuming the CFO position, Wyatt, 52, will be responsible for many of the new roles that Sara Lee Branded Apparel Americas/Asia will be required to have as an independent, publicly held company. He will report to Lee Chaden, chief executive officer.

With 30 years of financial experience, Wyatt joins the company from Sonic Automotive, Inc., where he was executive vice president, chief financial officer and treasurer. Previously, he served as vice president of administration and chief financial officer of Sealy Corporation and senior vice president of finance and administration at Brown Shoe Company.

Burlington Coat factory reports higher sales

24 August 2005

Burlington Coat Factory Warehouse Corporation has reported increased sales for its fourth quarter and year ended May 28, 2005. For the three months ended May 28, 2005, net income was $15.3 million compared with $21.6 million last year. Net sales for the fourth quarter were $756.9 million compared with $678.1 million for the fourth quarter ended May 29, 2004, an increase of 11.6%.

For the year ended May 28, 2005, net income was $105.0 million. This compares with net income of $68.0 million for the year ended May 29, 2004.

As of May 28, 2005, Burlington Coat Factory operated 362 stores in 42 states principally under the name Burlington Coat Factory.

Babolat tennis shoe with Michelin sole launched

24 August 2005

French racquet and string manufacturer, Babolat and tyre specialist, Michelin, have worked together to develop a new high performance tennis shoe, the Team All Court, that has now been launched in the USA.

Having studied players' specific movements on court, Babolat collaborated with Michelin to design a special outsole that combines side-to-side boosting, shock absorption and comfort, with abrasion resistance for top performance during play.

The Team All Court is the first in what will be a six-model line of durable, high-performance tennis shoes sold in the United States. Andy Roddick, 2003 US Open Champion and winner of the 2005 US Open Series, recently signed an agreement to wear Babolat tennis shoes starting in January 2006.

The 2005 French Open runner-up Mariano Puerta is already wearing Babolat shoes.

BASF to present eco-friendly products at ITMA Asia

23 August 2005

At ITMA Asia in Singapore on October 17 − 21, 2005, BASF will present its latest products and processes for textile processing that are said to be both economically and ecologically friendlier.

For example, Cyclanon XC-W, a newly launched soaping agent for reactive dyeings, is said to improve the quality of washing off and significantly reduce the effort of producing dyeings. By considerably lessening water and energy consumption, Cyclanon XC-W protects valuable resources and lowers production costs.
BASF will present products for a wide range of textile processes including products and concepts for weaving, pre-treatment, analogue and digital printing, coating and finishing as well as dyeing auxiliaries. Among these products, it will highlight its Lurapret textile coatings which are said to provide such functionalities as temperature regulation, protection from moisture, and elasticity, making outdoor clothing both long-lasting and comfortable while protecting the wearer.

Celanese announces emulsions price increases

23 August 2005

US-based global chemicals company, Celanese Chemicals has announced that it will increase the price for all PVAc homopolymer, VAE co-polymers, vinyl-acrylic and acrylic emulsion polymers in North America by 7-12%, effective for shipments on or after September 15, 2005, or as contracts allow. Pricing will reflect unique technology and delivery requirements for each product.

Celanese Emulsions, a business of Celanese Chemicals, supplies emulsion and adhesive polymers to the textiles and nonwovens industries.

Fairway and Greene win's top men's apparel vendor

23 August 2005

Fairway & Greene has been selected as the winner of the Top Men's Vendor award by the highly respected Association of Golf Merchandisers (AGM) for the third consecutive year in an annual survey of its members. The survey is designed to assist AGM in gathering industry statistics and determining the needs of its members for future educational initiatives.

AGM is a professional association of golf-related vendors and professional vendors located all over the world.

To be selected to receive this great award for the third consecutive year is truly an honour, especially from an impressive organisation such as AGM", said Todd Martin, vice president of sales and marketing for Fairway & Greene.

Founded in 1995, Fairway & Greene has grown to become one of the dominant players in the high-end golf apparel market.

A&E signs agreement to acquire Robison-Anton Textile Co.

23 August 2005

Ruddick Corporation has announced that its sewing thread subsidiary, American & Efird, Inc. (A&E), has signed an agreement to purchase assets of the thread and yarn business of Robison-Anton Textile Co. and certain of its affiliated companies (Robison-Anton). The agreement is subject to various customary conditions to closing and is expected to be completed on August 29, 2005. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Bruce N. Anton, the current president of Robison-Anton, will continue to be the president of A&E's newly created Robison-Anton Textile Company embroidery thread division.

India's manufactured goods exports increase 20%

23 August 2005

According to India's Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Kamal Nath, the share of manufactured goods in India's exports has increased to more than 70% in the last three years. The overall export of manufactured goods covering categories such as leather, textiles and chemicals (but excluding petroleum products) registered a growth of 20% during 2004-05 compared with the previous year.

Shri Kamal Nath added that the government had initiated action to further increase exports of manufactured goods which would result in significant value addition. The strategies formulated to encourage manufacturing activities include technological and infrastructural upgrades, the correction of inverted duty structure and ensuring that domestic industry is not disadvantaged in the Free Trade Agreements/Regional Trade Agreements. Government schemes such as the Integrated Leather Development Scheme (ILDS), the Technology Upgrade Fund Scheme (TUFS) for modernisation of the Textile and Jute industries, and the Industrial Infrastructure Upgrade Scheme (IIUS), etc. are already in operation to further augment the export of manufactured goods," the minister said.

TEXPO 2005 to help Middle East garment manufacturers compete

22 August 2005

TEXPO, dedicated to meeting the requirements of the region's apparel and allied industries, is scheduled to take place at the Expo Centre Sharjah from September 12-15, 2005.

It is hoped that the event will attract both garment manufacturers and those involved in related industries such as tent makers, boat builders and others looking out for new technology and solutions to cope with the challenges facing the industry post quota 2005.

"Post Quota 2005, garment manufacturers in the region are seeking specialisation to attract buyers," said Mr. Fasahat Ali Khan, acting director of Expo Centre Sharjah.

"TEXPO 2005 will be a one stop platform for the apparel industry to identify solutions and technology that will not only bring down production costs but also enhance quality," he added.

Swanndri announces design partnership

22 August 2005

New Zealand brand Swanndri has announced that it has entered a new design partnership with international fashion designer, Karen Walker.

The collaboration will produce a lifestyle collection known as Swanndri by Karen Walker, including products such as luggage and outdoor clothing.

This partnership comes as a result of Swanndri's strategic review of its business over the past 12 months, in which it identified two key areas for development. The first was the need for investment in product development and innovation in the rural and industrial markets. The second key area was to extend and further develop the Swanndri lifestyle range, and Swanndri sees this partnership as a way of making the distinctive Swanndri values more relevant for New Zealanders and ultimately, an international audience.

"New Zealanders have always loved the Swanndri brand and the emotions it conjures up. Now with Swanndri by Karen Walker the opportunity exists to add Swanndri to your life through strong, refined products from computer bags, to umbrellas, overnight bags to trench coats," said Julian Bowden, CEO of Swanndri.

Sympatex and Ricosta collaborate on children's footwear range

22 August 2005

In an attempt to improve the comfort of children's footwear, Sympatex and Ricosta

have created a new waterproof and breathable children's shoe to keep kid's feet happy.

The collection includes the 'Bart' shoe, which is a completely functional leather shoe for boys. It is part of Ricosta's back-to-school range and features Sympatex's intelligent waterproof breathable membrane.

US, China trade talks progress

22 August 2005

China and the United States have made progress in talks to reach a comprehensive agreement on textile trade at a two-day conference in San Francisco - and a new round of negotiations is expected soon.

The two sides agreed to continue consultations to find a mutually satisfactory solution after each party explained its stance, China's commerce ministry spokesperson Chong Quan said, adding that some substantial differences still remain.

The US Trade Representative's chief textile negotiator, David Spooner was quoted as saying that the talks on August 16 and 17 were productive and had gone very well.

A new round of talks is set to take place in Beijing before the end of this month, when the US Government is scheduled to decide whether to launch additional safeguard measures against Chinese textile and apparel products.

PAD System Technologies opens Indian office

22 August 2005

Montreal based PAD System, a provider of CAD/CAM integrated solutions, dedicated to the apparel, textile and leather industry, has recently established an India Office in New Delhi and Bangalore and has joined forces with Jay Cee Enterprises to provide their customers with a full Demo Room in both these two major cities as well as their other ranch offices in Bangalore, Tirupur, Chennai, Jaipur, Kanpur, Secunderabad and Ludhiana.

Ms Linda Breault, PAD System's international sales representative, will be responsible for the development of the Indian market, working closely with the newly appointed PAD India Team to provide training and support to accommodate India's marketing within the apparel industry.