Business Week

12th July 05 – 18th September 05

Mitsui acquires Pertex

16 September 2005

Following some weeks of speculation Mitsui & Co. Ltd has announced that it has acquired the Pertex brand. Included in this are all rights to the brand names, intellectual property, know-how and some key machinery formerly owned by Perseverance Mills Ltd.

Speaking from his office in Osaka, Japan, Mr Tetsuo Nonomura, director and general Manager – Textile Division, stated, Mitsui is committed to the research and development of innovative textile technology for which Pertex has gained a worldwide reputation with products such as Pertex Quantum, Pertex Equilibrium and the Backpacker Magazine award winning Endurance technology."

Mr Nonomura went on to say, the transfer of Pertex technology to our factories in Japan is well advanced and the manufacturing equipment will be sited in lines dedicated to the production of Pertex products."
Mitsui have retained the services of Pertex brand founder Steve Laycock with responsibility for marketing and new product direction.

DyStar introduces Levafix FastRed CA

16 September 2005

Germany's DyStar has introduced the latest addition to its Levafix CA range of high-performance reactive dyes, Levafix FastRed CA. This new copper-free dye can be applied by all common dyeing methods and is said to be especially suitable for pale to medium shades. According to the company, its features include excellent reproducibility and reliable application, offering outstanding light and wet light fastness even in the presence of acid and alkaline perspiration, and alkaline or oxidative detergent residues, and it has very high fastness to repeated washing.

In common with all Levafix CA dyes, it meets the requirements of all established ecological standards: it is metal- and AOX-free, has an excellent fixation profile and is easy to wash off, thus saving processing water and energy.

British university backs new prototype running shoe

16 September 2005

UK physiotherapist Adri Hartveld has been working with Staffordshire University's biomechanics experts for six years to research, develop and test new shoe technology with the objective of preventing common injuries. And now, with the help of the University of Stafford's Enterprise Fellowship Scheme, he has set up a business, Healus Ltd, in a bid to develop his prototype running shoe commercially.

A keen runner for 30 years, Mr Hartveld said: "My main aim is to help people to be able to run for longer and to run more without injuries. During my time as a physiotherapist I've looked at how exercise can achieve this but for the last seven years I've looked at how shoes can do this. I've come up with a shoe sole and have been able to prove that it reduces the impact forces when running by approximately half." And it's looking promising already as earlier this month he and his prototype shoes raced home in first place in the Wolverhampton marathon - despite being sent for half a mile in the wrong direction.

"The shoes make me run with a bounce and not with a bang and so that gives me competitive advantage over other runners," explained Hartveld.

Vanson Leathers introduces new features to motorcycle jackets

16 September 2005

US manufacturer of leather motorcycle jackets, Vanson leathers, has launched its new Cobra 2 (COB2) leather motorcycle jacket which incorporates a patented wind-curtain that allows the rider to control the airflow through the jacket and thus regulate the temperature.

According to Vanson, when the wind-curtain is wide open it allows for full air flow. With the wind-curtain closed it stops airflow completely, giving the rider control over the amount of airflow, allowing cooling air to flow inside the jacket for summer riding, for example, or reduced air flow for cooler days and early morning rides.

The jacket also includes a patented RAM Air Sleeve Vent, located inside the curve of the elbow, which channels air up the arm of the jacket to the torso while maintaining sleeve circumference for safety even when the vent is wide open; and the Floating Armour System (FAS) which allows the armour to float for rider comfort while remaining stationary in the event of a crash.

Avery Dennison acquires Sri Lankan apparel tag company

16 September 2005

Avery Dennison Retail Information Services has acquired Impressions (Pte) Ltd., a Sri Lanka-based producer of apparel tags and labels. The company state that the Impressions acquisition would strengthen Avery Dennison RIS' ability to help apparel manufacturing operations throughout Sri Lanka satisfy the product identification portion of their quick response and floor ready merchandise requirements.

Incorporated in 1991 and with a staff of 150, Impressions is one of the longest established apparel tag and label manufacturers in the country. The ISO 9001-certified organisation is equipped to manufacture brand enhancing woven and printed fabric labels and to produce product identification tags and labels on offset and screen presses.

AWI opens Shanghai office

15 September 2005

In an attempt to open up the Chinese market to merino products, Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI) has opened an office in Shanghai. In a statement, AWI said that it aims to work with businesses to develop innovative Merino yarns and fabrics, and to get wider commercial uptake of the existing processing technologies, yarns and fabrics.

More than 150 Chinese textile and apparel manufacturing industry representatives attended the official opening ceremony, and were joined by Australian Consul-General to Shanghai Sam Gerovich and AWI representatives including Deputy Chairman Brian van Rooyen, Director Chris Abel and CEO Dr Len Stephens.

Dr Stephens said, "It's vital that AWI has regular, face-to-face contact with the key decision makers in the manufacturing and retail sector. We need to be on the ground to build relationships with retail and manufacturing businesses in China."

AWI now has a team of six based in Shanghai, focused on building alliances with key players in the knitwear, menswear and womenswear market segments. It also has a representative based in Beijing, working on improving market access, in particular the development of the China-Australia free trade agreement.

Huntsman to build Polyetheramine facility in Singapore

15 September 2005

US specialty chemical company, Huntsman has announced plans to build a world scale polyetheramine manufacturing facility in Jurong Island, Singapore.The company expects the facility, which will have an annual capacity of approximately 30 million pounds, to be operational in the first quarter of 2007.

President, Peter R. Huntsman commented, "Our construction of this new facility is

consistent with our corporate strategy of selectively investing in our differentiated businesses, and will help us to meet the rapidly growing demand for polyetheramines, especially in the critical Asia/Pacific region."

Kraton increases prices for Kraton D Polymers in Europe

15 September 2005

Kraton Polymers LLC has announced a price increase in Europe for its clear and oil extended SBS polymers of €100 per metric ton. The increase will go into effect on October 1, 2005.

"Upward trends in raw material and energy costs, as well as tight supply of key raw materials have impacted availability," said Stephen Evans, general manager for Paving, Roofing and Footwear.

Kraton Polymers LLC is a global specialty chemical company and is the world's largest producer of styrenic block copolymers ("SBCs"), which enhance the performance of applications including adhesives and sealants, Its production facilities are located in the United States, The Netherlands, Germany, France, Brazil and Japan.

G-III Apparel Group appoints new director and CFO

15 September 2005

US manufacturer of outerwear and sportswear, G-III Apparel Group, Ltd. has promoted Neal Nackman to the position of chief financial officer (CFO) and elected Laura Pomerantz to its board of directors. Mr. Nackman has been the company's vice president of finance since joining G-III in December 2003. Ms. Pomerantz is a principal at PBS Realty Advisors LLC, where she advises and negotiates for a wide range of clients on retail and commercial real-estate strategies and transactions.
The company has fashion licences, among others, for Calvin Klein, Kenneth Cole, Nine West, Cole Haan, Guess?, Jones Apparel, Tommy Hilfiger, and sports licences with the National Football League, National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball, and National Hockey League.

Implus launches new performance footbed for cleats

15 September 2005

US footwear accessory manufacturer Implus Footcare has launched a new performance footbed under its Sof Sole brand that is designed for athletic cleats. The Cleat performance footbed is designed to reduce cleat pressure on the feet and increase comfort for the athlete, because the footbed is designed to absorb the shock that occurs when cleats make contact with the ground.

Designed for all foot types, including youth sizes, it has been developed for use in all football, soccer, baseball or track shoes with cleats. The footbed is constructed of lightweight (less than 1 oz.) Implus foam and includes a Hydrologix moisture management system to wick moisture away from the feet.

Anyone who participates in sports knows that being comfortable on your feet can help improve your performance," said John Andrews, vice president of Marketing for Implus Footcare. Cleats are made of hard materials that are designed to take the abuse of a full sporting season. The result is shoes that sacrifice comfort to increase durability. The Cleat footbed allows athletes to get the same durability from the cleats with the added benefit of comfort!"

Bayer included in climate protection index

15 September 2005

German specialty chemical company, Bayer, has been included in the Climate Leadership Index, the first global stock index for climate protection, in recognition of its efforts to reduce greenhouse gases.

"Inclusion in the Climate Leadership Index confirms our efforts in recent years to reduce CO_2 emissions and other so-called greenhouse gases," said Dr. Udo Oels, Bayer management board member

responsible for Innovation, Technology and Environment.

In terms of greenhouse gas emissions Bayer has already exceeded the targets specified in the Kyoto Protocol and by the Committee of Inquiry of the German Bundestag: The aim was to reduce emissions in Germany by 25% from the 1990 level by 2005 and by 50% by 2020. Bayer has already reduced emissions of greenhouse gases worldwide by more than 60%. "With this significant decrease we have made a sustained contribution to protecting the climate, achieving this by using state-of-the-art technology, closing old facilities and deploying energy-efficient power units," remarked Dr. Oels.

The Climate Leadership Index established in 2002 assesses companies' sustainable contribution to climate protection and to what extent they handle the relevant issues credibly and transparently.

Bayer also features on the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index) and the European Dow Jones STOXX Sustainability Index, both of which it has featured on since they were first introduced in 1999 and 2001 respectively.

A&E expands operations in China

14 September 2005

Ruddick Corporation has announced that its subsidiary, American & Efird, Inc. (A&E), has acquired an 80% ownership interest in Jimei Spinning Company Ltd. located in Hengshui City, Hebei Province, China on September 9, 2005. Jimei is a thread yarn spinning company created from the operations of Hengshui Yuanda Group Co., Ltd. with sales of approximately $14 million in 2004.

The thread yarn operations of Jimei will consist of a manufacturing facility located on the same complex as A&E's current thread yarn spinning joint venture, Hengmei Spinning Company, Ltd, in Hengshui City.. Simultaneously with this acquisition, A&E acquired an additional 20% interest in Hengmei from its joint venture partner Hengshui North Thread Industry Company, bringing its total ownership interest to 80%. North Thread has also entered into an agreement to acquire the remaining 20% ownership interest of Jimei from Yuanda.

Avery Dennison becomes certified RFID technology partner

14 September 2005

LXE Inc., a US developer of rugged mobile computing solutions, has announced that Avery Dennison, a producer of pressure-sensitive labelling materials, office products and retail tag, ticketing and branding systems, has become a certified LXE RFID technology partner. Avery Dennison is the first technology provider to be certified as part of LXE's recently announced RFID certification programme.

Certified LXE RFID technology partners provide RFID products that compliment the RX1 rugged forklift-mounted RFID reader. To become certified, technology partners must demonstrate complimentary value and rigorously test their products to ensure compatibility with the RX1 system.

Tissu Premier attracts 6,177 visitors

14 September 2005

Tissu Premier recorded a total of 6,177 visitors over the two-day fabric event held September 7-8, in Lille, Paris. Visitors included representatives from big name brands such as Reebok, Lee cooper, Tommy Hilfiger, M&S, and Carrefour, who were shown the summer 2006 offerings from the 410 exhibitors at the fair.

Sportswear was top of the agenda at the exhibition. Tissu Premier launched its third Designers' Expo in the Sport & Innovation area, where young designers from Lille, Roubaix and London created designs for men, women and children in three categories: activewear, lifestyle and urbanwear.

Scottish soccer team fights counterfeit goods

14 September 2005

Scottish soccer team Glasgow Rangers estimates that it could be losing up to £5-£6 million a year to imitation team products and has employed several different security measures to try to combat the problem, the latest of which is a collaboration with design concept, brand trimmings and logistics company Nilorn Calmon UK.

Rangers has adopted the Nilorn Secure product in its merchandise - a covert detection mark that can be applied invisibly to labels. Detection is done either by visual reading or by an acoustic detection device. Nilorn Secure may be used alone or as part of a layered" approach, combining overt and covert security strategies.
Nilorn offers labels, tickets and packaging that can incorporate special anti-counterfeiting measures, both obvious and concealed. Other ways of invisible identification can be in the form of sequential numbering, UV inks, holographic labels, watermarks or security inks that make it possible to spot a counterfeit.

Esjot Group opens new factory in China

14 September 2005

Producer of structural safety components for the safety shoe industry, Esjot Group, part of the UK-based Texon International, is to open a new factory in Foshan in October, to meet the increasing requirement for high quality steel toecaps locally, which is set to grow by over 60% in 2006 and over 75% by 2007. The company stated that it decided to establish a facility in China as a result of the new legislation in Chinese industry demanding stricter safety controls and implementation of new quality standard requirements, which as a result has increased the demand for personal protective equipment, such as safety boots.

The new factory will open alongside Texon's existing manufacturing facilities in Foshan, which have been established for over 14-years. The organisation employs a local workforce, including local management, and says it has strong relationships with local government.

The plant will also utilise the knowledge, resources, and equipment of Esjot's European facilities and will introduce experienced European technicians to provide training in China and ensure that European standards are maintained.

In addition, European machinery is being shipped to the Chinese factory, to allow the site to produce toecaps from a much larger coil of steel.

European Commission fines producers of industrial thread €43.497 million

14 September 2005

The European Commission has fined thread producers from Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom a total of €43.497 million for operating cartels in the market for industrial thread - used in a variety of industries to sew or embroider products such as clothes, leather goods, and footwear - in violation of EC Treaty rules on restrictive business practices.

Cartel behaviour is illegal, unjustified and unjustifiable, and will be punished severely no matter how large or small the companies involved," declared Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes. I will not allow consumers to be denied the benefits of the Single Market by companies carving up markets between themselves."

The companies involved were: Ackermann Nähgarne GmbH & Co, Amann und Söhne GmbH, Barbour Threads Ltd, Belgian Sewing Thread N.V., Bieze Stork B.V., Bisto Holding B.V., Coats Ltd, Coats UK Ltd, Cousin Filterie SA, Dollfus Mieg et Cie SA, Donisthorpe & Company Ltd, Gütermann AG, Hicking Pentecost plc, Oxley Threads Ltd, Perivale Gütermann Ltd, and Zwicky & Co AG.

The decision to impose the fines was based on information obtained during unannounced inspections carried out by the

Commission in November 2001 at the premises of several y producers of textile/haberdashery products. During these inspections and the subsequent investigation, the Commission discovered evidence that undertakings had taken part in three cartel agreements: a cartel on the market in thread for industrial customers in Benelux and the Nordic countries from January 1990 until September 2001; a cartel on the market in thread for industrial customers in the United Kingdom from October 1990 until September 1996; and a cartel on the market in thread for automotive customers in the European Economic Area (EEA) from May/June 1998 until 15 May 2000.

Wolverine elects Herman Miller chairman to its board

14 September 2005

Footwear brand Wolverine World Wide, Inc. has appointed Michael A. Volkema to the company's board of directors, as of December 1, 2005.

Mr Volkema is the chairman of Herman Miller, Inc., a designer and manufacturer of furnishings for the office and home. Volkema has held senior management positions with Herman Miller since 1990 when the company acquired Meridian, Inc., where he was president and chief operating officer. He became president and CEO of Herman Miller in 1995 and chairman in 2000.

Wolverine’s brands include: Bates, Hush Puppies, Merrell, Sebago and Wolverine.

GDS appoints new project director

14 September 2005

Messe Düsseldorf has named Kirstin Deutelmoser as the new project director for GDS. For the past five years she has held the role of project director at the Leipzig Messe GmbH and was in charge of, among other things, Body Look. She will take up her new role in mid-October.

Mrs Danila Avdiu who has been Messe Düsseldorf ‘s project director since 1999 will move to another project within Messe Düsseldorf following the 100th GDS, September 18-21.

Indo Gulf And Birla Global Finance to merge with Indian Rayon

13 September 2005

The Board of Directors of Indian Rayon And Industries Limited (Indian Rayon), Indo Gulf Fertilisers Limited (Indo Gulf) and Birla Global Finance Limited (Birla Global) have announced a restructuring proposal for the mergers of Indo Gulf and Birla Global with Indian Rayon. The arrangement, valuation reports and share entitlement ratios have also been approved by the respective boards.

The restructuring has been valued at valued at over Rs. 5,000 crores ($1.1 billion).

Under two separate restructuring schemes, Indian Rayon will issue to 1 equity share of Indian Rayon for every 3 equity shares of Indo Gulf to all Indo Gulf shareholders. Indian Rayon will also issue Birla Global Finance shareholders 1 equity share of Indian Rayon for every 3 equity shares of Birla Global Finance held.

In line with the approval of the Board at the same meeting, Indian Rayon proposes to rename the Company as Aditya Birla Nuvo”, subject to approval of its shareholders. The new name mirrors the transformed character of the company.

Vero launches new VISI-Shoes design software

13 September 2005

Vero International Software has introduced a new design software system, VISI-Shoes, developed specifically for the footwear industry. The company stated that it has designed the new system as a direct response to global demand. Through basing the new software on its VISI-Modelling system within its overall VISI-Series

CAD/CAM software solution, it claims to have created an easy-to-use programme in which the entire design and manufacturing process is catered for within a single, seamless environment.

Key features include powerful 3D modelling with combined solid and surface capabilities based on Parasolid, an automatic mould tool construction including upper and lower punches and automatic sole creation to create design and size variations by simple parameter changes that comply with recognised industry standards. It also provides a range of possible benefits allowing the incorporation of individual detail and methods for customised designs through to full volume production of shoes. Within the system, 2D or 3D data from the shoe designer is imported into one of the software's four modules – insole, sole, heel and tool build.

Motexha opens on an upbeat note

12 September 2005

H.E Obaid Humaid Al Tayer, president of Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) inaugurated the Motexha fashion and textiles exhibition on September 12. Some 500 companies and brands from 36 countries are participating at the show and over 5,000 visitors are expected to attend the three-day show.

H.E Obaid Humaid Al Tayer said, Textiles is a rapidly growing industry in the Middle East, and one of the oldest in Dubai, where it sustains imports worth 12 billion dirhams ($3.3 billion). Trade exhibitions such as Motexha make a large contribution towards the development of their respective industries. This year, Motexha boasts a high quality of participants, with diverse representation from various countries worldwide, which in turn reflects the good health of the industry and the consumer alike."

According to a recent study, the Middle East industry for fashion and textile exports is now worth US$ 11.4 billion.

Philips unveils photonic textiles

12 September 2005

Philips is exhibiting its latest textile breakthrough at the Internationale Funkausstellung (IFA) 2005, in Berlin, Germany - photonic textiles, which are fabrics that contain lighting systems and can therefore serve as displays.

According to Philips, the technology can be integrated into clothing, towels, upholstery, and even curtains to allow them to carry visual displays, without compromising the softness of the cloth.

In order to achieve this, Philips Research and textile institute TITV Greiz have developed an interconnecting substrate made entirely of cloth. Researchers from Philips have also created flexible and drapable substrates from plastics and films.

On these substrates, researchers have placed passive matrices of compact RGB LED packages. The pixelated luminaires with relatively large distance between the RGB pixels have been embedded in such everyday objects as cushions, backpacks, and floor mats. Since the fabric material covering the miniature light sources naturally diffuses light, each pixel seems bigger than it actually is. The LEDs, therefore, remain small and unobtrusive, while the fabric retains its soft look and feel.

Philips has also created interactive photonic textiles by incorporating sensors (such as orientation and pressure sensors) and communication devices (such as Bluetooth, GSM) into the fabric.

EC adopts regulation to clear blocked Chinese textile imports

12 September 2005

On September 12, the European Commission adopted a regulation providing the legal grounds for Member States to begin issuing import licenses to Chinese exports currently blocked from entering the European Union. The regulation will come into force on September 14, when Member

states will have the legal grounds to issue import licences to the relevant products.

The regulation has allowed import levels to be modified to provide sufficient amounts to enable the import of all the blocked quantities (estimated at 87 million pieces). Half of this amount will be unblocked through flexibilities agreed with China i.e. the transfer of agreed quantities from 2006 into 2005 in categories 6 (trousers) and 31 (brassieres) to clear the pending goods, as well as partially (up to 5% of the 2006 level) for category 5 (pullovers).

The other half of the quantities needed are being provided by a unilateral increase of the import levels on the European side through the provision of additional quantities.

In order to avoid any possible blockages this year a number of measures have also been agreed. Additional quantities, provided by the EU, have been rounded up in order to have an extra security margin, and flexibility provisions allowing 5% of advance use, 7% of carry over from previous years, and 4% of inter-category transfer among certain product categories.

EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said, I am pleased that the EU and China have been able to resolve this problem with the implementation of the Textiles Agreement in a way that preserves it without unfairly penalising retailers and importers."

Polartec mask tested at 8,000 metres

12 September 2005

Italian Sky runner Bruno Brunod has tested the Polartec Power Shield Mask" on Everest, in order to ascertain the how the garment limits the effects of dehydration and hypothermia. This first test at 8,000 metres is said to have produced excellent results that will be researched further in future tests due to take place later this year in a high-performance environment.

The mask" is the result of a collaborative research and development project between Polartec; the Federation for Sport at Altitude, and the Polytechnic of Turin through consultancy with Filippo Pavesi, Professor for the University Course of Industrial Design at the same university. It works by recovering heat generated by physical effort for re-use, allowing warm and humid air into the respiratory tract. The process is facilitated thanks to the characteristics of the technical fabric Polartec Power Shield which is lightweight, breathable, and warm.

It is hoped that with this patent pending innovation, there is the potential to drastically limit dehydration and hypothermia that threaten personal safety during high altitude alpine adventures.

Bruno Brunod was chosen as the tester because as a Sky runner, even at 8,000 metres, he has the technical capacity to inhale 160–190 litres of air per minute. It is therefore necessary to control the possibility of dehydration and hypothermia.