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The Sportsman's Guide posts net sales increase

15 May 2006

Outdoor clothing and equipment, sporting goods and golf apparel, equipment and footwear company The Sportsman's Guide, Inc. has reported results for the quarter ended March 31, with net sales at the high end of the most recent guidance. Net sales for the company's first quarter were $71.6 million, an approximate 11% increase compared with the $64.6 million reported for the same period in 2005. The increase in net sales for the period was primarily due to increased Internet-related sales.

Net earnings for the first quarter of 2006 were $2.2 million compared with net earnings of $2.3 million for the first quarter in 2005. The decrease in net earnings was due to the adoption of SFAS 123R effective January 1 and applied on a modified prospective basis, which requires all share-based payments, including grants of stock options, to be recognised in the income statement as an operating expense based on their fair values over the requisite service period.

Naturally Advanced Technologies posts Q1 results

15 May 2006

Canadian producer of sustainable, environmentally-friendly fibres and fabrics Naturally Advanced Technologies Inc. has announced its financial results for the three-month period ended March 31.
For the first quarter, sales were $285,200, up 60% compared with $178,600 in the year ago quarter. Net loss for the quarter was $324,800 compared with a net loss of $46,700 for the corresponding quarter in 2005.

"Our overarching goal is to deliver value to the environment, our shareholders and our employees through the proliferation of sustainable fibres," stated Jerry Kroll, CEO of Naturally Advanced Technologies.

Mecmesin expands its presence in Asia

15 May 2006

Product quality testing solutions supplier for industries including plastics, safety and textiles, Mecmesin has announced it will market its products directly to the Southeast Asian market through a new division, Mecmesin Asia Co Ltd, which recently opened in Bangkok, Thailand.

The company has successfully supplied their force and torque analysis equipment to the area for fifteen years in partnership with local distributors, Protool.

Robert Oakley, owner and chairman of the board of Mecmesin, commented, With an impressive increase in our product portfolio, and our own people and operations on the ground in Southeast Asia, Mecmesin are in a strong position to take a significant share of the local market."

Zimmer sells its Polytrade subsidiary

15 May 2006

Plant contractor for the polymers and synthetic fibres industry Zimmer AG, a company of the GEA Group, has sold its subsidiary Polytrade GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, to holding and project development company Zoom Developers Limited headquartered in Mumbai, India, with retrospective effect from January 1.

Polytrade will continue to cooperate closely with Zimmer and will remain its marketing partner for polyester granulates, polyamides and fibres from Zimmer-built plants. Polytrade will also continue its polyester additive and catalyst production and marketing activities under a Zimmer licence.

In the future, Polytrade will further expand its existing business in the area of polymer granulates and the associated raw materials and additives for the spun fibres and packaging markets.

Rockwood reports strong growth in Q1

15 May 2006

Producer of specialty chemicals Rockwood Holdings, Inc. has published first quarter 2006 results. Net sales were up 5.6% to $812.6 million. Excluding the negative impact of foreign currency changes of 6.1%, net sales were up 11.7%.

Net income for the period was $40 million, including $10.5 million related to net non-recurring and other special items, compared with net income of $38.3 million in the first quarter last year. Prior year net income

included income of $33.9 million related to net non-recurring and other special items.

Net sales increased 3.7% for specialty chemicals increased, 14.4% for performance additives, 3.5% for titanium dioxide pigments, 0.9% for advanced ceramics and 8.8% for specialty compounds.

Ethiopia regards India as role model

16 May 2006

At a meeting organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the head of Ethiopia's Trade, Industry and Urban Development Bureau, Mekuria Haile revealed that many African countries see India as a role model for economic development.

Mr Haile called upon India to share its knowledge and technology in many fields including IT, textiles and leather goods in order to help boost Ethiopia's economy.

He asked India to participate in Ethiopia's educational programmes as India has a talented Human Capital resource, commenting that the eight universities in Ethiopia could be increased to 15 with the help of India's expertise.

Mr Haile added that Ethiopia intends setting up a textile park and believes India's expertise in hand woven textiles would be very useful. Similarly, he pointed out that, although hides and skins already form a major part of Ethiopia's export basket, India's expertise and cooperation in minimising transportation costs could help to increase profits.

Joint secretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry P. Dash said it was unfortunate that, although the two countries had historic relations, trade volumes had remained static for the last few years. He said that the Ministry had started its 'Focus Africa' programme and that a Joint Trade Committee was scheduled to meet in June in New Delhi where all aspects of increasing bilateral trade volumes between the two countries would be discussed, including investment and the possibility of joint ventures.

Indian silk industry assured government's full cooperation

16 May 2006

Indian Minister of Textiles Shri Vaghela has called upon the silk industry to use push innovation in the area of silk production. He stipulated that the quality of raw silk must be improved and that a variety of products should also be added.

Speaking at the 20th Export Award Function, organised by the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council in New Delhi, Shri Vaghela said that quality improvement would lead to increased unit value realisation and higher exports. The minister added that the government would provide full cooperation to the silk sector, especially in terms of industry expansion and marketing, stating that the setting up of a Silk Technology Mission similar to the Technology Mission on Cotton would also be considered.

Highlighting the employment potential in the silk sector, he said that the creation of employment in the sericulture sector and the post-cocoon silk industry is very significant and that, when silk exports increase, thousands of jobs could be created.

He also urged the silk industry to be more active in the field of market research and development.

Textronics names VP of marketing and business development

16 May 2006

Electro-textiles producer for industries including sports, healthcare and apparel Textronics, Inc. has appointed Christopher DeFusco as vice president of marketing and business development.

Mr DeFusco will focus on the commercialisation of the company's textile-based physiological sensing systems for medical devices as well as industrial, military and automotive applications for the company's conductive Textro-yarns and Textro-interconnects.

Mr DeFusco has more than 20 years experience in the high technology, medical device and intellectual property industries. Most recently, he served as a board member, vice president, and general manager in charge of US operations for BTG International, Inc., a London-based technology commercialisation company.

Willis Investments in China show strong progress

16 May 2006

Global insurance broker Willis Group Holdings, Ltd. has been awarded significant new construction and marine cargo business with the Fujian Refining and Ethylene Project (FREP).

A $4 billion equity joint venture by Fujian Petrochemical Company Limited (a company jointly owned by Sinopec and Fujian provincial government), Aramco Overseas Company BV and ExxonMobil (China) Petroleum & Petrochemical Company Limited, FREP is the largest world-class foreign refining and petrochemicals project in China to date.

Based in the Fujian Province on China's southeastern coast, the construction of this project will expand annual capacity at the existing refinery from four million tonnes

of oils and chemicals to twelve million tonnes. In addition to upgrading the refinery, the project includes the construction of a number of additional facilities that support the refinery process.

In addition to this important new business news, the company has established an office in the northeastern coastal municipality of Tianjin, China. Tianjin's urban area is the third largest city in Mainland China, with a rapidly growing economy. Major industries include petrochemicals and textiles.

Vietnam to achieve WTO membership

16 May 2006

Negotiations between Vietnam and the United States concerning World Trade Organisation (WTO)membership have been completed, allowing Vietnam to join the global organisation after eleven years of negotiations. The WTO is involved in tariffs, non-tariff barriers, subsidies, trade remedies, trade-related investment measures and financial services.

Consensus has been reached on all points, including sensitive issues such as garments and textiles, and the agreement is likely to be signed in June, in southern Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam originally applied for WTO membership in 1995 and entered into bilateral negotiations with the US in 2002.

According to local officials and economic experts, Vietnam will now be open to more opportunities, particularly in terms of trade, investment, and technology transfer. However, WTO regulations, including those on tariff reduction, service market openness and intellectual property protection must now be adhered to and this will alter the way Vietnam currently operates.

Experts advise that the country should concentrate on the development of private enterprises as well as improving highly competitive items such as textiles, garments and footwear.

German manufacturers to appear at Cinte Techtextil China

16 May 2006

A selection of Germany's top technical textiles manufacturers will appear at Cinte Techtextil China 2006 from September 19-21. Other groups from Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Taiwan and the UK are expected to participate at the technical textiles and nonwovens event.

Exhibitors at the show will include W.L. Gore, Fleissner, Groz-Beckert, and Verseidag Indutex.

"We are very happy to welcome such a fine collection of German companies to Shanghai and to Cinte Techtextil China," said Katy Lam, director Trade Fairs at Messe Frankfurt Hong Kong. "As technical textiles and nonwoven industry in China grows ever more discerning, German manufacturers of high-grade products will find many more opportunities for export sales."

EU welcomes EU-ASIAN Vision Group report

17 May 2006

The EU has welcomed the final report of the EU-ASEAN Vision Group, which was established in 2005 to study ways of strengthening and deepening the trade relations between the EU and ASEAN. The group was established by EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson and his ASEAN colleagues in an attempt to bring fresh thinking to the economic relations between the EU and ASEAN. The report is said to be an important part of Commissioner Mandelson's wider strategy to renew EU trade policy towards Asia.

Mr Mandelson said, "The ASEAN region is changing fast and our trade relations must change with it. Europe’s approach to Asia is often focused on China to the exclusion of the rest of Asia and this Vision Group was an important part of changing that.”

At the centre of the report was a feasibility study on a potential EU-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement. The report suggests such an agreement would boost trade in goods and services and help attract new EU investment to ASEAN, as well as encouraging ASEAN’s increasing investment in the EU.

The report suggests a range of avenues for bringing the EU and ASEAN closer together such as widening access to the EU market, improving protection of intellectual property rights; and aligning some of the EU and ASEAN's regulatory standards to make it easier for businesses to trade.

Fountain Set wins textile industry awards

17 May 2006

Knitted fabrics manufacturer Fountain Set (Holdings) Ltd. has been awarded the "Number 1 Turnover in Textile Knitting Industry in China in 2005 – 2006", "No.1 Export in Textile & Garment Industry in China in 2005 - 2006" and "No. 18 Turnover in Textile & Garment Industry in China in 2005 - 2006" by the China National Textile & Apparel Council Statistics Centre.

HA Chung Fong, chairman and managing director of Fountain Set said, We are very proud to be accredited the textile industry awards, which reaffirm our leadership in the field of circular knitted fabrics. We owe this accomplishment to the devoted support of our valued customers, and the outstanding effort from our dedicated

staff in upholding the quality and innovation of our products. I truly appreciate their contributions."

Dick's Sporting Goods reports Q1 sales increase

17 May 2006

Sporting equipment, apparel and footwear retailer Dick's Sporting Goods, Inc. has published sales and earnings results for the first quarter ended April 29.

Net income increased 30% to $11.4 compared with $8.8 million in the corresponding period in 2005.

Net sales for the quarter increased 13% to $645.5 million from $570.843 in 2005.

Tefron launches new centre of excellence with Nike

17 May 2006

Israeli manufacturer of seamless intimate apparel, activewear and swimwear Tefron Ltd. has announced the launch of a joint Centre of Excellence with Nike, located at Nike's headquarters in Beaverton, Oregon. The centre will focus on integrating innovation and technology into garment manufacturing, creating first rate products and leveraging market trends.

Through this joint partnership, Tefron will serve as Nike's primary source in the development and manufacture of Nike's seamless products.

Zumiez acquires Fast Forward

17 May 2006

Specialty retailer of action sports related apparel, footwear, equipment and accessories Zumiez Inc. has signed an agreement to acquire action sports retailer Fast Forward with its 19 stores and web store.

The transaction has been approved by the Zumiez board of directors and the owners of Fast Forward, and closing, which is subject to customary conditions including regulatory approvals, is expected in the second quarter of fiscal 2006.

Textile alliance established in Taiwan

17 May 2006

60 Taiwanese companies involved in textiles and related products in southern Taiwan have formed an alliance aimed at sharing R&D and material resources. The idea behind the collaboration is to encourage innovation and progress within the industry.

The group will organise information sharing seminars in order to discuss technology exchanges and business management models.

Warnaco appoints new president of swimwear

17 May 2006

Apparel, swimwear and sportswear company The Warnaco Group, Inc. has appointed Paula Schneider as president of its Designer Swimwear division.

Ms Schneider will oversee all aspects of design, development, merchandising, marketing and sales for the Anne Cole, Calvin Klein, Michael Kors, Nautica and Catalina brands. She succeeds Kathy Van Ness, who is leaving the company to pursue other interests, and will report directly to Roger Williams, president of the Warnaco Swimwear Group.

Ms Schneider has more than 20 years experience in the apparel industry, including global product development and brand management. Most recently, she served as president of Laundry by Shelli Segal, a division of Liz Claiborne Inc.

Everlast licenses sunglasses and frames

18 May 2006

Sporting goods company Everlast Worldwide Inc. has signed a licence with Optimate, Inc. to develop, manufacture and sell men's, women's and children's sunglasses and ophthalmic frames.

Based in Arcadia, California, Optimate, Inc. is supplies the largest companies in the optical business. The Everlast-branded glasses and frames will be sold in high-end and mid-tier department stores, sporting goods retailers and optical stores.

Sara Lee sells Courtaulds Apparel

18 May 2006

Chicago-based manufacturer of brand-name products Sara Lee Corporation has entered into a purchase agreement for the sale of its UK-based Courtaulds apparel business to a group led by global garment company PD Enterprise Ltd.

Completion is subject to customary conditions and is expected to occur by July 1.

Sara Lee's interests in three Sri Lankan joint ventures

that supply a portion of Courtaulds' inventory were not included in this sale and may be sold at a later date.

Sara Lee Courtaulds, which manufactures private-label clothing for retailers, generated nearly $560 million in sales during fiscal 2005.

PD Enterprise operates nine facilities that produce more than 120 million garments annually. Its products include underwear, swim and beachwear, and casualwear.

President of AAFA's footwear division retires

18 May 2006

Fawn Evenson, president of the Footwear Division of the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), is retiring after 32 years in the footwear industry. Ms Evenson is also AAFA vice president, Global Initiatives. Her retirement will take effect from June 1.

Ms Evenson was chairman of the US Government's Industry Sector Advisory Committee for Footwear, Leather and Leather Products from 1976 until 2004, and is now vice chair of the Industry Trade Advisory Committee for Textiles and Clothing. The panel, appointed by the White House, advises the US government on trade policy. She has advised in every bilateral and multilateral trade negotiation in which the US has been involved since 1976.

Ms Evenson will assist the AAFA part-time through the summer with two programmes to be held in China in late September.

AAFA is the US national trade association representing apparel, footwear and other sewn products companies, and their suppliers, which compete in the global market.

Lanxess makes positive start in 2006

18 May 2006

German chemical company Lanxess AG has started fiscal 2006 with year-on-year growth in earnings in double digits for the period from January to March. Sales advanced by 6.2% to €1,836 million from €1,729 million in 2005. All the operating segments contributed to sales growth.

In the EMEA region (Europe [except Germany], Middle East, Africa), Lanxess sales fell by 3.3% to €619 million from €640 million in 2005, while business in Germany expanded considerably, increasing 6.9% to €417 million from €390 million. In the Americas region, sales grew 10.7% to €497 million from €449 million and sales in Asia/Pacific rose 21.2% to €303 million from €250 million. Business in China increased by over 40%.

Sales revenues in the Performance Chemicals segment rose 8.2% to €517 million from €478 million, a slight decline in volume being offset by price increases. Nearly all the business units in this segment raised their prices, with the Rubber Chemicals and Leather business units posting significant growth in volume at the same time. The Textile Processing Chemicals business unit recorded a significant drop in volume, especially in Europe and Japan.

Zumiez posts Q1 sales increase

18 May 2006

US specialty retailer of action sports related apparel, footwear, equipment and accessories Zumiez Inc has reported positive financial results for the first quarter ended April 29.

Total net sales for the first quarter increased by 43.2% to $47.8 million from $33.4 million in the first quarter of 2005. Net income was $1.1 million compared with a net loss of $40,000 in the same period of prior year.

The company stated that its projected earnings growth rate of 30% continues to be achievable for fiscal 2006.

Green energy possible from waste

18 May 2006

The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources in India has released a booklet on Green Energy from Waste" which highlights the potential for generating power from Co-generation in various core industries including the tanning industry.

The booklet gives details of demonstration projects installed under a project on Development of High Rate Biomethanation Processes as a means of reducing Green House Gases Emission". As part of this project, 14 full-scale demonstration projects have been set up using biomethanation technologies to treat waste from tanneries, slaughterhouses, pulp and paper mills, vegetable markets, and sewage works.

YKK to open facility in Pakistan

18 May 2006

Manufacturer of zips and other fastening products YKK has singed an agreement with Pakistan's Export Processing Zones Authority (EPZA) to set up a production facility in the Karachi Export Processing Zone Phase-II.

YKK director Kosuke Miimi and EPZA chairperson Rukhsana Saleem signed a formal deal for handing over possession and construction of the factory building. The

company plans to invest $15 million in the facility to produce zips and other fastening. It is already running similar projects in other countries including Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, with a turnover of $5 billion.

YKK zip production will help to meet local demand from apparel manufacturers and exporters who supply leather and textile garments for the export market.

The unit is expected to start production in 2007.

Nike ordered to pay damages

18 May 2006

Nike, Inc. has been ordered to pay damages in an arbitration case between the company's Converse subsidiary and Alon International, S.A., a former licensee for Converse in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. The arbitrator awarded Alon $52.5 million in damages, plus legal fees, less some amounts previously paid to Alon. This potential liability had not been accrued by Nike, and will likely result in a charge to earnings for the company's fiscal 2006 fourth quarter ending May 31.

"We disagree with the ruling and will exercise our legal right to challenge both the award and the amount of damages," said Nike's general counsel Jim Carter.

Standard confidentiality provisions in the arbitration rules forbid the company from commenting on the substance of the ruling.

Chinese counterfeit golf factories raided

18 May 2006

The US Golf Manufacturers Anti-Counterfeiting Working Group (comprising Acushnet Company, Callaway Golf, Cleveland Golf, Nike Golf, PING and TaylorMade Golf Company) has continued its aggressive enforcement against pirate facilities in China. In the latest series of raids, four factories and three warehouses involved in the production and distribution of counterfeit golf clubs and equipment in Guangdong province were raided by Chinese law enforcement authorities after requests by the Anti-Counterfeiting Group.

Moulds and machinery used to make counterfeit golf clubs along with more than 16,000 items of counterfeit golf equipment valued at an estimated $3 million were seized from the seven raid locations. Counterfeit products included golf clubs, shafts, club heads, golf bags and apparel.

Over 50 Chinese enforcement officials took part in the three-day operation targeting manufacturing facilities located in Dongguan, Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

The raids resulted in the largest seizure to date of moulds and other tooling equipment the value of which was estimated to be in excess of $300,000.

The Working Group will cooperate with the Chinese authorities in pursuing criminal prosecution of those responsible for production and distribution.

Cambrelle with X-Static launched

19 May 2006

Branded footwear lining manufacturer Camtex has launched a new product, Cambrelle with X-Static, combining the abrasion resistance and wicking properties of Cambrelle with the technology of X-Static—The Silver Fiber.

The anti-microbial and anti-odour benefits of silver have been acknowledged for centuries and with a layer of silver permanently bonded to the fibre, X-Static is said to offer lasting anti-microbial and anti-odour protection with the added benefit of increased resistance to static build-up.

According to the company, the new lining can be dyed any colour whilst retaining all of its properties.

Nike Canada opens athletic complex made from recycled running shoes

19 May 2006

Toronto Mayor David Miller, and Canadian hurdler Perdita Felicien officially opened the new Nike Malvern Sports Complex in Scarborough, Ontario.

The soccer, basketball and track sports facility is said to be the largest of its kind in the world and is made from recycled shoe material, Nike Grind, from approximately 50,000 running shoes donated by Toronto residents and other Canadians.

It is hoped that the facility will benefit both the community and the environment as thousands of pairs of old running shoes were diverted from landfill to produce the surfaces for the new sports complex.

In addition to Nike Canada's $500,000 donation to build the complex, the company also donated an additional $50,000 in athletic equipment for the community.

Montrail's new Bivouac slipper

19 May 2006

Montrail's, Bivouac Slipper has been released in time for this summer's festival season and uses PrimaLoft ultra light synthetic insulation.

The slipper weighs 140g and comprises two booties: the inner slipper uses down-like PrimaLoft insulation which is snow and water-repellent, the outer bootie is made from a waterproof, rip-stop nylon and has a synthetic suede sole with thin rubber tread to keep feet warm and dry when outside.

PrimaLoft insulation is used in clothing, gloves and sleeping bags. The microfibre's ability to provide the same lightweight, warmth and comfort of down with water repellent properties makes it a great alternative to goose down. In the event of PrimaLoft getting wet it will retain its warmth and will dry very quickly.

ispo BrandNew award winners selected

19 May 2006

There were 161 entries (23% more than at the ispo summer 2005) for the 14th ispo BrandNew Awards, with entries coming from 24 countries including South Africa, South Korea, Pakistan, and China.

The overall winner was Gruber Assist for its Gruber drive, a hidden drive system for mountain bikes.

The winner of Hardware Summer was Coldfever (Austria) for its Solo-Ski-Free, a water-ski-fun without external assistance.

The winner of Hardware Accessories was The Cleg (Germany) for its Freeride and Downhill hydraulic brake. The Accessories award was given to Sportsella (Germany) with its PC-based sales training system with online sales training. The Style award winner was 667 (Germany) for the Rover Jacket, with its combination of simplicity with clever details.

The Sportswear award was given to 3essen (Germany) for its special cycling apparel. A-bag (Germany) won the Bags award for its bags made from recycled airbags.