Covering all the bases (and layers) for summer 2007



New for summer 2007 – Gamex Compact Thermo.
Eschler

The sports apparel business is being turned inside out—or outside in depending on your perspective. More and more brands are broadening their product offer to equip consumers with a one-stop solution to sports apparel. Those that previously concentrated on base layer apparel, such as Germany's Falke, are now branching out into second and third layers, whilst the opposite is true for certain brands that were once better known for producing second and third layer apparel and are now including base layer products in their portfolios.

This is all well and good for the brands that can now boast wider ranges and further boost sales through brand loyalty, but they would soon be left out in the cold if they were unable to produce the level of quality expected in the new products that they introduce. Fortunately, the companies that provide the technical textiles that support these brands have also branched out into new areas to produce the fabrics and fibres required to meet the different demands of different layers of clothing. One such manufacturer is Swiss knits specialist, Christian Eschler AG, that has focused on its proven three-layer system for its new collection for summer 2007. With its multifunctional fabrics for underwear, insulation and weather protection, Eschler has covered all the bases and has enabled apparel manufacturers to provide multi-functionality across the spectrum from intimate apparel to outerwear. Eschler has developed numerous innovations for all three layers, which fulfil the requirements of clothing manufacturers of outdoor, bike, golf and most recently sailing clothing.

Back to bases

Functional knits for the first layer belong to Eschler's central area of competence and there is a wide range of single- and double-face fabrics available to the manufacturers of functional underwear. Bioactive yarn from Trevira with its permanent anti-bacterial characteristics has again been used for the newly-developed summer

qualities 2007. The Exotex-line incorporates Viafil on the skin-side, a super strong polyolefine yarn registered by Belgian company Jé-Bé. International. Unlike most conventional yarns, Viafil is naturally elastic, and can stretch up to 300%. It also offers permanent colourfastness properties as the colour is inserted into the core of the fibre during production.

The yarn is also anti-stain, anti-stress (thanks to its negative electrical value of -1.000 v/cm^2), anti-bacterial, anti-odour, and UV resistant. It also has thermo-regulatory properties as its capillary capacity transports perspiration to the exterior keeping the body cool and dry. Another advantage is that it is also recyclable—an attribute that is becoming more and more important to today's consumers.

T-shirt and shirt manufacturers for all kinds of sports can rely on even more new developments. In this area Eschler will offer structured circular knit articles, which are highly resistant to snagging and pilling and even more resistance can be added to these fabrics with Eschler's ceramic-printing, which is an important factor for manufacturers of outdoor, bike and sailing clothing due to the high level of abrasion that can occur in these sports. Tests have proved that fabrics printed in this way present up to 100% better results regarding abrasion than the same, unprinted fabrics. This makes ceramic-printed fabrics well-suited for the production of biking pants, gloves and protectors.

Second to none

For the second layer, particularly important to manufacturers of outdoor-wear for the production of jackets, sweatshirts and pullovers, Eschler offers various fleece fabrics and is sticking with a well-established one for 2007, Husky Loop. This special fleece with terry optic is already popular with manufacturers of fleece jackets and sweatshirts and is set to remain so for summer 2007 in the outdoor collection. Eschler paid great attention during the development of new fabrics for the second layer to Husky Elastic. This group of fabrics consists of various qualities which are highly elastic. Garments made from these fabrics guarantee optimal freedom of movement and excellent wearability. The outer side of the fabric is smooth, that is, without structure and very dense, and is very tough. Furthermore there is no deterioration in their appearance with frequent use or regular laundering. The inner side is napped and presents a high level of moisture absorption, whilst also being pleasant to the touch at the same time.

Outer protection

Eschler has extended its "Softshell laminates" product group for summer 2007 by further 2- and 3-layer special laminates. The 2-layer



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laminates are wind- and water-resistant, the 3-layer laminates are wind- and waterproof thanks to the use of a hydrophilic polyurethane membrane. For all Eschler softshell laminates the minimal weight and the high respiratory qualities are typical, as well as the excellent elasticity horizontally, or even, with some laminates, in all four directions. Although it already has well-established products in its third layer range, Eschler has also unveiled a totally new product for summer 2007: Gamex Compact, which offers all the qualities expected, but in addition it is also napped on the inside. "We expect great interest in this new product, especially from those customers who already work with Gamex Compact," says Philip Schär, who is responsible for sports fabrics at Eschler. "We will definitely win over new customers too with Gamex Compact Thermo."

All mapped out

In addition to offering new fabrics and meeting the ever expanding demands of manufacturers Eschler has also picked up on the expanding trend for body-mapping. According to the company, the growing popularity of body-mapping in apparel design will also be an important market trend for the first layer in summer 2007. In response to this Eschler has successfully introduced body-mapping to several manufacturers of bike and golf clothing, who manufacture T-shirts from qualities that are individually produced for them. The interest in body-mapping for the second layer is also increasing, especially on the part of manufacturers of outdoor wear and Eschler has reacted to this with the development of body-mapping fleece fabrics, which are at present being tested by several manufacturers.