

The brand is heavily invested in the Alpine lifestyle, sponsoring skiers, mountaineers and snowboarders.

Tenson



FOOTWEAR TECHNOLOGY: TENSON

The Swedish brand has spanned the product spectrum from swimwear to skiwear and its new line of footwear showcases the innovative nature that keeps it fresh after 60 years.

Tenson marches on

Scandinavians are good at many things, and establishing outdoor brands that are innovative and adaptive is one of them. Take Tenson: borne from one man's realisation that there were no fashionable cycling helmets in the 1940s, the Swedish brand has moulded itself over the years, branching into a wide range of sports. It sponsors a cross-country ski team, supports a triathlon and endorses snowboarders and mountaineers. Its tagline, "a way of living", speaks to the outdoors and the 'Tenson man', a vision conjured up by founder Paul Rydholm in the 1950s.

Its latest release is a line of functional footwear, which "allows the wearer to enjoy the rugged, unspoiled natural world in the utmost comfort".

The collection combines influences from the outdoor and sports worlds with a typically Scandinavian sense of style. No-nonsense and understated, the sneakers and boots have a calm and muted colour palette: fawn, anthracite, olive and taupe, with accents in the blue and yellow Tenson (and Swedish) colours.

Much of the collection features the company's Air Push technology. The shock absorber is located in the outer sole and helps to soften the impact of the downward step. The polyurethane-injected inner sole moulds itself around the foot and, after use, returns to its original shape. The flexible latex middle sole provides extra freedom of movement and the inner lining contains perforations that aid the discharge of moisture from perspiration.

The collection includes sporty and more formal sneakers, as well as ankle boots with sturdy soles. "They have been designed with the lover of the outdoors in mind and offer comfort in the most extreme conditions," states the company.

The collection is divided into three. There are purely functional boots with nylon uppers, models in leather and suede and ultra-light variants with neoprene uppers. "Thanks to the ingenious 'print' lining, these boots are as sturdy as it gets," it adds.

Back to the roots

Today, as well as home soil, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands are key markets for Tenson, and its current owner, Holland's

Unlimited Sports Group, has begun an aggressive push into Germany with the hope of regaining market share and revitalising the brand. USG owns INQ, SPEX, Wildebeast and Athlete, and is the agent for Le Coq Sportif, Ellesse, Diadora, Admiral, Helly Hansen and Champion Footwear in several markets.

"The ambition is to continue the building of the Tenson brand to one of the strongest within sport and outdoor in Europe," said Johan Löfqvist, managing director of Tenson, at the time of USG's takeover in 2010.

Rewind 60 years to Mr Rydholm working in his father's clothes store in the tiny northern Swedish village of Varburg and the seeds of this kind of ambition would be apparent.

The young man created a new shape of cycling helmet and persuaded local bike manufacturer Monark to buy the design from him. Next he drew trousers with innovative pockets; shortly after, he took inspiration from French magazine *Elle* to design a range of swimwear. Armed with a car full of samples, he travelled to a German trade fair with his sister, where his designs caught the attention of international distributors; Tenson's overseas footprint was cemented.

Mr Rydholm's vision of the 'Tenson Man' still informs the company's line: "He skis, hunts and fishes, wanders in the forest with his pipe in his mouth. Can't live without his jacket; sleeps in it if he can". Perhaps the description that he's "the kind of guy every girl wants to roll meatballs and fold the bedclothes for" hasn't aged quite so well but there's no denying the charm behind the ethos.

"The Tenson heart continues to beat for Paul and all our customers who, just like us, are people who enjoy living an active and prosperous life," says the company. 

A sturdy ankle boot from the new collection, featuring a subtle hint of Sweden's national colours.

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