

OUTDOOR trade and industry

for all retailers & suppliers in hike & bike & travel & tourism

a KSA business to business publication telephone: 0191 488 1947 e-mail: office@tradeandindustry.net March . 2016



winners' evening SPA TOWN FOR AWARDS SHOOT-OUT

The journey began last September in Warwickshire with the Trade, the party moved on for a public viewing and handshake session in London, now come March 15 in Harrogate there is going to be a Majestic round of applause for the *best of the best* in outdoor goodies. No doubt there are rules about acceptance speeches but the next stage is going to be skates on and sell-in. *Good luck guys!*

The Friendly Club pitches in

It is second time up for The Camping and Caravanning Club to headline sponsor the OIA Conference and agm in Harrogate. Conference time is March 15-16 at the hallowed Majestic Hotel venue which has hosted many an outdoor Trade happening. Now a regular in the outdoor diary, it attracts speakers and sponsorship support for two days of Trade networking and business presentations, about a hundred companies are attending. Of the Camping and Caravanning Club's involvement, their director general Robert Loudon MBE tells that the Club is in full support of the achievements of the OIA, and especially at national and Government level. "OIA help to create a healthier nation by encouraging the public to get out and enjoy the great outdoors. We're delighted to show our support for the whole Trade and for the Association." TR



monkey business is really serious

"Not sure if we have met, but we're a couple of the guys that the British sleeping bag operation Snuggpak are keen to tell you about. They are hoping people will mark the card on our behalf in a scheme to plant sixty thousand trees for us on the patch where we live and play. That's in the forest canopies of Western Nicaragua where a project from Paso Pacifico has been nominated by Snuggpak to figure in obtaining funding support from the EOCA outdoor operation which helps ecological and environmental schemes go forward.

We are a tribe of the Black-Handed Spider Monkey who rely upon intact forest canopies to survive as we are highly sensitive to forest fragmentation and over ninety percent of forest locally has been lost. And then there are those nasty people who come and try to capture us for the illegal wildlife trade, that's made us one of the most endangered primates in Central America. Planting a lot more trees will give us many more places to hide.

Truth is we monkey about a lot and that means in a restored forest habitat we'd be encouraging local groups to developing forest tours just to come and see us. That will help the local humans earn from ecotourism and tackle the poverty they endure on the forest floor. Probably over a hundred of their children could get involved in conservation and seven community rangers could watch and help to protect us Black-Handed Spider Monkeys.

We'd really like that, and all you have to do is vote for Paso Pacifico (and Us!) in the EOCA competition. Voting closes March 23. <http://www.outdoorconservation.eu/project-voting-category.cfm?catid=5>
For further information about Paso Pacifico, please visit www.pasopacifico.org. RW



Catering for the wheeled camper for 110 years, the Caravan Club has brought a new name to the scene: the Caravan and Motorhome Club. "We are focussing more on the experiences and the adventures you can have with us" says Nick Lomas, Club director general. www.camc.com

Biodegradable - the environmental future for the textile industry considering the impact

The priority for the next Performance Days trade fair is on textiles that are quickly biodegradable, a topic to be fully aired in Munich from April 26-27. As the volume of discarded textiles creates a growing mountain of waste there is also the flushing of microscopic fine fibre particles from garment laundering and into the world's oceans. So what is the environmental impact? What are the options for avoiding or minimising that impact? Some of the answers will become evident during Performance Days.

www.performancedays.com



settled to 2030

driving and supporting winter business

When the 63rd annual SnowSports Industries America wrapped after a four-day event in Denver and the On-Snow Demo at Copper Mountain nearly 18,000 retailers, suppliers, representatives and winter sports industry folks had came together for the world's largest gathering of winter-specific business.

Takeaways from the Show included the announcement that there's a ten year contract extension with Visit Denver to host the Snow Show in Colorado through 2030. After seven years there the SIA realises it's a foundation to continue driving and supporting the winter business, as well as opening new opportunity to address some of the key issues of the sector.

The 2018 SIA Snow Show runs January 25-28.

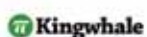


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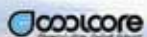
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ISPO 2017 – Messe Munich

growing business on the aisles

a lot of talk was about piling it high on money, writes Charles Ross

There have been times when ISPO-going people have taken to langlauf for their morning heart rate raiser, this year it could almost have been sunbeds instead as the biggest trade show of the Industry came together again under a remarkably warm Munich atmosphere. The Halls shone with progress in product terms along with things worth debating about, and a lot was there which needed a second look. The show is still growing, this year demonstrated rising visitor and exhibitor numbers that included an increase of British registrations. Munich Messe are building another two exhibition halls, ready in 2018, to accommodate further demand and this year at least one British brand was offered only stand space outside of their chosen area – hence decided not to display at all.

An easy breakdown of the show would be to divide the news into two sections: what was going on and what new product made people stop and talk. The former were events and meetings that happen in the various rooms around the Messe. The latter seemed more centred around who had the biggest marketing budget. The mood was positive, but the afterthought was that more of everything is starting to look the same and only those with the biggest budgets had the clearest message. The real gems of information and product got lost in the business of the show, there was a high point in terms of both product and events but I also noticed the reverse of that, too. But business is the order of the day at these events and that is well reflected by the overall experiences. Gone are the days when a brilliant product would completely win the mind, now it is more important the maker offers the right margin and support to sell it through. **CR**

Illustrating the new building going on at Munich



getting to talk about sport and outdoors

Knights Templar, King Henry VIII and Elizabeth I are amongst the people who have held homely chat sessions at Bisham Abbey, an 800 year old edifice that will become a right royal place June this summer when a whole host from the good and the godly of the sports and outdoors markets meet. A training venue for England's "not won too much since 1966" ball kickers, the Bisham walls will be eavesdropping on ideas being kicked around in networking and brainstorming that hinge on the 'Sports Trade Think Tank' and the 'Outdoor Think Tank' sessions originally conceived by Tim Drake, which have run for a couple of decades of debating.

The cerebral exercising will now run under the banner of the *Sports and Outdoor Think Tank in association with the OIA*, something that has come about in recognition of the considerable consolidation in the sports trade and the outdoors market. Of the move OIA ceo Andrew Denton tells the sharing of ideas and a pursuit of common goals makes this the right time for the Outdoor Industries Association board to work together with Tim Drake, supporting each of the sectors and so providing a service to the industry.

Planned are three Think Tank meetings through the year, with each to feature a speaker who will address relevant and topical business issues. The annual fee to join the Think Tank group is £1000, a percentage of which now goes towards the OIA in return for their support and assistance with promoting future events. On June 28 the first Sport and Outdoor Think Tank at Sport England's centre of excellence will be discussing and formulating plans for the industry to be working to jointly promote the health benefits of outdoor activities. **RW**



such a distinct disappointment

completely missing the point this time, or what?

At recent Trade shows Greenpeace have disrupted the event, and most certainly in thinking terms but their Munich short-notice press conference turned out to be very much a disappointment, *writes Charles Ross*. Not only did many of the journalists who turned up have to re-arrange or cancel appointments to be there, but it transpired that the event in the Ramada Hotel seemed to be just a secondary announcement that WL Gore were to develop a PFC-free DWR. It was already known the brand had announced six months previously at the Swabian Trade show that the membrane manufacturers were going to develop a new branch of chemistry, ie an hazardous-free fluorine type, meaning that the PFCs used in the making of Gore-Tex could be eliminated.

There are already membranes which have solved the problem of EU legislation that is currently being formulated to outlaw the use of PFCs. Already there is Sympatex and some other polyester versions.

The Non-Governmental Body that is Greenpeace has perhaps played what they believe is a trump card one time too many and I suspect that their next press conference will not be anywhere near well attended. Yes, it is right to acknowledge they have disrupted the field at times, actually prompting a faster adoption of environmental standards that are for the better of the planet, that is one. Whether they have brought our outdoor activity to better safety is another question as it appears that many more individuals have died from skin cancer than they have from PFCs. We all know that staying out of the sun is hardly an option, though. **CR**



the high interest stand

For the second year in a row the stand to be seen to be a part of was the GreenRoomVoice project, in Hall B6. This vast area was a collective of brands working towards a better direction as far as consumption of resources was concerned. That applies whether using recycled fabrics, harnessing different sources of power or the practise of manufacturing and to encourage participation there was a refreshment area and gathering space for events happening every day. Totalling over 50 brands from across the whole exhibition area, this great awareness project came from the ones prepared most to work towards a common good. They're doing it for the planet! **CR**



setting up offices in Brussels

The ISPO marked the actual Trade launch of the It's Great Out There movement, something that we'd reported in *tradeandindustry* earlier. Previously #itsgreatoutthere had been the tag for the work building up towards the European Week of Sport's Outdoor Activity Day. Now the project is aimed to a higher level and setting up office in Brussels will help mark closer links to the EU. To replicate more or less the pattern of activity with ECF not only in Europe but globally too, Outdoor Industry leaders have moved to recognise the need to get the next generation of youngsters out and about and active. In much the same way as Andrew Denton leads a collective voice for various sports in the UK and has helped to access extra funding to enable the engagement of various target groups, the EOG is keen to demonstrate to European governments of the serious effort the industry is making *being out there* is a positive contribution to society, rather than it being considered just a money making enterprise. Best line of the press conference came from the ISPO Director, Tobias Gröbe, who said that '*sitting had become the new smoking – attitudes needed to change*'. The project has already attracted extra funding and support from a variety of EOG members, including the trade associations, the brands, retailers and exhibition centre hosts. **TR**



there's more about the project on on the website, plenty of inspiration with evocative pictures and useful leads to join in the activities www.itsgreatoutthere.com

Paramo celebrate twenty five years of ethical partnership with the Miquelina Foundation

Munich's Gold Standard event

Rudi Dalvai , president of the World Fair Trade Organisation was amongst those present

It is now being recognised that just *being green* is not the whole answer, possibly because many marketing departments have embraced eco-marketing as a sales strategy: aka Green-washing. The bigger story is the adoption of Corporate Social Responsibility, and the leading example of CSR within our industry is Paramo. Yes, although Patagonia might have one of the best approaches to the sustainability questions it is the British brand that has the lead in CSR practice, *writes Charles Ross*. Paramo celebrated the 25th year of their brand at this press conference, which tuned into more of the telling of the back-story of the Sussex brand. Whereas using recycled fabric would appear to be better for the environmental impact, the brand has championed the manufacturing process. Paramo has shied away from using recycled fabrics up to now as their weakness is that they are not as durable as virgin fabrics, but they have plans afoot to progress this area. Any garment that wears out too fast has to be replaced earlier and the re-manufacturing footprint of a garment will always be much more than the savings in using recycled fibres can achieve alone.

At ISPO Paramo celebrated twenty five years of their ethical partnership with the Miquelina Foundation, a site overseen by Sister Rosaura Patino in Bogota, Columbia. The Sister, who has an MBA began the manufacturing project to give additional skills to the local women so that they would not have to revert to street based prostitution as an income source. It has transformed into a factory that employs graduates of the training scheme, paid for from the profits that manufacturing generates. Over 400 vulnerable women are trained each year, 200 pre-school kids attend the kindergarten and hot meals are served to 300 children each day. Other projects which have developed from the concern including a housing co-operative. The factory was ISO 9001 accredited 15 years ago.

The real coup at Munich for Paramo was in getting the President of the World Fair Trade Organisation to attend. To get Rudi Dalvai to come to ISPO demonstrated the strength of the Miquelina Foundation project, along with their confirmation that Paramo had become the first Outdoor Clothing brand to achieve Fair Trade endorsement. The call was made there for this to be the first of many brands, in attendance was noticed the Secretary General of European Outdoor Group which hopefully shows the commitment that the EOG has in nurturing good practice within our industry.

The press conference itself was a refreshing change to the product pushing that has become the norm at exhibitions. This one tracked back into the values that have formed the direction of the brand, as well as the good that it has done over the last quarter century. Paramo are reviewing their fabric selection



Sister Rosaura Patino in Munich with Nick Brown

after being the first outdoor brand to receive an endorsement from Greenpeace over their commitment to take the Detox pledge. They have identified some non-virgin fabric combinations for future production. During 2017 the first of batches of worn-out garments will be returned to Japan for re-processing into recycled fabric and insulations that can come on stream.

The lasting thought from the event was that several of the team from Columbia were there to thank Nick Brown for the work that had restored dignity to their lives of the women of Bogota and also to appeal to the wider industry for more work. The request was for work, as opposed to money. To see such genuine passion was heart-touching, it shows through as something good in that thought of clothing being made with desire in an unrain and so often unloved world.

A possible effect from the minimum wage in China is that production moves to the surrounding countries on the Pacific Rim in the short term and into near Asia in the longer term - just as long as the first experiences from the Rana Plaza in Dhaka, Bangladesh are overcome. Moving to Africa and the other Continents for a longer term solution to production could be a wise choice, so considering what the Miquelina Foundation and Sister Rosaura Patino have achieved in Columbia, isn't the template already in place? CR

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record breaking Nürnberg

Eight out of ten exhibitors and almost two-thirds of Trade visitors flocked to Nuremberg from countries other than Germany, and that made the 44th IWA OutdoorClassics one of the most international events held at the Exhibition Centre. This is a happening for people catering for the hunting and shooting sports or personal protection where the focus is on high-quality guns and outdoor products from international suppliers. Equipment for civilian and official self-defence was also the centre of attraction. The IWA OutdoorClassics is organised by NürnbergMesse and sponsored by VDB (Association of German Gunsmiths and Gun Traders) along with JSM (German Firearms and Ammunition Manufacturers Association).

The exhibition closed with new records for the four-day event and was the first time that the leading international exhibition for hunting and shooting sports, outdoor equipment and civilian and official security needs had hit such highs. The number of exhibitors was up around four per cent on the previous year to 1,515, it was 1,455 in 2016, coming from 57 countries. The Trade visitors count increased by around eight per cent to more than 49,000 (45,530 in 2016) from 120 countries. The date for your diary in 2018! The next IWA OutdoorClassics is scheduled to take place at Exhibition Centre Nuremberg from March 9 to 12, 2018. TR



IWA
OUTDOOR
CLASSICS 2017
High performance in target sports,
nature activities, protecting people

telling it in pictures

at ISPO with
a camera



Green Room
Voice
contributor
Arc'teryx solves
manufacturing
waste from the
cutting table



Marmot showed off some of their new technology



Sprayway
brought a new
look to their
collection



Patagonia solving
excessive
consumption by
getting people to
change their minds
a company
demonstrating
their intentions



keeping contents hot, keeping contents cold



The strongest design yet from Stanley, with new performance levels and a durability that locks in heat or cold better than any other technology out there. The new Master Series has an all steel stopper which means no plastic contact for contents in the vacuum bottle, so a better taste! The company's QuadVac Technology is designed to keep drinks hot for 40 hours, cold for 35 hours or iced for 160 hours. That's achieved through having four layers of protection working against convective, conductive and radiant energy transfer. You can drop it and it won't shatter like other vacuums!

Sizes of the Stanley Master Series include bottles at 1.3 litre (£74.99) a 750ml version (£59.99) and the Master Vacuum 532ml Mug (£39.99). Shipping right now from UK distributor Burton McCall Ltd.



Symbiosis, Sustainability, Adaption

In my book the Icebreaker gathering on the first evening was more than an ice breaker, it really gave the best of warming vibes heard at ISPO. Whereas most brands were trying to push an agenda of new stuff during their launches, the Merino specialists concentrated on explaining more of the company values. Jerry Moon, the founder, presented a relaxed chat about what made him set up the brand.

The revealing of common sense inspiration *"and of course the finer the wool, the warmer it is, which enables the sheep to go further and higher in search of food"* simply added to the credibility of the fabric which has bucked the industry wide trend towards artificially engineered fibres. The key take is how Icebreaker has kept the three values of Symbiosis, Sustainability and Adaption as their core direction to enable them to create a brand DNA of Provenance, People and Product.

The most interesting revelation was that welfare of the animals had a massive effect on the quality of the material, thus animals who were happy produced a more durable and functional wool. Probably why old time shepherds tended their flocks with a tin whistle in their knapsack! **CR**



Jerry Moon of Icebreaker looking towards the future customer

Charles Ross at ISPO

going back for the second look

when something grabs you it's worth making time!

In no order of importance or preference here's a list that recalls some good stuff.

Isbjorn - the Swedish childrenswear brand: something technical, different and quite beautiful standing out in a crowded field.

Polygiene - the debate about anti-bacterial solutions goes on, but this brand does seem to be leading the way in terms of smell resistance on synthetic fibres.

Primaloft - where some of the bigger suppliers just seem to re-package products on a regular basis, their blow-able insulation has brought this brand a product closer to down fill with ThermoPlume.

Sprayway - the outdoor product range as we know it has gained from using street styling for their urban collection.

Patagonia - their stand that was a celebration of the values that make this brand appeal to a wider audience than their original customers, demonstrating the hooks that are so engaging to Gen Z and Millennials.

Outdoor Research - they might not scream top-of-the-mountain, but OR have some great technologies.

Alchemy Equipment - performance garments, and ones that will appeal to a wider audience than outdoor.

Marmot - there are new technologies hidden in their stylish garments.

TexEnergy - technology for power generation devices which break new ground for use in in the outdoors.

HD Wool - making the traditional fibre be seen in more relevant applications.

Eagle Creek - a veteran brand that demonstrates how rugged performance can still have smart appeal.

BlueSign - not a product, but a process, the attraction here is their new ceo Jill Dumain, former director of environmental strategy at Patagonia. This move is an indication of great things down the road. **CR**



the Regatta Group always have a strong presence at ISPO, they know how to make space work for them. Come Autumn/Winter this year their range will have colour inside and out, the new collections bring together something for everyone.

this is our 27th year of putting you in the loop.

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the sector derives from the
original outdoor business magazine
Camping & Outdoor Leisure Trader - COLT

DWRs and THE FUTURE

getting two bites of the chemical cherry

"only a handful of people know the provenance of their products well enough to be assured in terms of Performance/ Safety/ Impact"

As those managing the production process comprehend both the forthcoming legislation and the greater consumer awareness of the dodgy chemicals highlighted by lobbying organisations - recall the *tradeandindustry* front page *"What has China Got Against Fish"* - then interest in this topic has grown bigger at trade show after trade show. Today there is big interest in a substitute durable water repellent finish, which we now realise is not going to come from some white-coated scientist who will simply take out the bad chemistry and replace it with non-toxic stuff so that waterproofs can continue at the performance levels we consider as being the norm, writes *Charles Ross*. It is just not that simple, sorry.

There were two events of note which put some reason in the DWR subject at ISPO with the first being the EOG Sustainability Breakfast. Great interest came with one of the presenters from Beyond Surface Technology, where the company that the Investment Fund from the Patagonia group of associated projects has put in over \$1million. The Tin Shed Ventures level of finance has brought forward a more rapid investigation into and a solution to be developed. The whole PFC area has been on the radar of several serious partners of the trade for a number of years, I remember Stefan Posner of Swerea input of twenty-five years along with decade's worth from the Performance Clothing Research team at Leeds University. Unhappily without real funds being targeted at the problem, then progress has been slow.

The EOG had asked BST to present an update and the subject was directly addressed in the early morning paper as part of the overall situation update about the 200 restricted substances, the 170 different eco-labels, and various planned chemical inventories. Perhaps the most noticeable comment was that BST had stopped using 'sustainable' as an expression as even the best chemicals still had a side-effect or more. Out of a hundred supply companies only a handful know the provenance of their products well enough to be assured in terms of Performance/ Safety/Impact. BST had investigated three main areas: wicking, softening and DWRs, whereas the Swiss green chemistry company with experience in oil resistance had made progress in the former two areas they had nothing to report in the DWR field.

At ISPO another seminar in the EOG work-room above Hall B3 was peopled with the traditional gathering of the various CSR and Eco-interested characters. Meanwhile the Rudolf Chemie presentation worked better than most as it was obvious that this was a brand that was based on the passion of chemistry, rather than a marketing budget. Their work in PFC-free chemistry started in 2001 when 3M changed their formulation in Scotchgard which then accelerated when Greenpeace launched their Detox campaign. Once again although they wanted to report that their Carbon Zero DWR was the ideal replacement to the industry norm of C8, they admitted that they had not made sufficient progress in this area. Possibly the most memorable thing about this presentation was an admission that 'alternative truths' were being emitted from the bigger companies in this area and that a situation could develop where those that had the biggest marketing budget might sound like that they had the best solution to the compromise of the fabric from factors like sweat and grass stains.

It was acknowledged that both the education of the consumer about fluorine free chemistry and whether everything endorsed by BlueSign should be taken at face value, there obviously is still plenty of room for improvements. **CR**

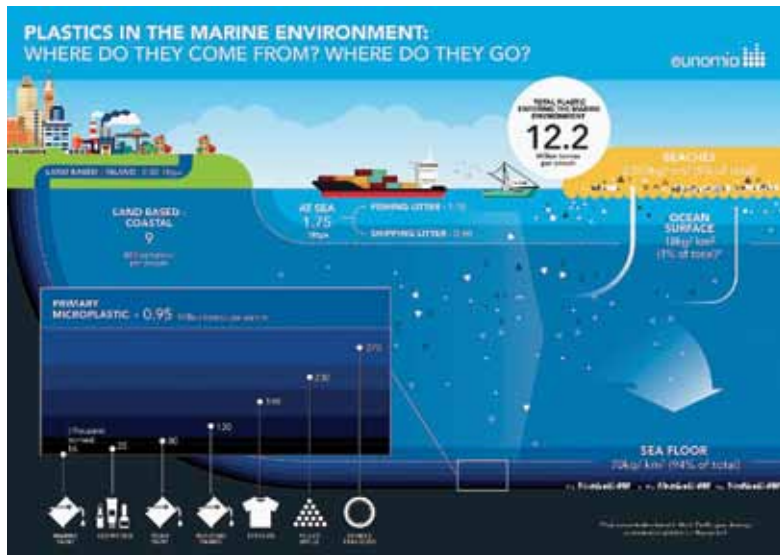
plastic in the oceans

There are reasons to be glad there is a Trade body and that comes very true with the big story of Sophie Mather's #DontFeedTheFish presentation at ISPO, about investigation into textile plastic in the oceans. Work on micro-plastics has just been done by Marine Biologists, as opposed to textile specialists, hence all this work needs to be investigated by people who understand fabric construction, design and performance comes together. It's estimated that although our industry is seen as five times the scale of the micro-plastics problem cosmetics are responsible for, we are but a third of the problem car tyre deposits leave on roads.

Although it is easy to blame the low hanging fruit of fleece, this should not be the only focus of the project. Polartec have good evidence that the water exiting their manufacturing plant is cleaner than water coming in. Of greater interest are the suspicions that tightly twisted yarns and old garments could be a greater source of plastic wash-off. The meeting of heads saw a packed room who were very aware of the potential that bad publicity could have upon the industry, especially as the winners would be 'natural' yarns like cotton which is normally 27% pesticide with a vast water footprint.

There was a call to have assessments done on how much plastic there was in seas, how bad this plastic was, seeing that micro-plastics can act like a magnet in attracting the impurities in the sea like PFCs and ingested by fish at the start of the food-chain; how could practice be improved in laundering and water treatment plants, although this would only influence the wash-off in the developed world; plus the possibilities that yarns could be re-engineered to provide a more stable fabric where splintering was not so common.

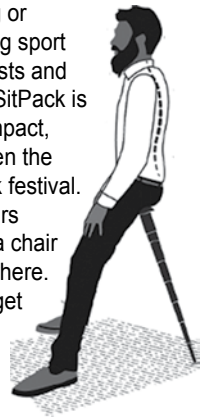
The Ellen McArthur Foundation, now recognised as the world's leading thinkers on the Circular Economy, have predicted that there will be more plastic in the sea by 2050 than fish: fact is no plastic which has been developed has yet bio-degraded back into the environment. **CR** illustration: *Economia 2016*



don't stand, you can sit!

support that comes robust, compact and light

Here's something that fits perfectly for people commuting or travelling, skiing, at festivals, on outdoor adventures, watching sport or being a hunter gatherer. For photographers or outdoor artists and anyone else who wants to take the weight off their feet then SitPack is not only a take-it-with-you gadget but is the world's most compact, foldable resting device. The idea for SitPack came about when the inventor was standing around for three hours at a Danish folk festival. Noticing thousands of people were sitting on clunky deckchairs they'd throw away after the festival he had the idea of fitting a chair into something the size of a beer can that can be taken anywhere. The idea for SitPack had arrived, it's not just an outdoor gadget but can also be used to take the weight off your feet and keep the blood flowing to your legs just about anywhere.



www.sitpack.dk RW

footfall is what matters

Some new dawns get earlier, and the Trade outing at Stoneleigh follows the current Show timings for European happenings. The schedules for product intros can force a tetchy time for Suppliers as well as their customers and on the UK scene OTS opens to as near the cut-off time for FE ordering as is manageable for many. Probably those brands that have a closer to home factory positioning could wait a time before showing their hand with next season's thinking, but there is not so much opportunity for that to happen.

Outdoor Trade Show at Stoneleigh is positioned to make the most of a situation that is mostly brought about with lead times and this year there remains excruciating tension with the Brexit affair, too. With present political mumbojumbo who knows what the new business rates will do for Retailer confidence, already pressured by a warm winter that's kept too much stock on the shelves, with signs already evident that Buyers are revising their new season order lists. Putting eggs in any basket is never for the fainthearted but as Shows need promise and excitement to draw crowds, lots of fingers crossed that the clutch is good!

Reports from the last OTS showed that new business accounts were opened and the Buyer reaction along the aisles was positive, opportunities to delve into true product innovation or brand development has often been a bit like searching for hens teeth among barn fowls but you still have to be on site or the gem that'll make tills ring won't be spotted. The 2016 *stone in a puddle* exercise of an OTS two-day show now reverts back to a final Show day three of three, and organiser Marta Williams tells that getting more big retailers on board is the main drive. Independent specialist retailers, needing to watch trends as well as network with like-minded always get to Trade-only gatherings rather than heading to events where time is shared with the public. Better attendance figures for OTS is less the hope but more an essential for this near teen-ager exhibition that's well set the diary in a way that matters. Visitor registration is about to open, your call to be there. **Pr**

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Wikipedia tells us the history of modern Internet email services reaches back to early 1973. The email message sent in those days looks very similar to a basic email of today. Email played an important part in relation to the Internet and in the early 1980s produced the core of current services.

Peter Lumley tells that the history of UK backpacking goes back to 1972. Backpacking trips of the early 1970s are very similar to ventures into the outdoors today. Backpacking is playing an important part in delivering 2017 opportunities for people to get off the couch and go into the countryside.

Their Year 45. Still enrolling and growing enthusiasts

someone once said this was a Club for the Unclubbable. So what, it has proved it's got good legs!

There have always been outdoor writers who understand where it all comes from, this fresh air activity with an intent that's the way of being a backpacker. It was Tom Waghorn, remembered for all the good stuff he did with *Climber & Rambler* magazine who wasn't so sure about the word though, he told me to my face that "every magazine has to have an editorial gimmick". Us Essex lads pronounce *gimmick* with a "g" as in give; Tom, being a true Northerner and one who has knocked off all the Munros, reckons it as a *jimmick*. He just wasn't so sure the word backpacker would ever catch on, yet it has - and seriously too: *Climber & Rambler* ensured it had the topic highlighted on their editorial masthead, their editor making sure they wouldn't miss out on this new outdoor calling. Backpacking helped change the look of an industry where it came to the Trade showing off wares, and for forty-five years it has been the buzzword in sustainable independent travel. But the lazy travel and holiday package industry people with "travel" writers and those who set up shop to offer hostel look-alike but cheap accommodation, they are guilty of badly abusing the word. Similar treatment as the English dished out in 1305 to one William Wallace in London would be an appropriate persuasion to get them to stop it. Right now!

Backpacking as a British habit had come about almost as Tom Waghorn said, yet it was no gimmick but the necessity of finding ways to get family campers into a lightweight tent during the dead of winter. It was at *Practical Camper* magazine where the editor's plot to keep readers getting outdoors in the darker months was played out. Haymarket published that market leading magazine and they invested £2,000 over each of the first two years as the Club built both public and wide Trade recognition with a good membership count. Recognition was helped when Action Man Paul Hughes at the *Daily Mirror* featured backpacking and tent living after his weekend trip on the Essex coast near St Peter's ancient chapel at Bradwell, where he pitched under the lee of a seawall near the bulkwarks of the old Roman fort.

John Hillaby, author of *Journey through Britain* and several other books with *Journey* in the title was the Club's first president. He wrote about his journey with members on The Ridgeway and of camping on a high fold alongside that ancient path in *The Times* newspaper and *The New Scientist* magazine and that brought membership enquiries in the thousands. Notable on that Ridgeway weekend was a first UK outing of a Camp Trails rucksack by Robin Adshead, who would become the regular backpacking correspondent for *Camping* magazine and the author who would bring in the new outdoor word bikepacking with a flourish. That title, as with a lot of his journalism was very photo-centric and when you scan his book pages not only is it very much a glossary of the kit that was available in outdoor and cycle shops but also featured a lithe Bill Wilkins cycling the Lands End to John O'Groats route with the author. Robin Adshead opened a Wilderness Ways shop near home in Gloucestershire and from there those who read his magazine columns were carried right to the front of outdoor activities, with a lot of insider information to boot. He wrote with humour and understanding of putting product in its place and right where the user would want to go. They don't make 'em like him any more!

In 2017 The Backpackers Club reaches 45 years of continued activity, the Club diary is a year-round stretch of events with hillwalking, canal tramping and green lanes bashing, doing a lot of good for outdoor shops, seeing many of the members are so into a "what's new, must try it" mode. Club activities also contribute broadly to helping sustain rural economies, inasmuch backpackers still appreciate a bit of comfort and they enjoy their shopping, it all saves carrying a bottle of Malt or - possibly and - a six-pack in the rucksack all day!

Hike and bike matters to members and In true Robin Adshead style Backpackers Club has acquired a taste for bikepacking in the warmer months, several members are Brompton tourists and they lengthen their trips by jumping on a bus or the train. Nothing new that, for backpackers! Next month In April, Backpackers Club have their annual gathering at Parwich in Derbyshire, it's a Friday through to Sunday or Monday happening. They'll take a two hour business session on the Saturday afternoon for Club agm matters and officers' reports, Nick Miles will demonstrate his Chairmanship reputation of calmly sorting things to ensure open transparency on all of the Club's affairs to keep members satisfied the Club is on the right path. There's a message there, in keeping the information flowing and with members in the loop the organisation can get on with staying the right side of worrying about what next as the years roll.

Backpack is the quarterly Club magazine. The Club's internet portal is:
www.backpackersclub.co.uk or email inforequest@backpackersclub.co.uk

Sandwich, Kent journalist and outdoor shop owner Mike Marriott and Peter Lumley co-founded The Backpackers Club; Dennis Noble was the first Club secretary, additional funding to set up the Club came from people like Graham Tiso, Robert Saunders, Alistair Moodie and management at Hawley Goodall (Speciality Works) Ltd. Amongst others were Peter Hutchinson and Alun Daley, both downwear specialists, Gordon Salt, the tent pegs and poles manufacturer. Today, the full forty-five years of active service on the outdoors scene by The Backpackers Club is a credit to these people who helped set things rolling in 1972. For sure there's a lot of life left in a Club where people have an intent urge to get themselves outdoors and backpacking! **RW**

a year round Challenge is set for members to cross a County Border and tally up the trips to gain an Accolade. There are four Standards and in the first year that year this Club competition ran, every one of the crossings between 48 of the English Counties was tallied by members.



The Backpackers Club Challenge has been designed to promote Backpacking and motivate the membership with a demanding personal challenge.

England County to County Challenge

WHY NOT TEST YOURSELF?

It encourages individuals to backpack in each of the 48 Ceremonial Counties of England by: camping on sites, at organised meets, arranged locations, wild camps or camping within one or more counties en route.

As a personal challenge, it is also hoped to stimulate individual development and champion members to achieve one of the following awards:

- GOLD** All 48 Counties achieved
- SILVER** 36+ Counties achieved
- BRONZE** 24+ Counties achieved
- ACHIEVER** 12+ Counties achieved

Further details Backpackers Club : www.backpackersclub.co.uk
 Kevin Jarvis: c2challenge@backpackersclub.co.uk

from the Kingdom of Fife, we hear about how the inventiveness and the engineering expertise of Rube Fernando has seamlessly rolled on . . .

working to keep you safe and dry

his is the story of Ardmel, Keela, seam sealing and System Dual Protection

People around the world who take on foul conditions all year, the Mountain Rescue Teams, Police Forces and Military, they have all come to appreciate the worth of the clothing brand Keela, a company born and bred in Scotland. There's a lot of expertise in forming and shaping fabric to design and make these garments, all down in no small measure to the innovation and technology Rube Fernando has developed at Keela's sister company Ardmel. The engineering solutions to cut and stitch and tape clothing is the foundation of this company which trades all around the globe. Their Glenrothes base buzzes a welcome through the warm nature of the people working under the eaves at the factory in Nasmyth Road on Southfield Industrial Estate writes tradeandindustry editor Peter Lumley. You don't hear Rube Fernando boast about how he invents and develops things mechanical or of his developing the fabric of outdoors clothing, because it's something he just does, yet on the other hand you can sense his annoyance and frustration that the supposed standards relating to garment performance is a long way lacking. That "the bullshit attitude from some camps on testing procedures leaves the public quite disadvantaged, and it is criminal" he reflects.

"The evaluation procedures under some ISO test rulings don't make so much sense, in them you encounter such weird interpretations which show really there is no outdoor reality check in the procedures when outdoor garments come under scrutiny and testing". Rube Fernando is not impressed either when a demonstration of just what really does happen inside a waterproof breathable is ignored as unallowable in a Judge's chamber. Of that he tells me "An injunction was taken against us for publicly demonstrating that we had a proper solution to solving the condensation blighting of garments. We were showing our solution was better than the one the Plaintiff W.L. Gore could attain in similar devised climatic conditions. It was done under ISO 11902 strictures, with the use of a sweating guarded hot plate and that showed just how much hot air wafts around." To show how Ardmel and Keela have supported their position on the topic of garment breathability and coping with wet weather conditions I am given full and unfettered access to the Glenrothes office library of to&fro letters and challenges passing between themselves and the legal parties and with documents and letters from W.L. Gore and others.

This is all interesting reading by any measure and at the beginning of my interview Rube Fernando bluntly puts it to me that he had "faced up to a lot of wriggling and skullduggery, which all adds up to people trying to make us and the buying public look quite terminally stupid. And it appeals to me that over a long time too many magazine writers have been scared to tell the truth." System Dual Protection was developed by Rube Fernando after experiencing what he stresses, "simply should never happen in a breathable garment guaranteed to keep you dry. It was here in Glenrothes when I was renovating a part of our property that something of a Eureka moment hit. Even indoors it was very cold so I'd wrapped up to get on with the job of cutting and laying tiles and painting doors and the like. Come tea-time when I finished work and took off the breathable jacket I was wearing I found my shirt was ringing wet with condensation but realised that in the same room the double glazed windows showed clear through. There was no damp on them!"

That was when he began developing Keela's answer to the sweating up problem, Keela's double glazed clothing and the first stage of System Dual Protection was underway. As Rube Fernando tells, "today it offers unrivalled protection in waterproofing and durability, and ours is the world's only waterproof performance clothing technology which can manage levels of inner condensation in wet and cold conditions" A research programme at University of Leeds tests concluded that with an ambient 21c/35c and rain present on the outer surface, on the Keela SDP product 4.67% of moisture remaining within the garment. Identical tests conducted at the same time and under the same regime saw 30.39% of moisture as remaining in the garment constructed with Gore-Tex.

To demonstrate how wet weather garments ought to perform, Rube Fernando designed a demonstration "comparator" device he demonstrated at Munich and other Trade shows. The aim was to illustrate the level of condensation occurring in breathable garment systems when subjected to test and evaluation at 35c inside temperature and 21c outside, all in raining conditions. "We wanted to show people the difference in condensation generation under conditions which are experienced by real people going outdoors in real conditions. The product chosen for the test demonstration at Munich involved a jacket made of Gore-Tex materials alongside one from our Keela System Dual Protection range" tells Rube Fernando. "This demonstrated a considerable comfort difference for users wearing these products. We were served an injunction brought to effectively ban us from telling the truth."

As is evident to people who move around the place in bad weather, and for those who will weather a rotten night in a tent with a lot of wet stuff being thrown against it, then they all know that seams and how they are stitched is what counts for everything. Using new breathables on a backpacking trip to the Scottish mountains in 1977, two of us discovered things were bad enough to be life threatening. Garment seam taping wasn't yet around, something which could have been some help on that occasion, seeing we had both almost passed the point of no return once the outer garments had wetted out. And in.

Seam sealing is the norm today, another Rube Fernando invention. Nowadays in clothing factories Ardmel machinery of some style or other sets standards for garment production. The story of seam sealing begins in 1974 when Rube Fernando registered a patent on his latest invention, a seam taping machine. Other companies saw the potential delivered by the product and one in particular asked that Ardmel would badge in their own name the machine they'd buy. As Rube Fernando tells, "it happened we preferred to have the Ardmel name on the machines we had designed and manufactured, I saw that as a matter of principle really". The offer pressing to own and take over his seam taping invention is in a collection of letters I was shown from Germany that would have put his seam taping IP and methodology along with actual machine production in another's hands. "There was an offer of very big money on the table" tells Rube Fernando, "but I was in no mood to sell our Ardmel future to them." The industry and garment users can readily confirm, tape seam sealing brought about a sea change in the performance garment market, heritage of Rube Fernando's expertise in finding engineering solutions by honestly engaging technology. Yet so much this time in history comes over as somewhat brutal and tarnished, revealed so in a pile of inter-party correspondence about seam taping, breathables, machines, threats and Courts. What was there shows there's been something of a battle going on behind the scenes of making waterproof clothing. One that, especially, he has been fully engaged with determined resistance to threats, and that has kept Rube Fernando on the front line



Rube Fernando with one pile of papers

for quite some years. Then in 2008 Keela was awarded The Queen's Award for Enterprise: Innovation, acknowledging the company's outstanding achievement in the field of design and development of System Dual Protection. A timely and much appreciated Award.

Asking Rube Fernando "what have YOU done" followed a path which was not entirely unexpected, for I have seen Keela and Ardmel greet people at Trade shows with a welcoming geniality towards all sectors of the trade and the industry. "There have been fun moments which to some could have looked very serious, but I have always tried to defuse the nasty moments when men in suits arrive to tell me they have obtained an injunction against me" tells the Ardmel boss. Myself, writes Peter Lumley, I was actually on the Ardmel booth when the ISPO boss arrived with legal eagles to tell Rube Fernando to stop displaying sporting footwear. No great drama or fuss ensued, just a reaction exemplifying the process of standing your ground. The men in suits showed paperwork related to four black and white strips on the black and white shoes on the booth: they were there to deliver an injunction. I realised there was something ado when Rube Fernando came over and asked for my ISPO Press pass. He took it to show to the visiting party and I heard him ask who had taken the photos on his booth, as he pointed out the Terms & Conditions bit on the Pass I heard him words: "here it states that only Press pass holders may take photographs in the Halls. What should be done about the privacy breach, Sir, and which of you is from the Press" he asked.

The boarding party retired the scene, the footwear remained on show, Ardmel instructed solicitors. Just another day! I have included that moment from time of being there to illustrate both the humour and the seriousness which accompanies those engaged in business, and especially with Rube Fernando's stance on the issue of breathability and how, in his words "the public doesn't get told all the facts which makes me of the opinion that magazine editors and Press people are scared of telling how it is. How everyone for a long time has agreed rubbish partisan Standards systems and how threats are thrown around like rice at a wedding." As for me, I'd not been prepared that the content within some of the documentation Keela showed me would be so definitive as to the way others took a position and what they threatened to do about it. Yet I witness an unruffled Rube Fernando declaring it is plainly evident that the Glenrothes company is very sure that people will find with System Dual Protection garments is that they do exactly what it says on the tin.

"All of the claims we make are vouchsafed by accountable, renowned professional research and investigation bodies." That others would pressure Rube Fernando's position is also to be expected, after all as in his words "no-one likes to be second best, but as I said to you before I am sure those people will say they'd love their day in Court on all this. Why don't they do something more than write threatening letters, and mostly through third parties". That comment came as we wrapped our time together, and final correspondence he showed was the delivery of a letter from a London firm of lawyers which referred, as Rube Fernando pointed out, "there would be English High Court Proceedings for malicious falsehoods, relying on previously granted prohibition of making any comparisons of the permeability between their Client's products and Keela System Dual Protection ones."

He saw the matter as a Lawyer asking to be told exactly what Keela or Ardmel would be displaying on their booths at upcoming Trade and public shows. "They put me on notice that any breach of Court orders meant we would face a fine of 500,000 Euros". Over a period of three weeks prior to important Trade Shows, the lawyers sent a letter by Royal Mail, delivered a copy by hand to Glenrothes ad also faxed their missive. Last words from Rube Fernando: "A year had passed when I asked why there had been no follow up, after all the Sword of Damocles suspended above us was something we need observe. My concern is that ever since these people began their silliness they have been very good at hiding behind smoke and mirrors.. You may even ask if they ever read the results from renowned Test Units investigating the phenomenon of water vapour and waterproofness of garments when used in the real world".

He continued: "I am sure the public is at a distinct advantage in not realising some garments simply cannot function in foul conditions when and where this is needed most. That's why our marketing message explains that garments are less likely to leak, and it is simply the overwhelming build-up of condensation inside the garment which is soaking you. That does not happen with our Dual Protection System".

Rube Fernando also has concerns about "the Taxpayers' pocket where Public Sector and Military procurement departments are guided by what I can only describe as mis-information and a lack of transparency. It can all put lives at risk, and for one I wouldn't want to be fighting a fire wearing a suit that 'breathes' when the hoses are being used to dampen me down. Think if all that scalding steam was to penetrate to the base layer. You could end up being poached like a bit of Tay salmon."

It's a mark of the man that Rube Fernando thinks long and hard about keeping people safe and happy when they are operating in hostile conditions.