

SNEWS[®] Morning Report

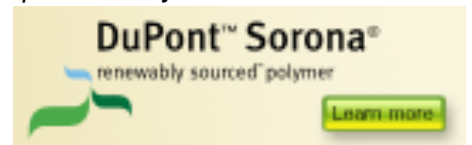
August 4, 2010

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Browsing the footwear companies, I got to thinking -- I haven't seen this much buzz about going "barefoot" since the '80s. When I was a kid, we went whole summers without wearing shoes. Of course, we also drank straight from the garden hose and climbed around in storm sewers -- probably toughened us up.

This summer, the bandwagon is bulging with a whole lot o' companies pushing the barefoot concept – also known as "minimalist," "nearly barefoot," and "natural," depending on who you are.

Jim Zwiers, president of Merrell's outdoor division, said the trend is also gaining momentum because shoes designed to burn fat and tone muscle (think MBT) have made people more aware of how footwear affects overall health.

Merrell (Booth 32127) is launching a relatively broad barefoot-inspired collection, with models for running, playing sports or just kicking around town. The bread-and-butter product should be the Trail Glove for men and Pace Glove for women.

For spring 2011, **New Balance** (Booth 36128) is rolling out the Minimus collection, which includes three styles -- running, trail running and wellness/recovery – each with men’s and women’s models. Like most shoes that follow the barefoot philosophy, they are said to nudge a person to land more on the midfoot.

Terra Plana (Booth 29108W), which launched its Vivobarefoot collection in 2004, is expanding with two running styles, the Revo and Achilles, plus the Ultra, a fully molded amphibious shoe for the beach or exploring streams.

Of course, **Vibram** (Booth 32119) has led the barefoot-esque movement with its FiveFingers footwear. The line has evolved to the point that it now includes new women’s-specific models, such as the Jaya and Jaya LR, for yoga, weight training and traveling.

The minimalist trend is also picking up new players in the market, like **Kigo** (Booth 29107W), a small company whose Curv shoe is designed for women. “Our goal was to design something portable, but it got into the hands of barefoot runners,” said co-founder Rachelle Kuramoto.

The big question is whether a large number of consumers will accept the barefoot principles. But Zwiers of Merrell said all people understand it inherently: “No one had to teach a young child how to run barefoot.”

Nope, they were too busy yelling at us for drinking out of the hose.
--Marcus Woolf

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Day 2 Show & Party Scene



Like Santa, Hula Hooping brings joy to all. But don't expect



Keen mascots waiting for the work

presents, unless sore abs are your thing.



"You can take my picture, but then get away from my meatballs!"

day to begin...shoes with or without chew marks available! -- photo by Wendy Geister



These large variety mosquitoes have renounced their old ways and joined forces with Insect Shield.



You would be this excited too if you won every issue of National Geographic, all the way back to the 1800's on DVD.



As the old saying goes, "Dress like a fish if you want to get the chicks."



***Unless indicated, photographs by Ben Fullerton: --*
<http://fullertonimages.com>

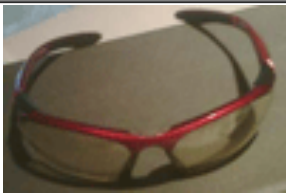
Indiana Jones swung by the show to pick up his new Papyrus hat from Outdoor Research.

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Gear of the Day



Picks by the SNEWS editors that you need to check out:



Bend this, Gumby! The new Zebra Light lenses in **Julbo's** Trail sunglasses bend dramatically to withstand shattering in the event of a crash or other calamity. Targeted at trail runners and cyclists, the "Zebra" photochromic NXT lenses adapt to varying light conditions (Category 1-3, changing from blocking from 20-85 percent sunlight) and, reportedly, get 50 percent darker in about 22 seconds. MSRP \$160. Booth 7044



Weighing in at 1 pound, 6 ounces, the Plasma 30 sleeping bag from **Marmot** – part of a new partnership -- is made of 900-fill down with vertical baffling and flow-gate construction. Meaning? Users can push the down fill around to adjust the insulation level

throughout the bag as needed. The outer shell is made of Pertex's 100-percent nylon micro ripstop for ultra-lightness and durability, and it has a full-length zipper. MSRP \$419. Booth 34037



Long known for its tennis shoes, **K-Swiss** showed off its first technical running shoe two years ago, but the newest addition – the Kwicky Blade Light – uses the company's so-called "Ion Mask" technology. Indeed, the hydrophobic upper hates squish-squish running in water-filled shoes as much as you. Water runs right off

the upper while drainage holes in the side squirt out any water that does accumulate inside to undrench the dogs. \$130 Booth 40173



Hey, what if we lay a bunch of guys on a glass table and figure out what part of a camp pad is a waste of space? So went the conversation at **Klymit** during R&D to design the three-season Inertia X Frame pad with cut-outs. By using body

mapping, the company sliced away parts of the pad it deemed unnecessary. Klymit said it takes twice the air pressure of a standard ground pad and is 70 percent smaller than competitors' pads when deflated. Now punch holes in that theory. MSRP \$99.95. Booth 38207

Hot Button

Q: Will consumers think it is important for brands to assess the sustainability of their products using the new Eco-Index?

>> "It's interesting. Enlightened groups in certain regions, especially in Boulder, are pushing for it constantly, but there's still a big curve. Even if consumers aren't asking, we still have to be the leaders in this." --*Kitty Bradley; president, Great Trango Holdings*

>> "This crowd — yes. The consumers who enter this market are going to pay attention to it. There's a whole new excitement about that. For the new generation, it's on their brain and has universal value." --*Jordan Campbell; public relation manager/athlete, Marmot*

>>“It is irrelevant what consumers will think. The Eco-Index was built as a brand-facing tool that brands can and should use to evaluate their own processes to improve upon them. It must never become a soap box where brands use their Eco-Index rating to compete with one another for consumer attention.” --*Paul Fish; CEO, Mountain Gear*

>>“Yes, because increasingly consumers expect transparency and the only way you can have that it to be able to look and compare on an equal footing. It will be one of many deciding factors that consumers will use when making a buying decision. Ultimately, it is important like the Energy Star where consumers will decide how much information they wish to see before they make a purchase.” -
-*Lee Fromson; vice president gear and apparel, REI*

>>“As long as it is credible and a benchmark that everyone agrees to and where things are measured apples to apples, it will be meaningful to consumers. The long-term goal for every company in this industry should be to make sustainable products, regardless.” -
-*Dan Madden; retail trade manager, Gore-Tex*

>>“We will need to prove to the consumer first that it is a legitimate measure and one they can believe in. But, ultimately, the product will still have to deliver all the performance features consumers expect and a price they expect. The rest is just a cherry on top.” -
-*Tom Mendl; sales and marketing, China, Vibram.*

>>“Yes, providing you provide the right amount of information that consumers can really use to make a decision. Will it be a single determining factor in a purchase decision? No, and it never has been and never will be.” --*Mark Galbraith; general manager, Nau.*

Don't Miss This...

9-10 a.m. -- Sweet Start

Start today off with a healthy breakfast at the Honey Stinger booth (37153), where the crew will be serving honey-enhanced smoothies. (Actually, they're doing this every morning.)

10-11 a.m. -- Cheap Feet

Not a smoothie person? Need a bit of the hair of the dog after the industry party last night? Over at Chaco (34127), you can pick up a free mimosa and a limited-run pair of Z1 sandals for only \$25. That's a serious bargain, and some of the proceeds benefit the Conservation Alliance.

2:30 p.m. -- Go For the Jugular

Fancy yourself a master juggler? Hit the Climbing Zone to see if you can beat other contestants and special guest Chris Sharma. You'll be juggling bottles of Nutriex performance supplement. Winners get, yes, Nutriex.

4 p.m. -- Celebrating Freedom

If you know the Munter hitch, chances are you learned it from reading the venerable tome of wilderness knowhow, *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills*. Raise a glass of free beer and eat some 50th-birthday cake while toasting the 8th edition of this encyclopedic treasure from The Mountaineers (booth 26049). Special guests abound, including Dee Molenaar.

4 p.m. -- Hips Don't Lie

Okay, people, it's *really* important to hit this event *before* you start drinking. Lole((umlaut)) will be teaching a hula hoop class at its booth (36187). Backpacker editor-in-chief Jon Dorn claims he was once a college hula champ and can swivel with the best of them. Also Thursday at 5 p.m. SNEWS requests photos!

5 p.m. -- More Free Suds!

There's beer everywhere at OR, but Sea to Summit (booth 5000) is hosting a "Piss-Up"—Australian for happy hour—to commemorate its 20th anniversary. Here at SNEWS, we never pass up a chance

to take part in a piss up. Not your style? Swing over to Princeton Tec for its daily tap and 35th anniversary celebration (17001).

7-9 p.m. -- The Lance Show

This is a film that will simultaneously inspire and make you feel like a fat toad. Honey Stinger sponsors a screening of [Race Across the Sky](#), the acclaimed film chronicling the 2009 Leadville Trail 100 Mountain Bike Race. It features the company's new part-owner, a certain well-known 7-time Tour de France winner. The showing is at [Brewvies Cinema Pub](#); more info at #37153

8 p.m. to midnight -- Magic Carpet Ride

Who better to headline JanSport's long-running Shake & Bake concert series than "Born to be Wild" author John Kay and Steppenwolf? Get your old-school groove on at The Depot—*after* visiting JanSport's booth (24043) to pick up your \$10 ticket. All proceeds benefit Big City Mountaineers.

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Outdoor Retailer Updates



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