

MAGAZINE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WORLD FEDERATION
OF THE SPORTING GOODS INDUSTRY

2022



*THE NEW AGE
OF DISRUPTION*



WORLD FEDERATION OF THE
SPORTING GOODS INDUSTRY

安踏氮科技 新一代中底技术

KT7 克莱·汤普森
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KT 07



MESSAGE

Co-Chair of the Board

Championing opportunities and navigating challenges together during the "new age of disruption".

COVID-19, as we all know, has reached every corner of the world as well as our industry. Thanks to global efforts to mitigate it, such as the expedited roll-out of vaccines, the pandemic has begun to stabilize in many parts of the world during the second half of this year. We are starting to see people and businesses return to "normal" in countries where COVID-19 is better controlled, and as several forecasts indicate, we continue to stay optimistic on the business outlook for 2022 that could well match pre-pandemic growth levels.

As representative brands of the sporting goods industry and members of WFSGI, we are all aware of the emerging and evolving needs of our consumers, and constantly try to find ways to address them in today's context. In this unprecedented era, we have seen shifts in consumer behaviours that continue to remain true in 2021. Consumers are more aware of the importance of health and wellness and are more engaged in sports activities with over half of them keeping up their new lifestyle habits into this year. Also, they have re-examined their consumption patterns: they are buying fewer goods and placing more importance on product quality. More than ever, consumers are also more conscious of the world around them; they value corporations' commitment to sustainability and favour brands that are socially responsible. Another trend we're seeing at the individual customer level is that consumers are preferring to personalize their products to show their individual taste and style rather than simply being a brand follower.

We need to understand our consumers at a deeper level to be able to offer them improved products and services, and ultimately, to help them live a healthier life and achieve their sports ambitions. Sustainability should no

longer be just a concept; it should be embedded in everything we do in our organizations across management decisions, corporate culture, operating models, and daily business. Finally, we should be flexible about how we provide our products and services so we can better suit our customers' new priorities and preferences.

Without a doubt, the global supply chain network has been greatly challenged by the pandemic, especially in South East Asia and South Asia, where ensuing challenges continue to surface. As a community of industry players, we have a role to play in providing sufficient support to our local vendors and business partners to help them overcome these difficulties. One way to make our industry more sustainable is to modernize the entire supply chain. We see a real need to upgrade traditional manufacturing infrastructure and processes with digital technologies to help make every stage of the supply chain future-proof. Ultimately, these enhancements will put us in a better position to serve our customers and consumers.

Needless to say, 2021 has proven to be another unique year with enormous changes happening in the sporting goods sector, giving us new, fresh opportunities to champion as an industry. In my second year as the Co-Chair of WFSGI, I acknowledge our responsibility and real ability to challenge ourselves and adapt to this "new normal".

I sincerely appreciate all your support and encourage everyone to continue working together towards the future development of our industry.

James Zheng

WFSGI Co-Chair of the Board

Face the weather with confidence.

Feel empowered to run all winter long in gear
that's designed to keep the weather out.

ALL WINTER LONG
COLLECTION

 **asics**
sound mind, sound body



MESSAGE

Co-Chair of the Board

When WFSGI was first established in 1978, it was the Rotary Club for the sports industry. Since then, WFSGI has been evolving and resolving challenges in the sports industry. As a result, the practical characteristics of WFSGI has been developed, as we know them today. At the same time, WFSGI has established close relationships with companies, federations and international organizations such as the IOC, WTO, WHO, UNESCO, and ILO. For example, the IOC recognizes the WFSGI as part of the Olympic Family, representing the sporting goods industry. In the case of child labour issues, WFSGI worked with the ILO and FIFA to solve industry problems. During the past year, the WFSGI tackled many more obstacles which can be read in this magazine.

WFSGI is fulfilling.

WFSGI currently has 8 active committees where we are addressing more than 36 issues. The committees are made up of employees and specialists from WFSGI member companies. The committees hold advanced and specialized discussions that enhance and impact the sporting goods industry.

“Sustainable Development Goals: SDGs” was originally publicized by the fact that the sustainability of the earth, which is the foundation of our economy and society, is in danger due to the rapid development in human society since the Industrial Revolution.

We, as people involved in the sports industry, have a responsibility to think seriously about how to pursue the SDGs, both as individuals and as companies, and to put them into practice. This can be seen throughout several committee activities and initiatives.

WFSGI continues evolving.

WFSGI's activities are carried out by both the Committee, which holds highly advanced and specialized discussions, and the Board of Directors, which is leading the decision-making process of WFSGI. The secretariat staff, under the leadership of President and CEO, Robbert de Kock, bridge the gap between the committee work, the important discussions and decisions from the Board of Directors, and then shape solutions to support the industry.

Although 2021 was a challenging year and the WFSGI General Assembly and other meetings were held remotely due to COVID-19, the yearly activities were effectively managed by the continuous efforts of the WFSGI staff. As we look forward to 2022, we hope to be able to meet in person. With the support of our members, the Board of Directors and the staff, I believe that WFSGI will continue to exist and evolve as a valuable federation for everyone.

With best personal regards,

Motoi Oyama

WFSGI Co-Chair of the Board

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

The sustaining membership is a complementary membership. Companies that choose to be a sustaining member demonstrate a strong identification with the Sporting Goods Industry worldwide, the WFSGI and its objectives.

GOLD

adidas



SILVER



BRONZE



The WFSGI thanks all its sustaining members for their support.

CHECK THE FULL
MEMBERS DIRECTORY
HERE:





MESSAGE

President and CEO

As we find ourselves in the "new age of disruption", we have learned to manage and accept COVID-19 but it kept challenging us on our flexibility and creativity to do business.. As I am writing this, today, we are entering into yet another wave and in a period where winter sport should have its biggest sales. As for the whole industry, in the past 18 months, we've experienced consequences and influences from the pandemic that stretched capacities and brought us to our limit. But it needs more to bring us down and in times of challenges, the industry performs at its best!

Also, the delayed Tokyo Olympic Games and Paralympic Games were successfully held (and a big thank you to the athletes for their performances). You may know that WFSGI successfully delivered another round on the NOC Uniform Support Programme. 11 WFSGI members delivered the third and largest WFSGI IOC NOC Uniform Support Programme to date (Video). The WFSGI members have provided free of charge competition uniforms for a total of 1,000+ athletes from 93 NOCs.

In addition, WFSGI continued the development of 2020 and had fully reacted to the situation and shifted resources to embrace the digital world. At the beginning of 2021, we successfully staged the first-ever WFSGI virtual General Assembly, several webinar series, and the launch of the new website, simplifying access to our working areas, confidential information for members, position papers, industry reports and so on.

In September, we had the privilege of holding the third World Cycling Forum (WCF), a hybrid event with an in-person forum in Munich, Germany, along with the option to join virtually. The WCF focused on capitalizing on the current bike boom and gave participants valuable insights on best practices for production and supply chain.

Despite all working digital, we had as many activities as ever before. Many countries decided to change rules during COVID-19 but WFSGI anticipated through by reacting via our Trade, Legal and Manufacturing committees.

In Legal, the WFSGI Compliant Labelling Requirements (CRL) Database continued to add value for our members, as well as companies outside of the WFSGI. The Legal Committee's new working group on Digitization of Product Information published a position paper aiming to find concrete solutions to push for digital labelling. In 2021, we also released the "Horizon Scanning", a quarterly compilation of recent legal developments impacting the Sporting Goods Industry worldwide.

In Trade, the sporting goods industry is facing challenges behind several trade cases. The Trade Committee continues to review the Brazilian anti-dumping duties on footwear imports in China, the Indonesian safeguard investigation, the Indian footwear and the Russian labelling regulations while focusing on the many technical trade barriers.

In Manufacturing, the committee has recently opened its committee to both representatives from manufacturing companies along with representatives from brand and retail companies to allow for a greater level of engagement across sectors. During the pandemic, this committee has become particularly relevant as many companies are dealing with supply chain challenges.

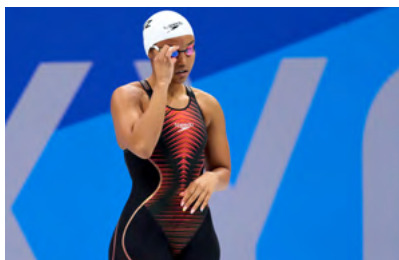
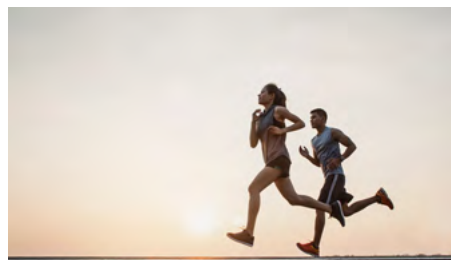
WFSGI has valued collaboration and teamwork with all the members and parties involved over the past year. I feel confident that with the continued support of the WFSGI Staff, the Board of Directors, Committee Chairs, Committees members, along with all WFSGI Members and Partners, we can continue to shape the future of the sporting goods industry.

Thank you for your membership and support!
With best personal regards,

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Robbert de Kock
WFSGI President and CEO

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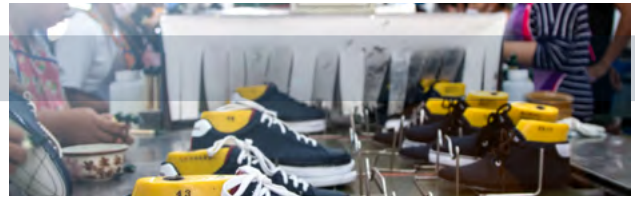


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By James Macleod,
Director of Olympic Solidarity
and NOC Relations, IOC

THE NOC COMPETITION UNIFORM SUPPORT PROGRAMME: DEMONSTRATING THE OLYMPIC SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY

James Macleod has been the Director of the NOC Relations Department and of Olympic Solidarity since 2019. Macleod has been Associate Director for Relations with the Olympic Movement under the supervision of the Deputy Director General since the beginning of 2017. In his earlier Olympic career, Macleod worked for Olympic Solidarity as Head of Athlete Programmes, before joining the London 2012 Organising Committee for the Olympic Games as Head of NOC and NPC Services and then the Baku 2015 European Games Organising Committee as Director of Athlete Services and Operations.

The NOC Competition Uniform Support Programme for the Olympic Games is a collaboration between the WFSGI, and the sport brands that make up its membership, and the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Together we are committed to making sure no athlete is left behind when it comes to their competition uniform for the Olympic Games. More than 1,000 athletes from 94 NOCs have benefitted from the programme to date – at the Rio 2016, PyeongChang 2018 and Tokyo 2020 Games.

I've been privileged – and moved – to see first-hand what being part of the NOC Competition Uniform Support programme means to those who benefit. Athletes come to the Olympic Games along many different paths. Some receive sponsorship and financial support from their national teams; others have a more challenging route. Not every National Olympic Committee (NOC) is able to provide state-of-the-art kit for their competitors.

Thanks to the programme, there's now a level playing field for every athlete when it comes to their competition clothing. At each Games since Rio 2016, the WFSGI's sports brand members have provided personalised uniforms designed using the latest technology that comply with the IOC's guidelines to Olympians whose NOCs do not have the financial means to provide it.

One of my highlights of the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Games was meeting Bobsleigh and Skeleton competitors from Nigeria when they were given their uniform. It was a magical moment – they had the biggest smiles on their faces. Coming from a country where there is generally no winter sport, for them having the right uniform and the right sports equipment provided a sense of belonging. I think that, for them, made all the difference.

Why does it matter so much? Firstly, competition clothing has evolved over time. What athletes wear now is part of their performance, with the design, fabric and materials varying between and tailored specifically for each sport. Secondly, the programme goes sport by sport, athlete by athlete and provides them with the most appropriate uniforms and competition wear. It takes away anxieties about what they'll wear or how they'll afford it. It enables them to feel comfortable, proud and equal, allowing them to focus on their performance.

Robyn Young, a swimmer from Eswatini, described how she felt collecting her uniform for Tokyo 2020: "I almost cried. I had the newest edition goggles, swimsuit, tracksuit. I couldn't have been happier – it was incredible. It's a major confidence boost. With this uniform it doesn't matter where you come from, what your background is: you're on the same level as everyone else. When you walk out to compete you stand tall. You can concentrate on showing your ability to the world."

With their NOC name and emblem displayed, the athletes also feel they're a representation of their NOC at Games

time. It gives them pride and the NOC community have been incredibly grateful for the support.

Making it happen

Piloted first at the Rio 2016 Games, the programme arose from an observation that not all NOCs were able to provide their athletes with competition compliant uniforms and here was an opportunity to ensure every single Olympian was supported. The WFSGI and the IOC then worked with the WFSGI sport brand members to bring the initiative to life.

Every effort is made to ensure athletes get the complete kit they need. The programme is logistically complicated but the IOC, WFSGI and its sport brand members all work together to ensure the smoothest process possible for the athletes. We identify the NOCs who need support and then WFSGI works with its members to ensure each athlete is supported by a brand. The brands and the IOC then begin working out exact requirements for each athlete, including individual items and sizing, a process that runs from 12-18 months out from the Games up until only a few weeks before the opening ceremony. If time allows between qualification and the Games, the design will reflect their NOC's colours.



Robyn Young, Eswatini

Then there's the operational task of getting each uniform from manufacturers around the world to a distribution centre at the Olympic Village in time for the Games. Finally, the athletes arrive and are given their uniform. They meet the brands, try on each item, and have time to train in them. Where possible, alterations are also made as necessary to ensure optimum comfort and fit and that important, final touch, the NOC emblems are applied to their competition uniforms.

Looking to the future

We're delighted to see the programme go from strength to strength. For the upcoming Beijing 2022 Winter Games, around 35 athletes from 14 NOCs will be benefitting. And, as at previous Games, the brands will be bringing specialist uniform tailors to the Olympic Villages to tailor the uniforms to the exact specifications of the athletes.

Looking further forward, the site for the Paris 2024 uniform distribution centre in the Olympic Village has already been identified.

This initiative is an example of true solidarity, enabling every athlete to step out onto the field of play feeling confident and proud. It wouldn't happen without the sports brands and the WFSGI. A huge thank you on behalf of all the NOCs and athletes involved. ■

FACTS AND STATS

Since its launch, the programme has impacted:

1,000+
athletes

93
NOCs

The WFSGI brands who have supported this initiative to date are: adidas, arena, ASICS, Descente, Mizuno, New Balance, NIKE Inc., Odlo, Orbea, Pentland (Speedo), PUMA and Under Armour



**WATCH WHAT IT MEANT
TO ATHLETES AT THE
OLYMPIC GAMES
TOKYO 2020**





By Lars Silberbauer,
Associate Director, Digital
Engagement and Marketing,
International Olympic
Committee

UNITING THROUGH DIGITAL ACCELERATION

Lars Silberbauer is Associate Director at the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Part of the Digital Engagement & marketing department, he is responsible for brand, marketing and digital partnership.

The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 were out of the ordinary: postponed a year; closed to spectators. At the same time, the pandemic had accelerated digitalisation across every aspect of our lives.

This context provided immense challenges for all sports organisations but also brought with it opportunities for us when it came to achieving our mission 'improving the world through sports' by connecting people all over the world, engaging new audiences and especially younger audiences. In absence of spectators on the ground, it was also vital that the athletes felt the support of their loved ones and hundreds of millions of fans at home.

We achieved incredible results in 2021, with more people than ever digitally connected to the Olympic Games. In addition to 28 billion views on Olympic broadcaster partners' digital platforms, part of this success was also due to the Olympic web and app platforms for Tokyo 2020. They attracted more than 196 million unique users, drawing more than three times the amount of online traffic for the Olympic Games Rio 2016, while the IOC's social media handles generated 6.1 billion engagements – including video views, shares, comments and likes.

So how did we do it?

Achieving digital transformation

The framework for our achievements was in place even before the outbreak of COVID-19. Identifying the ever-growing digitalisation of society, our digital strategy laid out key components that would help grow engagement with the Games, especially among digital-first young people. When the pandemic hit, our ambition for digitalisation became not only desired but essential. Innovating in the digital and social media spaces became more vital than ever.

Key elements in the lead up to the Tokyo 2020 Games were the launch of Olympics.com, a new Olympic Virtual Series and our Stronger Together campaign. At Games-time, digital activities connected athletes and people around the world like never before.





A single people-centric online platform

One of the biggest challenges we faced when it came to audience engagement was that there was no single digital Olympic platform for people to go to. So, we built Olympics.com and its sister app – merging the websites and apps of the IOC and Games organising committees for the first time. We also integrated the Olympic Channel – our sports video section featuring everything from live events to award-winning films across a range of Games-related topics.

Launched in 2021, the new platform provides a comprehensive source for information, news and original content, enabling improved, streamlined digital engagement both during and between the Olympic Games. Everyone in the Olympic Movement – fans, athletes, sports federations and partners alike – can now access the digital content they're most interested in based on data insights. Over the course of Tokyo 2020, 196 million users have visited the platform. This success was mirrored across social channels, including crafting our first digital collaboration with leading youth platform TikTok. A bespoke hashtag challenge #OlympicSpirit, has been viewed 6.7 billion times.

The Olympic Virtual Series

There's been huge growth in the gaming industry and virtual sport, bringing people together around their passions.

We identified the opportunity to promote the Olympic Movement, Olympic values, sports participation and grow direct relationships with young people by moving into this area for the first time. Partnering with five International Sports Federations and games publishers, we produced the Olympic Virtual Series: Olympic-licensed mass participation events bringing together virtual sport, esports and gaming enthusiasts around the world.

Held in May-June 2021, the series featured Baseball, Cycling, Rowing, Sailing and Motorsport events, each differing in format and concept in order to maximise online participation and prioritise inclusivity. We welcomed nearly 250,000 players competing from home or at training facilities, with people around the world following events on our digital channels.

It was a promising start in the virtual sports environment, and we're excited to develop it further in the run up to Paris 2024.



Stronger Together

With 100 days to go to the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Games, we launched our main Stronger Together campaign, focused on connecting audiences through human, emotion-led content. Athletes including Naomi Osaka, shared their powerful personal stories in our Olympic Voices film. We ran a bespoke TikTok challenge and harnessed influencer power including Tony Hawk and Sky Brown – generating record levels of engagement and directly targeting the youth audience.

A newly digital Games

During the Games, we knew people would want to find ways to support the athletes and feel part of the action – even if they couldn't physically be in the same place. Equally, we wanted the athletes to know they were being supported.

Working with Olympic Broadcasting Services, we encouraged fans to upload cheer videos and send virtual claps to the athletes they were following, which were then relayed on giant screens in the venues. Participants were able to pick any country they wanted to support, regardless of their location. In total 255 million cheers were sent from across the globe – a remarkable expression of the feeling of solidarity we were hoping to inspire.

Dedicated digital stations ensured that immediately after competing athletes could connect to friends and families thousands of miles away. The power of these moments will have been clear to anyone watching the emotional scenes – and it was especially moving that the 200th athlete moment was for the host country, Wrestling gold medallist Yui Susaki.

What's next?

This was a pivotal year for our digital strategy. Reacting to the world around us, we accelerated the journey to fulfil our mission. We'll be building on our successes at the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 and beyond, continuing to look forward and innovate in the exciting, constantly evolving digital space. ■



FACTS AND STATS

196 million

unique users on Olympic Web & App

255 million

virtual cheers sent from fans to Tokyo 2020 athletes

6.1 billion

engagements on Olympic social media handles

250.000 players

in the first Olympic Virtual Series

28 billion

views on Olympic Broadcast Partners' digital platforms



By Emma Terho,
IOC Athletes' Commission
(AC) Chair
and Kaveh Mehrabi,
Director of the IOC Athletes'
Department

REPRESENTING THE ATHLETES' VOICE IN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

A five-time Olympian and former captain of the Finland women's ice hockey team, Terho won bronze medals at the Olympic Games Nagano 1998 and Vancouver 2010. She was elected to the IOC Athletes' Commission in 2018 by her fellow athletes, and then elected Chair of the Commission in August 2021. Terho's playing career took her across Finland, the USA and Russia, and she also has a master's in economics.

A former badminton player and Olympian in Beijing in 2008, Iranian-born Mehrabi became Director of the IOC Athletes' Department in May 2021 after six years at the IOC. Mehrabi has over 10 years' experience in international sports organisations, including the Special Olympics and the Baku 2015 European Games Organising Committee. He is also a former member of the WADA and BWF athletes' commissions.

"Athletes are at the heart of the Olympic Movement," said IOC Athletes' Commission Chair Emma Terho. "Therefore, the top priority is to ensure the protection of clean athletes and to support them both on and off the field of play. The IOC Athletes' Commission (AC) has been given the mandate to make this a reality."

Some of the IOC AC's main priorities include:

- ensuring the athletes' voice is represented in decision-making processes throughout the Olympic Movement;
- supporting its stakeholders – the athletes – to the best possible extent; and
- listening to the athletes and taking on board their comments on important topics, such as athlete representation, Rule 40 and Rule 50.2.

The following comes from a joint interview with the IOC Athletes' Commission (AC) Chair, Emma Terho, and the Director of the IOC Athletes' Department, Kaveh Mehrabi, on the roles and objectives of the Athletes' Commission, working alongside the newly created Department.

OLYMPIC SOLIDARITY NOC AC
ACTIVITY GRANTS

10,000 USD

AVAILABLE TO ALL
NOC ACS



Athletes' Commission

The IOC AC, chaired by five-time Olympian and Olympic medallist Emma Terho, ensures that the athletes' viewpoint remains at the heart of all Olympic Movement decisions. The Commission represents elite athletes, and competing and recently retired Olympic athletes. Commission members are elected by athletes at each edition of the Olympic Games. The IOC AC leads the representation of athletes on a global scale by regularly interacting with ACs at national and sport levels, and with athletes directly.



10 GLOBAL CALLS

WITH NOC AND IF ATHLETES' COMMISSIONS

Terho stated: *"In 2021, the IOC AC celebrated its 40th anniversary. Thanks to the outstanding work over the years by past Commission members, and especially by my predecessor, Kirsty Coventry, and former Vice-Chair Danka Bartekova, the IOC AC has a very strong foundation to build upon for our future work."*

"The landscape in sport is changing," said Kaveh Mehrabi, *"and the IOC AC is adapting to these changes to ensure effective representation of athletes. For example, switching the format of the International Athletes' Forum [IAF] from in-person to digital was a great way to illustrate how the IOC AC remained flexible and adaptable during the pandemic. Additionally, as of January 2020, Olympic Solidarity funding of USD 10,000 is now available to every National Olympic Committee [NOC] AC each year, to further help ACs support their athletes during these times."*

Launched in early 2021, Olympic Agenda 2020+5 is the IOC's strategic roadmap to 2025 and includes a set of 15 recommendations, many of which are related to athletes. The athlete-focused recommendations will further address the changing landscape through a number of concrete and meaningful actions, such as reinforcing athletes' rights and responsibilities, further strengthening safe sport and protecting clean athletes. One recommendation that has already been achieved is the creation of an Athletes' Department within the IOC. The Department, headed by Olympian Mehrabi, who participated in badminton at the Olympic Games Beijing 2008, will further enhance athlete representation in both the IOC and the Olympic Movement.

The global network of ACs and athlete representatives has grown from strength to strength over recent years, with more and more ACs being created and supported by their respective organisations. The IOC AC brings together and supports the network of ACs so that they in turn can best support their athletes as much as possible. Through regular consultation with other ACs and athlete representatives, the athletes' viewpoint on the most important topics can be effectively gauged and then fed back to the IOC.

In 2021 alone, the IOC AC led 10 conference calls with the global network of athletes' commissions. Especially during the pandemic and in the lead-up to the Olympic Games, one of the key focuses was to keep the athlete community engaged and well informed every step of the way, and the same engagement is in place for the upcoming Winter Games in Beijing.

Athletes are represented at decision-making level in the IOC through members of the IOC AC being members of nearly all IOC commissions – ensuring the athletes' voice is heard in every aspect of the IOC's work. Terho said: *"As Chair of the IOC AC, I am a member of the IOC Executive Board, and IOC AC members are also members of every Coordination Commission for the Olympic and Youth Olympic Games. Ensuring the athlete experience at the Olympic Games is a top priority for Organising Committees remains a key focus of the IOC AC."*



ALMOST **2,000**
ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVES REGISTERED FOR IAF 2021

199
NOCs

41
OLYMPIC IFS

22
RECOGNISED IFS



OVER **125,000**
ATHLETES' AND ENTOURAGE MEMBERS OF ATHLETE365

The International Athletes' Forum is organised every two years by the IOC AC and is the largest gathering of athlete representatives from every sport and across the world. It provides an opportunity to discuss, in person, the issues that are most important to athletes. In 2019, for the first time, the AC Chairs of all 206 NOCs were invited to the Forum, joining athlete representatives from International Federations (IFs), the World Anti-Doping Agency, Organising Committees for the Olympic Games, Continental Associations, and the International Paralympic Committee, and bringing the total number of participants at the 2019 Forum to 350. In 2021, taking advantage of the digital format of the event due to the pandemic, all members of ACs were invited to the online event, which resulted in almost 2,000 athlete representatives registering for the biggest IAF ever.

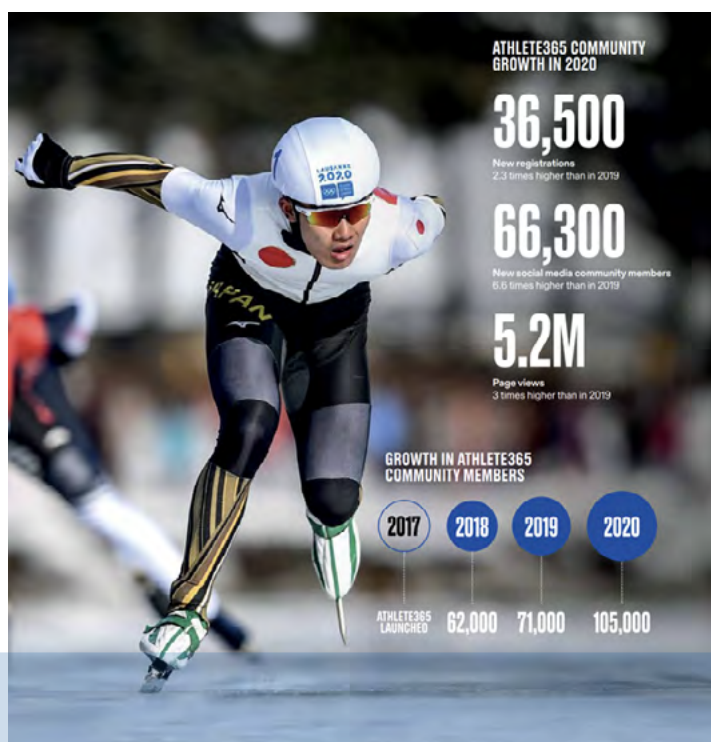
On a continental level, and funded through Olympic Solidarity, athletes' forums also take place every two years. Led by the continental ACs and supported by IOC AC members, these forums allow for the athletes' voice to be heard at regional level and provide another opportunity to strengthen the network for athlete representation.

IOC athlete programmes and support

Since 1981, the IOC AC has helped shape and drive a number of programmes for athletes. Through its dedicated athlete-facing communication platform, Athlete365, offers, services and resources are available to athletes all year round in multiple languages. As of today, over 125,000 Olympians, elite athletes and athletes' entourage members are subscribers to Athlete365.

Mehrabi explained further: *"Athlete365 Career+ is one of the longest-serving programmes initiated by the IOC AC and offers support and guidance to athletes who are approaching the end of their sporting careers. Since its inception in 2005, over 60,000 athletes from 189 countries have been reached by the programme. A dedicated Athlete365 learning environment provides a platform for athletes, and their entourages, to learn about a variety of topics, from nutrition and injury prevention to coaching advice and event management."*

Athlete365 also hosts content related to the important topics of safeguarding, mental health, prevention of competition manipulation and anti-doping, as well as implementable toolkits designed to help ACs and other organisations share the knowledge with their athletes.



"During the Athlete365 Career+ Power Up workshop, I realised how much sport has set me up for success in my career."

David Thibodeau, swimmer and Power Up participant



Supporting athletes during the pandemic

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Athlete365 became the hub for athletes and entourage members seeking information about COVID-19 and its impact on both the Olympic qualification events and the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

The IOC AC conducted a survey with more than 4,000 elite athletes and their entourages from 135 countries to better understand athletes' challenges in the wake of the Tokyo 2020 postponement. As a result of the findings, the Athlete365 platform was adapted to focus on providing the most up-to-date and accurate COVID-19-related information, resources and advice on the site, directly addressing the most prominent challenges faced by athletes at the time.

Innovative programmes with The Olympic Partners (TOPs) *"We continuously look to innovate and identify new areas that athletes can benefit from,"* said Mehrabi. *"A number of exciting offers from various TOPs are a great example of this. In partnership with Intel, Athlete365 hosts exclusive opportunities for athletes, providing well-being, career mentorship and learning services."*

Earlier this year, Airbnb awarded 500 travel grants of USD 2,000 to Olympians and Paralympians, as well as providing over 6,000 athletes competing at the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games USD 500 of credit. The Airbnb Olympian and Paralympian Experiences programme also gives athletes the opportunity to share their passions and connect with people from all over the world whilst earning money. P&G supported important causes backed by athletes who are advancing work in important areas, and Samsung has provided a limited-edition smartphone to athletes at every Olympic Games since 2014.

Olympic Charter Rules 40 and 50

Two important, topical subjects that are being discussed among the athlete community are Rules 40 and 50 of the Olympic Charter. Representing the athletes' voice on important matters such as these is undoubtedly a major priority, and the IOC AC has taken a number of measures in this respect.

Rule 40 relates to the Olympic Movement's funding model and the protective guidelines around the commercialisation of athletes, officials and Olympic properties during the period around the Olympic Games. The Rule 40 framework is critical as it safeguards the revenue sources that fund the IOC, and therefore enables the Olympic Movement to fund all Olympic teams worldwide, all Olympic sports and the Olympic Games themselves.



The Olympic Movement's funding model enables the IOC's funds to go straight back into sport and athletes' development, through Olympic Solidarity and staging the Olympic Games. Olympic Solidarity's budget for 2021-2024 is USD 590 million, and a significant portion of the funds are allocated solely for athletes' development; this amount was increased by 25 per cent compared to the previous four years.

The Olympic Games give athletes a unique platform and connect them to a global audience, creating opportunities to grow their personal brand. At the same time, the universality of the Games is what makes them so special, giving every nation the chance to compete against one another and a chance for smaller sports to be in the spotlight.



“For athletes, my advice is simple. Plan well, prepare well, and set your priorities right. Let’s think positive and live in a positive way.”

Eliud Kipchoge, Olympic gold medalist and Athlete365 Stay Strong webinar participant



The solidarity funding model ensures that athletes from all Olympic sports and from all NOCs (as well as refugee athletes) are supported financially, not only the most commercially successful athletes. Breaking the solidarity model would significantly hurt athletes from countries with fewer resources or without a professional sports system.

Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter governs the use of advertising, demonstrations and propaganda at the Olympic Games, and specifically prohibits demonstrations or political, religious or racial propaganda at Olympic sites. Racism or any form of discrimination have no place in sport, and the Olympic Games are a powerful symbol of peace and inclusion, by bringing together athletes from 206 NOCs and the Refugee Olympic Team.

The IOC AC consulted with 3,547 athletes from 185 countries, as well as holding a qualitative consultation with athletes’ commissions from NOCs and IFs on the topic, and developed a set of recommendations designed to increase the opportunities for athletes at the Olympic Games, but at the same time preserve the opening ceremony, podium and field of play from becoming places to express individual views. The majority of athletes believe that it is not appropriate to express views in these places – especially on the podium – and that unified anti-discrimination messaging would be a more powerful tool to raise awareness of important issues.

Next steps: Beijing 2022 and beyond

Looking to the future, Terho said: *“We have a number of priorities for the period ahead. With the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 taking place so soon after Tokyo, we are engaging with the winter athlete community every step of the way as the final preparations come together. Through regular conference calls and AC-to-AC meetings, the IOC AC are ensuring the athletes have as much clarity as possible on the various countermeasures and other important updates for the Games.”*

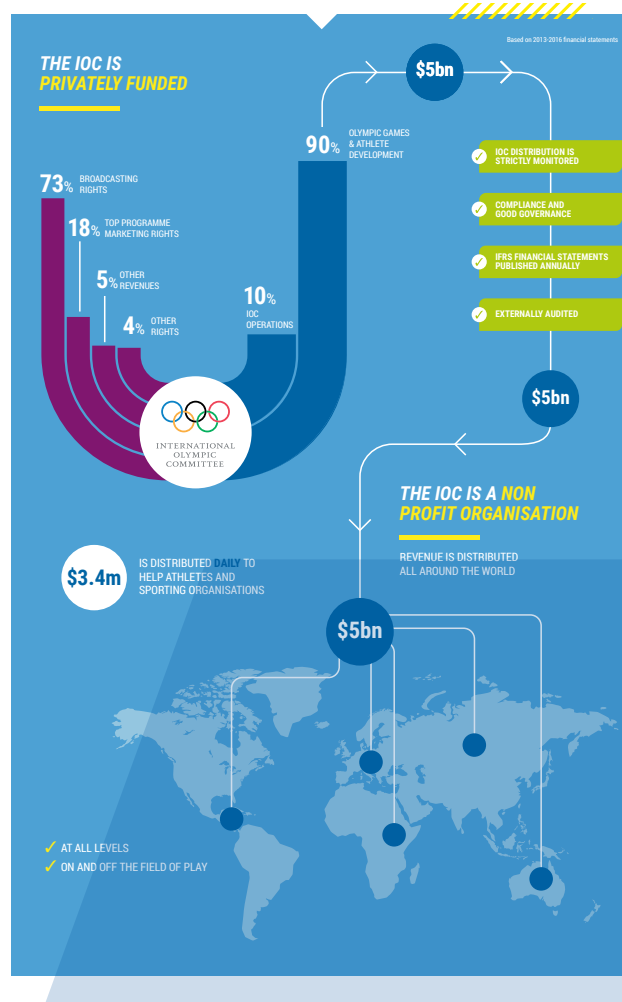
*“All graphics are reproduced here with the kind permission of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
© International Olympic Committee (IOC). All rights reserved.”*

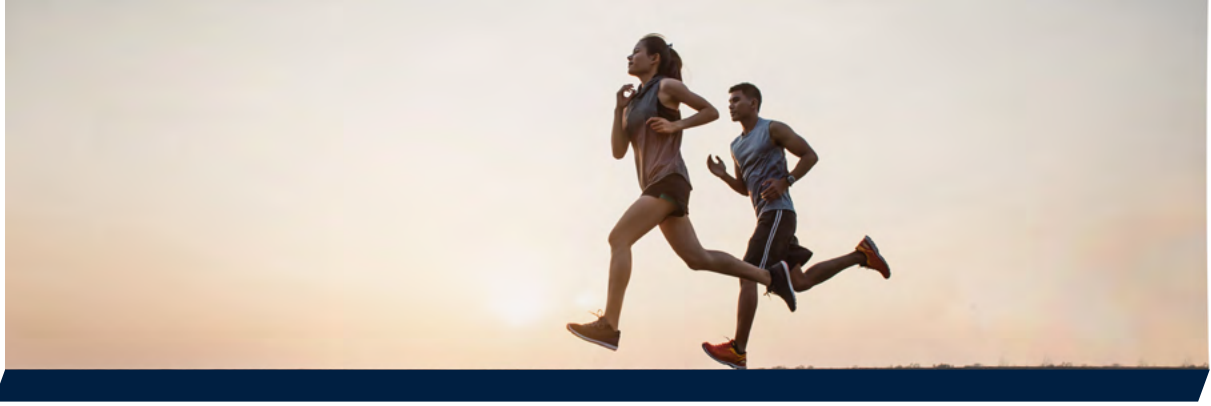
In November 2017, the Commission released its IOC AC Strategy, which was aligned with the IOC’s previous strategic roadmap, Olympic Agenda 2020. Terho concluded: *“Four years later, and following the release of Olympic Agenda 2020+5, we look forward to updating our Strategy in the coming months to align with the current priorities. We will continue to listen to athletes on the issues that matter most to them and remain flexible to adapt to the ever-evolving sporting landscape.”* ■



OLYMPIC MOVEMENT FUNDING MODEL

How the IOC finances a better world through sport
SOURCE: IOC’s audited financial statements





COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS



2021 Activity Report

Mandate

The Committee on International Sports Organizations (CISO) represents the WFSGI as the industry consensus voice before all sports federations and organizations on a range of issues including advertising and marketing regulations, uniform and equipment regulations, ticketing and accreditations and sport development and innovation. The CISO promotes maximum and equal benefit to all WFSGI members and the sporting goods community at large.

Summary

2021 was the year that the sport industry returned to live sport amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. COVID countermeasures meant that the industry had to adapt its way of working at Major Sporting Events and, in particular, at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games where brands sought to maintain their support to athletes to allow them to perform at their best despite the circumstances. Through CISO, WFSGI Members: delivered a third successful edition of the WFSGI IOC NOC Uniform Support Programme, continued to provide consultation to World Athletics in the development of their shoe regulations, and agreed to the establishment of a formal Athletics Committee.

We encourage all International Federations to contact WFSGI if they are interested in obtaining industry feedback on the evolution of their rules and regulations impacting the industry at emason@wfsgi.org

**WATCH THE
COMMITTEE
VIDEO HERE**



Update on Key Activities

In 2021, the Committee focussed on the following activities:

1. Rule 40

CISO continued to work constructively with the IOC to ensure that WFSGI members had clarity on how Rule 40 would operate in Tokyo and to provide support to brands to carry out business as usual activities. WFSGI also continued to advocate for a more holistic and purpose driven relationship between the industry and the Olympic Movement for the benefit of the athletes, the Olympic Games, and the industry. Progress stalled during the intensive COVID-19 period and the fact of Tokyo2020 and Beijing 2022 were 6 month away from each other did not help to make a lot of progress but given the received time frame by the IOC, WFSGI is hopeful and looks forward to collaborating further with the IOC on this topic in 2022.

2. NOC Uniform Support Programme

During the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, 11 WFSGI members (adidas, arena, ASICS, Descente, Mizuno, New Balance, NIKE, Inc., Orbea, Pentland (Speedo), PUMA, and Under Armour) delivered the third (and largest) WFSGI IOC NOC Uniform Support Programme to date. The WFSGI members provided free of charge competition uniforms to over 300 athletes from 73 NOCs and the programme was promoted by the IOC and the Olympic Channel.

WFSGI thanks its participating members and the IOC for their collaboration in this important solidarity initiative and looks forward to continuing the work at Beijing 2022 and Paris 2024.





3. Technical Accreditations

Through WFSGI's MOU with the IOC, WFSGI was able to support its members in obtaining vital Technical Accreditations to support their sponsored athletes during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. Brand representatives are a vital support for athletes during the Olympic Games as they provide the highest standard of service to allow them to perform at their best. There was a reduced number of Technical Accreditations permitted in Tokyo 2020 owing to COVID-19 restrictions and that resulted in brand representatives being required to service up to 70 athletes each, a significant increase on the number of athletes each individual would typically service during Games time. With close to 100 brand representatives from 21 brands were present during Tokyo, WFSGI members are estimated to have supported at least 5,000 athletes during competition.

4. World Athletics

In 2021, WFSGI and its members continued to work co-operatively with World Athletics on reforms to their shoe regulations, their practical implementation, and supply chain challenges that arose as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and factory closures. The World Athletics Shoe Working Group continued to be co-chaired by the WFSGI President & CEO with adidas, ASICS, Brooks, New Balance, NIKE and PUMA represented as ordinary members.

Owing to the importance of the work with World Athletics and with the support of the WFSGI Board Co-Chairs, WFSGI has established a specific Athletics Committee chaired by Spencer Nel (adidas) with Ryan Montgomery (ASICS), Craig Masback (NIKE), and CJ Davis (PUMA) fulfilling the role of vice-chairs who will help guide the industry's future work with World Athletics. WFSGI is certain that there are a broad range of topics where the stakeholders could successfully cooperate, particularly in relation to the attractiveness and future of the sport, and looks forward to growing the cooperation with World Athletics in future. ■

Chair



Johan Adamsson
Global Director of Sports Marketing and Sports Licensing, PUMA SE

Vice-Chair



Jens Jacobsen Jensen
Vice President Global Brand & Sports Marketing, Legal & Business Affairs, adidas AG

Vice-Chair



Craig Masback
Senior Director, Global & NA Athletics Sports Marketing, Nike, Inc.

Ex Officio

Emma P. (Mason) Zwiebler
WFSGI Vice President for Strategic and External Affairs

CHECK ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS



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THE HEART OF SPORT



By Roger Mitchell,
Founder, Albachiara

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATIONS ARE AT 10 MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT?

This article covers:

- *Sports governing bodies have never had a harder job.*
- *They are faced with existential threats on all sides.*
- *The business and financing of sport is turning upside down, from B2B, to B2C.*
- *Smaller sports are really going to suffer and will not get TV money.*
- *There IS a brighter future.*

Roger is a qualified CA, and investment banker. Involved as Chair in three IPO exits. Roger has been in the music/sport industries for 27 years. Starting as a journalist in the early 90s covering Italian football for Sky/BBC, he joined EMI in the mid 90s as CFO Italy, and lived the digital disruption of that industry in the first person. He was then the founding CEO commissioner of Scottish football in 1998, representing Scotland also in UEFA. He now has his own advisory and investment business, Albachiara, from where he consults with various companies and rights holders in the sport and music ecosystem, actively investing in sporttech, often taking the NED Chairman CFO role. The areas of sporttech expertise are content (digital publishing), fan engagement, sports media and formats, DTC, sports (big) data. With a specific eye on AI innovation. He has his own very popular business of sport podcast AreYouNotEntertained.

As someone who previous has had a leadership role in a major governing body, I know how very hard these jobs are.

Lets be honest, at the start, it was about organisation rules and regulation. Now if you think about it, IFs everywhere have a quadruple mandate:

- Legislative
- Executive
- Judiciary
- Commercial

That is not a good constitution, and many would argue that it is full of inherent conflicts of interests. Eg, how can you be expected to punish an errant top elite, athlete or team, when they are a significant driver of your commercial strategy? I could give many examples.



This is no-one's fault, but we need to admit that the mandate of all IFs has become more more complex than 100 years ago.

But the bad news doesn't stop there. Let's reflect on the major challenges for sport:

1) The traditional financier of sport for the last 30 years, PAYTV sports channels, are undergoing severe challenges to their business. They cannot be relied on to support the industry as in the past.

a. The delivery mechanisms like OTT mean that consumers are focussing on an unbundled product. I call this process the polarisation into hits, and filler. The parallel with the music business is clear. Once, you needed to buy a whole bundled album LP. Tech ended that. Cut-the-cord is real.

b. As the cost for premium sports rights increases, traditional payTV will not want, or be able, to buy 2/3/4th tier rights. Many smaller sports will NOT get a bid.

c. Piracy, especially for younger audiences, is endemic. They are not used to paying for content. I loved the BEIN sports guy saying: "we consider all rights as non-exclusive". If that isn't a cold shower?

d. Kids don't watch traditional TV.

2) Sport risks losing the newest generation, Z.

a. kids don't do the old pace of sport. Ask yourself if any of the old commentators around The Open, Wimbledon, baseball, rugby, would be indulged their slow eloquence these days! Sport hasn't got into the world of fast edits yet.

b. kids can't do full attention "live" consumption. These want explosive highlights, sizzle reels, Youtube compilations.

c. kids want the soap opera, the backstories, the "beef" around big, big stars. They are, in fact, deeply in love with Hollywood.

d. kids don't really do TV screens. It's the phone.

e. kids like video games. So much so, that they'll get their fix watching other people play them.

3) Sport post COVID is hugely undercapitalised if not insolvent. The providers of that fresh money, private equity and venture capital, have a different mentality to existing governing bodies.

a. When they think a sport isn't adapting quickly enough, they will finance CHALLENGER LEAGUES, that will just cut out traditional institutions. Swimming, Triathlon, Sailing to name just a few.

4) The growing importance of betting will distort so much of sport.

5) Sponsors aren't buying media equivalent exposure anymore. They, in fact, want engagement around rich data and targeting. Sport doesn't have that rich data, nor the strategic marketing skills to get it.

Sounds grim eh?

Maybe it is, after-all, 10 minutes to midnight!!

And yet, I still don't see enough rights holders really working out contingency plans.

Ask yourselves this: how many of the rights holders that you know have got a PlanB?

A "and if we don't get a bid from SkySports" plan?

Sports has very little time left!

But every problem is an opportunity. Sport is the ultimate "community" business that all investors are looking for. Yes, it needs to realise the dangers, and react, but the future is bright.

What does a future-proofing plan look like?

Well, how about this:

■ if we need to go DirectToConsumer, do we know our fan base, and if not, how do we do that?

■ can we do a proper strategic marketing plan with full segmentation?

■ if we are going for a subscription model OTT, what is our plan for FreeToAir and the social platforms?

■ can we cover the games cheaper with say AI production?

■ how do I make betting more central to my revenue generation and maintain integrity?

■ what does my content need to look like for Gen Z?

All of us want a future where sport is led by people with a wider interest than financial return. People who understand the traditions with EQ. That's the ifs.

But they need to reskill very quickly. ■



AQUATICS COMMITTEE



2021 Activity Report

Mandate

The Aquatics Committee is the aquatics-specific industry representative body towards the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA), World Triathlon, organizers of major aquatics events, international standards institutions and Non-Governmental Organizations with the intention of fostering the general development of aquatic sports with an eye on athlete safety in aquatic sports.

Summary

2021 was a challenging year for the Aquatics Committee as the member companies continued to feel the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on swimming pool, factory closures and raw material costs. However, the Aquatics Committee also worked cooperatively with FINA to achieve a new calendar of submission and publication dates for approved swimwear that allows athletes to wear new season product from 1 September each year (as opposed to 1 January), a long-term goal of the industry and the athletes they support.

Update on Key Activities

In 2021, the Committee focussed on the following activities:

FINA Relations – the Committee was very pleased when FINA approved changes to its swimwear approval regulations such that the approved list would be published each year on 1 September. This change allows the athletes to wear their new product from the start of the season, as opposed to the start of the calendar year (halfway through the season), and will help reduce a potential performance variable for the athletes throughout their season. The Committee would like to thank FINA's former Project Manager, Pavel Medvedev, for his support with this change and looks forward to working with John Lefevbre in future.

WFSGI also had the opportunity to meet with FINA's new Executive Director, Brent Nowicki, to exchange on various topics of importance for the industry and the sport. WFSGI looks forward to further developing the relationship in future.

PPE Regulation – the Committee continued to support WFSGI's European counterpart, FESI, in relation to its position toward the EU Member States that surface wetsuits should not be classified as PPE Category II as the products are neither designed or marketed as (nor intended to be used as) protective equipment. Surface wetsuits are a markedly different product to diving suits, wet or dry.

WATCH THE
COMMITTEE
VIDEO HERE



Goggle ISO Standard – the Committee supported the development of the new goggle Standard, ISO 18527-3:2020. The Standard is the new global benchmark of safety standard for a core product to one of world's top 3 lifestyle and fitness activities. The Aquatics Committee had the opportunity to provide feedback during development. The Standard has now been adopted as a British Standard (BS) and the previous BS, BS 5883 has been withdrawn. At the time of writing, the Standard has not yet been adopted as an EN. WFSGI will continue to follow-up on adoption and keep the Committee updated. ■



Chair



Greg Steyger
Product Category
Director, Arena
S.p.A.

Vice-Chair



Jonathon Higham
Brand Manager,
Speedo, Pentland
Brands Ltd.

Vice-Chair



Franck Horter
President, TYR
Sport, Inc.

Ex Officio

**Emma P. (Mason)
Zwiebler**
WFSGI Vice
President for
Strategic and
External Affairs



**CHECK ALL
COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**



By Benjamin Penkert,
Founder, SportsTechX

SPORTSTECH GOES MAINSTREAM - DRIVERS, TRENDS & EFFECTS

Benjamin Penkert is the Founder of Berlin-based SportsTechX, a market intelligence company that publishes data & insights about startups and innovation in sports, especially through industry-leading reports. Benjamin has been working as a Management Consultant and Strategy Expert for large corporations before joining the startup world in various positions.

The SportsTech industry is moving from a niche market to a globally accepted industry. Accelerated by the pandemic and driven by trends topics such as Digital Fitness, NFTs and Fantasy Sports & Betting, it affects how sports are played, consumed and managed. This also presents new developments and opportunities for the sporting goods industry.

A breakout year for SportsTech

2021 has been a record-breaking year for the SportsTech industry: Global funding into SportsTech companies reached \$8.33b at the end of Q3 2021 and is expected to close above \$12b at the end of 2021. This means that the first three quarters of 2021 have seen more funding than the entire years of 2019 and 2020 combined. And if the year-end prediction for 2021 is reached, the year combines more funding than the previous three years together.

What are the drivers for this development? The pandemic seems to have acted as an accelerator. This can especially be seen in the area of digital fitness, in which companies like Peloton, Tonal, Fiture, Tempo, Oura, Keep and others have thrived, all to enable consumers to work out from home and in a more connected way. On the other hand teams, leagues and associations have seen massive revenue decreases, as games and tournaments were often postponed, cancelled or run without any fans. As a reaction, they have turned to digital business models, with many of them participating in or setting up innovation initiatives and engaging with promising startups.

Global SportsTech Funding 2017 - 2021*



Another driver for the growth was NFTs, the megatrend of 2021, with companies like Dapper Labs, Sorare, Candy Digital, Zed Run or Animoca Brands making big headlines, and setting up an entirely new asset class. Last but not least: We have seen a range of big investments into the Fantasy Sports & Betting field, mainly driven to the opening of the North American market, with DraftKings, FanDuel, Fanatics, Mobile Premier League or Dream11 making big moves. A truly special time to be in SportsTech.

But what is SportsTech?

To provide a common understanding and structure we have created a holistic framework in 2017 which has since gone through various iterations. Our main questions were: Who is a solution serving? And what does it actually do? This is why the framework is organised into three sectors, which describe the respective target audiences: The Athlete (from pro to recreational level), The Sports Executive and The Fan. Levels two and three, the so-called sub-sectors and sub-sub sectors, describe the specific purpose a solution serves.

A look at sporting goods

The sporting goods segment is allocated in the “Activity & Performance” sector of the SportsTech framework, which accounted for 43.1% of the total investment since 2017. When looking at relevant trends within this sector the following topics stand out:

Smart Equipment

In a hyper-connected world, it is no surprise that sports equipment makes the step into the digital world as well. Basically, all traditional utensils now have their smart equivalent, from punching bags and dumbbells over insoles and mouthguards to rowing machines and spinning bikes. And if it's not already built into the devices then there is a solution that can be attached to them, for example, smart dampeners for tennis rackets or add-ons for gym equipment. So the question arises: Will there still be “non-smart” equipment in the future?

SportsTech Framework

For Athletes

Activity & Performance

For Activity - Hardware

Wearables
Equipment & Infrastructure

For Activity - Software

Tracking & Analytics
Classes & Tutorials

Before / After Activity

Booking & Discovery
Recovery & Injury Prevention
Coaching & Recruitment

For Fans

Fans & Content

Content Platforms

News & Content
Streaming Platforms

Fan Experiences

Fan Engagement
Ticketing & Merchandise

Fantasy Sports & Betting

Fantasy Sports
Betting
Enablement

For Executives

Management & Organisation

Organisations & Venues

Team & Club Management
League & Event Management
Stadium & Facility Management

Media & Sponsors

Media Production
Sponsorship



SPORTSTECHX

Smart Textiles

While smart equipment is great, it can be taken one step further by building sensors directly into the apparel. It might still take some time to reach the mass market, and challenges like duration and reliability need to be solved, but a variety of companies are in the race to develop mature solutions. Once established, smart textiles and equipment can provide personalized, data-driven insights and recommendations. Further applications are in the overall health & wellbeing segment, yet another promising market.

Recovery & Injury Prevention

One of the biggest growth markets within the sector. While previously only pro athletes were able to afford these solutions, they have now found their way into the mass market. Preparing for and recovering from exercise are seen as essential as the workout itself. But physical regeneration is only one variable. A host of stressors, including nutrition, sleep, and mental health, can hinder success and cause injuries. Recognizing this fact, startups are seizing on this moment, laying the groundwork for a multi-billion-dollar category.

What will the future bring?

The mentioned topics aside, there are a few more developments on the horizon for the sporting goods industry.

Activity-based rewards

When activity becomes more and more measurable through smart equipment and textiles, companies might switch to loyalty programs that not only reward customers for their purchases but also the actual workouts and time spent with the products. This creates entirely new dynamics and positive feedback loops, building a strong bond between brands and customers, ideally leading to loyal ambassadors. That aside it also builds up a valuable pool of data and insights about a brand's customers that can be used for further engagement.

Exergaming

In a world where attention is a rare good, many people choose the activity with the biggest entertainment factor. For the sports industry, this leads to a battle with Netflix, TikTok and other offerings. One way to approach this challenge is to add gamification elements to physical exercises, creating the so-called "Exergaming" category. Examples can be seen in solutions that use VR goggles for fitness activities in immersive worlds, or spinning bikes that act as controllers for games that are played on attached displays. This new field is only expected to grow, presenting a chance for brands to position themselves.

Virtual goods

With the latest boom in NFTs, it seems to be inevitable that virtual goods will become the next big thing. Not a few people expect that most physical goods will have a virtual twin or a certificate (both NFT based) that for example can prove their authenticity and track their lifecycle. However, the even bigger potential might be in "digital-first" goods which fit so well into the digital world we live in and that allows us to reach millions of people through our smart devices. Once virtual worlds, also referred to as the "Metaverse", are fully experienceable, those goods become even more valuable.

The SportsTech industry is in a phase of strong growth, catching attention from investors, brands and customers alike. This might likely not only change the way sports are managed and consumed but also how we prepare for sports, do sports and recover from sports. At the brink of this new era, chances are there to be taken. ■



UNDER ARMOUR

**THE ONLY
WAY IS
THROUGH.**

MARO ITOJE
PRO RUGBY PLAYER



By Laurent Petit,
Founder & CEO, Active
Giving GmbH

FROM INDIVIDUAL (PHYSICAL) ACTIONS TO COLLECTIVE (DIGITAL) ACTION

Sport lover with a deep passion for the environment, a nimble entrepreneurial spirit, and serious social media chops. Laurent inspires people to increase their personal well-being through fitness and sports while embracing a more eco-friendly way of living. With his Berlin-based startup Active Giving, he wants to help companies in their transition to a more sustainable business.

From less stress to a boost in self-esteem, exercise is as great for our brain as it is for our body. But can exercise also be good for our planet? What if by doing something good for ourselves - like exercising - we could do something good for the world? A good deed that would not only benefit our health but the health of our planet and provide a better future for the generations to come. A simple daily action that can be multiplied to create collective action and therefore real change.

Many of us sometimes wonder if, as individuals, our actions really matter. Good or bad. If we drive a car or if we use a plastic bag or if we stop eating animal products, what difference would it make? Would it really affect the world around us? Well, it surely does. Not only because of the action itself, as insignificant as it may seem but also because of the message behind the action. Let's take sport and exercising as examples. In most cases, the practise of sport and exercising spread the message of good health and care for oneself. If we would convey more positive and meaningful messages with our daily actions, we can envision the world changing for the better. Don't you think?

While the mainstream media are constantly picturing a world that is falling apart, we, as part of the new digital generation need to take action. When it comes to climate change, the finger is usually pointed at big companies that are consciously harming the planet (and yes they surely do). Though, chasing the corporations and businesses that are responsible for damaging our planet's ecosystem is for most of us, out of our league. We humans, as individual entities, do not always have the power to change how society functions, at least today. But what if as a group we could create the necessary power? And what if this power could come from the sport communities?

"A man doesn't
plant a tree for
himself, he plants
it for prosperity."

Alexander Smith (poet)

Sport communities are gaining unprecedented importance online (digitally) notably through the explosion of social media and sport apps. It is now possible to follow the routine of our favourite athletes, sport clubs; to access sports on demand and even exercise at home with virtual coaches. The digital consumption of sport is booming, and yet ironically more than a quarter of the world's adult population (1.4 billion adults) are insufficiently active, while 81% of adolescents are not meeting the WHO¹ recommended times for physical activity.

¹ WHO - Physical Activity 2020 : <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>

Could there be a way to increase personal wellbeing through sports while increasing global wellbeing?

As leaders in sports, athletes, federations, clubs or brands, it is crucial to create a path for more sustainability in sports. Sustainable Sport is still a young segment of the sport and fitness sector but has still a lot to explore and to prove. For instance, the latest Tokyo Olympics placed a major focus on using recycled and recyclable material, such as athletes beds made of cardboard, podiums made of recycled plastic, and even the medals were made from recycled devices. These initiatives should certainly be seen as steps forwards. Although, given the alarming state of climate change, we need to make big, bold moves that will support real change. And that is why the change can also come from our home, from the way we live our lives.

The Sports for Climate Action initiative led by UN Climate Change invites sports organizations and their stakeholders to join a new climate action for sport movements. And to use sports as a unifying tool to federate and create solidarity among global citizens for climate action². To this day 270 participants have joined the initiative and have committed to adhere to a set of five principles³ and incorporate them into strategies, policies and procedures, and mainstream them within the sports community, thus setting the stage for wider dissemination of the message and long-term success.

A movement is clearly on its way, and creating engagement amongst the sports fan community starts to happen gradually around the world. Last April on Earth Day, The International Biathlon Union (IBU) announced its Biathlon Climate Challenge to challenge fans to join one of ten different teams - all led by biathlon superstars - and to track their physical activity in a fitness app that will convert the distance they have covered or calories they have burned into planted trees by a reforestation project. In just 25 days, their goal of 100,000 trees was reached with almost 8 000 fans covering an accumulative distance of 618,595 km and burning a total of 32,369,652 calories.

² UNFCCC - Sports for Climate Action : <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/sectoral-engagement/sports-for-climate-action>

³ UNFCCC - Sports_for_Climate_Action_Declaration_and_Framework : https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Sports_for_Climate_Action_Declaration_and_Framework.pdf

⁴ Nielsen 2021 - <https://www.sportspromedia.com/news/nielsen-sponsorship-trends-2021-athlete-activism-sponsor-media-value>

Why trees? Trees are vital for our life on earth, they provide us with the oxygen we breathe, trees help mitigate human impact on climate change while providing essential habitats for diverse wildlife and help break the cycle of poverty and deforestation. Not only trees could be a key solution to mitigating climate change, but they also become a door opener to a more eco-conscious way of living. Indeed, if we can do good to our planet simply practising the sport we love. What other daily action could we turn into a good deed? Running and picking up litter (aka plogging)? Riding more often our bikes instead of cars. Adopt a plant-based diet. Giving a second life to our belongings by reusing, repairing, refurbishing or even recycling them instead of throwing them away. Many of these opportunities can be found in the concept of Circular Economy (as opposed to the linear economy we have been using for past centuries). Indeed circularity wants to tackle global challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution, all at once and to create a closed-loop system, minimising the use of resource inputs and the creation of waste, pollution and carbon emissions.

As our lives are nowadays mainly influenced by what we consumed digitally. The message sent across channels must be the right one. Brands and athletes for instance must collaborate to inspire fans and sport amateurs to make the right decision when it comes to buying new products or new services. And the good news is that athlete advocacy posts are generating 63% more engagement for brands compared to other social content⁴. It's a win-win-win, the shift is already happening. This is why uniting behind a set of principles and initiatives, will incentivize climate action beyond the sports sector, and therefore help restore global wellbeing through a holistic approach that includes the governments, the sport enablers, the brands, the athletes and most importantly, the sport consumer, us. ■





By Nancy McLennan,
Programme Specialist,
UNESCO

FIT FOR LIFE: ACTIVATING SMART INVESTMENTS IN SPORT TO BUILD BACK BETTER

Nancy McLennan is a specialist in inclusive change methodologies who has managed projects within an intergovernmental environment for more than 15 years. Her professional experience in participatory policy design, sports values education and grassroots movement building complements her passion to create transformative, rights-based change with public and private sector partners.

The COVID-19 pandemic has spotlighted the value of good health and the need to build resilient systems. The impacts of the pandemic, reaching far beyond health, require a response which combines the skills, expertise and resources of public and private sector stakeholders. UNESCO's new sport-based initiative, Fit for Life, provides a practical framework for stakeholder ecosystems to activate smart investments in sport to tackle rising inactivity, mental health issues and social inequalities.

FIT FOR LIFE

A partnership compact powering

1. Grassroots participation in sport and quality PE to reduce inactivity and chronic diseases
2. Quality and inclusive sport policies which drive health, education and equality outcomes
3. Values education through sport to promote equality and build skills
4. Educator training and delivery of quality, student-centred sport curricula
5. Evidence, data systems and use of technologies which support smart investments in sport

Fit for Life is designed to activate smart investments in sport to tackle rising inactivity, mental health issues and social inequalities. To enhance wellbeing from the ground up, Fit for Life will connect policy-makers, industry leaders, academics and civil society groups in the field of sport and development.

The need for integrated action from all stakeholders at all levels is pressing, and COVID-19 provides a unique portal to align strategies, investments, programming and impact methodologies. A key success factor in making sport a central proposition in policy frameworks, urban development plans, health strategies and social integration programmes is presenting the business case for investment.

UNESCO'S QPE SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

57% of countries invest less than 2% of national education budgets in PE

89% of countries say PE is the same for girls and boys, but less than 40% monitor and enforce gender equality policies

Only 64% of ministries require equal PE opportunities for students with disabilities

Only 44% of countries have specialist PE teachers in primary schools

Only 47% of in-service training (INSET) or continuing professional development (CPD) training includes safeguarding

81% of PE teachers report that classes have been negatively impacted by COVID-19, with girls and children with disabilities most affected

69% of PE teachers indicate that both the physical and mental health of students has worsened during the pandemic

Since the beginning of the pandemic, there has been a 41% decline in physical activity and a 200% increase in youth mental health conditions, exacerbating existing crises and disproportionately impacting disadvantaged groups. Findings from UNESCO's Quality Physical Education Survey¹, supported actively by WFSGI's Physical Activity Committee, point to a correlation between chronic underinvestment in PE and grassroots sport programmes, and documented spikes in inactivity and mental health issues.

Data gathered from 117 countries points to four key areas of opportunity which connect school PE lessons and grassroots sports practice: equality of access and participation between genders and for persons with disabilities; wellbeing and training of educators; building evidence and collective commitments around the value of sport and PE beyond physical health outcomes; and delivering new investment models with clear potential for scaling, notably to improve infrastructure.

Quality physical education provides a springboard for lifelong participation in physical activity and a unique space to fuse physical, mental, and socio-emotional skills. Despite this, "most schools don't have enough space or equipment to exercise. Balls aren't enough, we need better infrastructure" exclaimed one PE Teacher in the UNESCO QPE Survey.

¹ "To be published in a global status report in 2022."



There is an urgent need to reverse negative trends and an opportunity to capitalise on the appetite of public stakeholders for cost effective solutions to crises in physical, mental and social wellbeing. Fit for Life will tackle crises by breaking down knowledge siloes and systematising investments in sport for individual, social and economic development. A global Fit for Life baseline study, to be rolled-out in 2022, will gather data on sport policy, grassroots participation rates and related patterns of investment. This study represents the first-time data has been collected from upstream and grassroots respondent groups at this scale.

Building on the productive engagement in UNESCO's QPE policy project, Nike will join as a core partner in the baseline study. According to Kelly Lau, Senior Director in Social and Community Impact at Nike, "The QPE Policy project was a unique and rewarding opportunity for us to collaborate with public-sector and community-based stakeholders. This engagement helped inform our contribution to quality PE in elementary schools as part of Nike's Made to Play commitment to get kids active"

Through capacity-building and the use of AI technologies, the baseline study also represents a strategic opportunity for stakeholders from public, private and civil society sectors to integrate existing data sets, combine agendas and increase impacts. Data and measurement methodologies on the social return on investment will play an important role here in ensuring that PE and sport data can contribute to a safe empirical environment for public and private investors, as well as to encourage investment from new stakeholder groups.

In parallel to global data and advocacy activities, Fit for Life's partnership compact will create impact at regional and national levels through the establishment of action-oriented networks, the delivery of workshops and trainings to policy-makers and curriculum specialists, the roll-out of



resource packs and the launch of a youth taskforce and scholarship programme which empower young people to both produce and use evidence to create behavioural and systems-level change. "Youth should be involved in all policy processes to ensure inclusive participation and innovative solutions. To achieve this, we need tools that enable us, as young leaders, to take our legitimate sports at the table" Laura-Maria Tiidla, IOC Young Leader, Estonia.

Fit for Life will provide both the tools and the mentoring called for by youth communities. It will also scale existing good practice. A partnership highlight in this respect, stemming from WFSGI engagement, is the integration of BOKS Kids activities and trainings in schools and communities around the world through the Fit for Life champion country change programme. As Kathleen Tullie, Founder and Executive Director of BOKS, puts it "We're thrilled to be partnering with Fit for Life to scale the BOKS Kids.org resources and provide impact across the globe through this unique private-public partnership. Together, we will ensure that mental and physical health is seen as a priority core subject for all students."

All stakeholders have a role to play in framing sport as a central proposition for development agendas and a critical investment for resilient citizens, societies and systems. Fit for Life offers governments, companies, institutions and individuals a joined-up framework to strengthen partnerships, layer insights, hone interventions and increase impacts.

Now is the time to connect across the sport industry to offset the impacts of COVID-19 and move forwards with a common vision. UNESCO looks forward to continuing its collaboration with WFSGI members to deliver Fit for Life's ambitious agenda. ■





adidas

**IMPOSSIBLE
IS NOTHING**

**WE SEE PITCHES
BECOMING
PLATFORMS.**



**Interview with
Frederick (F.K.) Day,**
Chicago businessman,
entrepreneur and
humanitarian, World
Bicycle Relief

REACHING THE SDGS BY BIKE

In 1987, F.K. Day, his brother Stan and some friends founded leading bicycle component supplier, SRAM Corporation which produces high-end bicycle components including drivetrains, brakes, suspension and wheels. In 2005, immediately following the Indian Ocean Tsunami, Day and his wife Leah, with support from SRAM Corp and the Bicycle Industry, founded international non-profit World Bicycle Relief.

Mobility is an essential element of development strategies. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, there are over 600 million people who walk as their main mode of transportation. The lack of efficient, reliable transportation adversely affects economic and social development in regions where distance is a barrier. In this interview, the founder of World Bicycle Relief (WBR), F.K. Day talks about how WBR aims to contribute to end poverty through the power of the bicycle.

Question: F.K. Day, You told me that World Bicycle Relief aims to empower people, especially in rural areas, with faster and safer transportation. Why?

F.K. Day: According to the World Bank more than a billion people in rural developing regions lack access to reliable roads and affordable transportation—that's one out of every eight people in the world—including 70% of Africa's rural population.

The lack of efficient, reliable transportation adversely affects economic and social development in regions where distance is a barrier.

Compared to walking, bicycle riders can carry five times as much cargo in just a quarter of the time. A high-quality bicycle in a developing rural area is a powerful, cross-cutting intervention that immediately improves livelihoods and educational and healthcare outcomes. Our Buffalo Bicycles are affordable, built to last, and can be used by individuals of all ages; they are essential to create a long-term sustainable change in developing countries.

Question: 15 years down the road, what is the impact that you see?

F.K. Day: Philanthropy alone will not eliminate poverty. Eliminating poverty can only be done through solid economic principles. Philanthropy's role in development is to pioneer ways to empower individual's fight out of poverty. If those ways are based in economic principles and can be repeated, then philanthropy is doing its job.



Since inception, we have provided more than 600,000 bicycles to students, healthcare workers and others in need through our nonprofit programs, as well as through sales and partnerships in rural regions across more than 20 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. We also trained over 2,500 field bicycle mechanics.

But what we are most excited about is the positive impact we see in different areas of development that helps people not only survive but thrive. Research shows that with a bicycle, girl students in Zambia boosted their school attendance by 28%, dairy farmers increased milk deliveries and incomes by 23%, healthcare workers in Kenya increased monthly patient visits 88%.

The impact The Power of Bicycles bring best manifest through something that one girl once said to me: "Mobilize me, and I will change my world!"

For example, with her Buffalo bicycle the 17-year old Elizabeth from Malawi is able to help her family with its small business of making and selling a traditional non-alcoholic sweet beer known as thobwa. The bicycle helps

her cover the long distance to school and increases the family income at the same time. It's just one story of many that hide behind the stats.

Question: Having achieved so much, what is next?

F.K. Day: Our goal is to surpass one million bicycles by the end of 2025. We envision a world where distance is no longer a barrier to independence and livelihood. The power of the bicycle is a viable solution in accelerating and amplifying efforts to achieve nine of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals including no poverty, zero hunger and gender equality.

Despite the fact that rural mobility is a systems level issue, it's often being overlooked. In order to "leave no one behind" we believe we need to embed sustainable rural transportation across the SDGs with bicycles being recognized as an integral and equal mass transportation solution.

We are looking for like-minded partners in order to create inclusive and equal societies. Everywhere and for everyone. ■





PHYSICAL ACTIVITY COMMITTEE



2021 Activity Report

Mandate

The PAC's mission is to promote physical activity on a global level. The Committee also seeks to foster and encourage the participation of citizens of all countries in healthy sporting activities.

The PAC coordinates the industry's joint response to the global physical inactivity epidemic by focusing on the following areas:

- Working with the United Nations Agencies and other multi-lateral organisations to prioritize physical activity on the global development agenda.
 - Providing a global forum for WFSGI members to share best practices and lessons learned on approaches that increase participation in sport and physical activity.
 - Supporting global, regional and national level advocacy work to promote physical activity and sport.
-

Summary

2021 continued to challenge the global population in a variety of ways including how, where, and when they could be sufficiently and safely active in line with the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations. As governments around the world responded to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic with lockdowns that led to closures of sport and activity facilities, pre-existing inequalities in individual and community opportunities to be active were exposed and further widened.

In response and recognizing a dramatically changed physical activity landscape as a potential catalyst for positive change, the Committee increased its advocacy concerning the need for multistakeholder cooperation to resolve the inactivity challenge and further developed its relations with the WHO and UNESCO.

**WATCH THE
COMMITTEE
VIDEO HERE**



Update on Key Activities

During 2021, the Committee focussed its work on the following activities:

WHO Relations – the Committee promoted and supported WHO's ReInvent and ReBuild webinar series which sought to 'build forward better a stronger, fairer and more inclusive system that provides equitable opportunities for more people of all ages and abilities, everywhere,' through provision of two speakers who advocated for greater multistakeholder cooperation as a key driver in achieving WHO's aims.



UNESCO Relations – the Committee was pleased to provide UNESCO with both technical and financial support in relation to the development, translation, and dissemination of their flagship Quality Physical Education (QPE) survey (at both the ministerial and school level) as well as their COVID-19 top-up survey that explores the impact of the pandemic on pupil and teacher physical and mental well-being. The Committee was also pleased to accept an invitation to join the UNESCO QPE Steering Committee and to be listed as a Fit for Life partner ensuring that the sporting goods industry is able to play its part in helping UNESCO build a 'new normal' of inclusivity and resilience across the sport, education, health and youth sectors. WFSGI also supported UNESCO's formal launch of Fit for Life via integration of its launch campaign to WFSGI communications.

PAC Advocacy and Communications – during 2021, the WFSGI Secretariat participated in several conferences to advocate a multistakeholder approach as a key driver to reversing the inactivity crisis. Conferences included Global Sports Week, Sport Integrity Alliance, the WHO ReInvent and ReBuild series (noted above), and the International Tennis Federation's World Participation Conference. WFSGI also worked with its McKinsey partners to ensure that their inaugural industry report¹ included physical activity as a key trend influencing the industry. ■

1 Industry Report



Chair



Sarah McLean Cannon
Senior Director,
Communications
and Partnerships,
Social and
Community
Impact, Nike, Inc.

Vice-Chair



Kathleen Tullie
Senior Director,
Social Purpose,
Reebok and
Founder and
Executive
Director, BOKS

Vice-Chair



Lars Wiskum
CEO, Owner and
Senior Consultant,
SportVenture

Vice-Chair



Nathalie Coulomb
Corporate
Responsibility
Business Partner,
Pentland Brands
Ltd.

Ex Officio

Emma P. (Mason) Zwiebler
WFSGI Vice
President for
Strategic and
External Affairs

**CHECK ALL
COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**





REACH BEYOND

OUR SUSTAINABILITY

MIZUNO WILL CONTINUE TO NURTURE A BENEFICIAL FUTURE.
WHERE SPORT CAN BE ENJOYED ANYTIME, ANYWHERE
AND WITHOUT RESERVATION.

THIS IS OUR PROMISE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.



MIZUNO CREW 21

MIZUNO CREW 21 IS OUR GLOBAL
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT
TO PROTECT OUR PLANET FOR
FUTURE GENERATIONS.



SCAN & DISCOVER



By Dr Zoë Lee,
Communications Manager,
British Association for
Sustainable Sport.

SUSTAINABLE SPORTSWEAR: WORKING TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE SPORTING FASHION

Zoë is a passionate and dedicated sustainability professional and former Olympic athlete. With first-hand experience of the power of sport to inspire, unite and empower, combined with practical experience from working with Formula E motor racing, Zoë joined BASIS in 2021 to help accelerate sustainability within the sports sector.

The clothing sector is one of the most polluting industries in the world, second only to oil and gas, and produces more emissions than maritime shipping and international flights combined. While we all want to expand participation in our beloved sports and support our favourite clubs by buying replica shirts, it is time to educate ourselves on the social and environmental cost of sports clothing. In a 2021 webinar, now available online, BASIS discuss how to work towards sustainable sportswear.

Introduction

BASIS (The British Association for Sustainable Sport) exists to help develop best practice strategies and integrate sustainability into the sports sector, to encourage action and collaboration and to use the influence of sport to educate our participants and fans.

Through webinars, workshops and members' forums, we encourage open dialogue between leading academics, sustainability professionals and professional sportspeople, engaging all relevant stakeholders to inspire systematic sustainable change within their organisations. In turn, this allows sports organisations to leverage the power of their platforms to facilitate change through the invested attention of loyal fans.

BASIS recently hosted a stakeholder workshop considering sustainable sportswear, with the lens specifically on the sport of cricket. The discussion, however, is relevant to the sports sector as a whole and raises an interesting environmental and social debate on how the industry

needs to address fundamental issues within supply chains, codes of conduct and its sporting community to help tackle this particular sustainability problem.

Scale of the problem

The clothing sector as a whole is the second most polluting industry in the world. Accounting for 20% of industrial wastewater production and 10% of global carbon emissions, it has an environmental impact only beaten by fossil fuels. The economic value of the associated waste and discarded clothing is estimated to be approximately \$500 billion.

While sportswear only accounts for a small portion of this global industry, it is a sector heavily reliant upon highly polluting synthetic fibres, as consumer expectations of performance clothing demand fabric to be sweat-wicking, stretchy and breathable.

To illustrate the scale of the problem we considered the game of cricket. For a single match, 24 individuals will take to the field – 22 players across both teams plus two umpires. Assuming that all 24 involved wear a minimum of a t-shirt, trousers and socks, this accounts for 96 items of clothing.

Keeping these 96 items of clothing in mind we can cast the lens closer onto the environmental impact of a single polyester t-shirt. Manufacturing requires 5.5 kg CO₂ emissions, equivalent to driving a car for 22.2 km. Across all 24 taking to the field, the manufacturing emissions of their t-shirts alone are equivalent to driving a car for almost 533 km. These numbers don't even factor in the other items of clothing being worn, the fact that the majority of this type of clothing eventually ends up in landfills or the 1900 microfibers released by each t-shirt from a single wash.

Beyond traditional cricket whites, the competition kit is often screen printed with dispersive dyes and finished with chemicals to enhance technical properties such as sweat-wicking. Accordingly, downstream of factories producing these items, associated water pollution is a huge environmental problem as toxic chemicals, heavy metals and dyes get washed into the waterways.

Environmental concerns aside, the significant social impact of the clothing industry represents a hidden sustainability cost. Wages often amount to around a third of the local living wage, there is little or no guidance for safety or safeguarding and limited job security. Life working in large clothing factories can ultimately be dangerous and for the 80 million employees across the sector financially unrewarding.

Sustainable solutions

To fully tackle these embedded sustainability issues, we need a top-down systematic view across the whole supply chain. Clothing needs to be manufactured with a view to materials circularity, infrastructure needs to be in place to facilitate second life opportunities and procurement pathways need to be developed.

Innovation - More research and investment is needed across the clothing sector to facilitate a move from relying on virgin polyester. Options include using more sustainable natural fibres, such as bamboo or Tencel™, which has the advantage of recovering 99.9% of the water used in production. Alternatively, recycled synthetic materials, made from existing plastics in the waste stream, offer a reduced carbon footprint compared with virgin polyester.

Circularity - Materials and designs need to help facilitate circularity in the sportswear sector. There is a huge amount of stored waste sitting in wardrobes across the world that inevitably will end up in landfills at a later date. Investing in community reuse schemes for unwanted sports kits is an easy way to extend the life of these garments while helping to reduce the cost of access to sports in marginalised communities. The Lord's Taverners charity sports kit recycling scheme is one great example. It helps young people in the UK and across the world to access kits and equipment, which otherwise would have become redundant.

Governance - There is a need for sports rights holders and governing bodies to be more open-minded about innovation and change, to enable progress in the sustainability space, especially with relation to technical and specialist kits. While personal protective equipment must retain all necessary safety properties, regulations need to allow more freedom to explore how this can be achieved sustainably to allow suppliers to drive progress.

Urgency - Action needs to drive the narrative. Now is not just the time for talking about sustainable innovation. Now is the time to leverage our collective position as an entertainment property and become a leader in this space. By empowering sports teams and personalities to 'champion' the sustainability message we can educate a large audience and facilitate change. We see sports stars frequently use social media to appeal directly to fans about societal and sustainability issues. It would be great to get to a point where we see professional athletes expressing their preference for sustainable sportswear as suppliers drive innovation and competition in this area.

BASIS

Do you want to be part of conversations that are driving transformative change within the sports industry? By joining BASIS, you can help shape the sustainability narrative in sport, gain access to a network of like-minded professionals and advance the sustainability strategy within your own organisation. For more information contact info@basis.org.uk. ■





CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE

2021 Activity Report



Mandate

The CR Committee is focusing on global societal, social and environmental trends like climate change, resource depletion, labor and health issues. Its work is targeted at developing and promoting an understanding within the World Federation about the relevance of global social and environmental challenges for each individual member company offering members an opportunity to tackle challenges through guidance and sharing best practice services, supporting members in identifying synergies to tie resources and enhance leverage through collaborative work.

Summary

The WFSGI pursued the existing projects in the field of corporate responsibility. The pandemic caused some challenges, such as the impossibility to conduct onsite physical audits, which requested special attention for the work related to the WFSGI Pledge for the FIFA Quality Programme. The successful Pledge work has been expanded to the new product category of football goals in 2021.

Also, the Communication on Action (CoA) reporting was continued and the WFSGI CR HeadsUp newsletter was published throughout the year. The frequency of this newsletter has been increased and the team did its best to have a monthly CR Heads-Up issued due to the high demand of members.

The WFSGI has also actively participated in the webinars of the Centre for Sports and Human Rights throughout the year. In addition, the WFSGI was invited to participate

in a panel discussion and present its activities concerning supply chain verification in the Sporting Chance Forum.

The WFSGI CR Committee decided that the sporting goods industry through the WFSGI should agree on some aligned actions regarding climate change. To do so, the Committee worked out a paper with an overview of existing initiatives in the field and submitted a proposal to the WFSGI Board to join the UN Fashion Charter as a supporting organization.

**WATCH THE
COMMITTEE
VIDEO HERE**



Other topics discussed in the Committee touched upon virtual social and environmental compliance audits, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), diversity and inclusion, and recycling of products made of foam.

Outlook/Forecast 2022

The focus in the upcoming year will be on climate action. The WFSGI will look further into the topic of Climate Action. Depending on the decision taken by the federation, there will be activities to brief members about this topic and ensure that the industry is duly informed on any industry actions.

And as usual, the WFSGI CR Committee will pursue its role as an expert group to provide positions for other working groups at the WFSGI on sustainability. It will further look into relevant developments in the field of corporate responsibility to make sure that the industry is kept informed. ■

Chair



Frank Henke
Senior Vice
President
Sustainability,
Global Operations,
adidas AG

Vice-Chair



Sara Brennan
Head of Corporate
Responsibility,
Pentland Brands
Ltd.

Ex Officio

Marc-Ivar Magnus
WFSGI Vice President
Trade, Corporate
Responsibility
and Legal

**CHECK ALL
COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**



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By Jan-Willem van Schaik,
Editor in Chief, Bike Europe

WORLD CYCLING FORUM 2021 BRINGS BICYCLE INDUSTRY TOGETHER

"I never thought this combination of cars and bicycles in one show would happen," said Thorsten Heckrath, owner of a leading German omni-channel retailer, Rose Bikes at the opening of the World Cycling Forum this year. His statement marks the disruptive developments the market faced since the start of the pandemic, including the first time ever that cars and bicycles blended on an international automotive show, the IAA Mobility in Munich.

Event organizer, WFSGI, made a step forward and took the World Cycling Forum to Munich for the premiere of this IAA Mobility which took place in the second week of September. The theme of the 2021 edition was "Capitalizing on the current bike boom". A line-up of expert speakers addressed the business opportunities in the coming year which came to forefront during the pandemic, including:

- *The development of the online bicycle marketplace.*
- *How to adapt to a developing retail environment?*
- *Changing consumer behaviour as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.*
- *Overview of governmental initiatives to aid and develop cycling.*
- *Where are new and potential markets for the bicycle industry?*

Jan-Willem van Schaik took up the position as editor in chief of Bike Europe in January 2018. Prior to joining the editorial team of Bike Europe in 2007, Jan-Willem had been working for nearly ten years in b2b media for the Benelux bicycle industry. In his role as Bike Europe team member he successfully combined his skills in journalism, knowledge of the bicycle industry and his interest in new media. He has been closely involved in the brand's transition from print and newsletter to an online-first news reporting strategy. This includes the integration of social media to strengthen the communication with the cycling industry. His goal is to grow Bike Europe's position as the leading source of information while implementing the latest online technologies.

Transformation to online

"There are no limitations on internet," Thorsten Heckrath continued. "They even sell cars online although they are much more complex than bicycles. You just need to find the right presentation and user experience." While the retailer generates 80% of its sales online and 20% in its shop Rose Biketown in Bocholt, Germany, they have just decided to open another 10 locations on their home market and one in Switzerland together with some partners. "You have to go to you customers and give room for your products to shine in a store. Our shops are not a matter of size, it is all about how you connect to the users."

While Rose owner Thorsten Heckrath puts a strong focus on emotional approach, Internetstores CBO Frank Aldorf emphasized the relevance of data in the transition to online sales. Today Internetstores is a leading digitized retail group for bike and outdoor operating 40 online shops in 15 countries. "Digital first is not about technology, all business aspects are included. For Internetstores

data is king, while the heart rules. We see that too many companies stick to the old," said Frank Aldorf. "It is the consumer who decides; see what happened during the pandemic. It is up to us to engage, not to sell more, but make connections and keep them on board. This provides up the opportunity to turn data into valuable information and business intelligence via our customer data platform. Business intelligence is shared with our brands which have seen a dramatic increase in performance."

More bullish attitude

Philipp Rossner, CSO at Signa Sports United, owner of Internetstores as well as a range of online shops in various markets, took the audience one step further, by stating, "I had expected a more bullish attitude of the bicycle industry in today's boom. You are holding some key features which are unique and will bring growth figures never seen before in this industry." Rossner referred to two elements. First of all connectivity. "The sports fashion industry can't integrate chips in the clothing to measure the sports activity. In the bicycle industry it is widely available. That provides a unique feature, particularly for the sports market but also for daily-use bicycles. The second important growth aspect are the announced investments in infrastructure as part of the EU Green Deal. Don't forget that the market for sports products has changed drastically over the past 2 decades. In the past people were participating in sports to compete and to win. Now more and more people want to be active as they want to live a healthier life and live longer. This requires a different market approach. The online market has

changed drastically this year. In 2020 we sold some 300,000 bicycles and e-bikes. For this year we anticipate on 400,000 units. Also, IBDs see that online sales bring more than off-line only."

Harley Davidson's Serial 1

The announcement of Harley Davidson to enter the e-bike market a few years ago created some stirs in the bicycle industry. Was this a serious step by the American motorbike brand? Today Serial 1, the separate entity founded by Harley Davidson for its e-bike venture already partners with 130 dealers Europe-wide after an initial start in Germany announced Jason Huntsman, President of Serial 1 Company by Harley Davidson. "Breaking into the bicycle market is tough. We see e-bikes as an extension of our regular motor bike business into the e-mobility market. It is a big challenge for us to move into an adjacent industry."

#BikelsBest campaign

The cycling boom in the UK and London in particular during the pandemic was one of the most eye catching. The traffic disruption in the London City area was a much-discussed topic and resulted in the offspring of many new initiatives. One of those, the #BikelsBest campaign, is funded by the industry and aims to communicate the benefits of cycling to the British public. Founder and CEO of Fusion Media, Adam Tranter, discussed his approach toward the industry and the private sector to achieve this goal. "London experienced the highest level of cycling since the sixties," said Adam Tranter. "One of our activities was the creation of the 'Cycling Marketing Board' as we need to continue to attract new consumers to cycling and improve cycling's image with the government and in the media on the long term to make the modality shift happen."



On a European level, Cycling Industries Europe (CIE) takes a similar approach. It was founded as a united company voice to grow cycling in Europe for the benefit of society. "At the moment we have 93 members of which 40% are into production and retail while 60% are service-related companies," said Tony Grimaldi, CEO of Cycleurope AB and President of CIE. "On a European level we are working on easier access to bicycles and cycling in general." Since its foundation in 2018 CIE published multiple studies to support its objectives.

Kristina Jasiunaite, MD of World Bicycle Relief Europe (WBR) spoke about the promotion of cycling and the accessibility of bicycles to a global level. Over the years WBR has provided close to 600,000 bicycles specially designed and locally assembled for people in need, especially in Sub-Saharan countries. "The bicycle improves a range of socio-economic circumstances and reduces poverty and hunger, it gives easier access to education and clean water," explained Kristina Jasiunaite, "and directly contributes to achieving nine sustainability development goals of the UN development agenda."

Hyper personalized customer experience

"For Canyon founder Roman Arnold, his position as a middleman and listening to his customers provide feedback to the bike manufacturers, was the main reason for him to start his own B2C company," explained Simon Summerscales, Marketing and Brand manager at Canyon Bicycles. "Roman called it the 'feedback loop' and he developed Canyon not as a direct sales business only but also as a direct communication system. Online has one big advantage over off-line retailing: it provides you the data of combinations of product searches. To anticipate on needs is a great example of data driven understanding of needs and AI & machine learning. In which sequence are which bikes most searched for? This information gives us the opportunity to give the customer a seamless experience along the journey. In each stage he or she needs to be connected which gives us the necessity to understand where the customer is." The combination of the World Cycling Forum and the IAA Mobility triggered Simon Summerscales to state, "this is the 'belly of the beast': we are here to tell the automotive industry that bikes are a better solution."

Future proof industry

"How do we make sure the bicycle industry is ready for emerging markets?" asked Raymond Gense, Director of Public Affairs Pon Holdings to the audience of the WCF-2021. "Nobody knows whether the projected sales of 30 million bicycles in Europe by 2030 is realistic. What I do know is that this industry needs more investments and support from Brussels. On a European level we have to compete with the automotive industry. The bicycle industry has one big competitive advantage: we create jobs while the car industry only fires people. And our industry is very innovative; e-bikes come with many technologies known from the car industry or will soon have it. The world of mobility is changing to multimodality, and it is inevitable that the bicycle will have an important position in that system. However, this new mobility calls for new metrics including demographics, infrastructure, user preferences, environmental impact, industry capabilities, employment and government policies."

On the opening day of the WCF, Rose owner Thorsten Heckrath already stated that the industry has to discuss sustainable manufacturing as the usage of the product is green, but the production certainly not. Keynote speaker Erik Bronsvoort addressed this topic discussing his study on how to start a circular revolution. "The topic of sustainability and circular economy is only slowly being picked up by the bicycle industry," said van Bronsvoort. "To transform from a linear, to a circular cycling economy, the entire industry needs to change. The publication of its sustainability report by Trek is only the start but it makes clear where the problems are."

Bosch market entrance

In its analysis of the future mobility market Porsche Consulting set out four mega trends: growth of individual micromobility, multifunctional and dedicated mobility, dynamization of mobility prices and integrated mobility and finally, mobility systematically and in real time.

Porsche also analysed how Bosch was able to make a successful entrance in the e-bike market. "They started their e-bike business with a focus on mid-drives in 2009, but OEM-competitors began their serial production not before 2014," said Nicolas Grimm, Senior Manager, Porsche Consulting. "Bosch main industry insider released their first components for electric bicycles in 2010, but did not succeed in the very beginning. Bosch derives know-how as experienced OEM from their cordless power tool battery technologies as well as the automotive sector. Today there are clear similarities between automotive and e-bike manufacturers, including innovations, supply chain and distribution. Today Bosch holds on to intermediate sales but in future they will go consumer direct. Nicolas Grimm pointed out these learnings: develop a good go-to market strategy, offer unique as well as customer-oriented services, but also strive for integrated supply chain excellence." ■





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BICYCLE COMMITTEE



2021 Activity Report

Mandate

The Bicycle Committee gathers the major leading brands and allows them to have a global representation on all levels (Sport, Social and Environmental issues). The Committee is the voice of the bicycle industry towards the International Cycling Union (UCI) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Summary

The WFSGI Bicycle function operates through internal committees. These committees are formed by the members of WFSGI that are involved in the Bicycle industry. In the past committees have had at least two physical meetings a year plus more regular updates using teleconferencing facilities, in 2020 and 2021 the meetings have been all virtual which is challenging but has given a good degree of interaction with the majority of our brand members engaging regularly. Most topics of work were generated by the members themselves with some topics requiring reaction by WFSGI from a stakeholder such as the UCI, IOC or ETRTO or ISO itself. To explain the recent activities of the WFSGI Bicycle function we will use the committee structures to explain the work areas and progress we have made and while we concede that this is not all relevant to the ISO meeting it remains a good representation of our work.

Wheel and Tyre Committee

This group has now evolved to have a greater degree of interaction with tyre manufacturers and brands and this widening of its brief has been at the forefront of its recent activity. We have been closely working with ETRTO representatives to ensure the dissemination of progress concerning the development of the ETRTO standards for rim and tyre interaction into an ISO standard. Progress has been good though the evolution of the product during the

lifecycle of the project to migrate these standards has been an additional challenge that has created some delay. Specifically, the use of hookless rims and the need to test products on rims of differing types and dimensions and at a range of pressures is an issue though we feel confident in predicting that this will conclude soon.

This group is also seeking a rule amendment relating to the permissible dimensions of a cyclocross tyre that can be used in competition. This will require the acquiescence of the UCI and then a subsequent proposal to its internal committee structure.

E-bike Competition Group

This group has not been especially active in the intervening period, but it has remained in discussions with the UCI on this emerging discipline and the challenges it presents. Specifically, this is around the need for bicycles used in competition to remain in the state in which the manufacture

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COMMITTEE
VIDEO HERE**



sold them for public use. Anti tampering is the key challenge here and with additional products being available to facilitate this type of rule transgression we must maintain the momentum with the UCI and external stakeholders. We have also reopened the discussions with the governing body on the adaptation of competition to limit the ability of individuals to cheat in this way.

Technical Committee

This is an overarching committee that has taken the lead in a diverse range of topics in the past and into which subjects will find a natural home if there is no other specific group that is pertinent to the topic. The main topic that has occupied this group is the use of bespoke products and how they are regulated in terms of safety. The need for this project was generated both internally from our members but also following a request from the UCI to help to form a regulation to facilitate the use of these products while ensuring the safety of riders and the integrity of the sport and its wider aims.

We first identified the different types of bespoke product constructions and materials and while there is a lot of focus now on 3D printed (additive manufacturing) as a method of fabrication it rapidly became clear that there were several other methods and materials that needed to be considered including traditional steel.

Following several meetings and a wide range of feedback from our members, we have the basis of a proposal that will allow bespoke products to be used while ensuring they comply with safety regulations and the commercial availability requirements of the governing body.

Design Working Group

This group has traditionally focused on the design governance of the bicycle frame but more recently this has

been expanded to include the design of other components not specified elsewhere including the handlebars, seat posts and even chain sets and assemblies.

This group most recently created a proposal that was successfully accepted and adapted by the UCI giving a greater degree of freedom in the design of the bicycle frame. This was part of a longer-term plan to create a scheduled set of regulations simplifications that will over years allow freedom of design. This work is ongoing but very ambitious and optimistic through it remains reliant on the UCI.

This group has also responded to several requests from the UCI to solve problems they have identified in competition. The first of these was related to design regulations encompassing the integration of components into frame designs. We rapidly were able to identify the issue and the cause of concern and then create a plan for addressing this with the UCI and our members that did not require a lengthy and unnecessary change to competition regulations that would have been problematic for our members.

The second of these requests related to the security of drinking bottles on race bikes. Following several high-profile incidents in world level competition, the UCI expressed its concerns and opened a dialogue with the industry to attempt to find a solution. Initially, we considered the design and material of the bottle itself, but it rapidly became apparent that this solution would not be workable. The focus then moved to the apparatus attaching the bottle to the bicycle frame and we found that members had a varying number of testing methodologies. We started a consultation on these different types of tests and now have a number to compare to find a method that meets the needs of the UCI and the industry. ■

Chair Bicycle Wheel and Tyre Committee



Tim Gerrits
Product Manager,
Shimano, Inc.

Chair Bicycle Technical Committee



Bernhard Johanni
Director Product
Development
Europe, SRAM
Corp.

Chair Bicycle Saddle Committee



David Bunce
COO, ISM Saddles
LLC

Ex Officio

Mark Barfield
WFSGI Head of
Bicycle

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**Interview with
Tobias Gröber,**
Executive Director Business
Unit Consumer Goods -
Director ISPO Group, Messe
München GmbH

SHIFTING THE DATES WAS NOT ONLY A BOLD MOVE – IT WAS A NECESSARY MOVE

Tobias Gröber has been Executive Director of the Business Unit Consumer Goods at Messe München GmbH since 2004. He is responsible for the ISPO Group as well as for INHORGENTA MUNICH and the IAA mobility. He is also Chairman of the German Fashion Industry Foundation – SDBI. Gröber graduated with a Diploma of Sport Oeconomie at the University of Bayreuth. Tobias Gröber is married and has two children. enjoys mainly swimming, running, trail running, snowboarding, skiing and hiking.

No more ISPO Munich in January. Starting from 2022 the most important trade fair of the sports industry permanently takes place at the End of November. At the same time OutDoor by ISPO will move to Mid-June in 2022 and to End of May by 2023. Tobias Gröber, Executive Director Business Unit Consumer Goods at Messe München, speaks about how every business in the industry will profit from this shift.

Tobias, it's been a few weeks now that you shifted the dates of ISPO Munich and OutDoor by ISPO permanently. How have the reactions in the industry been?

Overwhelmingly positive. This continued over the past weeks. Sometimes it needs time for the information to sink in, but now the vast majority sees it as a clear business benefit.

Why is that so?

Shifting the dates was not only a bold move – it was a necessary move. We aligned it with the needs of the industry. We listened closely to our partners in retail, manufacturing, trade and to many of the brands and analyzed the needs of the market.

What was your conclusion?

The previous dates of ISPO Munich and OutDoor by ISPO hardly made sense anymore. Due to the disruption in supply chains, order cycles have changed. Now we are positioning our trade fairs where they are best for exhibitors and trade visitors: At the beginning of the selling season.

Is this also the case for hardgoods suppliers, who might not have their samples ready in November?

Of course, we understand those concerns, but for most hardgood suppliers it isn't such a big issue. Like almost everyone in the industry they see the big advantage of an ISPO Munich in November. For them the most important factor is talking to the retailers at the right time. Even hardgoods samples will be ready for showing them to the retailers.





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Which role did the COVID-19 pandemic play in your decision?

The timing of the order cycles had already shifted to earlier dates in the past few years, but the January date of ISPO Munich still was a good compromise. This changed with the pandemic in a comparably short time. As we saw our industry being disrupted at accelerated speed we had to act quickly.

What can exhibitors and visitors expect from ISPO Munich and OutDoor by ISPO at their new dates in 2022?

They will be inspiring kick-off dates, which will spark a fire of excitement in professionals and consumers. We can summarize it with three Rs: 1. Return on Invest – the beginning of the season is the time to make business. Retailers will get an overview of available products and trends at the right time. 2. Return on Relationship – ISPO Munich in November 2022 will be the first event where we will meet again in real life and (re-)build business relationships since the pandemic started. 3. Return on Media. Exhibitors will profit from the huge media interest right where new products are released to the trade and right at the start of the B2C winter season.

For the first time ever ISPO will also address consumers?

Yes. Our Consumer Festival will boost demand shortly before the Christmas business and inspire consumers for the products of the participating brands. It will take place separately to the B2B fair at an off-location but almost at the same time.

Why are you integrating consumers?

Besides being strictly B2B the ISPO trade fairs have always sent impulses to consumers. But in the last few years we experienced a growing demand of our B2B exhibitors to also use the ISPO brand to get in contact with consumers. First this led to the launch of our online Collaborators Club (former ISPO Open Innovation) and our online platform ISPO.com, which has been B2B2C from the start.

With our Consumer Festival we are taking the next step in the physical world. Consumers will be able to interact with brands, brands will be able to create unique experiences with a minimum of extra costs.

You also decided to limit the booth sizes to a maximum of 150 square meters for OutDoor by ISPO and 200 square meters for ISPO Munich.

Yes, the times of gigantism are over. By this decision, brands can concentrate on their core messages and reduce their costs. We did this for the first time at IAA Mobility, and it was a big success.

We also reduced the duration of ISPO Munich and OutDoor by ISPO from four to three days. OutDoor by ISPO will take place once in 2022 at the MOC event center plus the adjacent Motorworld buildings and then move back to the trade fair grounds in 2023. And in 2023 OutDoor by ISPO will move further forward into May.

What do you offer brands who will miss ISPO Munich in January 2022?

I know that you can't really digitize the trade fair experience. But still, we have a digital solution which combines the trust and relevance of the ISPO brand with huge reach to consumers and business professionals alike. It's ISPO.com. Here we will have our ISPO.com trend festival in January and February, where our editorial staff reports the latest trends of the sports industry for 2022. We also will showcase the winners of the ISPO Award.

You changed the concept of the ISPO Awards. How and why?

The ISPO Award is one of the most influential awards in the sports industry. But to stay on top, you need to constantly optimize and innovate. The award now takes place four times a year and gets extended coverage on ISPO.com, our printed ISPO Award magazine and also at our trade fairs. We made the judging more transparent and easier to understand by reducing complexity in categories and winner levels. Every innovative brand should apply for an ISPO Award as soon as possible.

OutDoor

by ISPO

What would you like to tell potential exhibitors and visitors of OutDoor by ISPO and ISPO Munich 2022?

Sport is stronger than ever. ISPO is stronger than ever. ISPO Munich and OutDoor by ISPO 2022 are the leading events in 2022 no sport business professional can afford to miss. At ISPO Munich and OutDoor by ISPO you get inspired, make connections and do business. Mark the dates in your 2022 calendar: OutDoor by ISPO will take place from June 12 to 14, ISPO Munich from November 28 to 30. ■





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**By Dr. Jochen
M. Schaefer,**

Attorney-at-law (Germany),
Law Office Dr. Schaefer
Legal Counsel WFSGI
and FESI

DISTRIBUTION RULES OF SPORTING GOODS IN EUROPE 2022 – A DIFFERENT BALLGAME?

Dr. Jochen M. Schaefer is a German practising attorney based in the Munich area. For numerous years he represents both the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) and the European Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (FESI) as Legal Counsel. He is a specialist in national and international distribution topics, intellectual property (IP) and risk management issues and in the drafting and negotiation of comprehensive contracts at an operational level, in particular in the area of European selective distribution schemes. For more details please visit his web site www.sjlegalonline.de or contact him at sj@sjlegal.de.

This article deals with the substantial revision of EU competition laws in the area of vertical supply relationships in 2022. This is not just a legal topic, but of strategic importance and relevance for decision-makers at manufacturer/brand/wholesale and retail level. The EU Group Block Exemption Regulation Vertical 2022 ("VBER 2022") plus its accompanying comprehensive guidelines will come into force on June 01, 2022, and the author focuses on new key elements of the revised law as contained in the current draft version.

Introduction

2021 has been a challenging year for the global sporting goods brands and the retail trade – both for the good and for the bad. Covid19 Shockwaves hit many WFSGI member companies same as supply-chain shortages and substantially increases of material and transportation cost. We saw winners (in particular the bicycle sector), but also losers (such as the winter sports industry). And nothing is as constant as change. The challenges, but also new opportunities and chances will continue to exist in 2022 as well.

This is demonstrated by the topic of this article too: If compared with a football/soccer game, the legal framework of EU competition law rules governing the distribution of sporting goods within the European Union and the European Economic Area will face a significant modification just before the end of the first half time in 2022, i.e. from June 01 onward.



Basics

The EU Commission as a rule setter operates since the end of the 1960s in the area of vertical distribution with the instrument of the Block Exemption Regulation Vertical ("VBER"). What does this mean? Commercial operators along the vertical supply-chain doing business in Europe (be it manufacturers/wholesalers/distributors/importers/retailers with a market share not exceeding 30% in a certain relevant market) can feel safe not to violate EU competition laws as long as they steer their ship in the calm waters and the safe harbour environment created by the VBER set of laws and as long as they are compliant with such regulation. All practices which are not explicitly forbidden by VBER plus its accompanying guidelines in these vertical relationships are group exempted and the commercial traders do not need to submit their vertical agreements to the Commission or national cartel authorities to get them approved. Yet these Block exemption regulations do not remain in effect for an indefinite period. VBER 2010 will expire on May 31, 2022, and will then be replaced by its successor, VBER 2022 plus revised guidelines.

While previous versions did not face substantial modifications compared to their predecessors, all experts agree that this time the revision has been substantial. This has been primarily triggered by the massive changes we saw in the last few years rattling and disrupting traditional distribution channels. Terms such as omnichannel distribution, social media, online marketplaces, go direct to consumers or popup stores were fairly unknown a decade ago or did even not yet exist at all. Market powers considerably shifted and the lawmakers at the EU Commission level had to realize that global players are about to dominate the online trade by even threatening the continued existence of the traditional sales channels, in particular of the brick-and-mortar retailers. In a comprehensive exercise, which started in the last quarter of 2018 already and included several public consultations with the active participation of FESI, the European Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry, the Commission came up with a substantially revised first draft version of VBER 2022 and of 95 pages of guidelines to interpret the law provisions of the Regulation itself. Such a first draft was published in July 2021 already and was then followed by the last round of public consultation ending in the second half of September of last year. Since then, the Brussels authorities are working on a final version of this set of competition law, which will then be published in Q2 of 2022, in any event before June 01.

What is new?

To draw the big picture first: Online distribution is in the clear focus of this law revision and the modified terms of draft VBER 2022 reflect this in many regards. Whilst only a few years ago, European and national competition authorities were of the opinion that the online channel deserved specific protection - since it was viewed as being THE vehicle in particular for smaller to medium-sized traders to become visible - this view has meanwhile substantially changed. The Commission regards online sales now as a mature distribution channel, which to the contrary is about to threaten to some extent the existence of traditional retailers.

These are key new elements of the Regulation:

- It will be permissible to grant preferred (better) terms and conditions to the stationary trade than to pure online players, which under VBER 2010 would have been considered as undue discrimination and in most cases as a violation of EU cartel laws;
- Active marketing and sales efforts of B2B customers of a manufacturer/brand which interfere with exclusive rights of other marketing partners or those of the manufacturer itself can be contractually forbidden. This includes for instance cross-border activities such as entertaining a website with a foreign GTDL or a web presence of a distributor/retailer in a non-local language (with the exception of English);
- The presence of marketing partners on third-party marketplaces can be under normal circumstances restrained or even banned and this will no more be viewed as a hardcore violation of EU competition laws (which had been a highly controversially discussed hot topic among competition law experts, especially after the landmark Coty judgement of the European Court of Justice of December 2017);
- In addition, it will be allowed to establish a system of shared exclusivity e.g. in a certain territory/country or relating to a certain product range with two or more co-exclusive distributor/retailers;
- Best price (so-called parity) contractual clauses, which aim at preventing a contracting party from granting lower prices to third parties than to the intermediary concerned, will only be allowed under very narrow circumstances;

■ Still a highly controversial topic: In any case of dual distribution (i.e. in scenarios where a manufacturer/brand sells its products directly, to consumers, but does at the same time also deliver these products to third-party wholesalers/retailers) the present first draft of VBER 2022 restricts in a very unclear manner the information exchange between manufacturers/brands and their retail customers (provided the combined market share of the respective actors exceeds 10%) since they are then viewed by the Commission as competitors, where the stricter rules of the EU Group Exemption Regulation Horizontal will apply, which is currently equally under revision. FESI has strongly voiced its concerns in a position paper (to which I contributed as well), which was forwarded to DG Competition of the Commission in September 2021.

■ Retail Sales Price Maintenance ("RSPM") Practices: From a brand perspective it would have been desirable to liberalize this topic, but the Commission remained firm in its opinion that any attempt to influence the pricing of the next vertical supply level towards their own customers constitutes a severe hardcore competition law violation under normal circumstances, which can trigger fines up to 10% of the global annual turnover of a commercial operator engaged in these illegal practices !!). Yet there is a small window opened in VBER 2022 and in its accompanying guidelines, where RSPM practices can be applied as a clear exception to the rule;

In this context, it is noteworthy to mention that the presence of e.g. retail customers on price search and comparison tools can under normal circumstances not be prohibited or restrained, yet the monitoring of the pricing of marketing partners at B2C level within the EU/ the EEA area remains permitted.

■ Online intermediaries, such as operators of marketplaces are now categorized as supplier of services and will be treated in a much stricter manner than in the past. The Brussels lawmakers are in particular critical if it comes to scenarios, where such intermediaries offer and sell in their own name the very same products as their customers being present on the marketplaces owned by the respective intermediary. Several high-level investigations are pending at EU Commission and national cartel office level, whether such intermediaries abused their dominating market power.

■ Selective distribution schemes will remain permitted under VBER 2022 but may require some finetuning and adjustments also from a strategic marketing point of view.

■ After VBER 2022 will come into force on June 1, 2022, commercial operators will enjoy a one-year grace period to adjust their existing vertical supply agreements and to make them compliant with the new law. Yet I recommend to all my individual corporate clients to start this process as early as possible since it could lead to a positive competitive advantage over others by being an early adopter. ■



WFSGI AND MCKINSEY & COMPANY COLLABORATE ON GLOBAL SPORTING GOODS INDUSTRY REPORT.

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**Marketing: digital communities, influencers,
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Sustainability

**Supply Chain: logistics challenges with eCom,
challenges with sourcing, dependency/diversification**

**Future of Channels: wholesale vs. DTC,
key accounts vs smaller players, omnichannel**

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By Lucie Mory,
Legal Advisor, Decathlon
Group, Member of the WG
on Digitization of Product
Information
and Romain Codron,
Legal Advisor, Decathlon
Group, Member of the
WFSGI.

DIGITIZATION OF PRODUCT INFORMATION TASKFORCE - A SYNERGY DEDICATED TO SPORTS USERS

Decathlon was founded in 1976 in France and is now present in more than 60 countries. Decathlon's main mission is to sustainably make the pleasure and benefits of sport accessible to the many, by designing and manufacturing innovative, quality performing sports products at the best prices, for more than 80 sports. Decathlon is always exploring and researching to ensure sports experience for end-users is constantly improving and moving in a sustainable way.

Birth of the Taskforce

A few years ago, international sports manufacturers, brands and retailers agreed that some of the information on and with their sporting goods could be digitized. They rightly imagined that digitisation¹ could be a solution for a global economy that would open up the market. They were even convinced that their consumers could have access to safer products with up-to-date information. It was a short step from their thinking to the launch of a working group hosted by the WFSGI. The first exchanges took place in January 2020 and less than 6 months later, in July 2020, a task force was launched dedicated to the digitalisation of product information, co-chaired by VF Corporation and Decathlon. An article in the WFSGI magazine 2020² already illustrated the challenges of dematerialisation. Let's go back to the findings and the problems encountered in the digital age and the advent of online platforms.

Current regulatory playground

There is no longer any doubt that technological progress in multiple fields have drastically changed our lifestyles. This phenomenon has been reinforced since last year with the Covid-19 crisis, having consequences the development of home-offices, the restrictions on the movement of persons, increasing online purchases which has further accelerated the digital transformation. As a consequence, it is more than necessary to rethink product labelling and open up the use of digitisation to provide mandatory product information.

Today, the main constraint is that even if product regulations are evolving, leaving sometimes the door open for digitisation of product information, ambiguity, unpredictability and lack of harmonization remains between regulations.

¹ Digitisation is the process of converting information from a physical format into a digital one.

² Digitisation of product information – the solution to break down protectionism's barriers by Juliette Barenne and Romain Codron

Let's start with encouraging progress, in July 2020, the European Commission published a draft of the revised « Blue Guide on the implementation of EU product rules » which established that « Unless otherwise provided for in specific legislation, whilst the safety information needs to be provided on paper, it is not required that all the set of instructions is also provided on paper but they can also be provided in an easily accessible manner through a website, electronic label, QR code, prompting the end-user to read on a webpage or download the full documentation in the language of their choice, or another electronic format»³. This wording is interesting because up to now, most product regulations do not specify a particular medium through which product information should be provided, only requesting the information to be communicated durably, leaving room for interpretation.

More recently, the European Commission has published a proposal for a regulation on machinery products which stated that « The instructions may be provided in a digital format. However, upon purchaser's request at the time of the purchase of the machinery product, the instructions shall be provided in paper format free of charge »⁴. By opening the possibility to communicate the instructions in a digital format, European Union's legislative bodies pointed out their wishes to push forward digital technologies to provide product information when it's possible and does not affect consumer safety.

Digitisation of product information has also been discussed as part of the transition for a more sustainable economy, which brings out the idea of a digital product passport which « would encompass product-specific key information in digital form about the materials and substances content of the product, as well as information about key attributes regarding product sustainability and circularity. This information can be accessed via a suitable digital application »⁵. Indeed, the European Green Deal⁶ and the New Circular Economy Action Plan underlines the fact that digital technologies and digitisation of product information could provide many opportunities to help the consumer to make sustainable choices by providing reliable and up-to-date information on the product.

Though, these legislative initiatives on digitisation of product information are today at the project stage and retailers are constrained to provide mandatory product information if they want to play safe until regulations evolve.



The Task Force

The working group's discussions focus on the opportunities and challenges of a digital shift in the communication of product information.

To move the line on digitisation of mandatory product information, the task force is looking at solutions that would permit digitizing product information to consumers, ensuring that all consumers, including the ones without access to the internet, will be informed and will have optimal access to the essential product information. Various technologies are considered as QR codes, URL, RFID, printing at the point of sales and others to ensure equal accessibility to mandatory product information.

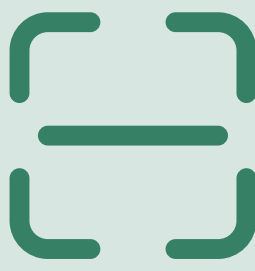
The sporting goods industry is convinced by the benefit for consumers of e-labelling. Indeed, digitisation will improve the information provided to the customer by giving more detailed data. Then, it will reinforce the durability of the access to product information while most of the time, printed labels as packaging, manuals, or tags are cut or thrown away. The task force recommends having an approach that preserves the safety of consumers and defines which product information could be digitized and which product information, for product safety reasons, must remain in physical format on the product or its packaging, to call the immediate attention of the user.

³ Draft revised « Blue Guide » on the implementation of EU product rules of July 2020 - point 3.1

⁴ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on machinery products of 21st of April 2021 – point 1.7.4

⁵ Council of the European Union conclusions of the 18th of December 2017 on Eco-innovation : enabling the transition towards a circular economy

⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European economic and social committee and the committee of the regions – The European Green Deal – 11th of December 2019.



Next Steps

The Working group hosted by the WFSGI is a perfect example of strong cooperation between international sports manufacturers, brands and retailers. And the first achievement is the WFSGI statement on digitization of product information. The position statement, whose purpose is to lobby and advance digitization in countries where digitization of product information is not yet on the radar, or not allowed in the regulations (as the USA, China, EU etc..) is available by QR code at the end of the article.

Without revealing the exact contents of the document, the Working Group is convinced that the future with fewer labels will benefit the market.

For end-users, it enables them to durably access essential information. For the regulatory and control authorities, it eases the analysis of legal compliance. For the planet, it reduces material and resource usage.

In the near future, standardization⁷ at the international level (ISO) will be a strong tool to quickly offer digitized solutions. Indeed, the bicycle sector is also thinking about what could be the future of bicycle information for consumers.

More globally, following the positive coming legislative developments (even if it's regrettable that the new changes on Directive 2001/95/EC⁸ on general product safety forget to refer to digitization), the Working Group will start calling the authorities from some countries to open discussions on digitization. ■



**Digitization
of Product
Information
Position Paper**





By Rutger Oldenhuis,
Recall Counsel and Owner,
RecallDesk

PRODUCT RECALLS: BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY

Rutger is an experienced and seasoned lawyer, holding a master degree in both civil and tax law. He has been Head of Legal of Shimano Europe B.V. for almost 17 years. He also headed the rowing division of Shimano Europe for 7 years, allowing him to gain valuable commercial and supply chain experience. As of April 2021, Rutger started his own venture RecallDesk, which is specialized in product recalls. The WFSGI and Rutger go back a long way. Rutger has been an active member of the WFSGI Legal Committee for many years. Rutger has been Vice-Chair of the Legal Committee for several years.

RecallDesk is a proud partner of the WFSGI.

Sports equipment, including bicycles and bicycle parts, is high on the list of most frequent product recalls. According to the OECD Global Recalls Database, there have been around 2000 product recalls in the sporting goods industry in the past 10 years. That means for sporting goods alone almost 4 recalls are reported every other week. Based on these numbers, sports equipment is ranked 5th on the OECD list of global recalls. The bicycle industry, which is included in the OECD's sports equipment category, represents a large number of these recalls.

Introduction

Whether big or small, recalls are complex projects and need to be managed properly. A recall requires a lot of resources and may hit a company's P&L badly. Whilst some companies may be perfectly equipped to manage a product recall by themselves, many others may not. But in any case, consulting an expert may add value, whether it is to lead or complete a recall team.

RecallDesk is unique in offering a combination of services that can be tailored to the needs of a client-facing a (potential) recall. RecallDesk offers legal, risk management and operational support.

In this article we would like to share some best practices that touch upon the following questions:

- How to mitigate the risk of having a recall?
- How to be prepared for a recall?
- How to manage a recall?
- How to ease the burden of a recall?

How to mitigate the risk of having a recall

Product safety as a primary concern

The best thing about recalls is not having one. Fortunately, there are many things you can do to mitigate the risk of having a recall. Ultimately, and as obvious as it may sound, it comes down to the commitment of your organization to

only supply products that are safe and compliant with relevant product requirements.

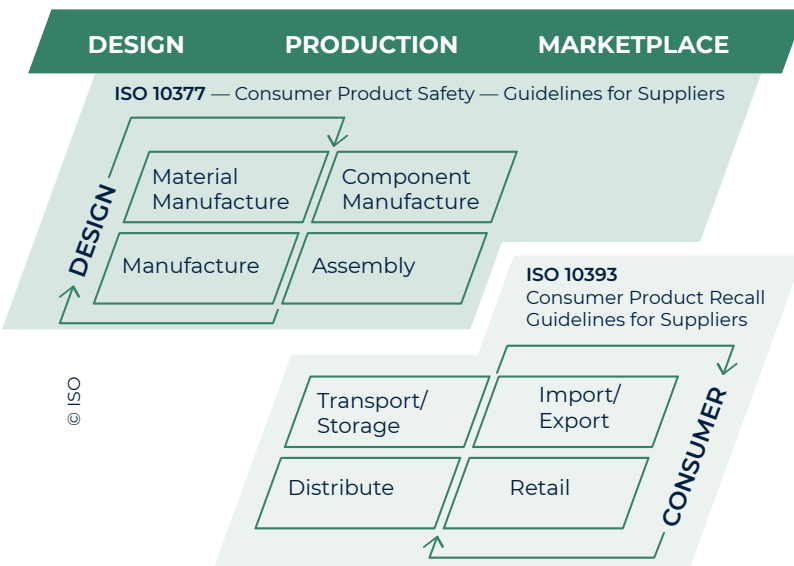
For companies selling their products on a global scale, it may be challenging to keep abreast of all the relevant product requirements in each country. Compliance & Risks' C2P platform, as well as the WFSGI Compliant Labelling Requirements Database, are excellent tools for companies to get access to relevant product and labelling requirements. However, it will still be important to have resources in place that can understand and translate product requirements to the actual product design and labelling.

Embedding a product safety culture

For companies that would like to bring their product safety processes to the next level, 2 ISO standards are worth mentioning: ISO 10377 on consumer product safety and ISO 10393 on consumer product recall. The key message of these standards is that design and production defects are highly preventable.

RecallDesk has developed a QuickScan that is largely based on these standards and helps companies to identify quick wins in their supply chain from the viewpoint of product safety, compliance and recalls.

The product safety process described by ISO 10377 and ISO 10393



How to be prepared for a recall?

A recall always happens when it is least expected or convenient. So the best thing you can do is to be prepared. Having a recall plan and recall team in place are things that would come first in mind. A recall plan should be drafted in such a way, that it guides you through the recall process tailored to your organization. Ideally, it includes a contacts list and communication templates. It will save you a lot of time and stress if a crisis hits you.

Another useful preparation is to make a 'recall journey': ask yourself the question how you are going to take back the products from the market and really think this through from a practical and operational point of view. It will give insight into what recall infrastructure is needed for your company, products and supply chain. Making this 'recall journey' before a recall happens can be tremendously helpful.

How to manage a recall?

Managing recalls is something you do not learn from the books, but mainly by doing. No recall is the same and yet certain steps or milestones are similar for each recall. These include e.g. product testing, making a risk assessment, liaising with and notifying market surveillance authorities, communication towards stakeholders and retrieving the affected products.

There is no such thing as a 'perfect recall'. Mistakes will be made and things will happen that are unexpected or not anticipated.

Risk assessment

A few more words on risk assessment, since it is such a crucial element of a (potential) recall. A recall is a last resort remedy. Typically, at least in the EU, a risk assessment is a starting point and identifies the risk level, which is formed by the combination of the severity of the injury and the probability. Risk levels can be low, medium, high or serious. The type of corrective action depends largely on the risk level. If the risk level is high or serious, you can be certain that your product needs to be recalled from the end-user. If the risk level is medium or low, other corrective actions may be sufficient. A risk assessment should be approved by the relevant market surveillance authority and is a crucial element in managing a recall.

How to ease the burden of a recall?

In the unfortunate case your company is hit by a recall, there are various things you can do to ease the burden. First of all, the sooner you are aware of a potential product issue, the better. Secondly, the fewer products are involved, the better. And thirdly, make sure the burden is taken where it should. Here are some best practices on each of these 3 points:

On the first point:

- Keep abreast of product requirements.
- Do not only test before market launch¹. Continue testing and auditing of products, tools and moulds.
- Continuously monitor the marketplace.

On the second point:

- Have a recall infrastructure readily available.
- Have a solid product identification and traceability system in place.

On the third point:

- Stipulate sound contractual arrangements with your suppliers and distributors with regards to product compliance, safety, testing and recalls.
- Check your product liability insurance. In several jurisdictions, certain recall costs can be claimed under your standard product liability insurance, including your legal/consultancy fees.

Concluding remarks

The best thing about a recall is not having one, but ignoring the risk is not a good strategy. Fortunately, there are many things you can do to avoid a recall. Product compliance is key. Design and production defects are highly preventable. But even so, a recall may hit your company, so make sure you are prepared. You only have one chance to do it right. Beware that a well-conducted recall will likely increase your customers' trust. Also, there is a variety of ways to ease the burden of a recall.

More information on the services of RecallDesk can be found at www.recalldesk.com. For questions or advice, please contact RecallDesk at info@recalldesk.com. ■



LEGAL COMMITTEE



2021 Activity Report

Mandate

The Legal Committee facilitates and enhances the interaction, information exchange and co-operation between the WFSGI members on the latest international legal developments within the Sporting Goods Industry. This neutral platform offers the advantage of enabling to develop concrete and tangible solutions to address emerging legal challenges.

Summary

2021 has been the very first year I remember where not even one physical Legal Committee ("LC") meeting took place. While I had still expressed some guarded hope in my previous 2020 LC Report that we might return to normal in 2021, this regrettably proved not to be the case. The result was one web meeting only conducted on September 16, 2021. Nevertheless, our Committee remained very active during the past 11 ½ months, where primarily two areas of prime interest were in our focus, which go beyond pure legal topics and where substantial progress could be achieved:

■ The WFSGI Digitization of Product Information Task Force under the umbrella of the LC conducted several web meetings and managed to come up with a joint position paper ("PP"), calling for the introduction and permissible use of digital labels. The PP has been formally approved by the WFSGI Board and the next agreed-upon steps include placing the PP on the front of the WFSGI's website and asking all WFSGI members to actively support and lobby for this initiative at the national/regional level;

■ In a series of intensive communication and negotiations with the WFSGI's cooperation partner Compliance & Risk ("C&R"), a contractual agreement could be reached in October 2021 to extend the valuable WFSGI Compliant Labelling Requirements (CLR) Database services of C&R for additional three years by at the same time further improving the quality of such services rendered to numerous WFSGI members and others at equally improved preferential financial terms.

■ In other areas, such as the collective efforts of several brands to conduct joint ground operations to fight the offering and sale of counterfeit products in certain geographic areas, such activities were hampered and slowed down due to the pandemic and its accompanying restraints and limitations.

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The mandate of the Legal Committee as a neutral platform for its membership remained the very same throughout 2021, i.e. to educate and timely inform the members on important and sector-relevant legal developments, to create and provide tangible services in this area for them, to remain in a kind of standby and alert mode as concerns the handling of vibrant legal topics, which pop up on an ad hoc basis and to cooperate with and assist other WFSGI committees, where appropriate; further to in general exchange relevant legal and compliance-related information in a legally permissible manner.

The following is a summarized update of the LC's 2020 activities:

WFSGI Compliant Labelling Requirements (CLR) Database

After C&R had launched within the first half of 2021 its significantly improved 2.0 version of the database jointly owned by C&R and the WFSGI also thanks to the active and valuable input of leading WFSGI brands, an intensive phase of contract negotiations followed, equally assisted by numerous LC members. These negotiations and discussions could be successfully finalized within the last quarter of 2021, where all actual and also potential new subscribers to C&R's services will greatly benefit from a fixed (additional) contractual three-year term, which defines the terms of the contractual relationship between the WFSGI and C&R.

WFSGI Digitisation of Product Information Task Force ("DPITF")

In 2021 the Task Force met four times virtually, at the latest in early November 2021. In close and positive cooperation with the Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry and spearheaded by the WFSGI member Decathlon, the DPITF members produced a joint position paper, which received Board approval and will now form the basis for further concrete lobbying and other activities to be pursued in 2022.



Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)- Collective On the Ground Operations in Southeast Asia

Covid-19-related limitations and restraints hampered or even prevented the conduct of efficient collective online ground operations against counterfeiters to a significant extent of trusted investigators and enforcers in 2021; just one example out of many: it proved impossible to get search warrants issued by the competent local authorities to carry out efficient raids and seizures.

WFSGI Legal Alert Mechanism – Horizon Scanning

The WFSGI started in 2021 under the umbrella of the LC Horizon Scanning legal information service - a regular publication providing WFSGI members with a compilation of recent legal developments impacting the sporting goods industry worldwide. Two issues thereof have been published in June and November 21 and we count on the active assistance in support of all LC members to be able to continue this ambitious service in 2022 as well.

Finally, in my capacity as the WFSGI's Legal Counsel and Chair of the LC, I warm-heartedly thank all Committee members for their ongoing active support and engagement, who made things happen in a genius team effort. ■

Chair



Jochen Schäfer
WFSGI Legal
Counsel

Vice-Chair



Dora Zachou
Brand Protection
Team Lead,
Nike Inc.

Vice-Chair



Dr. Markus A. Kürten
Head of Compliance,
adidas AG

Ex Officio

Charlotte Giudicelli
WFSGI Head
of Legal



**CHECK ALL
COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**



By Ben Sheath,
VP and Managing
Director, Siemens

THE FUTURE OF SPORTS AND SPORTING GOODS: HOW SMART TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE

Taking pride in creating a safe environment where people can excel, explore, challenge, take risk and succeed, enjoying helping people realise they can when they felt they couldn't.

I have a degree in Engineering, and I am passionate about innovative problem solving. I live on the Isle of Wight enjoying sailing, car restoration and have recently rediscovered the joy of making model aircraft with my children. I work with an exceptional team that is helping our customers navigate their digital transformation. Amid unprecedented change and the rapid pace of innovation, digitalisation is no longer tomorrow's idea. We take what the future promises tomorrow and make it real for our customers today. Welcome to... Where today meets tomorrow. Here to help individuals and organisations by sharing the insights and experiences I've gained supporting multiple industry sectors be successful in overcoming their unique and shared challenges. Overall P&L responsibility for Siemens Digital Industries Software in the UK and Eire including Marketing, Sales (direct and through partners) and delivery services supporting customer in multidisciplinary design and development of Smart connected products.

Complete business responsibility for our software business within the UK and Eire. Bringing together all elements of the organisation (Sales – Direct and Partners, Marketing and Delivery Services) focusing on our customers goals to reach ours.

It is no secret that the events of this past year have taken a toll on brands and retailers. The global crisis was significant enough that companies immensely underestimated the amount of financial loss they would incur. Along with other manufacturers and brands, the global sports market also fell prey to the catastrophic effects of the pandemic. However, as the year progressed, the sporting goods industry managed to perform better than expected. And as it looks ahead, this industry is now forecasting continued growth in the coming years. In addition, sporting goods have a predicted value of at least \$599.9 billion worldwide by 2025 at a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of 8%.

So, what is the source of this industry's growth? Since 2015 there has been an uptick in sporting goods sales. The increase in sales is not from consumers purchasing traditional sporting goods but from the growing urge to access equipment that can provide performance data. Smart-equipped sporting goods allow coaches and athletes to track, monitor, and analyze information—accessibility to this type of data is helpful for coaching, enhancing, and improving athletic ability. In addition, manufactures can use crucial information to develop sports equipment and athletic gear.

The IoT is making technology and connectedness possible, transforming how people experience sports on every level. Sporting goods manufacturers who invest in product development discover how to add value to existing offerings while creating new ones. Equally, athletes and coaches benefit from smart-equipped goods. These innovations also allow brands to maintain their current market share and acquire future ones.

When aspirations meet innovations, it creates a pathway to success.

Imagine a young golfing student aspiring to become a professional player. The golfer will be competing in a high-stakes tournament that their coach cannot attend. Ordinarily, this situation could be stressful for the young golfer, but they manage to avert a potential crisis because of smart technology. With the help of embedded electronics in the player's golf club and an app on both the coach's and player's smartphone, the coach can log and analyze performance data. The coach uses the app to provide feedback and ultimately store crucial practice evaluations during their sessions. Now the golfer can access vital information, thus giving them the needed guidance to compete as if the coach was present.

Innovative simulation is also practical when evaluating the performance of sporting equipment and athletes.

Surf Loch is seizing on the opportunity to use simulation technology to help surfers ride the perfect wave. Aided by advanced simulation software, Surf Loch can simulate and create waves at a rate of 400 per hour. Professional surfers can use the simulation to sharpen their skills, giving them the edge needed for competing. Novelists who live inland can experience surfing for the first time, and amateurs can become better surfers. While Surf Loch is a relatively small organization, it can compete globally because of its capabilities and invested technologies.

ASICS is a renowned manufacturer of sports shoes that maintains a leading-edge position.

Along with using analytic and quantitative data to enhance athletic performance, brands also use the same information to develop superior athletic gear. ASICS stays in continuous pursuit of performance excellence. By adopting simulation early in the product development process, the company can offer a distinct advantage over its competitors.



It is essential to develop new solutions to stay relevant to mitigate risks.

Brands that have not yet invested in innovations and new technologies risk falling short of consumer expectations, lost revenues, and becoming obsolete. Many brands are infamous for not keeping up with changing consumer demands and are either out of business or uncompetitive versions of what they once were. Technology is ubiquitous, and consumers expect it in all parts of their lives. As a result, professional and leisure athletes demand reliable, safe, professional-grade, innovative, functional, attractive, and intelligent products. Moreover, competitive pressure is building. Startups unencumbered by established processes are popping up continually. In the years ahead, this competition, coupled with technological improvements, will drive down sporting goods prices, putting further pressure on latecomers to play a costly game of catch-up or fall behind.

An ability to deliver innovation through embedded electronics and software technology in new sporting goods products is essential to capitalize on emerging market opportunities. For many manufacturers, this means moving away from disconnected applications to an integrated design platform that can facilitate the following capabilities:

Collaboration: Smart sporting goods product development requires collaboration with an expanded supply chain, often with different partners responsible for numerous parts of the design. The platform must ensure the security of each partner's information while sharing enough data to facilitate the integration of the systems.



Multidisciplinary design: The embedded electronics and software required in innovative sporting goods products bring new packaging challenges and significantly raise the complexity of the product design process. Multidisciplinary design enables mechanical, electrical, and software engineers to work together simultaneously and in one linear path independently. These solutions speed up the entire process by integrating functional requirements and validations into the workflow.

Product validation: Advanced products require advanced simulation and test capabilities. Multidisciplinary platforms can provide designers with a complete engineering toolset to perform CAE analysis in the same environment as CAD design, with the same data set. Integrated product validation helps capture and avoid complications early in the design process. All this gives designers the tools to arrive at the ideal design and ensure quality from the beginning.

Immersive 3D visualization: Knowing what a product will look like before the manufacturing begins is a massive advantage because decisions about aesthetics, materials, and marketing become possible early in the process. This solution reduces the need for prototyping crude versions, which could take weeks at a time.

Consumers are looking for tailored solutions that fit their needs.

As companies embrace technology-enhanced equipment, they soon discover that solutions benefit both the brand and consumers.

Loyalty. Regular interactions with their sports equipment and a more profound experience with information, recommendations, and communities build an ongoing relationship with the company, resulting in loyalty and cross-sell opportunities.

Athlete safety. Many athletes have endured injuries from participating in their sports. Real-time data can protect the athlete and prevent common sports injuries.

Information is power. Apps deliver experiences but also collect information about users and personal use of products. In today's world, those who have data have control.

Sporting goods manufacturers that take advantage of many innovations can leverage these capabilities to create highly sought-after products. By doing so, brands can stay relevant, competitive in the market while building loyalty and trust. Don't wait until it's too late; get in the game now. ■



A woman with a braid is running on a path. The background is a bright, hazy landscape. Overlaid on the image are digital elements: a wireframe model of a running shoe, a software interface window showing a 3D model of a shoe, and several glowing blue and yellow lines that swirl around the runner. The Siemens logo is in the top left corner.

SIEMENS

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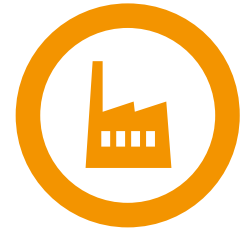
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siemens.com/sw



MANUFACTURING COMMITTEE

2021 Activity Report



Mandate

The Manufacturing Committee aims at creating a positive synergy between manufacturers and brands. As a hub for manufacturers and manufacturing issues WFSGI is working on joint approaches to tackle common challenges and to identify key issues.

The Manufacturing Committee is a unique platform to exchange and seize new opportunities. An excellent global network provides manufacturers the necessary insights and updates on the global economy trends and changes which helps to place investments. Everyone can gain new inspiration from this Committee's work.

2021 was a challenging year for the manufacturing companies of the industry. The majority continued to be severely impacted by the pandemic and the continued lockdowns. Besides travel restrictions, & regional measures, freight and supply chains continued to disrupt.

Many relevant topics were covered across the committees under the WFSGI umbrella this year. An important impact of the pandemic are the increasing container and shipping prices which have been addressed across several committees.

The industry was also confronted with a heavily increasing number of trade cases which are impacting the sourcing of sporting goods. Different countries have put technical barriers to trade, safeguard duties, etc. in place and the WFSGI has engaged in different cases.

It has also been agreed and some preliminary work has been done to elaborate and align on climate action, which will be of importance for manufacturing members as well.

We see continued aftershocks with Covid-19 variants continuing to emerge, alongside continued disruptions and exponential increases in freight rates and rising raw material costs. This will shape the work for manufacturing members in the upcoming year, the WFSGI Manufacturing Committee will pursue its efforts to support manufacturing companies with relevant data and information. ■

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Chair



Colin Browne
Chief Operating
Officer, Under
Armour, Inc.



**Rakhil
Hirdaramani**
Director,
Hirdaramani Intl.
Exports (Pvt.) Ltd.



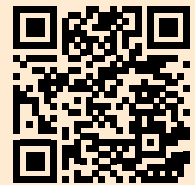
Duncan Scott
Vice President
External Products,
New Balance
Athletics, Inc.



Charles Yang
COO, Victory
Group Ltd.

Ex Officio

Marc-Ivar Magnus
WFSGI Vice
President Trade,
Corporate
Responsibility
and Legal



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By Juhi Dion Sud,
Partner, VVGB Advocaten,
Brussels, Belgium

Juhi specializes in EU and International trade law, WTO law and EU Customs law. Over the past 15 years, she has represented numerous governments, exporters, importers and trade associations in EU trade defence proceedings, customs matters and trade cases in the U.S., Canada, India and South Africa. She is recommended in the leading legal directories including Who's Who Legal, Legal 500 and Chambers.

TIME TO RETHINK THE OBVIOUS – URGENCY OF A GLOBAL MOMENTUM TO DISMANTLE TRADE BARRIERS FOR THE FOOTWEAR SECTOR

Tariff and non-tariff barriers have been serious challenges for the footwear sector from decades. In addition to the traditionally high tariffs and trade defence measures existing for this sector, non-tariff barriers - in the form of technical requirements and customs and licensing procedures - are on the rise. As economies around the world are struggling to return to the pre-pandemic 'business as usual' mode, and unprecedented problems affecting supply chains are emerging, there is a greater need for renewed momentum towards some sort of an international meeting ground whether it be in the form of a plurilateral agreement for reducing trade barriers or inducing wider acceptance of international standards.

The experience with the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to fore, more than ever before, the reality that global economies today are highly interconnected and interdependent and international trade relies to a large extent on global value chains. While economic resurgence is the focus, nearly two years since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is still not business as usual. As of now serious supply chain disruptions are negatively affecting international trade in footwear products - among uncountable other sectors - as COVID waves continue to impact production in Asian manufacturing hubs amplified by logistics problems.

These unprecedented obstacles are on top of the plethora of tariff and non-tariff barriers affecting global footwear trade and force us to rethink the obvious – the need for a global momentum to dismantle trade barriers for the footwear sector.

Footwear imports have been historically subject to high import duties.¹ Over a decade ago, there was a significant increase in trade defence cases against footwear imports from mainly Asian countries by the European Union, Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Turkey to name a few countries. While some of these trade defence measures have been eliminated over time (such as the anti-dumping measure by the European Union and the Turkish Safeguard measure), thanks to the efforts of the footwear economic operators, in recent years, non-tariff trade barriers such as

¹ See for instance countries such as Argentina (20%-35%), Algeria (30%), Brazil (20%-35%), India (average 35%), Indonesia, South Africa (30%) have very high most favored nation ("MFN") tariffs. The EU and UK tariffs are comparatively lower than the examples provided above but still remain high especially for countries such as China that do not benefit from the Generalized System of Preferences and/or do not have free trade agreements with the two countries.

labelling requirements and national quality and conformity standards have increased. Ostensibly instituted for consumer protection, product quality and the protection of human life and the environment, some of the measures strongly indicate protectionist tendencies aimed at restricting imports to boost local footwear production. Moreover, several countries apply different types of tariff and non-tariff barriers cumulatively thereby further restricting market access. For instance:

Argentina: Argentina applies high MFN import tariffs on footwear, anti-dumping duties on footwear imports from China, non-automatic import licensing, specific footwear labelling requirements and sworn declaration for footwear product composition;

India: In addition to the already high import tariffs, India has recently introduced a law requiring most footwear products to comply with national quality standards and bear the corresponding Indian standard mark. There are 27 national standards applicable to different footwear types. Moreover, the footwear products can only be certified by laboratories authorized by the concerned Indian standardization body and all footwear factories where the footwear is produced - regardless of the geographical location - need to be verified and approved by the officials of the Indian standardization body;

Russia: Last year Russia introduced a labelling requirement that mandates all footwear (and apparel) producers, importers and resellers to label footwear (and apparel) with a unique QR code and to enter into an agreement with a private company appointed by the Russian government as the labelling operator. Moreover, these labelling requirements are Russia-specific and not harmonized between the Eurasian Economic Union members and Kazakhstan has adopted its own labelling system;

Indonesia: Indonesia has high import tariffs and instituted non-automatic import licensing for footwear in 2020.

Several other countries have or are in the process of introducing similar requirements.²

² To give some more examples, the Andean Community has introduced labelling requirements; Algeria requires mandatory compliance with the Algerian quality standards and technical norms; China requires certain footwear types to confirm to national quality standards.

Agreeably, labelling and/or quality conformity requirements are important and justified. However, recent experience has shown that mandatory national quality standards and the requirement to use national certification bodies/operators significantly increase the compliance and cost burden for imports apart from creating regulatory uncertainty and delays especially if the host country certification bodies/operators do not have enough resources. In any event, the lack of mutual recognition and harmonization implies that different standards and labelling requirements have to be complied with for exports to different countries. Moreover, national quality standards seem questionable when in fact international (ISO; UNIDO) standards exist and are recognized by several countries for footwear and some of the national standards being promoted (e.g. by India) are very old. Furthermore, tying labelling requirements to the use of domestic operators seem unnecessary.

While economic operators in the footwear sector have been and continue to address the country-specific trade barriers affecting the sector, it is perhaps necessary to push for a global meeting ground whether it be in the form of a plurilateral agreement to reduce specific non-tariff barriers or induce the adoption of international or harmonized quality and labelling standards. Such an effort is unlikely to be easy but with the MFN nature of the labelling and quality requirements, mutual interest of footwear exporting countries lies in adopting a common approach because what goes around comes around. ■





By Jay Duehring,
Global Logistics
Manager, Specialized
Bicycle Components

UNPRECEDENTED TIMES? ABSOLUTELY

Fourth generation living with bicycles; started with my Great-Grandpa operating a bicycle / hobby store; Grandpa, operating a bicycle / lawn mower store; Dad, owner of a bicycle store, bicycle industry experience with a career in logistics and myself having over 15 years' experience in the bicycle industry who earned a MBA from California State University, San Bernardino. I've worked in and led quality, support, distribution, operations and now focused on logistics. Streamlining touch points, costs, and transit times will always be at the forefront while keeping our relationships strong. No matter how challenging, logistics will always be a driver that consumes me in connecting bicycles to riders around the globe. I'm very grateful to be part of a company and industry where I get to enjoy, support, and deliver one of the best and most efficient machines ever built.

Over the past 18 months, major disruptions across the entire supply chain have significantly: increased costs, caused equipment shortages, longer transit times, increased ocean insurance rates, port congestion, Centers for Disease Control scrutiny and theft around major ports. Non-related pandemic incidents like capsized vessels, lost containers at sea and the Suez Canal blockage have brought new governance and oversight creating a ripple effect that will last months if not years.

Costs for a 40 ft HQ container is off the charts. Today, containers cost 4x ~ 8x pre-pandemic levels within some shipping lanes. Shipping anything, without a contract (at spot rates), is a challenging proposition, with extreme price and space volatility.

Ocean carriers today, are preferring advance payments on premium sailings for multiple containers/shipments. Vessel space reservation requirements which were once 10 ~ 15 days, can now be 30 ~ 45 days in advance, with sometimes no confirmation simply days before close of container yard.

Turn-around times for loading containers can be 1 ~ 5 days with penalties for violations.

Exporters too, are voicing about the carriers demands on brief loading times, rejecting some commodities, vessels returning to Asia with empty containers to shorten vessel return to Asia and increased ocean rates.

Compounding things; shortages of containers, chassis, trucks and other equipment at both origin and destination,

The world of logistics has been impacted by the pandemic. Professional logistic leaders, with decades of experience, have no comparison point for what is happening in both ocean and inland transportation.

are impacting container booking, loading and port delivery.

Transit times have been greatly impacted during the pandemic. Transit times have doubled from Asia to the United States. Port congestion all over the world are at all-time highs; Los Angeles/Long Beach broke records reaching over 100+ vessels anchored waiting to berth.

All of this has contributed to not only premium costs, but uncertainty and volatility. The global schedule reliability index which once was above 70% is now at record lows hovering around 35%.

News reports have indicated carriers and ports are investing in additional equipment and vessels. This is good news but will take years before we see improvements.

Logistics and transportation have been devastated during the pandemic. It has exposed the weakness in the current legacy ocean transport system. We are all going to need to adapt by being more planful, proficient in our booking, efficiently packing our products, coordinating our needs to match sailings, and building flexibility into our operations to manage volatility.

Logistics was once an operational function. It's now a strategic resource that needs to be forecasted, managed, planned and effectively executed. This is the new normal.

It will not end in the near term and will require effective leadership and strong relationships.

The outlook is not encouraging. We see more governmental oversight, rates settling to 2x to 4x pre pandemic levels, continued long booking times, longer transit times and congested ports lasting 3 ~ 5 years. ■



TRADE COMMITTEE



2021 Activity Report

Mandate

The Trade Committee is focusing on international trade issues facing the global sporting goods industry, including eliminating trade barriers, defending against trade cases, examining new product safety and testing requirements, removing restrictions that impact WFSGI member company's supply chains, supporting international trade agreements that benefit the global sporting goods industry.

The WFSGI again worked on a wide variety of trade related cases in 2021. Our first topic of the year related to ongoing discussions around the mandatory Russian labelling regulations. These regulations initially applied only to footwear imports into Russia but were then extended to apparel and other product categories. Later in the year, Kazakhstan implemented a similar regulation requesting the marking of footwear imports. This case is ongoing, and the Trade Committee is advocating for a practical solution where the two national regulations would at least be aligned to avoid double labelling for footwear being imported from Russia into Kazakhstan. The WFSGI has sent several letters to different countries' missions to the WTO to raise its concern and ask the addressees to mention these trade barriers in the WTO Technical Barrier to Trade Committee.

In another Technical Barrier to Trade issue, the WFSGI engaged with Indian authorities on an important case for the sporting goods industry involving the Indian regulation for compulsory use of Standard Mark for Footwear. Concerns over the requirements of this regulation have been shared with the Indian authorities. This case is still ongoing and Trade Committee calls have been set up to enable member companies to discuss current challenges and questionable testing requirements. We are working

to propose practical solutions that will be put forward to the Indian authorities.

The WFSGI has also been kept in the loop by APICE, the Brazilian Sporting Goods Industry Association, on the second expiry review of the Brazilian anti-dumping duties on footwear imports from China. This mandatory review was initiated in 2021 by the Brazilian authorities to determine whether anti-dumping measures, which have been in place for ten years, should be extended for another five years. APICE as registered as an interested party and has played a leading role in the investigation.

It remains crucial that our industry continue to raise its voice and actively participate in the review in order to advocate for a neutral application of the law and to defend our position for free and fair trade.

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COMMITTEE
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In a second trade remedies case, we have engaged in extensive advocacy in the Indonesian apparel safeguard investigation. A group of brands have joined forces under the WFSGI umbrella to actively participate as registered interested parties. Notwithstanding these efforts, the Government implemented safeguard tariffs on many apparel imports that affect the sporting goods industry. The Trade Committee is evaluating options for our next steps.

In addition, the WFSGI has also as of 2021 an official observer status at WIPO - World Intellectual Property Organization.

The activity of the Trade Committee in 2022 will continue to focus on many of the above listed examples. The Committee has seen a rising number of barriers to trade—both tariff and non-tariff—and we expect more protectionist measures in 2022. These trade challenges coupled with the challenges caused by the pandemic — including disrupted supply chains, increased shipping costs, and reduced container availabilities - will likely require further extensive involvement of the Trade Committee in 2022. ■

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February 2020 – January 2023

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MEET THE KEY
PLAYERS OF
THE SPORTING
GOODS
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**GET FREE
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ENTRIES**
TO THE
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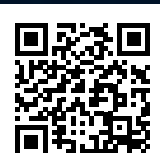
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