

# RUNNING INSIGHT

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THE BEST STORES ARE  
DOING FINE BECAUSE  
THEY CREATE THEIR OWN  
TRAFFIC AND THEY'RE  
THE CENTER OF A  
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**PHILLIPS OUT  
AT FLEET FEET**

# BROOKS

**Q&A WITH JIM WEBER**

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# Jeff Phillips Is Out at Fleet Feet



Jeff Phillips, Fleet Feet Sports president and CEO since 2012, has departed the company.

Phillips oversaw the growth of the franchise to be one of the leading forces within the specialty running business

In an abrupt move that caught the industry by surprise, Jeff Phillips has left Fleet Feet, Inc. Phillips has been president and CEO since 2012 and led the company through a buyout from its previous owner Tom Raynor and has overseen the growth of the franchise to be one of the leading forces within the specialty running business.

Details of Phillips departure are not known. Phillips did not return a text to his cell phone and by the end of the

day on Tuesday, his biography had been scrubbed from the company's website. Fleet Feet issued the following statement, which it attributed to CFO Joey Pointer.

"Jeff Phillips, Fleet Feet Sports president and CEO, is no longer with the company effective immediately. I will be partnering with the Fleet Feet Sports board of directors to lead the company through this change. The Fleet Feet Sports board of directors will lead the search for Fleet Feet Sports' next CEO.

During this transition, the Fleet Feet Sports board, led by Jim Hyler and Richard Urquhart, will work closely with myself and Fleet Feet Sports leadership as well as its franchisees, vendor partners, and store employees. The board has full confidence in the Fleet Feet Sports leadership team to continue the successful operations of the company."

In June, 2012 IMC, a North Carolina investment firm which also owns the Golden Corral restaurant franchisor, acquired Fleet Feet, Inc. in a buyout from Raynor that included Phillips and other members of senior management. In the nearly five years since the acquisition, Fleet Feet, Inc. has moved aggressively, growing its store count to 166 stores from 93 nationwide. In addition to franchising stores, Fleet Feet has also been converting

existing run specialty stores to franchisees. Most recently Fleet Feet converted Runners Spot in Fayetteville, NC to become a Fleet Feet store.

Under Phillips' stewardship, Fleet Feet also implemented an Operating Partner program in which it took employees and helped them become owners of Fleet Feet stores in markets where Fleet Feet either owned stores that needed owners or in which it was seeking to open stores.

An industry veteran for over 40 years, Phillips started his career while a standout runner at Virginia Tech, off-setting college costs by working at a local running store. After graduation Phillips joined Brooks Sports, where he spent 14 years in executive sales and marketing positions. In 2001, Phillips turned to retail, joining Raynor at Fleet Feet. Phillips is well liked and respected in the industry and was named to the Run Specialty Hall of Fame this past December.

Phillips becomes the second senior executive to leave Fleet Feet in the past several months. Late last year Luke Rowe left Fleet Feet after 13 years. He was most recently senior vice president and oversaw vendor partnerships, training and education, store development and support at Fleet Feet. He has since joined CEP as Senior Vice President overseeing the United States. ■

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# Jim Class

**Brooks CEO Jim Weber Is Looking Forward.**



By Jennifer Ernst Beaudry



Photo: Dan Brennan

**A**fter a turbulent 2016, Brooks is doubling down on performance product and broadening its reach. But according to Jim Weber, it's not just more of the same. Speaking to *Running Insight* on a snowy day at Brooks' Seattle headquarters, the CEO said the running brand will be aggressively pursuing new customers, redefining its audience as "all who run" and adding more versatile, more fashion-oriented product to appeal to that younger, broader group of active consumers. "The truth is, we've always had license to speak with everybody as they're coming into this health/wellness/ fitness/ active lifestyle,

and running's always part of it," he said. "But we think the brands that have authenticity and credibility are the ones that lead with athletes and engaged enthusiasts. We're always going to try and win those customers over and build product for them."

Part of that is a big brand-building campaign that the brand will launch in June on Global Running Day. While Weber is keeping the campaign's theme and even name secret until its June 7 debut, he did say the global effort — which will focus heavily on digital and social activations with a strong grassroots and in-store experience component — will be the brand's largest and most expansive to date. "What we've found is a vehicle to engage people on a one-to-one basis like we do at events," he said. "We should reach millions with this campaign, we should. And I think it's open-ended and fun."

The new campaign will launch into a dramatically changed



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**Jim Glass (continued)**



A living wall welcomes visitors to Brooks' headquarters; the Trailhead store, the brand's only brick-and-mortar location, shows off the full product line.

athletic environment.

The wave of retail bankruptcies and closures took a heavy toll on most run-industry players, Brooks included. And a challenged market for performance footwear didn't help.

"We were actually down in total, but we were up in the back half. We were down a *lot* in the first half, but now in footwear we're growing again, and I think we'll grow this year as well," Weber said.

Despite the drop, the brand ended the year near \$500 million in sales, and initial indicators for 2017 are positive.

Stephanie Blozy, owner of Fleet Feet Sports in West Hartford, CT, said Brooks had grown its market share dramatically in the first part of 2017.

"The new Ghost is really killing it, for men's and women," she said, noting that the women's Ghost outsold the next-nearest shoe by a factor of two in February.

Blozy also heralded the arrival of new, more competitively priced footwear.

"We need to always have a good-better-best strategy, even in terms of quality and price," she said.

And Sonya Estes, owner of Runners Roost in Lakewood, CO, said Brooks' commitment to projects like the FastTrack app that lets RSA store owners take orders for styles, colors and sizes not in stock for drop-shipment to consumers will help them build sales — and keep consumers.

"With our backroom, we just don't have the space to carry six colors" of a any given style, Estes said. "For us, [FastTrack] is brilliant."

This year will bring more changes to Brooks.

A new website with an increased emphasis on storytelling is expected to roll out shortly. And this summer, the brand will debut

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***"We still have a goal to be the No. 1 choice for runners worldwide."***

a new shoe featuring an all-new proprietary midsole compound. "It's one of the best shoes we've ever built, and it looks gorgeous," said Weber — who, as a sample size, has had more chances than most to test the new shoe. "It's just fun to run on because of that Energized [cushioning] experience — you feel faster."

Here, Weber sounds off on keeping performance first, taking a stand and why specialty will remain on top.

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**Last year wasn't a great one for many brands, and you ended the year down. Did you need to revise your target of being a \$1 billion brand by 2020?**

"We still have a goal to be the No. 1 choice for runners worldwide, which is well over a \$1 billion opportunity, but we haven't been growing like we had intended to in the last two to three years. Right now the industry is resetting and consumer behavior is changing a lot. We refuse to chase [business] at price points that don't make sense. We gave up some growth last year because we didn't chase that and we didn't discount and promote. We're not bolted on to that goal by a specific date in that we'll do anything to get there. We really feel we have to earn it."

---

**Were the sporting goods bankruptcies a major player in that choppiness?**

"We lost 900 stores that we distributed through. Obviously 400 and change were at Sports Authority, but then you had City Sports and Sport Chalet and Eastern Mountain Sports and some Finish Lines closed and some specialty stores closed as well. [But] more big-box self-service stores, by far, closed than did specialty. [Going forward], I think we're going to lose most of the self-service, big-box stores."

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**Do you expect more of the same in 2017?**

"Dick's is doing fine, REI is doing fine, Academy is doing fine. Specialty is a bit of an uneven playing field because no question, some of them are really struggling. If you came into this kind of a cycle not real strong, it's challenging. We still see a barbell





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## Jim Class (continued)



Brooks moved to their global headquarters in 2013.

market: on the one side, Amazon and everybody that's selling digitally where the convenience and price is gonna be there. The retail experience side, with service and advice and connection, is not going away. We're brainstorming with [our retailers]. Are they going to become more showroom-esque? That's an example of a business strategy where we can give them more product access and they can present our whole line. That's what the FastTrack model is all about."

### Is the specialty market going to thrive?

"In specialty run, the best stores are doing fine because they create their own traffic and they're the center of a community. Having said that, the second and third shoe purchase is going to the web. There's no question about it. Because it's convenient! In some cases it's cheaper — there's too much inventory out there and it's gotten very promotional— but in our category ultimately I don't think that's the long-term issue. The long-term issue is that people have lots of choices now, and if they can save time when they know their shoe, they typically do that. Brick-and-mortar is not going away, it's just not. But the experiences have to evolve so people go there for a reason. So the programs — with locally.com and FastTrack, we're trying to create long tail for them so if they have them in the store, they don't lose a sale over the color or size."

### What do you have on tap for product in 2017?

"Our product pipeline is the most exciting pipeline we've ever had. We've been engineering and really trying to bring better function, better performance, and I think with [the new compound debuting this summer] we're going to have the most resilient compound in history. When we were working on Run Signature we lost a

***In specialty run, the best stores are doing fine because they create their own traffic and they're the center of a community."***

season or so on really pushing our product forward — but now we're [doing it]. We're going to continue to step into a pretty identifiable space for Brooks, and you're going to see a very distinctive look to the line that we have not had before. We want to own the cushioning segment, and in our Energize category, which is a category that we're really going to invest heavily in, you're going to see a Launch and Ravenna experience that evolve over the next couple of seasons."

### The brand's new positioning is to serve "all who run" — how does that differ from where you've been?

"Aesthetics and versatility is something that we're working more deliberately on. We feel like we're really in a great spot to address this younger runner who's doing everything: they're at the gym, they're running, they're active. The shift that we've made is really something that's always been part of who we are; we're just being more deliberate about acting against those new consumer segments of people who are active but running is only part of what they do. Winning on performance frankly gives you more credibility and license to play in every segment of the space, even for people who are only running two miles a week."

### Your first shoe in that more versatile gym-run-lifestyle and lower-priced space, the \$100 Revel, debuts for fall. How are you building on that?

"We think the fit, feel and ride at this price point, and with this versatility in the gym is going to be unsurpassed, and I think it's going to sell really well in that space. And for spring '18, we're going to explore new price points. There's frugality out there — the younger consumer is careful with their dollars and they're being very deliberate about what they spend their money on. They'll definitely spend their money on this. *Gestures to phone*. But what else makes the cut? So we wanted to bring more versatility."





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## Jim Class (continued)



**Trade reform was a major platform of the Trump campaign, and the president withdrew the U.S. from the controversial Trans-Pacific partnership. Will that affect your business?**

“We already pay — and we’re a small company in the scheme of things — \$15 million a year in tariffs, right now, on imported goods. The TPP over the next 5 years would have taken that to zero for Vietnam-made goods. So what could we do with that money? We could hire more people here, we could hire more people out in the marketplace, we could create more R&D capabilities to go faster on new product development. It’s going to make us less competitive to grow our brand around the world, which creates jobs here. And that’s the same story at so many companies and brands in our industry, it’s not unique, but I think that it’s unfortunate that agreement is dead.”

**The border adjustment tax being proposed by the House of Representatives would dramatically increase duties on imported goods — shoes included. What effects are you predicting?**

“A border tax would be a complete disaster. You have to grow the economy, and you can’t grow the economy by creating a Smoot-Hawley-era border tax. And probably the quickest way to start a recession is to start a tariff war. We source all over the world, we sell all over the world, and open trade and open borders are

***The younger consumer is careful with their dollars and they’re being very deliberate about what they spend their money on.***

nothing but good for the economy. There’s almost no brands that are [just] national anymore — they’re all global. You have to create local economic development to make sure everybody benefits from a growing economy — and everybody hasn’t benefitted in the last 20 years. But to think you can solve it with border taxes? You’re going to shrink this economy fast. If borders stay open, we can do business everywhere in the world, and we’re going to hire people in Asia, in Europe and we’re going to hire a lot more people in the U.S.”

**Is American manufacturing something Brooks wants to pursue?**

“We’re working on technologies and automation, but right now the materials aren’t here, and there’s still more labor in

our shoes than would make it economical to be here. But I think there’s automation coming. We would love to make product here in the U.S., and hopefully that will happen at some point. But there are a lot of technologies that have to be brought to bear to have that happen at volume for us to make the kind of shoe we want to make. But 5 or 6 years from now, could it be there? Yeah, it could be.”

**Some of your competitors have made waves with their stances on political hot-button issues — New Balance and Under Armour in expressing support for the Trump administration over the TPP, Nike in condemning the immigration ban. Will Brooks be weighing in on today’s issues?**

“There are three issues that we are absolutely going to take a stand on. One, with 7.5 billion people in the world, we have to engage — we can’t get nationalistic and isolated and inward focused. The world’s too small. Sustainability is another one. The science is in on global warming, and we’ve only got one planet. You should use less energy, you should use less water, we should make the least amount of impact on the earth as we possibly can while we run our business. And then the third is trade.”

**Do consumers want to hear from Brooks on issues like this?**

“Your brand is ultimately a symbol of the relationship you have with your customers and the trust that they give — or not. Not everybody wants to know what makes you tick, but or people for whom this is a part of their life that they care about, they want to know more. And what we believe in terms of inclusion and being a global citizen and in global trade and how we treat people and the environment, that’s who we are.” ■



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# Running USA Conference Report



## Race Directors Face Changing Market

By Lou Dzierzak



**T**he challenges facing race directors sound a lot like those faced by run specialty store owners. After decades of growth, flattening participation rates and an increase in the number of events have race directors embracing new methods to compete.

Preliminary findings of Running USA's 2017 National Runner Survey, unveiled at its recent conference in Orlando, show race participation decreased 1 percent in 2016.

Facing shrinking numbers, race directors are learning how to retain runners year-to-year and attract new participants. "When there is an increase in the number of races every year, it's watering down the number of runners you can get. We know that a lot of races are struggling to attract runners. The big events like Chicago, Boston and New York will always be fine. It's the small-medium races that are trying to understand how to differentiate themselves," says Scott Bush, director of communications, Running USA.

Addressing these issues, the Running

USA conference offered sessions exploring technology, social media marketing and related topics. A key challenge is mastering social media. "There is a never ending learning curve for this and how to use it, when to use it and what is the best way. It seems to be the hottest topic and we are all trying to figure out how to capitalize on it," says Mary Anderson, owner, Anderson Race Management.

"We've seen a huge interest around marketing, social media and marketing to mobile devices. Technology evolves so quickly yet has so much impact, people are trying to understand how to use it," says Bush. "People are seeking out how to be different by embracing technology and learning how to market to runners so they can continue to grow."

### Competing with Technology

Race directors rely on technology platforms to manage registration, timing, distribution of event photography and event management. The tools are constantly evolving.



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## Running USA Conference Report (continued)

### PARTICIPATION BY THE NUMBERS

**57 to 43**

Race finishers in 2016. Female VS. Male

**1%**

decline in finisher totals. 2016 VS. 2015

**30,400**

Races were contested in 2016

**7%**

Growth for 5K distance finisher totals in 2016

Source: 2017 National Runner Survey

Running USA's 2016 National Runners Survey noted 61 percent of runners run with smartphones. "As we are becoming a more instantaneous society, race directors have to keep up. What's the significance of having a race photographer if everyone has access to a smartphone and can take 500 photos and share them on social media during the race? The photography industry has had to evolve," says Bush. "From a timing standpoint, people are expecting immediate results. The moment they cross the finish line they receive a text with their result. They want to share that information across their social media channels and have friends receive those updates simultaneously."

Says Sam Renouf, GM of sports, ACTIVE Network: "Our industry is beginning the next big technological shift. Race directors are faced with the challenge of meeting the demand of participants who prefer activities that offer engaging and entertaining experiences. To solve these challenges, utilization of interconnected technologies will be key moving forward. Ultimately, demand for engaging, sharable and entertaining event experiences will drive this next generation of technology adoption."

Exhibitors at the RUSA conference presented updated services for registration, timing, photography and analysis.

"Technology is a double-edge sword. What people are using may be fine but it's not the newest and the best so they feel they need to upgrade. Race directors have to be very

deliberate and determine what works best for your race," says Dimity McDowell Davis, co-founder, Another Mother Runner, Running USA board member.

"We are trying to be the middleman in educating race directors. We want to be able to connect what top photography, registration, timing and even apparel and awards are offering. We want to showcase those technologies to race directors and explain how they can affect and improve their runner's experience," says Bush.

#### More Races Chasing Runners

Although participation rates were flat over the last two years, the number of races continues to grow. To retain and attract runners, race directors are looking for ways to improve the runner's experience.

"The environment is changing rapidly and race directors need to pay attention and adjust race offerings," says Bush. "Runners are signing up for destination races and spending more money on travel. But there's more competition. When there are 20 races every weekend, and they all offer a race T-shirt, a banana, Gatorade at the finish line and a standard medal just doesn't cut it anymore. People don't want to pay \$50-\$100 for a race they can find anywhere. People are looking for different experiences and more bang for their buck. Is it even worth offering a race T-shirt anymore? The race directors that care about the full runner's race experience are continuing to grow." ■

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# Thinking Like a Startup

WHAT RUNNING STORES CAN LEARN FROM SUCCESSFUL STARTUPS. BY DANIEL P. SMITH

**F**or as much as running retailers talk about moving forward each day, sometimes the business hits a standstill. Sales slow down. Marketing stalls. Customer service becomes rote. And the status quo dominates.

It happens to every established business at some point, so much so that many enterprises have begun creating “intrapreneurship” teams and assigning a group of employees to think more like risk-taking entrepreneurs to solve business problems and drive growth.

After all, adopting the startup mindset has its advantages.

Newfound operations trying to inch their way toward sustainability tend to be more wide-eyed, creative and flexible, possessing fewer preconceived notions about the business and the marketplace.

“And those same attributes can help any business be successful,” notes James Jackson, a business advisor with the Connecticut Small Business Development Center.

When a retail operation finds stability with systems and processes in place, things can become routine, even stale and that can threaten continued progress, particularly given the speed at which today’s market and consumers move.

“Established businesses often look at sustaining their business



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## Think Like a Startup (continued)



Ask yourself, employees and even customers how the store can improve and then, rather than dismissing those ideas immediately, brainstorm how they might be incorporated.



Examine how you might be able to recapture the relentlessness that spurred your store's rise and apply it in calculated ways today.



How can you quickly provide customers their desired shoe when it's not in stock? How can you better service youth running teams?

and you can sustain yourself right out of business," cautions Kevin Smith of Riggs Partners, a South Carolina-based marketing communications firm. "It's healthy to examine your business and adopt some of the characteristics that drive successful startup businesses."

### Successful startups are relentless.

Largely out of succeed-or-fail necessity, startups have no choice but to employ a pants-on-fire approach to their daily work. Persistent thoughtful action, though exhausting, is required.

*How your business can think like a startup:* Yeah, you've been there and done that: the constant grind of 16-hour workdays and ever-present concerns about keeping the doors open and staff paid. After attaining some stability, you're not interested in a return to those days.

Fortunately, you don't have to go back, though Jackson does suggest business owners have "a come to Jesus meeting" with themselves.

"Reflect on what drove you into this business in the first place and understand why you're doing what you're doing," he says. "Do you need to channel your passion into something more creative? Do you need to delegate more so you can dream the business forward? Is it time to open a new store so you can get the energy of building something from the ground up again?"

In short, examine how you might be able to recapture the relentlessness that spurred your store's rise and apply it in calculated ways today

### Successful startups clearly define and communicate their vision and purpose.

Because startups are constantly in recruiting mode, competing for both customers and team members, Smith says they must offer a clear vision of what the business is, where it's going and why it exists, including any greater purpose or philanthropic bent that is core to the concept.

*How your business can think like a startup:* Define your company DNA and your plans for its future. Share these ideas with staff and, where applicable, the community. Beyond running gear, what do you really want to provide people? How will the business grow into a leader?

"When you can paint a clear picture of where the business is going and how it's evolving, that's

compelling to people and it becomes like a private club," Smith says. "And quite often, the bigger the vision, the bigger the draw."

### Successful startups are nimble and flexible.

Startups naturally work to identify an unmet market need and fill it, which requires ongoing iteration, problem solving and evolution. The savviest startups assess what's resonating and proving successful for their business and then double down on those efforts, evaluating and reexamining all along the way.

*How your business can think like a startup:* Far too many established businesses, Jackson contends, take their customers for granted, feeling they know plenty about who their customers are and what they need. By taking a deep look at the retail landscape, including direct competition, keeping antennae up for novel ideas for marketing, customer service and other business areas, and gathering input from staff and customers through surveys or conversations, retailers can keep abreast of market trends and perhaps land on products and services not currently offered.

"The best startups do these things every day and so, too, do the most successful established businesses," Jackson says.

### Successful startups refuse to be boxed-in by operations.

Operations are an obvious necessity for any business, but savvy startups do not let operational constraints overrun potentially productive ideas. They don't say, "We can't do that because . . .," but rather look for ways to inject good ideas into their business and create practical, sensible workarounds.

*How your business can think like a startup:* Ask yourself, employees and even customers how the store can improve and then, rather than dismissing those ideas immediately, brainstorm how they might be incorporated. How can you quickly provide customers their desired shoe when it's not in stock? How can you better service youth running teams? How can you make fun runs more dynamic?

"Established businesses tend to have a methodology and don't want to veer," Smith says. "That's fine, but understand that the rewards are diminished as a result." ■

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Friday, June 16, 2017



Official footwear sponsor of The Sportstyle Mile.

**T**he Sportstyle Mile race will take place on June 17, 2017 on A1A in the heart of Fort Lauderdale Beach, the day after the Sportstyle trade and consumer show and is open to both professional and amateur runners. Professional runners will compete for a purse of nearly \$6,000 in prize money. The race will be presented by Runner's Depot, the leading run specialty store in the area, and Formula 4 Media.

The Sportstyle Mile will begin at 6:30 a.m. on June 17 and feature 11 different heats, segmented according to age group. The highlight of the competition will be the Pro Mile for both females and males, which will take place at 9:15 and 9:30 a.m. respectively.

Professional athlete heats are by invitation only and runners who want to be considered for these heats must be approved by the race director and register for the Pro Mile to be eligible for prize money.

"We're extremely excited to be hosting this race with our good friends at Formula 4 Media," said Renee Grant, owner of Runner's Depot. "We've been hoping to do a race of this

distance for awhile and with so many industry people in town, right after the Sportstyle show, the timing is perfect."

The Sportstyle Show and Conference will take place June 14 and 15, 2017 at the Fort Lauderdale Convention Center and a special one day Consumer Expo and experience will take place on Friday, June 16, 2017. Packet pickup for the Sportstyle Mile will take place at the Sportstyle Consumer Expo on that Friday from 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Early registration for the race is \$20 by April 30; \$25 through

May 31st and \$30 from June 1 until race day. Runners can sign up at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com). All attendees at the Sportstyle trade show will be eligible to compete at the early registration rate.

The starting line will be at Windamar Street and A1A by the Hilton Hotel. The Finish Line and Post race expo and party will take place at DC Alexander Park, just south of 5th Street.

There will be awards for 1st through 3rd place overall; 1st overall Masters Male and Female and 1st through 3rd in the following age groups: 10-19; 20-29; 30-39; 4-49; 50-59; 60-69; and 70-plus.

There will also be additional awards for:

- Top Corporate Team (5 runners scored, all genders).
- Top Corporate Team (Most participants).
- Top High School runner, male.
- Top High School runner, female.

For the Pro Mile, 1st place overall male and female winner will be awarded \$1500 each. ■

Industry companies interested in sponsorship should contact  
**Troy Leonard: [tleonard@formula4media.com](mailto:tleonard@formula4media.com) or 352-624-1561.**

Florida businesses interested in sponsorship should contact  
**Renee Grant: [renee@runnersdepot.com](mailto:renee@runnersdepot.com)**



# sportstyle®

the show

Images courtesy of Shape activewear, Vimma, Reebok Blurred Lines



blending  
sports and  
style

## Trade Show, Business Conference + Consumer Expo

**Fort Lauderdale Convention Center, Florida**

Capturing the strength of performance sports as well as the lifestyle aspect of the active category. The sportstyle show will include activewear, footwear, accessories and technology and the conference will focus on key business topics to our retail attendees. We will invest heavily in its growth with increased marketing, including the Third Annual RIA Summit and the addition of a one day Consumer Expo which will attract VIP shoppers from South Florida's active, affluent market.

JUNE 14-15, 2017

### Trade Show

Showcasing the best footwear, apparel, wearable technology, and accessory brands.

JUNE 16, 2017

### Consumer Expo

An opportunity for brands to connect and interact with VIP consumers.

Host retailer: **Runner's Depot.**

Contact Jeff Nott: [jnott@formula4media.com](mailto:jnott@formula4media.com) or Troy Leonard: [tleonard@formula4media.com](mailto:tleonard@formula4media.com)

[sportstyleshow.com](http://sportstyleshow.com)



# Running Shorts



ASICS is focusing on “fast” with its latest performance running offerings.

## ASICS Introduces FlyteFoam Fast Series of Footwear

ASICS is focusing on “fast” with its latest running offerings. Featuring ASICS’ patented FlyteFoam midsole technology, the brand’s new FlyteFoam Fast Series of performance running footwear caters to runners across a wide range of foot types and running styles. At retail now, the FlyteFoam Fast Series features the NOOSA FF, which features a full-length FlyteFoam midsole, breathable upper and Wet Grip rubber outsole; the GEL-DS TRAINER 22, which is a medium-high stability shoe featuring DYNAMIC DUOMAX support for enhanced stability and comfort; and the DynaFlyte, which has a full-

length FlyteFoam midsole, delivering lightweight cushioning.

ASICS has also introduced Pace Academy, a series of Runkeeper workouts, pro tips, and inspiration from top athletes. ASICS Pace Academy will serve as a platform to help runners improve their speed. Within the Runkeeper app, workouts will be tailored to each runner’s ability, complete with audio coaching.

## Inov-8 Launches Contest for UK Trip

Trail running brand inov-8 is launching its biggest-ever competition with seven lucky winners set to scoop an all-expenses-paid trip to the Lake District - the home of inov-8 and UK trail running.

The Get A Grip

Competition provides runners with the opportunity to win a five-day experience (June 30th – July 4th) “that money can’t buy.”

Winners will learn “tricks of the trails” from international inov-8 athletes and high-profile ambassadors, gain insight into the inner workings of the brand and be among the first to test new running products in footwear, apparel and equipment.

Winners will also form #TeamGetAGrip and take part in the Skiddaw Fell Race. This classic nine-mile Lake District event combines both trail and fell running on the slopes of one of England’s highest peaks.

**To enter the competition visit: [www.inov-8.com/GetAGrip](http://www.inov-8.com/GetAGrip)**

## Launch of the enRoute drives North American sales for Salming

Salming Sports AB, which appointed David Field as the new CEO of its North American subsidiary in January, reported record numbers for the month of February. The Swedish-based brand reports that its February results were bolstered by strong demand across the newly launched 2017 running line, with total sales increasing 48 percent over last February.

The Salming enRoute led the way, accounting for 55 percent of the brand’s footwear sold in the U.S. market. Retail booking orders for the spring 2017 running line also rose 31 percent over last year, according to the brand, spurred by the opening of several new key accounts.

## Zensah Announces Scholarship Program

Two high school scholar-athletes will have the opportunity to be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from a new scholarship program.

Zensah is teaming up with Olympian Kara Goucher to announce the Zensah-Kara Goucher Scholarship Program. Two exemplary student-athletes, one male and one female, will be awarded a scholarship towards their college education.

The application is open to any high school student who has participated in at least one season of a high school sport related to running. Students will be able to apply online via



this link ([www.zensah.com/scholarship](http://www.zensah.com/scholarship)).

The deadline to apply is April 23rd, 2017. The selection committee, which will include Kara, Zensah, and representatives from the running industry, will review applications and notify the finalists on May 8th. Awardees will be announced May 29th.

Kara Goucher was an outstanding high school runner, winning state championships and qualifying twice for Foot Locker nationals. Over her career, Kara has overcome numerous challenges and obstacles, and her tenacity is an inspiration to all.

“We are thrilled to team up with Kara for the Zensah-KG Scholarship. Kara’s perseverance is an example to all high school athletes,” said Alberto Benarroch, Director of Marketing. “We look forward to working with specialty run stores and high schools across the country.”

Mark Rouse, owner of specialty running store Runners High ‘n Tri in the Chicago suburb of Arlington Heights, stated, “I’m honored to be on the selection committee. The Zensah-KG Scholarship Program is a great opportunity for specialty running stores and high school programs to work together



Above: the Nike Zoom Running collection, designed as part of Nike’s Breaking2 project, an innovation to break the two-hour marathon barrier. Left to right: the Nike Zoom Vaporfly Elite, Zoom Vaporfly 4%, Zoom Fly and Air Zoom Pegasus 34.

# Adapting to the Extreme

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## Running Shorts (continued)

to get students involved in running.”

### Under Armour Announces UA Mountain Running Series

The inaugural Under Armour Mountain Running Series will kick off in summer 2017. In partnership with POWDR Adventure Lifestyle Co., UA’s North American trail running series will feature racing experiences in mountain environments and at some iconic resort destinations across the country.

The UA Mountain Running Series is slated to kick off in July at Oregon’s Mt. Bachelor, the largest ski area in the

Cascade Mountains with a peak elevation of 9,065 ft. The next stop in the series takes place in August at Killington, touting a peak elevation of 4,241 ft. and tucked in the Green Mountains of the Appalachians in Central Vermont. The series concludes at Copper Mountain, situated in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado with a peak elevation of 12,313 ft.

Registration for all races is open now at: [www.UAMountainRunning.com](http://www.UAMountainRunning.com).

Each stop in the series is designed to be a running festival unto itself, with seven different race categories, cash prizes, exciting weekend-long



Under Armour’s Horizon trail running footwear features ESS rock plates, mono-coque construction, durable welded overlays, internal fit systems, toe protection and Michelin outsole compounds and lug design.

resort activities, and post-race parties. Races can be done individually or as a series.

### TriggerPoint Unveils GRID VIBE

The new GRID VIBE from TriggerPoint is a premium

vibrating foam roller designed for muscle relaxation and quick recovery. It combines the company’s GRID foam roller with the benefits of vibration.

Research has indicated that foam rolling is an important and effective practice used to

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keep muscles and fascia healthy, releasing tightness and improving overall flexibility. The GRID VIBE combines TriggerPoint's patented, multi-density outer GRID pattern, firm EVA foam and a vibrating core to help minimize pain perception and relax tight muscles. The combination of foam rolling and vibration allows users to focus longer on tender areas and ultimately achieve better foam rolling results.

The compact GRID VIBE is cordless, rechargeable and travel-friendly. It can be used at home or on-the-go, and easily fits into a gym bag. The GRID VIBE will be available beginning in July 2017 and will retail for \$99. ■



TriggerPoint's new GRID VIBE combines the company's GRID foam roller with the benefits of vibration. MSRP \$99.

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The 3rd Annual

# RIA Summit



## New Thinking: Strategies and Tactics for the Future of Running Stores

**June 13, 2017: The Hyatt Pier 66, Ft Lauderdale**

The **Running Industry Association** will hold its 3rd annual Summit in Ft. Lauderdale on June 13. The Summit is expected to attract 150+ running store owners and executives for seminars, workshops, networking and Spring '18 product presentations.

Co-located with the **sportstyle trade show** held June 14-15, the RIA summit is an opportunity to connect with run store owners and executives in an exclusive setting before the trade show.

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