VOL. XII NO. 1
SGEPC newsline
Xsports
December 2009 - January 2010

Chairman's word...

Dear Members,

Subsequent to successful organisation of focused promotional campaigns for Sports Goods & Toys over the last few years; this year, the next phase is being organised by the Council with support from Department of Commerce, Govt. of India, under the Market Access Initiative scheme.

An additional promotional campaign in USA for Toys is also being organised. The preparations for events in Germany (ISPO Winter and Nurnberg Toy Fair) and USA (American International Toy Fair) are in full swing at SGEPC. All prominent publicity spots have been booked for these events. Focused publicity campaign has been planned by selecting important publications related to these events. A local promotion agency appointed in Germany is undertaking publicity campaign through direct mailing & contacting the buyers.

The participants have been preparing for long to showcase the best of their products in Europe & USA, under these marketing projects. I wish them all a very successful participation.

I extend warm season greetings to all of you for the New Year 2010.

Your Sincerely,

Anil Mukim

(A.G. Mukim)

Indian participation in Soccerex 2009, Johannesburg

Soccerex, Johannesburg (28th November to 2nd December) was organised as a global convention, which included 3 days exhibition from 30th November to 2nd December 2009 at Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg 2009 in view, of 2010 FIFA World Cup scheduled to be held in South Africa.

Mr. Vikram Doraiswami, Consul General, C.G.I, Johannesburg inaugurating the India Pavillion at Soccerex 2009

A view of the India Pavillion at Soccerex 2009

(Report overleaf)

Indian participation in Soccerex'09, was limited to exhibition only, by 8 equipment exporters. Since Soccerex was not purely a B2B exhibition, no direct business was reported by participants. However it provided an opportunity to do networking with people as well as businesses connected with Soccerex.

Soccerex is the leading event provider for last 14 years for the global football industry, renowned for delivering unique networking platforms around the world. The Soccerex events calendar includes exclusive Soccerex forums and culminates in the 4-day Soccerex convention encompassing the whole 'Soccerex Experience' (Conference, Exhibition and Football Festival). It was attended by senior executives from around the world, including representatives from FIFA, Global Federations, National and State Govts. along with many of the world's leading clubs, brands and suppliers.

Soccerex was launched in 1996 at the iconic Wembley stadium in London. Ever since, Soccerex has gone from strength to strength hosting its convention and business forums in the world's greatest cities covering five continents. ■

Warehousing Facility in Brazil

It is informed that we have earlier published news about Warehouse cum Showroom set up by UPICO in September 2007 under Govt. Market Access Initiative scheme, in our August '2009 issue of newsletter. Now it has been brought to the notice of all members that these three departmental stores hired by UPICO for display of goods have been relocated and the new addresses are as under :

Facilities

Warehouse cum Showroom

Av. Dr. Jose de Moura Resende, 1148, Vera Cruz-Cacapava Sao Paulo, Brazil, CEP 12287-650 (Ph. 055(12)-3652-5483)

Store & Display-I

UPICO-Tara, Rua Orieent, 626, Bairro Bras, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Store & Display-II

UPICO-Goa, Rua 25 de Marco, 6 Andar, Bairro Ceentro, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Store & Display-III

UPICO-Sansara, Rua Barao de Ladario, 439, Bairro Bras- Sao Paulo, Brazil

For any query, CMD, UPICO may be contacted at: cmd.upico@gmail.com, Ph. 0512-2242717 (Kanpur Office)

Vice Chairman and Regional Director of SGEPC Elected

Shri K.C. Anand, *Managing Director, Sanspareils Greenlands Pvt. Ltd., Meerut,* has been elected as the Vice-Chairman and **Shri Raghunath S. Rana**, *Managing Partner, Ranson Sports Industry(Regd.)*, Jalandhar, has been re-elected as the Regional Director of the Sports Goods Export Promotion Council.

Extension of Duty Suspension

SGMA works with US Congress

The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA) is aggressively supporting the extension of duty suspension bills on basketballs and volleyballs. If the U.S. Congress approves tariff relief legislation by year's end that includes the SGMA ball bills, duty suspensions will be extended through 2011.

In 2006, Congress temporarily suspended duties on basketballs and volleyballs for three years effective January 1, 2007; the duty suspensions are scheduled to expire at midnight December 31, 2009. According to SGMA, there are two issues which must be resolved in order for the duty suspension bills to be included in a broad tariff bill.

"It's important that SGMA succeeds in getting Congress to pass this duty relief because these products are no longer manufactured in the United States," said Bill Sells, SGMA's vice president of government relations. "With no domestic production of volleyballs and basketballs, any duty collected would result in a higher retail prices for the consumer; something our economy does not need."

On October 29, four bills were introduced in the U.S. Senate to extend the ball duty suspensions through 2011. The four bills were S.2333 (for volleyballs), S.2334 (for leather basketballs), S.2335 (for basketballs not made of rubber or leather), and S.2446 (for rubber basketballs).

On November 2, the Senate Finance Committee requested public comments on all duty relief bills. SGMA submitted a 'Statement of Support' to the Committee for each ball bill. In early December, the International Trade Commission (ITC) and the International Trade Administration (ITA) contacted SGMA for information regarding domestic production on volleyballs and basketballs. The Senate is currently reviewing all public comments and a report from the ITC/ITA to verify there is no domestic production of volleyballs and basketballs. ■

Source : SGMA

Poland

a promising sports economy

Poland offers many opportunities in the sports and camping goods sector for exporters from developing countries. Polish consumers are not especially partial to their own locally produced products and are willing to purchase products produced abroad.

Poland is the fourteenth largest sports and camping goods market in the EU and this medium-sized market is similar to a cluster of countries including Belgium, Denmark and Greece, but well ahead of sales in the Czech Republic.

Poles enjoy sport, but they are primarily passive rather than active participants. However, the number of people spending time actively doing sport is increasing. The most physically active are young people with the time and money to visit a gym, swimming pool or any other sporting facility. An important aspect of this is social, as much as a way of keeping fit. The media in Poland is now actively encouraging people to take up sport, particularly women's magazines that often run special features on fitness clubs. Dance exercises have become more popular than aerobic exercises.

Cycling is the most popular sport, but football, basketball, volleyball and skiing are popular amongst men. Broader development of sports participation has been restricted due to the lack of sporting infrastructure and sports facilities in local areas around the country. However, the forthcoming Euro 2012 football tournament, jointly hosted by Poland and Ukraine, will ensure that investment will be taking place over the next few years.

Consumer Trends

Consumers are not particularly loyal to local brands and consumption is not evenly spread throughout the country. The older population has not taken to fitness and exercise in the same way as older consumers in many other EU countries. A survey at the Fit Expo in Poznan in 2008 found that out of 2,200 private clubs, 6% of members were between 16-25 years; 68% were between 26-35 years; 21% were between 36-45 years and only 5% were over 45s. However, there are indications that the number of older members is starting to increase. In terms of product groups, team sports represented 33%, followed by outdoor activities, including camping, fishing and horse riding (23%), fitness (15%), snow sports (14%), individual sports, including a small golf market (12%) and water sports (3%).

Market Outlook

Market growth is expected to continue but growth rates will be much lower. In fact some segments will decline. The outdoor market was 4% lower in April 2009 compared to the same period a year earlier. Despite the poor economic outlook, it is expected that growth will be maintained in this market sector, primarily because participation and expenditure rates are still quite low.

Poland is a small-medium sized producer of sports and camping goods and faces competitive pressure from low cost suppliers from other parts of the world, particularly from Asia, so the industry will need to invest in technology and otherwise innovate to maintain its position. Poland may benefit from further outsourcing by some of its EU neighbours, but is also equally likely to lose production as a result of lower cost imports.

Opportunities and Threats

+ Leading product opportunities for exporters are fitness equipment and general gymnasium equipment, particularly in the lower to middle market segments.

+ Poland offers many opportunities in this sector for exporters from developing countries. Polish consumers are not especially loyal to their own locally produced products, and the Polish trade is aware of this. Hence they will be receptive to professional approaches from well-run companies abroad.

- Despite the low levels of consumer confidence in the market at present, demand will ultimately grow strongly.

Although opportunities are limited at present, the future prospects are good. Many exporters will also be viewing the opportunities available on the Polish market. Any of these trends can equally be an opportunity for one exporter but a threat to another.

Market Entry

The Polish sporting goods market is still quite fragmented, despite the arrival of a number of large international specialist sports retail chains. Outside of the major cities, Poles are quite price-conscious and traditionally loyal to local family-run sports shops. **The most common means for a developing country exporter to enter the Polish market is via an importer who then distributes onward either to wholesalers or retailers.** Alternatively, there are some importers who simultaneously act as distributors. Traditional agents are not significant in the Polish market. Some wholesalers and importers :

- **Pol Sport** - http://www.pol-sport.com - used to be the government sponsored sporting goods company, but it is now independent and is active in wholesaling, etc.
- **Allto Sport** - http://www.alltosport.com.pl - is a wholesaler of a wide range of sporting goods, including fitness equipment and racket sports.
- **Topsport** - http://www.topsport.pl - located in Lodz, is a wholesaler of sports equipment including snowboards, tennis equipment and bikes.
- **Folc Sport** - http://www.folc.pl - located in Warsaw, is a leading wholesaler of sports equipment and products since 1990. It supplies equipment for rugby, football as well as winter sports.

Approximately 2,000 outlets sell sporting goods in Poland. The leading specialists include Intersport (24 outlets), Go Sport (22 outlets) and Decathlon (www.decathlon.com.pl (7 outlets). There are some regional chains including ABEX, which has eight shops in western Poland, and small local retailers including Budo Sport . There are also a number of single sport specialists. Some sports and camping goods are also sold in hypermarkets, such as Metro, Tesco and Carrefour, and discounters such as Biedronka.

The online channel is growing strongly, driven by the relatively young population who are more comfortable with this medium. Online sporting goods specialist retailers include Sklep Sportowy (www.sportosklep.pl), Asport(www.asport.pl) and Presto (www.sklep-presto.pl).

Imports and Exports

In 2008, Polish imports of sports and camping goods were valued at Euro 164 million, or 36 thousand tonnes. Out of the 27 EU countries, Poland was ranked twelfth largest (in value), and joint eleventh largest in volume (with Denmark), and as such was regarded as a medium-sized country for sports and camping goods imports. Imports exceeded exports by 15% in value, but by almost 75% in volume in 2008. Exports were increasing at a similar rate to imports. The same period has seen a small decrease in sporting goods production, and above average annual increases in consumption.

Consequently, the market was increasingly dominated by imports. Most imports came from China, Germany and France. By source, around 36% of Polish imports, valued at Euro 60 million, came from developing countries in 2008 (60% by volume or 22 thousand tonnes). This proportion was 39% in 2004 (69% by volume). China accounted for 88% of all developing country supplies by value in 2008 (96% by volume), followed by Pakistan (5% by value and 2.2% by volume) and Thailand (3% by value and 0.4% by volume). India, Malaysia, Ukraine and Philippines were also important suppliers. While China's supplies increased by an annual average of 12% by value (13% by volume), supplies from Pakistan decreased by 6% (9% by volume).

Supplies from the other leading developing country suppliers increased, except for India and Philippines. Sports and camping goods exports from Poland were valued at Euro 141 million in 2008, representing 21 thousand tonnes. This was dominated by camping goods and fishing. Between 2004 and 2008, the average annual increase in exports was 12% by value, and 4.6% by volume. There appears to be some re-exporting from the Polish market, as exports were much higher than domestic production. ■

Ring Game

an old fashioned Polish game reintroduced recently

Each team attempts to score 15 points (2-point advantage wins the game). Each team consists of 4 players: 3 attackers allowed to throw the ball through the wholes in the net to the other side and 1 dispatcher staying within the 1.5-meter wide dispatch zone by the net, allowed to serve the ball to the member of his/her own team (the dispatcher must not block any of the holes). A player serves the ball over the net from behind the back line to start the game.

Each team tries to throw the ball through the whole in the net so that the ball falls on the opponent's field. If successful, the team scores 1 point and serves the ball. The ball must hit the ground within the 1.5-wide dispatch zone behind the net but, in such case, only the dispatcher of the opposing team may prevent this. No other player is allowed in the dispatch zone. The players of a team may pass the ball one to another 1-4 times, after which the ball must be passed on to the opponent's field. Otherwise, the opponent scores and takes the right to serve.

The dispatcher manages the game by passing the ball to his/her partners. The dispatcher must not block any of the holes or pass the ball to the other team's field. Once an attacker catches the ball, he/she must not move to another place but can pass the ball to the dispatcher and then move to a favorable position to throw the ball with both hands, in front of one of the holes. Alternatively, the attacker may pass the ball to the other field directly, giving up the exchange with the members of his/her own team. It is important that the attacker throwing the ball must stand with both feet on the ground. The game develops tactical thinking and prepares players for regular volleyball. For this reason, the remaining rules may be set and modified. ■

Catalogues Printing

New WFSGI service helps save costs

The WFSGI is working on finding solutions for its members to reduce costs. The WFSGI has signed an agreement with onison corporation (www.onison.com) to provide a suite of web application services to help the sporting goods industry to slash marketing production cost and to create competitive advantages. Sporting goods manufacturers, importers, and distributors have unique needs to manage print catalogues, marketing collaterals and digital files in a timely and cost effective manner. This partnership will provide the sporting goods industry with a WFSGI branded web suite of applications that helps to slash costs in the production of catalogues and marketing collaterals and to manage digital files.

The catalogue production is based on dynamic template layouts that can be customised for each member. The users can import and merge product images and metadata and produce high resolution pre press pdf files ready for the print shops. This production method is terminating the entire chain of pre press cost and reduces processing time from months to hours. In its agreement, the WFSGI has made the initial setup for the industry. The WFSGI members enjoy a list of benefits starting with no initial investments, no monthly minimum fees, and much more. The partnership with onison will deliver huge competitive advantages to users. With the help of onison's applications, users will be able to get their product information into the market much faster. The underlying applications that enable the rapid catalogue production are in use by over 18'000 clients. If you are a WFSGI member, visit www.onison.com/wfsgi and try the application! ■

Source : WFSGI

Market Evolution

strategies of brands & retailers

NPD Group communicates its analysis of the market evolution and the strategies of brands and retailers using figures coming from its European consumers panel. The NPD Group Panel consists of 300.000 purchases (shoes and apparel) carried out over the two last years from a sample of individuals representing 5 large European countries (France, Italy, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom).

Which future for the retailer brand?

According to Renaud Vaschalde, sports expert at NPD: "In spite of a considerable growth in France, it is not obvious that the retailer brands win the game against the brands on a world level".

The retailer brands in full growth

France is a special country where the sports retailers (shoe and apparel) play a unusual role with 25% of the market in value over 12 months at the end of June 2009. In comparison, if we add the presence of retailers in the 5 large European countries, the whole weight of the retailer brands is only 13% of the market. Over 12 months at the end of June 2009 in France, the 4 biggest retailers carried out a sales turnover for their own brands in growth of 12% compared to the same period the previous year, in a total market going -4%. These "in-house" brands still have a potential as they represent only 37% of the turnover of the 4 larger retailers.

Desire to grow bigger outside

Some retailers try to sell their own brands outside of their own points of sale, either internationally, or on a complementary distribution network - for example a network of mountain shops. Nevertheless, the marketing of the retailers brands is only at the start. The development of the retailer brands remains for the moment subject to the preliminary establishment of shops.

And the establishment of shops in the world is a longer and more expensive process and less flexible than the development of a brand.

International level

Retailer brands have more difficulties to develop on the international level than the sports brands, who have, especially in the developing countries, a bigger value than retailer brands. We forecast a stronger growth in the developing countries for sports brands than for retailer brands. The 2008 annual reports of Nike and Adidas give a growth of their turnover higher than 1 billion dollar, that is to say much more than the growth of any retailer brands in the world.

Development of the offer

Brands progressively develop their product offer. In Europe, sports brands are entering new market segments, like Adidas with the mountaineering shoes and Nike with swimming suits. Even if they need to progress on that level, (ski wear, wind and waterproof jackets, etc), they have improved their offer and cover more sports practice and more seasons, which was before a retailer strength.

A widened target

Historically, brands owe their success to teenagers. Retailer brands relied on the consumers that were not targeted by the sports brands. But over the 5 last years, we can see that brands have invested much on age ranges with buying power and more time, that is to say the 35 years old and more; exactly the age ranges that made the success of the retailers. For the 5 biggest sports brands, the 35 years and more, which counted for 24% of the sales in 2004, represent now 31% of the sales in 2009.

Sports brands bet on distribution channels

Brands develop their own networks. Retailers are strongly supported their mother company. This is why the sports brands invest in their own stores and thus widen their distribution channels. Thus, over 12 months at the end of June 2009, in the 5 large European countries, the own distribution was carrying out a growth of +5% when the rest of the market went the opposite trend (- 5%).

The new trend : Internet

The rise of Internet changes all the deals. Over 12 months at the end of June 2009, Internet sales are growing by +32% in Europe. By pulling the prices of sports brands to the bottom, Internet should narrow the difference between sports brands and retailer brands. Moreover, we see a certain reserve of the consumer to buy a retailer brand on the Web: retailers brands account for only 11% of the sales on Internet in France compared to a 25% on the total market. The promise of the retailer remains the "best price available" .

The price differences remain sizeable. It is interesting to see that in Europe, the variation between the average price of the 10 main brands and that of the 3 main retailers of the market is tightening but remains important. For example, on wind and waterproof jackets and ski jackets, the price of a brand product was 72 Euros on average in 2004, that is to say 90% more expensive than that of a product of a retailer (38 Euros).

In the first half of 2009, the average costs of a brand product in this category dropped to 70 Euros, but still remain 84% more expensive than the retailer product which remains stable over the same period (38 Euros). As for the average costs of sport shoes, it went from 55 Euros for the brands in 2004, that is to say 2,6 times more expensive than the retailer (21Euros), to 49 Euros in the first half of 2009, still twice the price of retailer (24 Euros).

Finally, it seems that the retailer brands in sports blossom within the framework of the European southern cultural model of specialized hypermarkets, very appreciated by the consumer.

But the brands still benefit from a geographical influence on the worldwide market and a model of growth based essentially on the needs of teenagers who give them a more universal competitive advantage for the future. ■

Source : NPD (translated by WFSGI from French version)

Creativity is a Round Process

In a world of fast change and fierce competition, the ability to find new and innovative solutions is necessary for survival. Thinking power and creativity are your primary competitive advantages. Unlocking new ideas and multiple possibilities begin with a "Round Process". Research - Originate- Unite-Nurture -Do It!

Research - To produce creative output, you need creative input! Collecting a variety of information, without worrying how it fits, is the foundation of the research phase.

Look for new ideas in your environment, Seek inspiration in all things, including nature, Commit to continuous learning, developing abilities and talents, enhance your education and Analyse data and historical trends.

Originate - The second step is the most fun, because in this phase, everything is possible. Bring together team members and peers for a short, but lively session of Originating. This process works well with a diverse group, people with very different skills, personality styles and experience. Brainstorm and "what-if", Generate many, many ideas and Use your imagination, think, ponder, daydream.

Unite - As you review the ideas you have generated, you select a few to explore in greater detail. As you embrace these ideas, you unite related concepts; look for connections and ways to build on the ideas of others.- Borrow ideas from others, Invent & innovate and Make decisions.

Nurture - In the next phase, you refine and improve your ideas. By identifying and eliminating obstacles you nurture the best ideas, giving them the chance to blossom and grow. Objectively evaluate an idea, Reject what doesn't work and Simplify the over-complicated.

Do-It - Finally you must commit to a course of action. In the Do-It phase you make the decision to go forward, and never give up. Market your idea, Deal with critics, Survive success and Begin Again!

If you need to solve really important problems, surround yourself with people who are smarter, more successful, and more knowledgeable. This is tough for many small business owners. It is not that we don't know smart people, but admitting we don't know something is scary. Will our customers and employees lose faith in us? Here the advice is to get over the belief. Ask questions, lots of questions, watch others, and learn.

It is much easier to watch someone else run into a wall and learn as they pick up the pieces, then to do it yourself. Bring these people to your brainstorm and planning sessions and watch the quality of the conversation, and ideas generated improve dramatically! ■

Lorraine Ball, Management Expert

Lead Testing

CPSC issues Statement of Policy

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has issued a statement of policy regarding the testing and certification of children's products for compliance with the lead content limits established in the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008. The document addresses several key unresolved issues related to component testing that had been raised in recent months by US importers.

The CPSC determined in August 2009 that certain products or materials inherently do not contain lead or contain lead at levels that do not exceed the CPSIA lead content limits. Some of these products and materials are listed below.

- Wood - Any paint on wood needs to be tested and certified. Paper and similar materials made from wood or other cellulosic fibre, including but not limited to paperboard, linerboard and medium, and coatings on such paper that soak into the paper and cannot be scraped off the surface.
- CMYK process printing inks (excluding spot colours, other inks that are not used in CMYK process, and inks that can be scraped off the surface on which they are used or used in after-treatment applications, including screen prints, transfers, decals or other prints).
- Textiles (excluding after-treatment applications, e.g., screen prints, transfers, decals or other prints) consisting of:

Natural fibres (dyed or undyed), including but not limited to cotton, kapok, flax, linen, jute, ramie, hemp, kenaf, bamboo, coir, sisal, silk, wool (sheep), alpaca, llama, goat (mohair, cashmere), rabbit (angora), camel, horse, yak, vicuna, qiviut and guanaco; Manufactured fibres (dyed or undyed), including but not limited to rayon, azlon, lyocell, acetate, triacetate, rubber, polyester, olefin, nylon, acrylic, modacrylic, aramid and spandex; Other plant-derived and animal-derived materials, including but not limited to animal glue, bee's wax, seeds, nut shells, flowers, bone, sea shell, coral, amber, feathers, fur and untreated leather.

The CPSC notes that some retailers may want manufacturers and importers to test and certify their products but those tests and certificates are not required by the CPSC for the materials or products in the above list. The CPSC will not require testing for lead content of those parts of a children's product that are inaccessible (i.e., parts that cannot be touched by a small child's finger) nor will it require testing of certain components of children's electronic devices. ■

Source : HKTDC

Video Games

Brazil to ban while US makes ratings work

Recently it was reported that following Venezuela's lead in attempting to reduce "violent tendencies" in South American children, Brazilian Sen. Valdir Raupp has authored a bill that would make it a crime to make, import, or distribute "offensive" video games. The goal of the bill is to "curb the manufacture, distribution, importation, distribution, trading, and custody, [and] storage of, the video games that affect the customs, traditions of the people, their worship, creeds, religions and symbols."

Where this ban, like many others, falls short is in assigning blame for societal ills to video games instead of dealing with larger social issues, including a lack of parental oversight. There are, no doubt, influences in Brazil that are different from the US, but video game ratings have proven to be an excellent example of an industry-wide standard that could easily be adopted internationally.

In a recent report, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) praised the video game industry for continuing "to have the strongest self-regulatory code" of all the entertainment sectors. And while there is evidence to support both sides of the argument--that video games do and do not incite negative behavior in children--the ESRB recently released a statement (PDF) providing evidence that the ratings program is a success in the eyes of the FTC.

The FTC said the US video game industry "outpaces" other entertainment sectors in restricting target-marketing of mature-rated products to children, clearly and prominently displaying rating information and restricting children's access to mature-rated products at retail. The report further states that these measures helped to stop 80% of mature-rated game sales to minors. In contrast, the report showed that more than 50% of teen shoppers were able to purchase R-rated and unrated DVDs. ■

10 Sports Gear Inventions

technological advances that have changed sports

Sportspeople have been trying to get an edge since the 3rd century BC, when barefoot Olympic runners switched to sandals. For all the cost and technology of today's gear, most of it is incremental – helping us run a bit faster or hit the ball a bit further. So hats off to these inventors, who transformed major sports.

The vulcanised rubber tennis ball Charles Goodyear spent nearly 20 years trying to create a rubber that didn't stink, melt or crack. Having been imprisoned for debt, nearly killed himself with nitric acid and worn a foul-smelling rubber suit for promotional purposes, he finally chanced upon his dream of "vulcanised" rubber in 1843. Once rubber balls could be pumped up hard enough to bounce properly off grass, lawn tennis – and modern football followed.

The dartboard For centuries boards were barrel tops or slices of tree with bull's eyes marked. Then, in 1896, Bury showman Brian Gamlin devised a 1-20 board, with the higher scoring segments separated by lower ones to make the game harder. His layout is one of the best of the myriad possible combinations. But even that wasn't as clever as the slogan he used to draw punters to his fairground stall: "No skill required".

The lawn mower Before the lawn mower, all sports fields had to be grazed messily by sheep, or cut by men with scythes while the dew was still on the grass. That was until 1830 when West Country engineer Edwin Beard Budding adapted wool trimming technology to "crop or shear the vegetable surface of lawns". Once anyone with a few quid could have a reliable playing surface, the way was open for new games such as croquet and tennis.

Longitudinal socks Now known as cricket pads. "Long" Jack Robinson of Surrey first saved his shins with a wooden pair in 1800, but it took vulcanised rubber and batsman Nicholas "Felix" Wanostrocht to make them acceptable. Felix's enthusiasm for leg protection in the 1840s was no surprise given that Kent team-mate Alfred Mynn was so badly injured at the wicket that he almost lost his leg. Footballers adopted shin guards from 1874.

The Haskell golf ball Bouncing a ball of rubber bands paid off for Ohio businessman Coburn Haskell in 1899. He found that such a ball, coated with traditional latex or gutta percha, had more spin and "feel" and flew 25 metres further than existing "gutty" balls. With bumps (which later became dimples) to reduce their swerve, Haskell's "bounding billies" won Alexander Herd the 1902 Open, ushering in more challenging courses and more aggressive play.

The rubber-faced table tennis bat Table tennis would have remained a harmless pat-a-cake had it not been for London sporting goods manufacturer Frank Bryan. James Gibb's introduction of the celluloid ball helped, but it was Bryan's 1901 rubber-faced Atropos bat ("A wonderful bat for screwing") that made it a genuine athletic sport. In fact the spin became so unplayable on serve that since the 30s the ball has had to be tossed up from the palm.

The derailleur gear Two was the full range of gears available to racing cyclists before Tullio Campagnolo, competing in the 1927 Gran Premio della Vittoria, found himself on the snowy Croce d'Aune pass in the Dolomites, trying to disengage his back wheel and turn it round to employ the other gear for the descent. Tullio's moment of realisation led to the quick-release hub and, in 1937, to the first rod-operated derailleur, as used by Fausto Coppi, above.

The racing shell His rivals cried "foul", but it was Tyneside's Harry Clasper who put together the first modern rowing boat. Clasper combined a narrow lightweight hull with cross-braced outriggers so that the crew, now seated in line, could get the same leverage as on a wider craft. By replacing tubs with tubes, Harry and his family won the 1845 national rowing championships and he built his first eight-man "Clasper" three years later.

The rounded cue tip Before Captain Francois Mingaud invented the rounded cue tip in 1807, a push and prod was as sophisticated as a billiards shot could be. Mingaud's tip opened up a whole new level of skill, allowing a ball to be spun back. Eventually he had 40 shots in his locker, including glancing blows and raised cue shots. Pros such as Jack Carr made a living selling special "twisting chalk", until it was discovered that any old chalk would do.

Shorts The 1947 US and Wimbledon champion Jack Kramer saw artificial surfaces, metal rackets and cortisone injections – but rated shorts, which he was the first to wear on Centre Court, the greatest innovation of all. Credit goes to Loretto School in Musselburgh, where shorts replaced knickerbockers in football in the 1890s, and where the boys played golf without coats and pioneered 'anatomical' – left and right-fitting - boots.■

Source : The Observer Sports Monthly, UK

Drawback Schedule (Chapter 95) (Drawback Rates Schedule for 2008-2009) to be continued for 2009-10 until revised schedule is notified

The Notification No 103/2008 - Custom (N.T) dated 29th August, 2008 amended vide Notification No. 175/2009-Custom (N.T) dated 27th November 2009, the drawback rates pertaining to Sports Goods & Toys are given in the said notification and accordingly the new entry of Rounder's bat wood HS No. 95066993 has been added in the notification and thus, Drawback Schedule for 2008-09, amended shall continue to be in operation until a revised schedule is notified. The drawback rates and caps on other items remain unchanged.

Copy of Ministry of Finance Notification No. 175/2009 - Customs (N.T.), dated 27th November, 2009

G.S.R. 850 (E). - In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 75 of the Customs Act, 1962 (52 of 1962), sub-section (2) of section 37 of the Central Excise Act, 1944 (1 of 1944), and section 93A and sub-section (2) of section 94 of the Finance Act, 1994 (32 of 1994), and in pursuance of rules 3 and 4 of the Customs, Central Excise Duties and Service Tax Drawback Rules, 1995, the Central Government, hereby makes the following amendments in the notification of the Government of India in the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue), No.103/2008-Customs (N.T.), dated the 29th August, 2008 published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i) vide number G.S.R. 627 (E) dated the 29th August, 2008, namely:-

In the said notification, -

(a) under the heading 'Notes and Conditions', after serial number (19), the following shall be inserted, namely, -

"(20) The drawback rates prescribed in the said Schedule against tariff items 711301 and 711302 shall apply only to goods exported by airfreight, post parcel or authorised courier through the Custom Houses as specified in para 4A.12 of the Hand Book of Procedures (Vol. I), 2009-14 published vide Public Notice No.1/2009-14 dated 27th August, 2009 of the Government of India in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, after examination by the Customs Appraiser/ Superintendent (Jewellery Expert) to ascertain the quality of gold/silver and the quantity of net content of gold/silver in the gold/silver jewellery. The Free on Board (FOB) value of any consignment through authorised courier shall not exceed rupees twenty lakhs.

(21) The drawback rates prescribed in the said Schedule against tariff items 711301 and 711302 shall not be applicable to goods manufactured or exported in discharge of export obligation against any scheme of the relevant Export and Import Policy or the Foreign Trade Policy of the Government of India which provides for duty free import/replenishment/ procurement from local sources of gold/silver."

in the Schedule, -

"(vi) in Chapter 95, after tariff item 95069962 and the entries relating thereto, the following tariff item and the entries shall be inserted, namely:-

			A		B	
Tariff Item	Description of goods	Unit	Drawback when Cenvat facility has not been availed		Drawback when Cenvat facility has been availed	
			Drawback Rate	Drawback cap per unit in Rs.	Drawback Rate	Drawback cap per unit in Rs.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
95069963	Rounder's bat, Wooden	piece	11%	44	11%	44"

(Rajesh Kumar Agarwal)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

Note : The principal notification No.103/2008-Customs (N.T.) was published in the Gazette of India, vide number G.S.R. 627(E), published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i) dated the 29th August, 2008 and was last amended by notification No.2/2009-Cus (N.T.) dated 2nd January, 2009, vide number G.S.R. 8 (E) dated 2nd January, 2009. [F. No. 609/67/2009-DBK]

Addition of Ports in Handbook of Procedures

Copy of Public Notice No. 25/2009-2014, dated 9th December, 2009

In exercise of the powers conferred under Paragraph 2.4 of the Foreign Trade Policy, 2009-14, the Director General of Foreign Trade hereby makes the following amendments in Handbook of Procedures, vol. 1:

1. The following ports shall be added at the end of Seaports/ Airports/ ICDs/ LCSs, as the case may be, in paragraph 4.19 related to "Port of Registration".

Seaports : Bedi (including Rozi-Jamnagar), Dharamtar, Muldwarka, Porbander, Vadinar.

Airports : Lucknow (Amausi), Rajasansi (Amritsar)

ICDs : Babarpur, Bhadohi, Durgapur (Export Promotion Industrial Park), Kundli, Loni (District Ghaziabad), Mandideep (District Raisen), Raipur, Talegoan (District Pune), Dhannad Rau (District Indore), Kheda (Pithampur, District Dhar), Patli (Gurgaon).

LCS : Agartala, Amritsar Rail Cargo, Nepalganj Road, Sutarkhandi.

This issues in public interest.

Sd/-

(**R.S. Gujral**)

(Issued from File No. 01/94/180/946/AM10/PC. 4). DGFT and Ex-Officio Additional Secretary to the Government of India)

Extension of time for filing of applications for fixation of Brand Rate of Duty Drawback for High Speed Diesel supplied by domestic oil companies to EOUs

Copy of Circular No. 20/2009-14, dated 1st January, 2010

Reference is invited to this office letter Pt. F. No. Misc-12/AM-05/DBK Cell dated 5th March 2008 addressed to DC, NSEZ on the above subject wherein it was inter-alia clarified that no new applications for fixation of Brand Rate of Duty Drawback for HSD should be entertained and applications already filed and pending in the office of DC, NSEZ as on 5th March 2008 should be disposed off as per the directions given in the aforesaid letter (copy enclosed).

Pursuant to the above, representations have been received from FIEO and individual firms pleading for equality of opportunity and seeking extension of time for filing applications for fixation of Brand Rate of Duty Drawback for HSD on the grounds that the criteria for fixing Brand Rate of Duty Drawback was communicated on 5.3.08 and the same date was also fixed as the cut off date for filing of applications and this date was not announced either by a Circular or Public Notice for information of the exporting community.

The matter has been reconsidered and it has been decided to give one final opportunity, of three months time from the date of issue of this Circular, to enable the trade to file their applications, for fixation of Brand Rate of Duty Drawback for HSD supplied by domestic oil companies to EOU's prior to 17.8.05. The finalization of such applications shall however be subject to fulfillment of the prescribed conditions and careful scrutiny of all documents submitted in support of the claim so that no fraudulent applications are approved. This may please be brought to the notice of all concerned.

This issues with the approval of Director General of Foreign Trade.

Sd/-

(**Akash Taneja**)

(Issued from File No. Misc.34/AM-09/DBK Cell) Jt. Director General of Foreign Trade

Editor: Tarun Dewan

XSPORTS is the newsletter of the **Sports Goods Export Promotion Council**

1-E / 6, Swami Ram Tirth Nagar, New Delhi -55; Tel: (+91) 11 23525695, 23516183; Fax: (+91) 11 23632147

E-mail: mail@sgepc.in ; Website: www.sportsgoodsindia.org

***Designed and produced by* Establishments Promotion Bureau** *B-14, Aditi Apartments, 16-A I.P. Extension, Delhi - 92*

Tel: 22246094, 64631211; Telefax: 22733605; E-mail: mail@epbureau.com