

# JACKET REQUIRED

The latest edition of London's premium menswear show for those in the know brought together the great and the greater of the industry at the Old Truman Brewery. Tom Bottomley went along to get the industry word from some select exhibitors at this season's Jacket Required.



## ADAM SCOTLAND

Sales manager, Out of Step Distribution (showing The Hundreds, Brixton, Huf and Rebel8)

### Why the much larger space at the show this time?

We wanted to stretch our legs and present more of the collections. It means people can come to the show and step into "our world"; a mix of brands mainly from the West Coast in the US. Huf is probably our most hotly desired brand at the moment, particularly its graphic prints, T-shirts, headwear and

accessories. The footwear is relatively new, but it's something we're seeing increasing success with. It has a base in skateboarding but a more premium angle. Brixton is probably our most mature label, with less reliance on graphics and some great hats.

### What's new from The Hundreds?

The "Adam bomb" and slant logos are still core for the brand, but we wanted to highlight other elements of the line that you sometimes don't always get to see properly, such as the outerwear and shirting. There's a lot more to the label than people realise. We've grown up with our customers, because we've been selling The Hundreds for around seven years. The brand, which is from Los Angeles, is 11 years old, and we feel the time is right to open a London shop soon.



## CHRIS DENT

Agent, Red Wing Shoes (also showing Upstate Stock and G.R.P knitwear)

### Do you now have more s/s options?

We've introduced suede and leather with a lighter-weight sole unit. For s/s 16, there are two new patterns, in three colours, on US-made stitch-downs - still 100 per cent authentic and made in the Red Wing factory in Red Wing, Minnesota. They're based on the fact that we needed to do something more for our retailers for s/s, and they've been well received. The retail prices are also

very good - £189 for the shoes and £199 for the chukka boots. The "rough 'n' tough" leather is proving particularly popular.

### Is the footwear accessories side growing?

Over the last 18 months, the accessories have gone through the roof. We've sold items such as leather conditioners, mink oil, creams and laces individually but, at the back end of last year, we introduced care kits. They retail together in a box with a brush and buffing cloth for £30, which is great value, and we did 1,000 boxes in the first three months. We're expecting a busy Christmas with them.



## CRAIG FORD,

Co-founder of Jacket Required and founder of a number of names\* (showing brands including Bedwin & The Heartbreakers, Human Made, Billionaire Boys Club, TSPT, Cav Empt, Ebbets Field Flannels, Kinfolk, BrandBlack and Native Shoes)

### Why have you decided to reintroduce Native Shoes into the UK market?

It was in the market a few years ago, but it didn't work out as it was over-distributed. It sold into stores really well, but it went too

wide, too fast. So it's been out of the UK market for a few years and we're working with the brand to relaunch it. It's from Canada, and has two main footwear programmes: a one-piece shoe with a PU-injected sole unit, starting at £60 retail; and a new running shoe silhouette, which retails at £70. I put them into a number of names\* on Upper James Street in Soho, and they sold out really quickly.

### What else is brand new to your wholesale portfolio?

We've brought in Kinfolk, which is a Brooklyn brand. It's classic American style mixed with Japanese influences. It has a great set-up in Brooklyn, with a retail store, nightclub, bar and restaurant - all in one big old warehouse unit. They've never sold outside of America and Japan, until now. I currently have it in my store as an exclusive for a year, but we're launching in to the market at wholesale for s/s 16. There has been a lot of interest.



## HANNAH ROBINSON,

Brand manager, Spring Court UK

### Is the sales momentum growing for Spring Court in the UK?

We've had a really great selling season. S/s 16 signals the 80th anniversary of the brand, and we've got lots of old accounts back on board, as well as new accounts. The collection has been really well received at Jacket Required. Day one was fantastic, with lots of buyers and orders, too.

### Has the brand gone back to its roots?

It has in a big way. We've cleaned up the logo, and the whole shoe has been stripped back to how it once was. It's been brought back in-house by the family of the original founder of the business in Paris, whereas previously it had been with different licence holders for a few years. The brand message and product had been distorted, but we're back on track. It's the right time for this kind of shoe, and we'll be setting up a proper UK office soon.



## IAN GARSIDE

WG Flagship Distribution (showing brands including Nowgone Pioneers, Cockpit USA, Richard James accessories, Pointer footwear, Eyvan 7285 eyewear, Porter-Yoshida, About underwear and Japan Best)

### What's the newest brand to your portfolio?

I've just taken on Cockpit USA - formerly Avirex. It's relatively expensive product, all made in America in the original Avirex factory. It's a purest product, with some fashion pieces. All the classic military

outerwear pieces are in there, such as the G-1 and A-2 leather flying jackets, with or without patches, and in different leathers and treatments. There's also a pea coat and a super-lightweight ripstop nylon M-65 field jacket with a camo lining.

### What has been strong for you?

Pointer has been really good. We've picked up loads of new accounts at Jacket Required, as well as getting accounts back that we'd previously lost. Pointer has got the product right, and I think people are looking for a cleaner hybrid sneaker/shoe. It's quite simple, but there's a lot of interesting detail, and the price points and margins are appealing. Porter-Yoshida, a high-end specialist line of bags from Japan, has also opened some great accounts for us, such as End, Oki-Ni, Liberty, Selfridges and Mr Porter.



## NEIL SMITH,

Sales director, Björn Borg

### We all know the underwear, but tell us about the sportswear line?

It's our second season with the technical sportswear, but initial distribution was focused on the sports market, such as specialist tennis stores. It's now crossing over into fashion. There's a big sports and tennis heritage thing coming back, but we're not going with a heritage look or type of product, though we are using green trims as a nod to lawn tennis. There are lads

now wanting our T-shirts with taped seams, and workout poly tees - wearing them with jogging bottoms. We've seen it in womenswear for a while, with girls wearing technical running tights as everyday items, but now we're seeing lads picking up performance products, too, to wear every day. We're seeing real interest, particularly in the North West, for our sportswear apparel. One of the first accounts to take it on was Giancarlo Ricci in Liverpool.

### Is the Borg name carrying weight with this type of product?

I think so. There are more people in the UK who probably associate Björn Borg more with sportswear than they do underwear, though underwear is obviously our core product - now evolving into more base-layer type products as well. On the sportswear side, there are also polo shirts and track tops, and we now have five British tennis players wearing our "match-day" and "warm-up" products. We also have a great technical polyester hoody with hydro-pro moisture management properties that is set to retail at £85. It's a good piece to wear down the pub as well...



## SIMON PURCHASE,

Sales director, Supremebeing

### What spurred the recent opening of the new Supremebeing standalone shop on London's Marshall Street?

We had our showroom on Shoreditch High Street, but we really felt the best way to help to expose and build the brand was to open a flagship shop in the UK. As a brand you need to control your own destiny. We chose the spot on Marshall Street, in the Carnaby area, because there's a lot of creativity around there, but also a commercial edge.

### Is the offer still graphics-led?

As a brand, we started out in 1999 doing graphic-printed T-shirts, and that's still very important. We have an area downstairs in the shop where we're now doing our Artist Series of T-shirts. Every couple of months we're getting a new artist in to show some artwork, and we're supporting that with product as well. In terms of wholesale, Urban Outfitters, Asos and John Lewis are our main retail touch-points. A lot of it is graphics based, whether it's prints on T-shirts, wind-breaker jackets or shirting. There's a lot of bold colour and panelling.



## MATHEW HUGHES,

Sales manager, Two Agent See International Ltd (showing Ellesse)

### Is the Ellesse brand undergoing a resurgence?

Yes it seems to be that way. I've been writing orders at the show, and I've not done that for a few years. We've seen a really positive reaction from premium menswear accounts such as Philip Browne in Norwich. Ellesse is one of its top-selling brands at the moment. It's really motoring the "heritage" line to a younger demographic, but you've also

got guys like me who remember it from the first time round and are buying into it again. Price point is key, with Ellesse logo T-shirts retailing at £20, crew-neck sweats at £40, and hoodies at £45. The lads are liking the "suits" - matching grey marl tops and bottoms in particular, or tees and shorts. There's definitely a trend there. They like to wear a brand but, at the tender age of 16 and 17, they haven't got that much disposable cash. So they are getting the brand, and getting that look, but at a commercial price point.

### Is there also a higher tier now?

The brand is quite a big entity, and will tier the label in different ways. There's a re-issue package launching - which is more archive-led. The Ellesse Italia line is coming out for s/s 16, and will be pushed into more premium independents - it's a bit sharper and neater. It will prolong the longevity to make sure it doesn't burn out in just a few seasons. There's also footwear.