

Change or Fall Behind Is Message from Speakers at the NSGA Management Conference and Team Dealer Summit

Date: 05-20-2008 05:01 PM CET

Category: [Associations & Organizations](#)

Press release from: [National Sporting Goods Association](#)

MOUNT PROSPECT, IL – While the speakers, panelists and workshop leaders covered a broad range of topics, one message was clear. The sporting goods industry is in a time of change, and those who resist that change are likely victims.

And the more than 400 attendees picked up on that message.

“It was great to share thoughts and perspectives in a time of intense change,” said Nissan Joseph, president and COO of Hibbett Sports. “The format of the NSGA conference definitely creates an atmosphere of sharing and solving of key issues facing the industry.

“While things around us are constantly changing, it’s great to see that the NSGA conference continues to add significant value for its members,” Joseph said. “The quality of speakers and the camaraderie of participants keep one looking forward to this event.”

“The message is clear out there,” said Steve Carloni, vice president of Kesslers Sport Shop of Ohio, a first-time Conference/Summit attendee. “If there is one word you can take away from this, it is change, and to accept change. That can’t be any more impactful than in the IT area and the tools that area has to offer.”

Even the number of networking opportunities – greatly appreciated by attendees – changed at this year’s Conference/Summit. More than 60 attendees took part in a first-ever networking lunch that was moderated by Mickey Newsome, chairman & CEO of Hibbett Sports. The 90-minute, unstructured networking lunch allowed participants to address issues of their choice.

“We’ll do this again in San Antonio next year and make it even more meaningful for the attendees,” said NSGA President & CEO Matt Carlson. “The feedback from those who took part will help us for next year.”

“The NSGA Management Conference is great for networking with the most senior executives in our industry,” said Mitchell Modell, president of Modell’s Sporting Goods.

“This was, by far, the best event since I’ve been on the Board of Directors,” said NSGA Chairman Bruce Ullery, president & CEO of MC Sports. “The speakers were on target, and the retailing workshop allowed us to cover a lot of ground in areas about which all of us should be aware.”

In his final official duties as Chairman, Ullery appointed Carlson President & CEO of the Association, succeeding Jim Faltinek, who retired earlier this month. Ullery also announced the new officers and director, whose terms start on June 1.

The new Chairman will be Bob Dickman, general manager of the Sport Supply Group Team Dealer Division. Treasurer and Chairman-Elect is Jeff Rosenthal, VP and general merchandising manager of Hibbett Sports. Ullery will serve as Past Chairman. Officers’ terms are two years.

John McArthur, president of Johnny Mac’s Sporting Goods, was elected to a three-year term as an at-large Director, replacing Ron Kruse, whose term as Past Chairman expires at the end of May.

In 2009, the Conference/Summit will be held May 3-6 at the Westin La Cantera Resort in San Antonio, Texas, a site that has proven popular with attendees in the past.

The Management Conference title sponsor was the GE Money Sport Finance Program. The Team Dealer Summit was co-sponsored by Mueller Sports Medicine, the Russell Athletic Group (Russell Athletic, Spalding, Bike Athletic, Moving Comfort, Huffy Sports, American Athletic, Inc., and Brooks Sports, Inc.), SportsOneSource and the NSGA Team Dealer Division.

HALL OF FAMERS, GOLF WINNERS, SILENT AUCTION AND MORE FEEDBACK

Highlights of the Conference/Summit included the annual Sporting Goods Industry Hall of Fame induction, which honored four persons this year at the annual Tuesday night dinner. Ron Kruse, Hayden's Athletic; Augie Nieto, Life Fitness and Octane Fitness; the late Kihachiro Onitsuka, Asics Corp.; and the late Randy Renfrow, Fitness Resource, were inducted into the Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame awards were co-sponsored by ISPO (Messe Munchen GmbH), Mizuno USA, New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc., and W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc.

The annual golf tournament, sponsored by SportsOneSource, attracted 160 players on the Lookout Mountain and Moon Valley courses for a scramble-format tournament.

The team of John Bals, Bob McDavid, Bram Krieger and Barry Gauthier won with a low score of 58. Paul Albrecht, Phil Rosati, Dick Cann and Ellen Rosati finished second, and Robert Frennea, Geordie Shaw, Margaret Bowman and Kevin McNabb finished third. All received prizes.

Longest drive prizes were presented to Ed Schopp and Brett Markwort. Closest to the pin winners were Doug Gordon and Randy Ruch.

Conference/Summit keynote speaker Pat Summit, University of Tennessee Lady Vols basketball coach, autographed a Wilson basketball, which became the prize in a special charity silent auction to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association's (MDA's) effort to find a cure for ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease.

Hall of Famer Augie Nieto was diagnosed with ALS three years ago and has been an active force in raising funds to find the cause of this incurable disease.

Randy Hooper, President of Sports Distributors of Canada, Ltd. submitted the winning bid of \$700 for the signed ball, and NSGA matched that amount, bringing the total sent to MDA to \$1,400 on behalf of Randy Hooper and the members of NSGA.

MORE COMMENTS FROM ATTENDEES

Glenn Lyon, Finish Line: "I liked all that I saw. The NSGA team was great!"

Randy Ruch, Schuylkill Valley Sports: "I think this is the best overall conference I have attended in 29 years."

Mark Johnston, Hayden's Athletic: "This is my fifth Conference, and I feel I took home as much information at this Conference as I did at my first. The speakers continue to be outstanding."

Ray Fowle, M.J. Soffe & Intensity Athletic: "Overall, it's the best networking I do all year. This is a great industry, with a lot of talent. It's good to hear the speakers and get re-energized."

Don McClelland, Sportline: "Great networking opportunities. You have fine-tuned it to perfection."

Sam Poser, Sterne Agee, first time attendee: "Great speakers overall, especially considering the market climate."

Doug Lindstrom, NPD Group, first time attendee: "It was a great opportunity to network and learn, both in and out of the sessions; a great event."

Don Leonard, Crown Sport Sales: “Great Conference. Jay Goltz spoke to everyone on the ground level. He spoke about real solutions to real issues in business. I’ll be back!”

Sponsors: Accusplit, Inc.; adidas America; ADT Security Services, Inc.; Cruzin’ Cooler LLC; DeLong Sportswear; Emery & Webb; Edifice Information Management; Elavon; Formula4Media LLC; Gatorade; GE Money Sport Finance Program; Glenview Health Systems; Holloway Sportswear, Inc.; IBM; Messe Munchen GmbH (ISPO); Mizuno USA, Inc.; M.J. Soffe, Inc.; Mueller Sports Medicine, Inc.; New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc.; The NPD Group; NSGA Team Dealer Division; PartnerShip; Russell Athletic Group (Russell Athletic, Spalding, Bike Athletic, Moving Comfort, Huffy Sports, American Athletic, Inc., and Brooks Sports, Inc.); Schutt Sports; SportsOneSource; Wild Sales LLC/Tailgate Toss; Wilson Sporting Goods Co.; and W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc.

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About NSGA:

NSGA, which has served the sporting goods industry since 1929, organizes and hosts the annual NSGA Management Conference & Team Dealer Summit, the sporting goods industry’s premier educational and networking event (Next: May 3-6, 2009, at the Westin La Cantera Resort in San Antonio, Texas).

For more information on NSGA member services, visit the Association home page (www.nsga.org); call Rhonda Onuszko at NSGA, (847) 296-6742, Ext. 131; e-mail: ronuszko@nsga.org; or fax (847) 391-9827.

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