

Outdoor Industry Weekly Brief

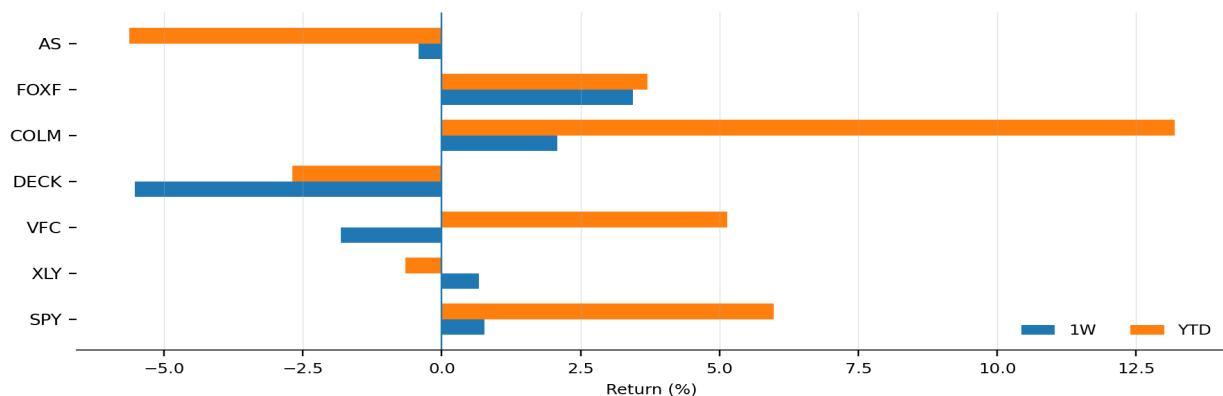
May 4, 2026 | Week 18 (Apr 27 - May 3, 2026)

Weekly digest of key signals for outdoor-industry professionals (product -> trade/policy -> companies/exec -> earnings/macro).

Key signals (2-3 min read)

Signal	Brief	Source
Running	Brooks delivered its strongest quarter, with sales up 23%, North America up 20%, EMEA up 30% currency-neutral and China up 136%. Performance running remains one of the industry's cleanest growth pockets.	Brooks Running (May 1, 2026)
Earnings	Outdoor-linked results split between disciplined operators and pressured portfolios: Columbia raised guidance, Thule expanded EBIT margin, while Newell Outdoor and Rocky Brands showed tariff and demand pressure.	Columbia; Thule; Newell; Rocky Brands
Sustainability	Equip/Rab achieved B Corp certification, On published impact progress, and OIA reported 500+ sustainability participants from 118 companies - compliance is becoming operating infrastructure.	Equip; On; OIA Sustainability
Trade shows	European Outdoor Week issued its final call with 350+ exhibiting brands, while Switchback and Outdoor Retailer continue to rebuild event formats around retail execution and industry engagement.	EOG; Switchback; Outdoor Retailer

Market - snapshot (weekly + YTD; close May 1, 2026)



Asset	Close	1W	YTD
AS (Amer Sports)	35.25	-0.42%	-5.63%
FOXF (Fox Factory)	17.74	+3.44%	+3.70%
COLM (Columbia)	62.35	+2.08%	+13.19%
DECK (Deckers)	100.88	-5.52%	-2.69%
VFC (VF Corp)	19.01	-1.81%	+5.14%
XLY (Cons. Disc.)	118.63	+0.67%	-0.66%
SPY (S&P 500)	720.65	+0.77%	+5.97%

Note: 1W = close 2026-04-25 -> 2026-05-01; YTD = close 2025-12-31 -> 2026-05-01. Market data: price aggregation. Returns: Artiga calculations.

Section summary

Week 18 (Apr 27 - May 3, 2026) - Curation: Artiga Partners

Product & Innovation

Brooks - running platform keeps compounding. The brand reported 23% Q1 sales growth, with strength across Glycerin, Adrenaline GTS, Hyperion Elite, Cascadia Elite and Glycerin Flex. Apparel rose 33%, showing that technical running can still extend beyond footwear when the performance proposition is clear.

Source: Brooks Running Q1 2026 update.

ECCO / Spinnova - protein-based fiber shoe. The limited-edition BIOM 720 uses a protein-based fiber made from leather-production by-products. It is still a narrow launch, but strategically relevant because it tests whether waste streams can become visible performance-material stories inside footwear.

Source: Spinnova / ECCO launch release, Apr 29, 2026.

POC - downhill racing as protection lab. POC joined Norco adidas Race Division as protection, eyewear and apparel partner. The deal puts helmets, body armor and riding apparel back into a high-speed validation environment where credibility, athlete feedback and product storytelling overlap.

Source: POC partnership release, Apr 30, 2026.

Trade & Ecosystem

European Outdoor Week - final call before launch. The first EOW in Riva del Garda is now positioned as an integrated business platform: Outdoor Impact Summit, OUTDOOR trade platform, Activation Days, awards, innovation and media components. Organizers report more than 350 exhibiting brands.

Source: European Outdoor Group EOW update, May 1, 2026.

Switchback Spring - retail relevance and participation data. The June New Orleans program adds public lands perspectives, an adaptive mountain bike film screening and the debut of OIA's 2026 Participation Report. The format is designed less as a stand-alone buying show and more as a practical retail-and-category forum.

Source: Switchback Spring announcement, Apr 29, 2026.

Outdoor Retailer - Minneapolis reset gains leadership. Outdoor Retailer appointed Matthew Mathiasen as group show director ahead of its Aug. 19-21 Minneapolis debut. The appointment matters because OR is trying to rebuild credibility around timing, location, buyer value and community programming.

Source: Outdoor Retailer / OIA member release, Apr 30, 2026.

Companies & Executives

Columbia Sportswear - better outlook, still uneven demand. Q1 net sales were USD 779.0m, relatively flat year over year, while operating income fell 10%. Management raised full-year guidance after better-than-expected early Spring shipments and a less severe tariff outlook, but the U.S. wholesale recovery remains a second-half question.

Source: Columbia Sportswear Q1 2026 results.

KMD Brands - governance reset continues. Philip Bowman was elected chair after David Kirk stepped down. KMD links the transition to its Next Level turnaround plan, refreshed management team and need for sharper execution across Kathmandu, Rip Curl and Oboz.

Source: KMD Brands chair transition announcement, May 1, 2026.

Snow Peak - U.S. community retail expands. The new Seattle store and community hub in Fremont is Snow Peak's fourth North American location and its first new U.S. retail store since Soho in 2014. The read-through is selective, experience-led retail rather than broad store-count expansion.

Source: Snow Peak / Outdoor Industry Association release, May 1, 2026.

Earnings, Economy & Markets

Brooks Running. Q1 sales rose 23%, with 20% growth in North America, 30% currency-neutral growth in EMEA and 136% growth in China. The company called it the strongest quarter in brand history, supported by performance footwear, trail and apparel.

Source: Brooks Running Q1 2026 update.

Thule Group. Net sales were SEK 2,573m, down 3.4% reported but up 3.9% organically. Operating profit improved to SEK 424m and EBIT margin rose to 16.5%, showing the value of category focus and cost discipline in a still-challenging market.

Source: Thule Q1 2026 interim report.

Newell Brands - Outdoor & Recreation. Segment sales fell to USD 175m from USD 182m, with core sales down 5.7%. Operating loss widened to USD 7m, reinforcing the pressure on broad outdoor portfolios when demand softens and brand mix is uneven.

Source: Newell Brands Q1 2026 results.

RevolutionRace. Q3 net sales were SEK 487m, essentially flat reported but up 5% in local currencies; EBIT rose 31% to SEK 105m and gross margin reached 71.0%. The result shows DTC margin resilience, even without strong reported top-line growth.

Source: RevolutionRace Q3 2025/26 report.

Rocky Brands. Net sales increased 9.1% to USD 124.4m, but gross margin fell to 36.5% from 41.2% as tariff-related costs reached about USD 7.1m. Xtratuf and Muck Boot growth is positive, but sourcing variance remains the more important signal.

Source: Rocky Brands Q1 2026 results.

Macro and markets. Consumer confidence edged up to 92.8 in April, while BEA reported March PCE prices up 0.7% and core PCE up 0.3%. In the Artiga watchlist, Columbia gained 2.08% for the week, while Deckers fell 5.52%.

Source: Conference Board; BEA; market price aggregation.

Next dates to watch

Date	Item
May 8-10, 2026	Snow Peak Seattle grand opening weekend.
May 14-19, 2026	European Outdoor Week - Outdoor Impact Summit + OUTDOOR trade platform, Riva del Garda.
May 28, 2026	BEA Personal Income and Outlays - April PCE release.
Jun 16-18, 2026	Switchback Spring - New Orleans, LA.
Aug 19-21, 2026	Outdoor Retailer - Minneapolis debut.

Sources consulted (selection)

Brooks Running | Columbia Sportswear | Thule Group | Newell Brands | RevolutionRace | Rocky Brands | Garmin | KMD Brands | Snow Peak | POC | Spinnova / ECCO | Equip Outdoor Technologies | On | Outdoor Industry Association Sustainability | European Outdoor Group | Switchback | Outdoor Retailer | Conference Board | BEA | ISM | market price aggregation