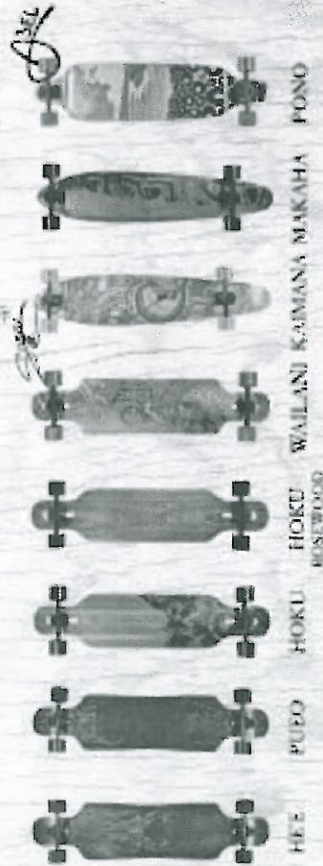


JUCKER HAWAII



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1. CONSTRUCTIONS

Technical advancements are separating the real from the fake. To a point where today's longboards are an altogether different beast. New constructions aim to make boards lighter, stiffer, or more flexible. "Probably one of the disciplines that has the biggest change is freestyle, the boards used three years ago are totally different compared with the boards used at this moment. Flexible boards are used most of the time for carving or dancing," said Pablo Rivera, Communication Events at HLC (Long Island, YGM, Aloha, etc.). For more flex, Origin Distribution (DB Longboards) is seeing "huge success" with the DB CoreFlex Compound, said Italian Pauli.

"Designed for freestyle riding and fluid carving, the Compound utilizes a chambered bamboo core sandwiched between fibreglass and high density material to provide the perfect flex pattern," Deb at Moonshine MFG is proud of innovations such as "vertically laminated wood cores, full urethane side walls and truck mounts, precision machined truck mounts and a full glass wrap that makes our boards waterproof and sealed from the elements. For added speed, Dusters is introducing 'the new Keen downhill in a shape with W concave and V-Ply core for a stiff, fast and stable ride. With attention to the design and details, this board features Metallic Gold Swirl wheels, Metallic Gold graphics and amazing looking wheel wells showing through the vertical ply core."

2. MATERIALS

Beyond Canadian maple and bamboo, brands are exploring new materials for added performance. Shane Maloney at Madrid said: "Our downhill team is currently riding our **tormica/maple combo lamination**,

designed to maximize torsional strength and decrease road vibrations at high-speed. We are continuing to use combinations of maple, birch, and bamboo to create boards with the perfect amount of flex for carving and cruising." Pogo in Germany are drawing on snowboard tech for that extra edge. "For the Pogo Caracal trick-ready freeride board we developed an ultralight construction. It's a featherlight wood core with all around urethane protection, sandwiched by two layers of carbon. A titanium stringer and a special rubber frame from snowboard technology provide an ultrafast pop and eliminate any vibration." New technologies also increase the board's style factor, explained Chris Brunstetter at Gold Coast. "We are using a new photoemissive ink in a new drop-through called The Pluton. The board's graphic changes in sunlight, which is super cool and not something we've seen in the category before." D-Street's Brand Manager, Karl Martinez sings from the same hymn sheet. "We will continue to use alternatives to Maple for our face veneers, our current line of Cherry, Rosewood and Walnut skins not only look fantastic but give the retailer a new story."

"Our German company is now also working with local manufacturers and we will be releasing smaller series of decks from local factories. Soon we will release a dancer 100% made in Germany."

Mike Jucker Co-Founder /
Brand Manager at Jucker Hawaii

"Once all this excess discounted inventory has worked through the pipeline, the strong brands in Europe will get stronger and the weak brands will fade away as they have in the U.S."

Chris Allen, Shiner Distribution

3. SHAPES

Most brands agree that hybrid street and downhill boards are the next big thing – especially elongated popsicle shapes inspired by street skating. Duciers California is pushing "The Puck, a perfect hybrid longboard for high speed hills and tricks. Looking more like a stretched out popsicle deck, a 9.5" x 36" functional shape with kick on nose/tail and the new limited Orange Kryptonics, you can go from a hill straight to a bowl with this board." Mindless serves the category with the Nyck's mini, "a scaled back version of our extremely popular Nyck's still with fibre laminates displaying gorgeous, new sublimated graphics on both sides of the deck." Putting the trend in perspective, Enrique Becerril at Miller Division said, "Some countries still do well with drop-throughs but people want small and versatile decks that permit them to move around the city and to include them in their day-to-day life." Frank at Drucraft wants to "focus on the shorter boards, and make them stand out from the competitors." At Arbor, designers have blended the two most popular shapes – drop-through and mini cruiser – into one convincing package. "Our Drop Cruiser in new colourways is an advanced drop-through shape for technical freestyle, around-town cruiser tricks, and mellow downhill," said Burak Duran. Hydroponic is keeping little rippers in mind with the DT Kds, a complete drop-through longboard for kids.



Photo: Long Island Longboards

4. TRUCKS AND WHEELS

Look forward to a new breed of longboard hardware. French scene kingpins Hoff are "currently working on new trucks called Dozer Trucks. These are new high-tech forged trucks made with Cobra Press technology," said Hoff's Benoit Erco, who also looks after Flying Wheels. Gold Coast is about to drop "newly designed Century Trucks (which we believe are setting a new standard for precision cast longboard trucks." Nathan at Origin Distribution announced, "The forged Atlas 8mm Ultralight are some of the most versatile, affordable PVP trucks on the market." With patented technology, an affordable price point and a full range of colour options, this truck is a perfect go-to offering for any retailer." UK-based Mindless is cooking up the new "Talisman V2 truck, which has been refined and we believe improved upon whilst keeping its much loved riding

characteristics." Wheels are also getting a makeover, as most brands are reworking their urethanes and constructions. "Among core downhill skaters, wheels with wider, more supportive cores like the Venom Cobra Core Cymbals are a must-have," said Shane Maloney at Madrid Skateboards, adding "The Venom March 1 wheels are being hailed as the fastest wheels in the world" after Venom rider Erik Lundberg broke the world speed record reaching 130.63kph on the wheels.

"The mission is to introduce alternative, environmentally friendly components into our urethane formulas that improve performance, while reducing the petroleum footprint of our urethane, and the environmental impact of slides and long term wear." Benoit at Hoff is stoked on "wheels improvement in Flying Wheels with their Fast Forward range with AA, CHR for all the range and Spine Hub on bumpers and Gyro models."

5. ACCESSORIES

Retailers can drive successful cross-sales with the right selection of accessories, but Pablo Ribera at HLC urges caution. "In longboarding, all the accessories are important, fortunately people wear helmets, gloves, protective pads. A lot of people have various kinds of bushings to have a setup for each situation and equipment to try new things and feelings. Most of the time, trendy things are simply fashionable, so it has an expiration date." But as Pablo mentioned, protective gear is always a welcome addition and many brands supplement their hardware with the right kind of safety equipment. "The phrase for us is it has to protect, but it has to fit." We provide coloured helmets that fit really good, gloves and protection kits with the best quality to price ratio," said Enrique Becerril at Miller Division. For the discerning rider with a big board quiver, Hydroponic Longboarding is making road trips easier with "a couple of skate and longboard travel bags, able to carry up to four or five decks when you are traveling, which is something we all do and not many options are available right now." Beyond hardware, Arbor is branching out. "We got really nice feedback from our customers for our flask, bottle opener, and whiskey glasses that all have the unique Arbor look." On that note, cheers to the future of longboarding! ☺

HIGHLIGHTS

- Market consolidation continues
- Upgrade to "senior" boards
- Education for core resellers
- Manufacturing in Europe
- Skateboard style, tricks, and shapes
- Snowboard technology constructions
- Short hybrid boards (drop cruisers)
- Cruisers renaissance
- New truck and wheel tech
- Lead paddles for concrete SUP



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