



SUNGLASSES SS15 TREND REPORT

Even though in fashion you have to come up with something new every season, you can't reinvent the wheel year after year. You don't really need to either, and so in 2015 we'll see a lot of twists on classics in the eyewear section.

Report by Anna Langer

"Reengineered Classics" is THE trend of 2015, according to Electric and Smith, who both use the exact same wording and phrase. The vintage vibe is coming strong again and Dragon are introducing the 'Fit For Living' collection: "classic shapes with a smaller fit," aimed at their younger athletes who travel a lot. Otis are producing "rounder eye shapes, driven by vintage classics", "semi-round wireframes and teardrop acetate eye shapes" (Electric), "vintage inspired details with modern rimless lens details" (D'Blanc) and increased influence from heritage collections (Smith, Oakley, O'Neill, Otis & C  b  ). "Flatter top brow lines" (VonZipper) and "flat top unisex frames with metal brow details" (D'Blanc) are also good examples of that added twist.

The vintage inspired 'Leather Side Glacier Shields' from D'Blanc bridges over to the next big trend of 2015: performance driven frames and shields as well as more modern shapes. Wraps with "large temples protect from the sun, sand and wind" (Smith) and are "stylish and functional" at the same time, as available from Spy, Boll   and Gul. Nike Vision rely completely on functionality and don't "focus so much on what's 'trendy' but instead on what will serve our athletes and improve their performance." Melon and C  b   add some square looks to the party while Dragon, pioneers of the #weareframeless look present the Shadow Collection, their latest frameless range. Dirty Dog and D'Blanc mix it up with geometric and rimless designs as do D'Blanc. Electric and Sinner take it even further with "post apocalyptic / futuristic themes" (Electric), while Sinner's campaign was photographed at one of the craziest festivals out there: the Burning Man in the USA.

With Dragon pushing their technical innovation within their APX (Advanced Project) goggle line, they have hinted that we are very likely to see this cross over into their eyewear category, taking it to the "next level in the near future". Watch this space.

Besides these "mad designs you know from the older Oakley days", they also offer clean lifestyle pieces, as do Ashbury, who "feel that less is more and really try to convey a minimalist style in all our designs."

COLOURS

Colour is still a big theme for summer too, no matter if vintage, modern or sports related. Neff even state that 2015 is their "most colourful collection yet" and Spy go for "fun, playful and happy," as do Nike Vision, O'Neill, C  b   and Boll  . VonZipper add coloured versions of their bestsellers and Oakley add colour to colour, with "contrasting frame colour inserts and temple tips". Colour combinations can also be found in collections from Boll  , O'Neill and Melon, while Nectar inject colour directly into the frames of some of their new hydrodipped styles. For those who prefer a more subtle approach, Spy have "'60-esque tinted translucent colour frames with contrasting Spectra lenses" and Neff "blend pop colours of tie-dye and classic sporty styling" for their Tie-Dye Sportswear look.

Electric on the other hand only add some "bright spots" to their darker colours, whilst VonZipper and Sinner go for more toned down, earthy shades. C  b   spark up dark frames with coloured flash mirrors and Dirty Dog leave colour out completely, offering clear frames, as do

"unburdening the consumer from choosing between technological features and style" Shred

Melon with their semi-transparent numbers.

As we look to patterns Neff are advertising their “Hard Fruit Collection” which features brightly coloured digitized fruits and O’Neill mentioning some textured frames. Dragon have new Hawaii floral and Hula print collections featured on the outside temples and a stunning collab with artist Schoph. In return, classic tortoise is making a huge comeback with Spy, VonZipper, O’Neill, Melon and Sinner, who value them as constant bestsellers and add “bright Spectra lenses” (Spy) or a matte finish (Melon) for a little extra. Despite the slight hype last year, matt frames don’t seem to have held their ground, and have found only little mention from Melon and O’Neill.

LENSES

Lenses are staying quite colourful too and have little twists or extras added as well. Mirrors are still mirrored in all collections with variations from Electric and O’Neill, while Polarized Blue and Bronze Mirrors come from Smith, Cébe and Bollé; Rose Gold, Sky Blue, which is contrasted to frame colours from Sinner and even double layered by Bollé, adding the initially mentioned twist. Dragon have three new lens colours to shout about, all of which making quite the statement; rose gold, sky blue and plasma. For a less flashy look, Electric, O’Neill and D’Blanc also offer graduated or even bi-gradient lenses to go with their vintage themes (Electric) and lifestyle collections (O’Neill).

When it comes to lens materials, Ashbury and Melon are proud to equip their models with premium Zeiss glass, while Otis rely on mineral glass, which they state to be the “most optically correct, distortion free and highly scratch resistant” material for sunnies. Bollé find similar qualities in their new NXT, “a premium lens material based on Trivex, which offers superior optics for a crystal clear vision close to glass.” And Electric increase their use of Melanin, which they claim to be the “best natural defence against the harmful effects of the sun” and filters 100% of UV as well as 98% of blue light while maintaining the perception of natural colours and enhancing contrast. Which is especially vital in the sports performance sector, that Smith’s ChromaPop and Spy’s Happy Lens Technology cover as well, which are both expanded through the brands’ collections in 2015. Ensuring optimal performance for all sectors, Oakley varies lens attributes according to demands and optimize them “for specific environments and sports”.

MATERIALS

Material of choice for most brands is still Grilamid/TR90 (Electric, VonZipper, Otis, O’Neill, Melon Optics, Gul & Dirty Dog), especially in more performance oriented styles since it “retains shape for optimal fit in heat” (Electric). While Gloryfy swear on their signature G-Glex frames and I-Flex lens materials, that ensure their unbreakable ethos. Dragon have harnessed their proprietary frame material over a period of years both in the lab and out in the field, and SS15 sees them expand their H2O collection of floatable frames, while Gul add flotation with a “retaining leash for a secure fit”.

There are also some real innovations to be expected for 2015, with the “eyewear sector evolving every day” (Spy). Oakley’s NanOmatter, which will be launched in October, offers “a new material that is very strong even if the frame is very thin”. Filtrate have something completely new “that was never offered before” up their sleeves as well, but won’t spill before next summer so we’ll have to curb our curiosity for now. And last but definitely not least, Shred have revolutionized not the material itself, but its use with their NOWEIGHT™ technology: “a derivative of structural engineering studies, [that] allows us to create a shape that minimizes the amount of material used while maximizing the stability and performance of the eyewear”.

An increase is also visible in the use of hand-made and/or plant-based acetate, especially from Italy (Electric, Otis, D’Blanc & VonZipper), with multiple layers (Sinner) or even combined with Bamboo (Shred). Smith expand their use of bio-based Rilsan Clear material to 95% of their collection, as do Spy with their Plantate plant polysaccharide. Metal in various variations from Titanium (Smith) to Nickel Silver Alloy (VZ) is still popular as well and paired with TR90 and acetate (Dirty Dog) and twisting classics (O’Neill & Otis).

PRESCRIPTION GLASSES

Most interviewed brands agree that prescription glasses from boardsports related brands will only increase in future and could be a “vital brand extension” (VonZipper). Those with big optical parent companies such as Marchon/VSP (Dragon & Nike Vision) and the Safilo Group (Smith) can tap into their experience and knowledge with RX and offer top-notch service with their high-end models. Nike Vision sums up the growing demand: “We are facing a population that is very much into fitness and sport. We need to be able to deliver RX options for those consumers, especially as this fitness aware population ages and needs vision correction.” Shred are also on the bandwagon: “When a frame is superior in terms of style and performance, it is superior no matter the lens colour” and offer their models prescription-ready, for customers to have their own prescription lenses fitted.

OUTLOOK

With brands happy exploring all sorts of trends, shapes, colours, materials and realms of combinations, there’s one aim combining them all: an “unbound pursuit of style and performance” as Shred summarize. In our sports driven industry, performance or style is no question any longer – just the way in which the two are brought together and combined. Whether with details as hidden rubber pads for increased hold (D’Blanc) or simply applying performance and durability standards to lifestyle as well as performance collections alike, “unburdening the consumer from choosing between technological features and style” (Shred). This is also what sets these brands and their products apart from regular high-street brands, who may copy the looks but are far from the experience and expertise that sports companies have built up over years.

EYEWEAR EDITORIAL TEAM EXPOSURE RANKING

JAN – JUN 2014, GLOBAL WEB PRESS

Source: Rideometer.

Rank	Brand	Editorial Team Exposure	Clipping Pages
1	Oakley	1 213 554€	2086
2	Quiksilver	1 191 673€	2439
3	Dragon	716 780€	1222
4	Von Zipper	505 388€	1068
5	Electric	372234€	682

“Editorial Team Exposure” gathers the value all the brand’s team riders editorial exposure on websites over the period in that specific product category. The value is based on the advertising equivalency method.

EYEWEAR TRENDS AT A GLANCE

- REENGINEERED CLASSICS – modern twists on classic looks & styles
- SPORT GALORE – performance optimized specifics
- COLOUR FLASH – mirrored lens & colour combinations
- MATERIALS – ecological & technological innovations



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