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NATHAN PERFORMANCE GEAR[™] INTRODUCES XC RACE SERIES*High-performance paks feature first-of-its-kind harness system designed specifically to reduce muscle fatigue and bounce when biking and running on trails*

(SHARON HILL, Pa.) – Nathan Performance Gear[™], a subsidiary of Penguin Brands, Inc., and developer of the popular HPL Series of hydration vests, has developed a new line of high-performance race paks designed for speed and comfort on the trails. **The XC Race Series** not only features two brand new paks, but also introduces a brand new harness and adjustable shoulder straps that revolutionize the way paks fit, hold weight, and improve an athlete's performance on the trails.

“Just like our athletes, Nathan paks are in a constant state of evolution, and performance breakthroughs come in unexpected forms,” says Megan Russell, vice president of sales and marketing for Penguin Brands, Inc. “This season we honed in on producing gear that through some innovative enhancements customize specifically to an athlete's body like no products before.”

The XC series solves the problems bikers often have with hydration paks in terms of stably carrying gear while allowing for full range of motion. Utilizing a unique harness strap system, called the X-Factor Harness[™], that crosses over the chest and connects in the front, the XC series' paks minimize bounce, allow for even weight distribution, and provide a full range of motion for arms and shoulders. Adjustable shoulder straps with corresponding hash marks on each allow for customization of what is actually a one-size-fits-all pak. What makes for an at-first unusual appearance results in a comfortable, lighter, and more versatile pak that ensures no one part of the body is working harder to support an uneven weight load.

The larger of the two, the X-Treme, features a 3.0 liter bladder, a zippered front pocket with a power stretch mesh pocket, 900 cubic inch capacity, and several zippered and expandable mesh pockets for storage and trash. Featuring the same material found in most Nathan paks, including Honeycomb Mesh shoulder straps and back panel, and reflective detail, the X-Treme is great for road or mountain biking, has a suggested retail of \$80, and offers the most comfortable way to carry gear without sacrificing speed or range of motion.

“Fatigue caused by wearing an uneven or uncomfortable pak can really hamper the efforts of a cyclist,” says Bryce Thatcher, Nathan’s chief product developer. “This year we really dialed in to producing two paks that not only differ in amounts of fluid and storage capacity, but can really adjust to fit in a way that feels like it was custom-built specifically for that cyclist or trail runner.”

Like the X-Treme, the X-Ceed features the X-Factor Harness, Honeycomb Mesh shoulder straps and back panel, and reflective detail, but differs in bladder size, carrying capacity, and MSRP. Featuring a 2.0 liter bladder, 24 cubic inch capacity, and a suggested retail of \$70, the X-Ceed is the ideal lightweight runner and cyclist pak for carrying just the essentials on the trails.

“The XC Race Series really fulfills a requirement many athletes have for a bladder pak that had been previously underserved, and that is providing a pak that provides storage capacity and bladder capacity for intense and all-day excursions while not sacrificing range of motion or contributing to muscle fatigue during intense exertion,” says Russell. “And with two different sizes and bladder capacities, the XC Race Series offers the best of both worlds for runners and bikers.”

The XC Race Series also debuts a brand new feature for Nathan this year – the use of a SlideSeal™ top closure for all its bladders. In addition to the XC Race Series, all Nathan paks (not including the Snow Series) will begin to include bladders with this new closure, which allows for easier access to fill, clean, and dry each bladder.

Coinciding with the introduction of the XC Race Series, Nathan also announces the return of a favorite, albeit redesigned and updated favorite, to the 2010 Nathan product line. The Proton, which originally debuted in 2006, makes its return to the Nathan line this year with a more streamlined and superior design. Utilizing a 2.0 liter bladder, 3-way propulsion harness, Honeycomb Mesh shoulder straps and back panel, a rapid access bladder pocket, an Air Scoop with ventilation channel, and featuring 100 cubic inch capacity, the Proton carries provisions in the most efficient and comfortable way while helping to maintain body temperature and minimizing bounce. Retailing for \$60, the Proton demonstrates Nathan’s commitment to incorporating athlete feedback in product enhancement and development.

For more information on the XC Race Series, and other Nathan products, please visit www.NathanSports.com, or contact Ellen Cassidy at ecassidy@penguinbrands.com or 610-537-8828.

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About Nathan Performance Gear

Based in Sharon Hill, Pa., Nathan Performance Gear™ is a subsidiary of Penguin Brands Inc. Nathan Human Propulsion Laboratories are committed to redefining the very notion of what is humanly possible. Unlike most companies’ new products that are born in the boardroom, Nathan’s labs are the beautiful and grueling terrain in which we compete. Our hydration and nutrition systems, running paks, accessories, and reflective gear are all engineered for the impossible. For more information, visit www.NathanSports.com.