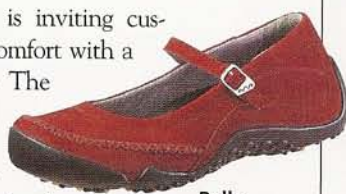


## Wolverine Dials In Comfort

**F**or fall '09, **Wolverine** is inviting customers to turn up the comfort with a brand new technology. The ICS (Individualized Comfort System) Collection features travel boots and shoes for men and women with removable insoles and adjustable heel disks to allow wearers to customize the amount of firmness by turning a dial. With four distinct comfort options, each pair goes the extra mile by supporting flat feet and fallen arches, as well as providing enhanced shock absorption. Waterproof leathers and performance suedes add a dose of durability and style, while Gore-Tex waterproof membrane linings make these slick kicks an all-weather option, too. Available in hiker, clog and oxford styles, the retail range is \$95 to \$160.



Bella



Marco

—Liane Bonin

## Keen Shoes Get The Works

**O**utdoor performance brand **Keen** steps indoors to tackle occupational footwear with three work-specific styles for fall. The collection is named PTC, which stands for Professional Technical Comfort, or, as Keen CEO James Curleigh affectionately refers to it, “punchin’ the clock.” Designed for professionals who spend extended periods of time on their feet, PTC styles feature oil- and slip-resistant non-marking rubber outsoles, waterproof leather for easy cleaning and a comfy Keen.Cush footbed. With an eye on safety, PTC outsoles are SATRA-certified and meet or exceed ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) F1677-96 Mark II nonslip testing standards. Only six months old, the Cush footbed—comprised of recycled PU, cork and memory foam—adds an eco element to the line by providing sustainable comfort.

“We did not start off as a professional, industrial brand of footwear,” says Curleigh. “We started off making product that’s comfortable and durable, with the right balance of performance, innovation and sustainability for everybody.

What I think makes [PTC] different is that the consumer literally requested, demanded and pleaded with us to go into this category.” To start, PTC will offer three silhouettes including a men’s lace-up, a women’s Mary Jane and a unisex slip-on, all retailing for \$120.

—Meaghan Kerins



## Auri Slips Into Something More Comfortable

**A**uri is getting soft around the edges with Heffs, a shearling-lined slipper for fall. An homage to the original playboy and his casual lounge style, the first preproduction pair was custom-monogrammed and given to *Playboy* magazine creator Hugh Hefner as a gift. But don’t let their fuzzy looks fool you; the Heffs are built on Auri’s Gen 2 chassis, the same base as the Concord slip-on and the Offspring sneaker.

“The technology is the same. We cold mold the PU, which is the basis of the chassis, with the rubber lugs and then [add] the leather stitch down,” explains president and CEO Ori Rosenbaum. “Then we just designed the slipper on top of it and made it all shearling-lined.” Dubbed a “man Ugg,” the indoor/outdoor style is designed for casual all-day wear. Even better, the style looks great with denim. “It’s a hybrid,” adds Rosenbaum. “You see slippers that have a little rubber heel or a little rubber pad at the bottom, but you really have no support, you have no structure, you have no stability—it’s not a walking piece. But [the Heffs] legitimately use the same technology as some of our best high-end walking shoes.”

Made with all-Italian leathers, Heffs are available in brown, black or two-tone tan and brown and retail for \$110.

—Meaghan Kerins



## [ THE GREEN SCENE ]

### AUTONOMIE PROJECT'S BRITISH INVASION

**L**aunched in December 2007, **Autonomie Project** was built around the concept that truly ethical product should be eco-friendly and fair trade, but for people to actually wear it, it couldn’t look like it was made from grass. “We wanted to create a line that looks like every other product on the market, so you can wear your values without sacrificing your style,” says president Anne O’Loughlin. With that in mind, the company partnered with the eco-forward U.K. brand **Ethletic** to bring its basketball-style sneakers stateside. Green elements of the shoes include upper canvas and shoelaces made from organic cotton (this year they’ll be switching over to fair trade-certified organic cotton), PCP- and AZO-free dyes, and an all-natural, sustainable rubber sole. The vegan sneakers are certified by the Fair Labeling Organization and the Forest Stewardship Council, and a Fair Trade premium is paid to both the rubber producers in Sri Lanka and to the shoe stitchers in Pakistan. Currently offering hi-tops, lo-tops and flip-flops, the company will expand its audience for fall by introducing children’s sizes, as well as wide widths. Ethletic will also be adding a new silhouette for fall, though it’s keeping tight-lipped on the design. Retail range is \$30 to \$56, with hand-painted, limited-edition styles selling at \$110 to \$125. —Meaghan Kerins

