

No.38

**March
2000**

JETRO
Japanese Market
Report —Regulations & Practices—

Swimwear

List of Contents

Summary.....	1
Introduction.....	4
I. Market Overview.....	5
A. Market Scale	5
B. Changes in imports	6
C. Characteristics of the markets.....	7
D. Recent tendencies.....	10
II. The Importing and Distribution Process	10
A. Regulations and Procedures at the Time of Import	10
B. Regulations and Procedures at the Time of sale	10
C. Regulatory Agency Contact.....	11
D. Labeling Procedures.....	11
E. Tax Laws and Regulations	13
III. Distribution Conditions and Trade Practices	13
A. The distribution channels	13
B. Customary practices in merchandising.....	16
IV. Advice on Access to the Market.....	16
A. Competitive swimwear.....	16
B. Leisure swimwear	17
V. Source.....	19
A. The Trade Fair, Exhibition.....	19
B. Government Agencies, Industrial Organizations	19
C. Manufacturers	19
D. Wholesalers	22

Summary

Summary of the Market

The Japanese swimwear market can be broadly divided into competitive swimwear and leisure swimwear, and they differ in almost all respects, from product lines to manufacturers to sales channels. The scale of the market is approximately 13 billion yen for both categories, with competitive swimwear accounting for 30% and leisure swimwear for 70%.

Given the recent health and fitness boom, demand for competitive swimwear has expanded in fitness clubs. In addition, demand from educational institutions is stable, and the market for competitive swimwear may be thought of as one with prospects for demand throughout the year.

Since fashion is particularly emphasized for leisure swimwear, which is an extremely seasonal market controlled by the weather in a given year, it is referred to as a high-risk market. However, it is also true that retail prices are correspondingly high.

Domestic companies are strong in the market for leisure swimwear, but imports were also growing steadily until 1996. However, due to stagnant consumption caused by the sluggish economy, they began decreasing in 1997, and they continued decreasing in 1998.

The Import System and Related Laws and Regulations

There are no particular regulations concerning the importation of swimwear. However, when selling swimwear in Japan, one is subject to Household Goods Quality Labeling Law, Law Against Unjustifiable premiums and Misleading Representation, and Law for Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances.

Circumstances of Distribution

In the distribution channel for competitive swimwear, the sportswear manufacturers lay in supplies of fabric from the materials manufacturers, sew or make the suits at their own plants or in the plants of subcontractors. They then employ their own marketing

channels or sportswear commission agents to wholesale their products to the retailers. Most imports are the products of develop-and-import schemes by sportswear manufacturers, and foreign brands themselves are rarely seen. This situation is less due to default selling of foreign imports because of sizing problems than due to the domination of the Japanese sportswear manufacturers and the existence of a little room for foreign products to get in. Another area of demand for competitive swimwear is from educational institutions: these are mostly sold by businesses that sell school uniforms and accessories as well as acquire swimwear from the manufacturers.

The main feature of the leisure swimwear market is that the apparel manufacturers wholesale their products directly to department stores and clothing stores, with almost no participation of intermediate wholesalers. In effect, the products are extremely subject to fashion, and the success or failure of the manufacturers' tactics largely control the course of sales during the season. That is to say, the manufacturers themselves perform the functions of gathering and disseminating information that wholesalers are usually expected to perform. The percentage of imports in this product category is extremely low, because a little importance is attached to brand names.

Advice on Market Access

Since competitive swimwear and leisure swimwear are different products, different methods are required for entering the respective markets. In the case of competitive swimwear, sportswear manufacturers dominate the market. One effective way of penetrating into the market is to approach sportswear or sporting goods wholesalers. Since sportswears are expendable products, the requirements for materials are high, then using Japanese-made materials could be an element in favor of the receptivity of the sportswear wholesalers. In addition, requirements for sewing technology are also high, and it is important to achieve that level of quality. Competitive swimwear is relatively inexpensive, and little importance is placed on fashion.

When trying to enter the leisure swimwear market, it is effective to be aware of the present fashion trends. It is also important to educate the market on foreign fashion trends, and it is necessary to conduct precisely targeted marketing campaigns when first entering the market. The fastest marketing approach is making direct contact with retailers. Moreover, leisure swimwear is priced somewhat higher than other apparel products, but it does not seem effective to pursue low prices.

Future Prospects

In a textile market where imports predominate, domestic products are putting up a vigorous fight in the area of swimwear. For that reason, they undeniably seem to be high priced. The difficulty for foreign companies to penetrate into the Japanese market is mainly in the appreciation of the fashion trends that differ from the western countries. When entering the Japanese market, it is necessary to emphasize not only low prices but also the excellence of the product itself.

At this effect, it seems that some in the domestic swimwear industry are beginning to wonder how long the high price policies can be maintained. There are already tendencies to cut prices, even by the small amount of approximately 1,000 yen (around 9.2 USD, 9.6 EUR).

Introduction

The Japanese swimwear market is broadly divided into competitive swimwear and leisure swimwear that have different market characteristics. At this effect, the swimwear market needs to be thought as two individual markets.

Due to the recent health and fitness boom, the demand for competitive swimwear, which includes demand for educational institutions, has mainly expanded at fitness clubs. This market is considered as a stable market based on demand anticipated throughout the year. On the other hand, the market for leisure swimwear, which places particularly heavy emphasis on fashion, has a strongly seasonal aspect and can be called a high-risk market with correspondingly, high retail price.

Imports into the Japanese swimwear market have been decreasing in both quantity (number of suits) and amount of money since reaching a peak in 1996. However, despite the market is contracting because of the economy stagnation and the decrease of disposal income, the market share of imports has expanded. Over half the imports are manufactured in China.

Taking this background into consideration, this report will summarize the actual state of the swimwear market in Japan, in foreseeing the future of this market and looking at the possibilities for new foreign businesses entering the market.

I. Market Overview

The Japanese market for swimwear may be broadly divided into the competitive swimwear market and the leisure swimwear market. The former category includes swimwear used in swimming competitions or at fitness clubs. The latter category, which is the leisure swimwear for woman that often referred to the “fashion swimwear,” is mostly used at swimming pools or at beaches in resorts. Since the product lines and the marketing circumstances, from the manufacturer down to the sales channels, are entirely different for the two types of swimwear, it is essential to think of them as separate types of merchandise.

Table 1: A comparison of the characteristics of the competitive swimwear and leisure swimwear markets

	Competitive swimwear	Leisure swimwear
Target customer	Men and women	Mostly women
Seasonal nature	None (all year)	Yes
Trends	Few changes	Striking changes
Supplying manufacturers	Sportswear manufacturers	Apparel manufacturers
Sizes	Strict attention to size	Standards are lenient
Quality	Durability and chlorine resistance required	No importance attached to functionality
Price	Somewhat low	Somewhat high(around 14,000 yen)
Lots	Various	Small
Percentage of imports	High, particularly for standard-issue items	Low

A. Market Scale

The scale of the market is approximately 13 billion yen for both categories combined. There are no accurate statistics, but it is estimated that 30 percent of this is competitive swimwear and 70 percent is leisure swimwear. In recent years, the share of leisure swimwear has decreased and the share of competitive swimwear has increased, due to factors such as demands for fitness-related items.

In addition, the share of imports has been expanding in recent years. It reached a level of 23.5% in 1997.

Table 2: The share of imports in the swimwear market (Units: millions of yen)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Shipments of manufactured items	8,007	8,831	9,606	11,223	9,581
Imports	1,011	1,232	1,937	3,181	2,870
Exports	278	210	186	200	235
Scale of the market	8,740	9,853	11,357	14,204	12,216
Share of imports	11.6%	12.5%	17.1%	22.4%	23.5%

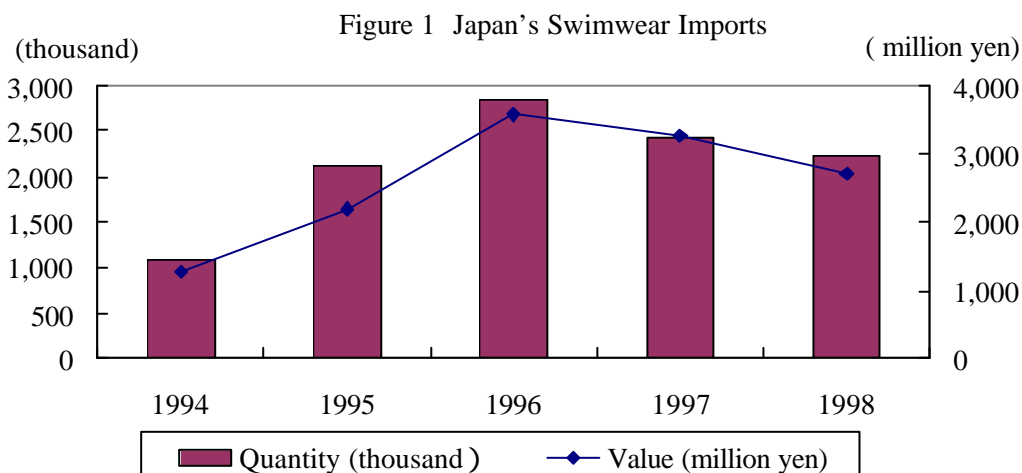
Note: "Shipments of manufactured items" on the Table of Industrial Statistics refers to workplaces with four or more employees in the categories "knit swimwear" and "swimming trunks/beachwear."

Source: Tables of Industrial Statistics and Monthly Trade Statistics of Japan

B. Changes in imports

Imports of swimwear in 1998 totaled 2.219 million outfits (an 8.9% decrease over the previous year) with a value of 2.695 billion yen (a 17.7% decrease over the previous year).

Looking at trends in swimwear imports, we find that they formerly exhibited steady growth, but due to factors such as sluggish consumption caused by the stagnant economy, they began decreasing after peaking in 1996. This decrease in imports continued in 1998.



(Units: thousand, million yen)

	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998	
	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity
Synthetic fibres for men's	109	42	262	94	393	142	385	154	343	125
Other for men's	0.4	1	25	12	4	4	16	9	11	7
Synthetic fibres for women's	960	1,196	1,751	1,958	2,349	3,245	1,976	2,989	1,829	2,497
Other for women's	16	43	82	122	103	183	60	124	36	66
Total	1,085	1,282	2,120	2,185	2,849	3,574	2,437	3,276	2,219	2,695

Source: "Japan Exports and Imports", Japan Tariff Association

Looking at swimwear imports by country and by region, we find that products manufactured in China accounted for more than 50 percent of the total monetary amount and about 70 percent of the total quantity. In recent years, imports from Republic of Korea and the United States have decreased, while imports from Vietnam, Hong Kong, and Israel have increased noticeably.

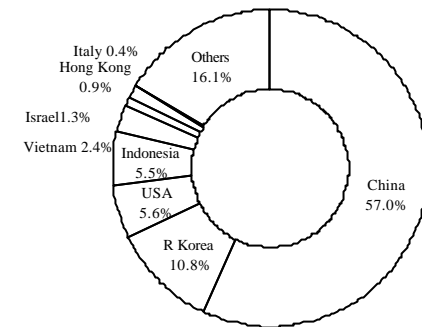
Table 3 Principal Exporters of Swimwear to Japan

(Units :million yen, thousand)

Country/ Region	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998	
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Quantity	Quantity
China	503	941	1,380	1,437	1,536	1,523				
R Korea	202	321	574	302	290	224				
USA	128	260	623	503	151	55				
Indonesia	173	258	233	182	149	96				
Vietnam	0	1	5	108	65	142				
Israel	-	1	1	60	35	13				
Hong Kong	0	3	41	26	25	47				
Italy	10	15	10	17	11	38				
Others	267	385	707	642	435	81				
Total	1,282	2,185	3,574	3,276	2,695	2,219				

Source: Same as Figure 1

Figure 2 Share of Exporters



Source: Same as Figure 1

C. Characteristics of the markets

1. Competitive swimwear

Due to demand in fitness clubs caused by the recent health and fitness boom, the market for competitive swimwear has shown a correlative growth. Competitive swimwear is mostly used in pools, but because of the effects of the chlorine used to treat the water in swimming pools, one can expect that customers will buy one or two replacement suits per year. For that reason, there is no noticeable marketing season, and stable demand throughout the year can be anticipated. Manufacturers predict that in 2000, demand will rise of 15% over the previous fiscal year to a total of 2.95 million suits. The retail outlets for competitive swimwear are mainly sporting goods stores and the sales areas of fitness clubs.

Educational institutions are another major user of competitive swimwear. The swimwear is used in physical education classes in elementary schools and junior high schools, and the system is set up so that schools buy it in bulk. The demand follows every year the decrease of the number of children at school. That is why this market is slowly shrinking.

Sportswear manufacturers are in charge of manufacturing competitive swimwear, and they dominate the market in this area. These manufacturers treat swimwear as a variety

of sportswear, and in most cases, the swimwear carries the same brand as the other sportswear.

Materials that offer resistance to chlorine and comfortable fit have been developed for competitive swimwear. Competitors value the styles of swimwear that have led to improved results in competitions, and some of these styles have filtered down to the general consumer.

Prices of competitive swimwear vary according to the materials used, but they are set lower than the prices of leisure swimwear.

2. Leisure swimwear

The Japanese market for leisure swimwear has some major distinguishing features, particularly in the area of women's swimwear. As the alternative name of "fashion swimwear" makes clear, this is because its fashionable nature is emphasized, aside from its functionality as swimwear. Here we will deal mainly with fashion swimwear, since it is overwhelmingly predominant, both in terms of suits sold and in terms of sales prices.

The main customers for fashion swimwear are young women, and since they buy a certain number of new suits each year, swimwear is just like another item of clothing. The suppliers also have reflected current trends in the course of meeting these needs, thus stimulating the desire to buy.

Manufacturers of materials play a large role in the swimwear fashion market. Since Kuraray Corp. withdrew from swimwear market in 1999, there are six major companies at present: Toyobo, Asahi Chemical, Unitika, Teijin, Toray, Kanebo.

a. The flow from product planning to retailing

In October of each year, the major materials manufacturers listed above start hiring campaign models to promote the newest trends in materials, colors, and designs in the mass media. This is one of the big event in the textile industry: it has become a social phenomenon covered by fashion magazines, as well as by feature-oriented programs on daytime television and programs that explain current trends.

Manufacturers of fashion swimwear (hereafter referred as "apparel manufacturers") take the information announced by the materials manufacturers, plan new products and incorporate their own marketing strategy according to their feeling of the fashion trends. Around November, they hold exhibitions of their new products for retailers. Along with decisions about the prevailing trends for the next season, almost all orders for

merchandise are completed at November. The peak shipping period being April, the merchandise goes on display in the shops at once during the Golden Weeks (there are many Japanese national holidays in early May). The only other group involved in the process is the dyers which is a relatively simple and straightforward manufacturing industry.

b. Unique characteristics of leisure swimwear

Leisure swimwear is exclusively summer merchandise, and in addition to its strongly seasonal nature, it is controlled by the weather for a given year. In fact, the weather is such a decisive factor that the period of May and June determines the annual amount of sales. That factor alone would entail a great deal of risk, and since a sense of style reflecting current trends is required, retail prices are set at a high level. (The average retail prices for fashion swimwear are about 13,000 yen for two-piece suits and 14,000 yen for one-piece suits.)

In addition to the weather, an important element is the ability to read fashion trends. There are many uncertain elements, such as the need to launch a marketing campaign half a year before the season, and due to sudden changes in fashion trends, there is always the inherent possibility that consumers will not accept the planned merchandise. For that reason, some major manufacturers of leisure swimwear try to deal with any changes as quickly as possible by observing street fashion trends around March and reassess their merchandise in so-called "midterm planning." For example, the long pareo type of swimwear popular in 1999 was not planned in the previous autumn. Indeed, it was designed on the basis of observations of current fashions last spring. A few major apparel manufacturers plan less than 50% of their merchandise in autumn and more than 50% beginning in the spring, but in general, over 70% of merchandise is planned during the previous autumn.

c. Differences from other apparel products

Fashion swimwear has high price because apparel manufacturers have their own brands and tend not to emphasize the original brand name. This is caused by the fact that this swimwear is targeted at young women and is usually used for only one season. This is the decisive difference between fashion swimwear and other clothing.

Another decisive difference from other clothing is the lower share of imports. This situation results from the fact that leisure swimwear are almost entirely sewn in Japan.

Indeed, the domestic products have a high share because of three reasons: The main reason is the high quality standards of the Japanese industry. The second reason is, despite the extreme importance of colors, there are only a few dye works which are done overseas of Japan. The third reason is, the proportion of the costs of sewing operations and assembly is low, compared to the retail price.

D. Recent tendencies

The entry of leisure swimwear manufacturers into the competitive swimwear field is one of the trend of these recent years. These entries are most attracted by the stable demand of competitive swimwear, and even if the selling prices are somewhat low, they cannot overlook the stability of demand during down times.

The predominance of sportswear manufacturers is based on market share and the power of their brand names. The predominance of the leisure swimwear manufacturers, new entrants into the market, is based on the sense of fashion they have acquired in the leisure swimwear industry. For that reason, a tendency to incorporate touches of fashion into competitive swimwear has been observed by professional.

In addition, one of the recent changes seen in retail outlets for leisure swimwear is a later selling. Until recently, swimwear were generally sold in May and June, even though it would not be used until July and August. However, the first and second weeks of July, have become the period of heaviest sales.

II. The Importing and Distribution Process

A. Regulations and Procedures at the Time of Import

There is no system restricting the import of swimwear.

B. Regulations and Procedures at the Time of sale

The sale of swimwear products is regulated by “Household Goods Quality Labeling Law,” “Law Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representation” and “Law for Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances.”

1. Household Goods Quality Labeling Law

When selling swimwear, products must display the information specified in this law.
(See D. Labeling Procedures below.)

2. Law Against Unjustifiable premiums and Misleading Representation

This law prohibits unjust indication that will possibly confuse the consumers' choices and this Act requires that the country of origin be clearly and properly indicated on the label. (See D. Labeling Procedures below.)

3. Law for Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances

This Law requires that all household products comply with Harmful Substance Content Standards for substances likely to cause damage to the skin, etc. (including formalin and dieldrin). Swimwear products may not have a content level of these substances higher than the statutory standard.

C. Regulatory Agency Contact

Household Goods Quality Labeling Law:

Consumer Affairs Division, Industrial Policy Bureau, Ministry of International Trade
and Industry

Tel: 03-3501-1511

Law for Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances:

Office of Environmental Chemicals Safety, Environmental Health Bureau, Ministry of
Earth Welfare

Tel: 03-3501-1711

D. Labeling Procedures

1. Legally required Labeling

The Household Goods Quality Labeling Law” and “Law Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representation” sets labeling requirements for textile products. Swimwear products must be labeled with the following information:

a. Composition of Fiber

The fiber used for the products must be indicated using the designated terminology. Further, the ratio of each fiber, by mass, used in the product must be indicated by percentage in order to show the mixture content.

b. Labeler

The name and address or telephone number of the labeler who is responsible must be indicated.

c. Country of Origin

Swimwear product is subject to country of origin labeling requirements imposed by the Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representation and administered by the Fair Trade Commission. The Act establishes precise labeling practices for imported products to ensure that consumers do not receive misleading information about the actual place of origin.

“Country of origin” means the country where action causing a substantial change in the nature of the product was performed. Note that action certifying a country as the origin for swimwear is sewing in the case of sewn goods.

2. Voluntary Labeling Based on Provisions of Law

< Labeling of Size Under the Japan Industrial Standardization Law (JIS Law) >

The Japan Industrial Standardization Law (JIS Law) defines methods of labeling size for swimwear and specifications of size. Note that the JIS standards for labeling of size recognize labeling of overseas swimwear by ISO (International Standards Organization) standards as JIS labeling for the purpose of promoting harmonization with those standards.

3. Labeling according to the industry’s voluntary rules

The Association of Japan Sporting Goods Industries (JASPO) has established size labeling according to JASPO norms for competitive swimwear.

E. Tax Laws and Regulations

1. Customs Duties

HS No.	Description	Rate of Duty			
		General	WTO	Preferential	Temporary
6112.31	Men's or boys' swimwear				
	Of synthetic fibres				
-010	1. Containing embroidery or lace, or figured	16.8%	13.3%	6.65% Tax free	
-020	2. Other	14.0%	12.1%	6.05% Tax free	
6112.39	Of other textile materials				
	Of other textile materials				
-010	1. Containing embroidery or lace, or figured	16.8%	11.8%	5.9% Tax free	
-020	2. Other	14.0%	10.6%	5.3% Tax free	
6112.41	Women's or girls' swimwear:				
	Of synthetic fibres				
-010	1. Containing embroidery or lace, or figured	16.8%	13.3%	6.65% Tax free	
-020	2. Other	14.0%	12.1%	6.05% Tax free	
6112.49	Of other textile materials				
	Of other textile materials				
-010	1. Containing embroidery or lace, or figured	16.8%	11.8%	5.9% Tax free	
-020	2. Other	14.0%	10.6%	5.3% Tax free	

Note: Refer "Customs Tariff Schedules of Japan" (published by Japan Tariff Association) etc.

Note: "*Free" in Preferential applicable only for least less developing country.

2. Consumption Tax

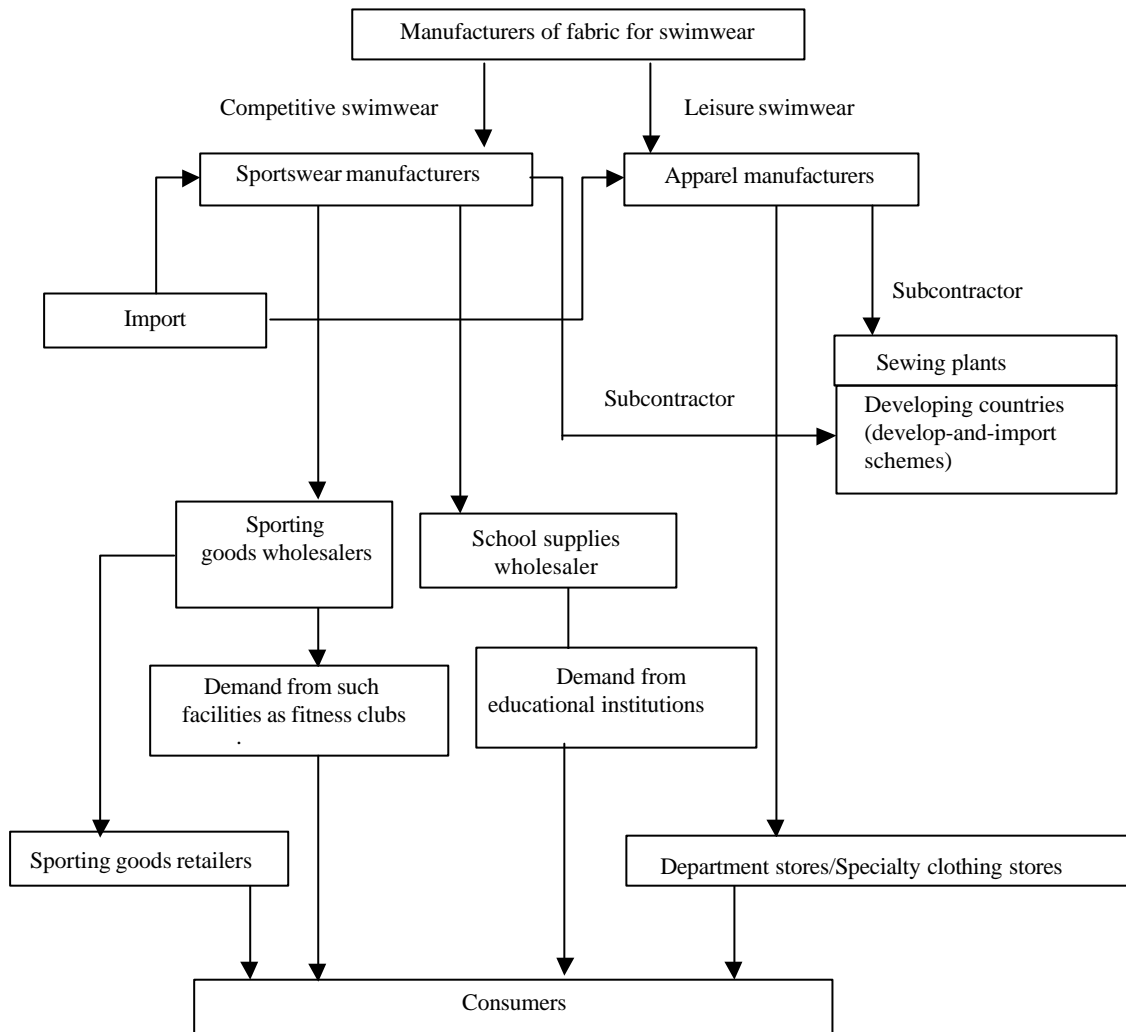
$$(\text{CIF Value} + \text{Customs Duty}) \times 5\%$$

III. Distribution Conditions and Trade Practices

A. The distribution channels

The distribution channel for swimwear is shown in the following flowchart. Since the distribution channels for competitive and leisure swimwear are different, they will be explained separately.

Fig. 3: The Distribution Channel for Swimwear



1. Competitive swimwear

As shown in Fig. 3, the distribution of competitive swimwear follows two different channels. The first channel is governed by the demand of fitness, a channel in which sportswear manufacturers lay in stocks of fabric from materials manufacturers and have them sewn and assembled in their own plants or in the plants of subcontractors. They then get the merchandise into sporting goods stores through their own sales channels or sporting goods wholesalers. The other channel is the merchandise flows from the manufacturers to schools through wholesalers of school supplies. Due to longstanding competition in the sportswear industry (including general sporting goods manufacturers), the market is dominated by a few famous manufacturers, and the field of competitive swimwear is not an exception: the sportswear manufacturers exercise overwhelming dominance of the market. However, school demand is almost entirely handled by

specialized companies that deal in items such as school uniforms.

Sportswear manufacturers often have their own plants or cooperating plants in developing countries such as China, and they usually order sewing and assembly from those plants. Consumers do not distinguish the swimwear made in developing countries for mainly two reasons. The first reason is, the sportswear companies use their plants, avoiding any change in brand recognition. The second reason is, the recent transfer of sewing technology in developing countries does not allow the consumer to make the difference.

2. Leisure swimwear

Every autumn, manufacturers of materials are launching grand advertising campaigns in the purpose to sell their products. Because of the way these advertising campaigns communicate, customers generally believe that material manufacturers make the swimwear, when in fact apparel manufacturers do. The manufacturers under discussion include both major manufacturers that are dealing in all kinds of apparel and manufacturers that are specialized in swimwear. While the former treat swimwear as one type of merchandise to be launched in their retail chains, the latter are mostly SME (small and medium enterprises) that have total annual sales of about 1 billion yen. The SME do not have their own sales outlets, and they mostly sell their entire line to department stores or specialized shops and rely on consignment sales.

A special characteristic of this merchandise is that wholesalers play almost no role. The apparel manufacturers handle planning, manufacturing, wholesaling on their own, and selling their products directly to department stores and specialized shops. In general, Japanese wholesalers of consumer goods act to transmit and disseminate information between the manufacturers and the retailers. However leisure swimwear is a specific industry: Upstream material manufacturers disseminate information and participate in planning, the apparel manufacturers carry out needed and manufacture plan for commercialization. There are very few wholesalers standing between them. One reason of this specificity is that the fashion swimwear field is a new industry with a short history beginning only in the 1970s. No traditional wholesalers existed before this period, which has created new trading customs.

There is little leeway for changing the merchandise, aside from materials, colors, and designs, so it is conceivable that handling information is relatively simple.

B. Customary practices in merchandising

1. Competitive swimwear

For the sportswear manufacturers, competitive swimwear is nothing more than a single item in a diverse product line, and payments are transacted according to almost the same conditions as those for other sportswear. Almost all transactions, whether between the manufacturer and the wholesaler or between the wholesaler and the retailer, are paid on the basis of bills payable within 180 days. Yet chain retailers of sporting goods or sportswear usually lay in stock directly from the manufacturers, and in those case, they may acquire only a small amount of stock, cash transactions being a greater importance.

2. Leisure swimwear

Since major apparel manufacturers usually market their merchandise through their own chain stores, the payments for leisure swimwear are usually dealt with as internal settlements of accounts, but in case of specialized manufacturers of swimwear, cash settlement is done by bills. Most bills are for either 90 or 180 days.

IV. Advice on Access to the Market

When foreign swimwear businesses enter the Japanese market, they need to follow different methods for competitive swimwear and leisure swimwear. The following are some important points regarding the means of accessing these two markets.

A. Competitive swimwear

Sportswear manufacturers firmly dominate the market for competitive swimwear, and it is extremely difficult to get one's products into their distribution channels. One effective method of entering the market is to approach sportswear wholesalers or sporting goods wholesalers. Since these are expendable goods, the requirements for materials are high, and using Japanese-made materials will make products more acceptable to wholesalers. Of course, if one can claim advantages for foreign-made materials, it is possible to use them.

An important point to consider in connection with market access is whether to promote

one's brand on all fronts or to lower prices. Japanese sportswear manufacturers turn out their own brands of swimwear, and foreign businesses will need to make efforts to stand up against these brands, establish and maintain their own brands. In order to do this, they will have to attempt brand permeation through means such as commercials using famous athletes, which will require some initial costs. When following a low-price strategy, a corporate needs to be aware that low-priced goods have a poor image in Japan, and will necessarily have to pay a careful attention on the quality. The minimum requirement for this is getting hold of Japan's standards for industrial quality and meeting them.

Since seasonal factors are irrelevant for these products, there is almost no problem with delivery dates missing the selling period. Yet it makes sense that delivering merchandise at the promised time is important.

Since the selling prices of competitive swimwear are relatively low and fashion is not particularly emphasized, observation should be pointed out that for companies which have no brand name, this market is easier for foreign businesses to enter than the leisure swimwear market is.

B. Leisure swimwear

Color and design are among the factors emphasized in leisure swimwear, and this is unique to the Japanese market. When entering this market, one must keep in mind that this is more than mere swimwear, and there is no more effective method than touting a product's stylishness. Indeed, appeals based on price are rather meaningless: In order to enter into the market, it is necessary to use the Japanese people's sensitivity to trends by emphasizing that these kinds of products are popular overseas. For this reason, in addition to the associated costs, to penetrate into the Japanese market requires efforts such as proposing topics to the mass media in exchange of products promotion. The most effective method is to target department stores and other retailers. As with competitive swimwear, it is important to meet the high standards demanded for sewing and assembly.

Note:

A point that one must pay attention when entering the market for leisure swimwear is the importance of honoring delivery dates. Unlike competitive swimwear, this product is very seasonal, and it is necessary to treat it as a living thing. Moreover, it is easier for

retailers to handle small lots with as much variety as possible. Furthermore, products compatible with typical Japanese body types must be developed. For example, corporate must make efforts to develop products that create the impression of longer legs or a larger bust.

V. Source

A. The Trade Fair, Exhibition

International Trade Fair for Sport & Leisure

Duration :February 23,24,25,2000

Site :Tokyo Big Sight (Tokyo International Exhibition Center)

Organization :JAPAN SPORTS INDUSTRIES FEDERATION

B. Government Agencies, Industrial Organizations

Consumer Affairs Division, Industrial Policy Bureau

The Ministry of International Trade and Industry

1-3-1, Kaumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-891

Tel: 03-3501-1511(The main number)

Japan Sports Industries Federation

Nougakusyurin Bldg.3F, 3-6, Kandajinboucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0051

Association of Japan Sporting Goods Industries

Santou Bldg.9F, 3-28-9,Kandaogawamachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0052

Tel. 03-3219-2041

Tokyo Sporting Goods Manufactures Association

Tokyo-Sport-House, 5-8-6, Asakusabasi, Taito-ku, Tokyo, 111-0053

Tel. 03-3863-3851

Kansai Sporting Goods Manufactures Association

Takatsu green Mansion, 1-3-22, Takatsu, Chuo-ku, Osaka-city, Osaka, 111-0053

Tel. 06-6761-5787

C. Manufacturers

1. Competitive swimwear

MIZUNO CORPORATION

1-12-35, Minamikohoku, Suminoe-ku, Osaka, Osaka 559-0034
Tel. 06-6614-8200

Desant Limited

1-11-3, Dougashiba, Tennouji-ku, Osaka, Osaka 543-8921
Tel. 06-6774-0365
Fax .06-6774-2605

GOLDWIN INC.

2-20-6, Shoto, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8690
Tel. 03-3481-7200

ASICS

7-1-1, Minatojimanakamachi, Chuo-ku, Kobe, Hyogo 650-8555
Tel. 078-303-2231
Fax. 078-303-2241

Wacoal Corporation

29, Kisshoinnakajimacho, Minami-ku, Kyoto, Kyoto 601-8313
Tel. 075-6682-5111

GOLDWIN INC.

2-20-6, Shoto, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8690
Tel. 03-3481-7200
Fax. 03-3481-7208

CAPITAL INDUSTRY INC.

2-27-7, Asakusabashi, Taito-ku, Tokyo 111-0053
Tel. 03-3862-0271
Fax. 03-3864-7094

OZAKI SHOJI CO.LTD.

3-10-25, Kojimatanokuchi, Kurashiki, Okayama 711-8622
Tel. 086-477-6111
Fax. 086-477-4390

Kanebo.Ltd.

Izuminishiazabu Bldg.4F, 4-3-11, Nishiazabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0031

Tel.03-3405-2745

Fax.03-3405-2790

2. Leisure swimwear

NIKKi

3-4-7, Kitakyuhojicho, Chuo-ku, Osaka, Osaka 541-0057

Tel. 06-6251-3871

Fax. 06-6253-2186

YAMATOYA CO.LTD.

8-5-22,Imagawa,Higashisumiyoshi-ku, Osaka, Osaka 546-0003

Tel. 06-6797-7831

Fax. 06-6797-276

TAKAHASHI SHOJI KABUSHIKIGAISSYA

2-5-20, Utsubohoncho, Nishi-ku, Osaka, Osaka 550-0004

Tel. 06-6448-0741

Fax. 06-6448-7760

ACT THREE

4-8-11, Ryogoku, Sumida-ku, Tokyo 130-0026

Tel. 03-3635-7131

DREAM

Mitsui Bldg2.3-4-18, Nakanoshima, Kita-ku, Osaka, Osaka 530-0005

Tel. 06-6445-2621

Fax. 06-6445-2622

RIOKA

Osakakagakusenikaikan Bldg. 4-6-8, Kawaramachi, Chuo-ku, Osaka, Osaka 541-0048

Tel. 06-6201-3861

Fax. 06-6227-1560

MARUFUJI KABUSHIKIGAISHA

28-4, Sanbancho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0075

Tel. 03-3264-8411

Fax. 03-3264-0127

BLACK SHARK

1-23-11, Taito, Taito, Tokyo 110-0016

Tel. 03-3835-7107

Fax. 03-3832-1423

Miulan

NS Bldg24, 1-10, Nihonbashihamacho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 103-0007

Tel. 03-3862-7891

KOSUGI SANGYO COMPANY LIMITED.

2-8-5, Nihonbashihoridomecho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 103-0012

Tel. 03-5695-9000

Fax. 03-3662-3100

D. Wholesalers

IMOTO SPORTS

3-1-5, Honjohigashi, Osaka, Osaka 531-0074

Tel. 06-6372-2861

SSK CORPORATION

1-2-19, Kamihonmachi-nishi, Chuo-ku, Osaka, Osaka 540-0062

Tel. 06-6768-1111

EVERNEW

6-4-38, Kiba, Koto-ku, Tokyo 135-0042

Tel. 03-3649-4611

XANAX

1-4-52, Minato-cho, Naniwa-ku, Osaka, Osaka 556-0017

Tel. 06-6568-1110

ZETT CORPRATION

1-2-16, Torigatsuji, Tennoji-ku, Osaka, Osaka 543-8601

Tel. 06-6779-1171

CHITOSE TRADING INC.

Nihon-Golf Bldg, 1-5, Kamiyama-cho, Kita-ku, Osaka, Osaka 530-0026

Tel. 06-6312-8721

TROPS CORPRATION

2-9-10, Fukae-kita, Higashinari-ku, Osaka, Osaka 537-0001

Tel.06-6973-4848

BEST ONE

405, Fukumotocho, Nishinotoindori, Shimogyo-ku, Kyoto, Kyoto 600-8320

Tel.075-341-6621