

- Press release

## **SHERPA TENSING VINTAGE EDITION**

### **The legendary Swiss sunscreen now in retro look**

**Fifty-five years ago, the Sherpa Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary became the first people to set foot on the summit of Mount Everest. The Swiss sunscreen brand to which the Tibetan porter a short while later lent his name has been part of Swiss popular culture ever since. CWK, the sunscreen's Winterthur-based manufacturer, decided in the spring of 2008 to celebrate this success story by launching a new "Vintage Edition" of Sherpa Tensing in a product that combines today's contents with the look and bottles of the fifties.**

(pd.) The history of the popular Swiss sunscreen dates back to 29 May 1953, when a hitherto unknown Tibetan Sherpa called Tenzing Norgay accompanied the New Zealander Edmund Percival Hillary on an expedition to Mount Everest, where they became the first people ever to set foot on the summit. One year later, in the summer of 1954, the experienced Sherpa who in the meantime had become an international celebrity, visited the school of mountaineering in Meiringen in Switzerland. It was there that Norgay met a young cosmetics pioneer called Gerda Spillmann; she had just developed an innovative suntan lotion for which she had yet to find a suitable name and sponsor. Impressed by both the product and the young entrepreneur, Sherpa Tenzing did not hesitate to offer Spillmann the right to market her suntan lotion under his name – in exchange for a smile and a gold Omega.

*From a single product to a whole series of sun care products*

Today, the Sherpa Tensing brand belongs to the portfolio of CWK, a manufacturer of household and personal care products and natural cosmetics. The Winterthur-based production company, which is part of the Coop Group, purchased the brand in 2003 from Gaba AG, which in turn had acquired it from Wolo AG. CWK saw the potential of what, in Switzerland, is a much loved and well known brand, and began developing a whole series of 18 different sunscreens and sun care products. The Sherpa Tensing formulation was completely reworked and updated in line with the latest international standards in skincare research. Whereas protection factors 5 and 7 used to be advertised as "blockers", for example, these days only waterproof care products with an SPF of between 15 and 50 and a UVA/UVB protection system comply with this standard. The logo, which originally used an Asian-inspired font, was likewise reworked and modernized.

*Conscious production, cutting-edge technology*

What did not change, however, was the typical, slightly vegetable "Mount Everest" scent of Sherpa Tensing, which is prepared in Switzerland according to a secret formulation. Sherpa Tensing now has sunscreen lotions with a wide range of protection factors as well as some for children and those with sensitive skin (the Sensitive Line). The collection also includes after-sun products and mini-bottles designed for sports lovers. Sherpa Tensing is prepared, produced and bottled in Switzerland; the production company CWK complies both with its own exacting standards and Europe-wide skin compatibility, environmental protection and sustainability requirements. These cover everything from the sourcing of raw materials and the sparing use of resources to bottling, logistics and distribution.

### *A bit of Swiss popular culture*

The work carried out on the Sherpa Tensing brand has paid off: its market share has risen from a modest 1.5% to a current figure of well over 10%. In the very hot summer of 2006, Sherpa Tensing products recorded a massive 50% jump in sales compared with the previous year. Active sports sponsorship has also proved its worth: Sherpa Tensing is now official sunscreen supplier to a number of professional sportsmen and women, such as the beach volley team Heyer/Heuscher, the mountaineer Kari Kobler, the cross-country skier Seraina Mischol, various tennis juniors and bike teams. The year 2007 saw the brand becoming a partner of the Swiss Gymnastics Festival in Frauenfeld, too. Its long history and countless community involvement activities have made Sherpa Tensing a brand which in Switzerland is both well known and well loved, especially as its characteristic scent frequently triggers memories of childhood and youth.

### *Vintage Edition in retro look*

To celebrate the unique history of the Sherpa Tensing brand, which is so deeply rooted in Switzerland, CWK complemented its existing product range with the launch of a fifties-style “Vintage Edition” in the spring of 2008. This product combines the safety and high level of protection of today’s sunscreens with the original bottles and logo of the fifties. Thanks to the fact that Sherpa Tensing is such a lovingly cultivated part of branding history here in Switzerland, CWK was even able to retrieve the machine-tools used to produce the original bottles. And these were in such an impeccable condition that even decades later, they could still be used to make the Sherpa Tensing bottles. What's more, no compromises had to be made with regard to durability and dosage for the “Vintage Edition” of sunscreen products. What made Sherpa Tensing big in the first place – safe tanning – is just as important now as it was back then.

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*www.sherpatensing.ch* or [www.cwk.ch](http://www.cwk.ch)

Sherpa Tensing is available from all Coop’s larger sales outlets and specialist retailers.

### Captions:

1. Sherpa Tensing’s new Vintage Edition: a modern sunscreen in original, fifties-style bottles
2. Sherpa Tensing’s original, Asian-inspired logo
3. Mountaineer and Sherpa Tensing Norgay first saw the Swiss Alps on a visit to Meiringen (Canton

Berne) in the summer of 1954. (Walter Studer/Keystone)