

Inside:
Pg. 24
The **WWD** List
London's Top Retail Streets

WWD THURSDAY

Sportswear

Star Bright

No need to wish upon a star this spring. Girls are getting just what they want: colorful, fun clothes touched with an Eighties dance flair. Here, Killah's cotton dress worn as a shirt and Miss Sixty's cotton and spandex jeans and shoes. For more young fashion, see Next Generation, pages 13 to 23.



Polo Express Rolls On: Eyes European Growth As Profits Leap 31.5%

By Vicki M. Young
NEW YORK — The news from Polo Ralph Lauren Corp. just keeps getting better. The fashion house on Wednesday reported a 31.5 percent gain in net income in the second quarter ended

Federated Posts Third-Quarter Loss Because of May Integration Costs. Page 3.

Sept. 30 to \$137 million, or \$1.28 a diluted share, on a 13.6 percent increase in revenues to \$1.17 billion. Polo also upped its full-year earnings guidance and said it was making a \$9 million acquisition of its belts and small leather goods license.

See **Polo**, Page 10

COMPLIMENTS OF WWD



Jordache, Penney's Team to Relaunch Maurice Sasson

Maurice Sasson began a new life this week as a moderate brand available exclusively on jcpenny.com.

Parent company Jordache Enterprises several months ago stopped selling Sasson at Nordstrom, where it retailed for \$68 to \$88, in the hopes of finding a retail partner that would expand the brand's customer base.

"We had Maurice in the better market for a while and we were looking for a broader avenue of distribution," said Ira Spiegel, vice president of Sasson and Jordache's Kikit Jeans brand. "As a division of Jordache, we're used to doing big projects and we were looking for a little bit more volume out of the label."

Jordache wants to replicate the success of its Kikit brand. Relunched in 2002 and retailing for \$30 to \$40, Kikit has been a strong seller at Macy's.

"We want to turn [Sasson] into a major brand with another major retailer," Spiegel said. "Our Kikit brand has been so successful in Macy's, it's become an all-door brand for them. We wanted to develop another brand with another retail partner that could be the same thing."

Spiegel noted that retail consolidation has left fewer stores with which to be a partner. Developing

specific brands for existing partners has become a necessity, he said.

The brand will bow with four long-pants bodies, including a basic boot-cut style and a straight-leg style, all of which are available in three washes. The line will focus on clean finishes and darker washes, giving it a more upscale or contemporary look from Kikit. Retail prices will range between \$29 and \$39.

Spiegel acknowledged that launching on Penney's Web site represents the first test for the brand, partly because selling solely through the Internet required focusing on a few key items.

"You don't get the breadth of product shown that you would at a retail location, so you have to pick your best products and be sure they're exhibited in the right way," he said.

The early response from Penney's has been positive, Spiegel said, adding that the retailer has already placed an order for some spring products, including a capri style.

"We're hoping to do a couple million at retail on the Internet and see that the big opportunity is when we hit the retail stores," Spiegel said.

— R.T.