Knitters exhibiting at the show featured a variety of stripe patterns, which looked new through the use of slubbed yarns. “Stripes are a big trend right now,” said Pat Tabassi of Design Knit. “And the use of slubbed yarns is very important in Europe, so we’re showing a lot of these types of knit fabrics.”

Glitter and sparkle was also evident throughout the show. Attendee interest was generated by the use of silver or gold lurex yarns, giving even the traditionally casual knits a new and updated feel. These fabrics were especially appealing to attendees representing the contemporary market.

One of the most popular seminars at the show was the Authentic Green event, sponsored by Lenzing Fibers, which featured a discussion of the “Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability Consumer (LOHAS)” by Dina Dunn of Oeko-Tex and David Atkins of Lenzing Fibers.

Recycled cotton
Key developments at the show included a line of domestically produced 100% recycled cottons and 100% recycled jerseys and piques, made from 65% recycled cotton/35% recycled PET polyester from Green-Spun Textured Knits, based in Gastonia, North Carolina.

Barbara Montz of Green-Spun explained: “Recycled cotton may be the most environmentally friendly fibre on the planet. It is made from pre-consumer cotton ‘table waste’ clippings from cut and sew facilities that otherwise would be dumped into landfills. It doesn’t need to be dyed and there are no harsh chemicals or liquids of any kind used in its production process.”

Jim Jakubecy of Green-Spun also emphasised the importance of understanding certain “green terminology”, including the terms ‘recycled’ and ‘reclaimed’. He said: “Recycled fabric has had a prior life as a fabric, such as post consumer PET polyester or recycled cotton.

“Reclaimed fabrics are basically made from spinning room floor waste that is made into mop yarns or has other low-end industrial uses. Green-Spun uses only recycled fabric for its high quality, textured knit fabrics.”

The trend for sustainable fabrics is spilling over into other markets. Ms Montz said: “I see the popularity of eco-friendly fabrics from the outdoor market now moving into the fashion market, which is very evident at this show.”

Los Angeles based knitter, Design Knit is a leading manufacturer of high quality knit fabrics, made from eco-friendly yarns and high-end luxury yarns, targeted towards the

Embroidered and sequined Polartec embellished fabric from Sequin City
designer/contemporary market. The company typically uses 30s and 50s yarns in jerseys, and 80s yarns for very sheer constructions.

Design Knit featured new product developments focused on year-round wear, including cotton/cashmere blends in jersey and plissé rib constructions. The company also showcased a collection of 2 x 1 mini ribs, made from MicroModal slubbed yarns. Slubbed Supima cotton/Modal/spandex yarns also featured in jersey constructions for garment dyeing, and Supima cotton/Modal with polyester stripes. Tonal stripes are also an important trend.

Design Knit’s eco-friendly collection consisted of a variety of fabrics made from hemp, hemp blends, recycled polyester, organic Supima cotton/MicroModal, bamboo blends, Tencel blends, and organic mélange yarn dyes.

US Silk and Textile Secrets, two fabric importers, specialise in a variety of printed fabrics, both knit and woven. US Silk, based in New York, featured its 150g/sq m 100% silk interlock which was its most popular knit construction. Other important knitted base fabrics included 15% silk/30% cotton and 95% rayon/5% Lycra blends. Textile Secrets, based in Los Angeles, showcased 100% silk, silk/cotton and silk/lycra jerseys.

Both companies presented a variety of print patterns including large brush-stroke florals, novelty animal prints, ombrés, free-hand drawings, large geometrics, and what is referred to as “no-print” prints, a mixture of trends in one print pattern. According to Steve Hirsch of US Silk, the key colours for print patterns are “brights in bluish green tones, such as teal and turquoise”.

**Sequined fabrics**

Not many companies epitomise the glitz and glitter trend in fashion fabrics better than Sequin City, a New Jersey based supplier of sequined fabrics, sequin trimmings, embroidered fabrics, and hand beaded and glittered fabrics.

At the show, Sequin City featured a variety of designs and an extensive array of sequin colours and fabrics for Broadway show apparel and dress attire for American theme parks, embellished on both knit and woven base cloths. According to Raymond Hill, president of Sequin City, about 70% of the company's fabrics are targeted toward the sportswear market, 20% go into costuming and 10% can be found in couture designs. All Sequin City’s designs are copyrighted.

Lenzing Fibers used its participation in the LA International Textile Show to promote its new MicroModal AIR yarn, and the overall eco-friendly properties of all Modal and Tencel fibres.

**Ultra-fine fibre**

Lenzing’s newly developed micro fibre, MicroModal AIR, is lightweight and ultra-fine. The fibre’s diameter is 0.8 dtex, which makes it the lightest Modal fibre available in the marketplace, permitting lighter and finer knit fabrics than possible previously. The new microfibre has a mass per unit of less than 100g. Because of its soft quality, it is said to be comfortable against the skin after repeated washings, making it ideal yarn for high quality luxurious lingerie, according to the company.

According to technical information provided by Lenzing, knit fabrics made from MicroModal AIR are symmetrically smooth and reveal a perfect fabric appearance. Yarns up to a count of 225Nm can be spun, leading to new knit creations in the fine count range (E 36) for luxury applications. KI