

across its sock range at ISPO, with sales guy Steve Booth noting that this is its unique selling point.

SmartWool is now moving deeper into the outdoor clothing and baselayer segments, which Booth said it has a lot of work to do in order to catch up with market leaders such as Icebreaker.

However, Booth said: "Year one has gone better than we could have expected, and by years three and four, these lines will be very successful for us."

Bag specialist JanSport said it is in the midst of repositioning itself in the UK market, and is working to make itself known as leader in the outdoor field once more.

UK country manager Nathan Hill said; "Consumers are looking for quality and features these days. We've been making bags for 44 years, so they're quality outdoor products."



On show at ISPO was the Katahdin range of bags that offer a variety of technical and functional features, such as ergonomic S-shaped straps and different storage solutions. Katahdin bags will be on sale later this year, and UK key account manager Paul Collier said: "The Katahdin range is about style, comfort and functionality."

Relative newbie Kozi Kidz was showing its range of brightly coloured, yet functional outdoor clothing for children.

Director Tomas Torstensson said the point of the Kozi Kidz range was to make outdoor clothing as appealing to children as possible, while simultaneously providing parents with reassurance over performance and function.

And so successful had ISPO been, that Torstensson said it had agreed provisional deals with three new country distributors to take the brand further afield from its South Yorkshire base. Torstensson said: "We saw there was a gap in the market for children's outdoor clothes that offered both fashion and function."

"We grew from 10 retail partners to 100 in eight months, and have signed up three more country distributors here."

Another young gun, footwear brand Hoka One One, had a range of shoes on show on its stand, including its Mafate series of trail running shoes. There were also examples of its work to extend into other footwear areas, such as hiking, road running and cross-training, which a spokesperson said Hoka One One would be pushing in 2011.

They said: "People have asked for these products, so we made them and the market has responded well."

"ISPO gives us the opportunity to let the market try them, talk about them and get a feel for our shoes."

Big brands Berghaus and The North Face were also extremely please with the outcome of ISPO. The North Face's vice president and general manager for the EMEA region, Timo Schmidt-

ISPO 2011 facts:

- **Over 80,000 visitors; 25 per cent increase on number in 2010 and biggest year in 71-show history**
- **2,267 exhibitors, up 200 on 2010**
- **Net exhibition space up 13 per cent on 2010; exhibitors cover all of New Munch Trade Fair Centre**
- **67 per cent of visitors and 84 per cent of exhibitors based outside Germany**
- **ISPO 2012 dates: January 29 to February 1, 2012**

Eisenhart, has gone on record as saying ISPO 2011 may have been "the best trade show of all time".

Speaking to *SGB Outdoor*, Schmidt-Eisenhart said: "It has been a busy show, and our stand has been rocking throughout. We've had plenty of good meetings with some of our key accounts."

Schmidt-Eisenhart also outlined the work The North Face is undertaking to continue momentum within its business and achieve a five-year target of sales totaling £3bn. This included its businesses model extending across new categories, such as performance and youth categories, a global support network from being part of the VF group of companies and its corporate social responsibility initiatives.



He said The North Face plans to grown into new markets, like Russia and Turkey, and have 10 own-brand stores across Europe by year-end.

However, the UK will remain central to its business, he said. "There is still a massive opportunity for growth in the UK. The UK hasn't hit the ceiling yet, and we have work to do to manage the brand and continue to provide the right solutions."

Berghaus spokesman Chris Lines said: "Berghaus has grown its international footprint by signing up a Russian distributor at the show."

Berghaus has recently overhauled its international management team, as well as creating more specific regional business units, to help support global growth. Lines said this will see more focused put on the UK, which has its own unit within the wider EMEA operation.

"It's the right time to make this change as it is

a positive restructure. The economy is scary at the moment but the UK outdoor industry will trade through it. Demand for apparel is growing and the high street is leveraging a greater influence. There are sure to be pot holes in the road, and there will be a lot of pain, but this change will help accelerate growth for Berghaus."

The Berghaus stand included some new products derived from its MtnHaus development programme, which featured the Gore-Tex active shell, as covered in the December 2010 issue of *SGB Outdoor*, which debuted at ISPO and for which Berghaus is a launch partner.

SGB Outdoor was also shown the Arisdale line of products, which Lines said are tailored to suit a variety of outdoor categories. "With these we are able get Gore-Tex to a wider market by offering it in products at an entry-level price point."

Jack Wolfskin had an imposing stand at this year's ISPO, and UK and Ireland country manager Alan Perrins indicated this was a sign of the brand's potential to dominate the market.

Perrins said Jack Wolfskin has been focused on its home market of Germany, as well as neighbouring territories such as Austria and Switzerland, but is now working to make itself known in the UK once more.

The brand was available in the UK 15 years ago, but pulled out for various reasons. "It is now seeded in central Europe as the biggest outdoor brand and has decided now is the time to re-enter the UK," said Perrins, as "the outdoor market has been static for a while, and customers want to see new products and innovation."

"Jack Wolfskin has been described as a sleeping giant and we are now knocking on the door. We're making a huge commitment to the UK, and people are welcoming another brand."

Jack Wolfskin already has own-brand stores in the UK, with three key ones in London, "We have 300 franchise stores around the world, but

our own stores allow us to make a statement and showcase our products to consumers as we look to grow the brand's recognition in the UK market."

Perrins said reaction to the move has been good so far, with its sales force growing from two to five to meet demand. It has also undertaken marketing initiatives to drive brand awareness deeper into the UK consciousness, with three-year advertising board deals at Premier League football outfits Liverpool and Fulham.

Perrins said this initiative will help embed Jack Wolfskin with those not directly embedded with the outdoor industry.

"It worked in Germany for us at Bayern Munich, and helped grow interest and understanding of the wider outdoor market with a different set of consumers."

