

One of the visitors to the 'have-a-go' day gets to grips with some RWS airgun pellets.



RUAG's Dave Cooper (left) explains the ammo to shooters.

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Come and have a go... with **RWS**

Shooting is well known as an industry with strong brand loyalty. RUAG Ammotec is hoping that by putting its products in the hands of the people that count, it can sway their allegiances...

Shooters are a funny breed at times. Anyone who has spent any significant time in the trade will be able to vouch for that. It's the nature of the sport; it's a very habitual and superstitious thing. People find what equipment they are comfortable with and tend to stick to what works. That's not to say that advertisement and new launches from gun

companies fall on deaf ears, but RUAG Ammotec has come up with a new idea it hopes will serve to boost its popularity. Back in March, the company began a string of road shows to shooting clubs up and down the country taking with it a boot full of its latest German-manufactured RWS ammunition. The idea is simple – in conjunction with a local shooting retailer, RUAG offers

local shooters at a shooting club the chance to try as much of their ammo as they like, for free with the hope and confidence that they will like what they shoot. If so, the dealer in question will order a host of the particular lines of the ammo that their customers have enjoyed shooting with that day. Not only does this prove a boost for RUAG, backed by its consumer advertising, it also offers clubs a

chance to invite people to their grounds and make a real day of it. Some clubs that have already taken part in the event have used it as an opportunity to get more youngsters into the sport.

Testing, testing...

The latest of these 'have-a-go' days was held at one of the Midlands' growing shooting clubs: Leicester and District Small Bore Rifle and Pistol



Shooters of all ages, genders and abilities are invited to try.



The Leicester club also has an indoor rimfire range.



The best critics of products are the end users and RUAG is well aware of this.

Club (LSBRPC). T&G was invited along by RUAG's sales manager of more than 10 years, Dave Cooper, who was partly behind the conception of these events. He explains more about the events: "Basically we're looking for ways in which we can increase the profile of RWS in a way that is positive for the sport and that helps local clubs and dealers. The dealers invite their customers along, as do the club owners, and they basically get to use as much of our ammunition as they please."

The day runs from midday through until 5pm and shooters arrive steadily throughout that time; everyone from the club captain, John Fudge, down to young shots who are fairly new to the sport. Dave is on hand to explain to them the specification and benefits of the ammunition he has brought along.

Used and abused

The day is definitely well received by the shooters who attend, obviously a chance to shoot with some free ammunition is a bonus, but the chance to try out a brand that's highly regarded is also valuable.

Dave adds: "One of the best things about these 'have-a-go' days is the fact that people can try out this ammunition in sufficient quantity for free. Okay, some people might try different ammunition anyway, but if they don't like it, they'll feel like they have wasted their money and will feel even more negative towards the brand. With this, they can try RWS under no pressure and give us some honest feedback. If the feedback is good enough, then the dealers in the local area will put an order in with us."

Since the first of these

"People are free to test our ammunition against what they normally use to see the benefits for themselves."

– Dave Cooper.

The RWS range on offer is rimfire ammunition. Dave has brought a good selection from the lower-end Target and Match ammo through to the mid-range Special Match. On the high-end scale of things the flagship names of R50 and R100 are here too. A new ammunition has also been brought along: Gecko, an affordable entry-level ammo that has been built with surprisingly good build quality. It actually receives some very good feedback from the shooters here today. One visitor, who has some international shooting experience, found that the Gecko had comparable patterns to a high-end ammunition of a competitor. This is another obvious benefit as Dave explains: "Some of these guys would be coming here to shoot unaware about this event so for them to get to try out some ammunition for free is a bonus. Also because it's a laid-back thing, people are free to test our ammunition against what they normally use so that they can see the benefits and differences right before their eyes. Something like that works so much more effectively than me trying to clinch a sales deal with retailers – trying to explain why their customers will like it."

in March, RUAG has seen significant orders in the various lines of the RWS ammo to prove that this scheme really does work. Dave is also on hand to answer any questions and concerns that the shooters have. He has years of experience in this trade at every level: customer, retailer and now supplier.

The Leicester club has ample grounds for this sort of day to take place and these events can often give clubs a welcome boost. Although LSBRPC isn't doing badly as a club, it's still a difficult time for shooting and anything that can help to boost interest can only be seen as a good thing. With a 50-metre range, 80-metre range, an indoor air-pistol range and land that is owned by the club itself, LSBRPC is in a strong position. The day is successful for a club of this size and works at smaller and larger ones too. The RUAG event today is the latest of about 15 that have already been run and has, like the others, been enjoyable and successful for everyone involved. This step to get grass roots shooters involved has not only benefited RWS and RUAG, but local clubs and local shooters. ■