



DICK FARLEY

MERCHANDISE AND MARKET TRENDS

It's always a pleasure to talk with a successful golf club professional. Tommy Jacobs, director of golf at LaCosta in California, fits that mold perfectly. Jacobs is a major stockholder of **Golf Tech**, a division of Simmons International Corp. Golf Tech's golf club business, according to Jacobs, is booming. Current plans call for overseas marketing of its products.

The feature of the line is the Honeycomb woods and irons.

Carl Horn, executive vice president of Golf Tech, points out that the unique honeycomb construction was developed because of its successful application in the aerospace industry. The honeycomb structure, he says, allows the weight to be removed from the center of the clubhead. This results in better heel to toe balance without sacrificing strength or rigidity.

Another recent development mentioned by Jacobs was the appointment by **Jantzen** of Golf Tech as the sole agent for the Jantzen lines of tennis and golf apparel and related sportswear in the United States. Under the terms of the agreement, Golf Tech's network of 43 national sales representatives and company sales managers will market the famous Jantzen Open sportswear line to golf and country club pro shops, golf shops at driving ranges, golf specialty stores, golf stores and tennis shops.

Golf Tech's fleet of 35-foot mobile home showrooms was a major factor that determined the selection of the golf equipment company as Jantzen's sole United States agent for its golf and tennis lines. "Bringing together a major soft goods line and a golf equipment line in luxurious mobile display rooms makes the job of examining and ordering merchandise far more convenient for the golf professional," says Jacobs. "He can now spend much less time shopping for the two most impor-

tant product lines in his shop."

With wool prices spiraling up, **DuPont's** new 65-E Dacron (spun polyester) is an attractive alternative to 100 per cent wool. Reported to be the "nearest thing to woven wools," this fiber will be introduced in lighter weights for tailored clothing this spring. Heavier weights are expected for fall 1974. Meanwhile, a rising tide of wool-plus-blends is expected to hit the market beginning the second quarter of next year.

Those golf professionals who are serious about merchandising in the pro shop should own a copy of the "Textile Glossary," published by Fairchild Publications. It is an instant portable reference for fabric descriptions; definitions of yarns, fibers and processes used to create fabrics; and identification of important trademarks. The book, priced at \$1.95, should prove invaluable to the professional in both buying and selling golf merchandise. It can be obtained by writing: Fairchild Book Division, 7 East 12th St., New York, N.Y. 10003.

A new offering for the golfer's wardrobe is "The Gentleman's Shirt" by Ben Hogan. The shirt signals a product diversification for the **AMF/Ben Hogan Company**, supplementing the company's well-established general line of fine golf equipment with a quality golfwear line. The shirt is currently being supplied in 15 color-and-pattern knit varieties. Four sizes are available. The fabric is a special blend, combining the drip-dry characteristics of 65 per cent Du Pont Dacron polyester with the moisture absorbency of 35 per cent long-staple Pima cotton. Two collar styles are available, full-fashioned knit and fully tailored. The shirts, with a classic, fully tailored appearance that

looks good on the golf course or in the clubhouse, are also designed for maximum golfing comfort. As with the general line of Ben Hogan golf equipment, the shirts are to be found only in golf professional shops.

According to Bill Kaiser, **Hillerich & Bradsby Company** has a winner in its new Thoroughbred golf club line. The new Thoroughbred irons are stainless steel investment castings, which feature a contour beveled sole. Heel and toe weighting is achieved with a cavity back rather than weighted inserts. The woods feature a clear face plate insert, which exposes the Thoroughbred horse head design underneath.

According to Kaiser, the company will continue to market its heel and toe weighted forged irons, which have reached a very high acceptance in the market, as well as the new investment cast club.

"After much experimentation," he stated, "we rejected the weighted insert theory and utilized the basic heel and toe weighted design of our famous Power-Bilt iron. In short, we have taken our famous iron design and utilized it to the fullest with investment casting."

Although the new club has been in the development stages for some time, Hillerich & Bradsby were very deliberate in the club's development. "One thing we did not want to give up," Kaiser added, "was the contour beveled sole. We feel this sole was probably the major technological advance in irons in the last 10 years. However, many companies rushed investment castings to market without this great feature, simply because they didn't think it could be accomplished with casting. We found it could be."

The Thoroughbred clubs are now available in limited quantities in pro shops throughout the country. □