

# Stocks, Display, Advertising, Are Tanis Success Keys

By HERB GRAFFIS

**T**HERE are not many merchants, large or small, in any phase of the sports goods business who do any smarter or more thorough job of merchandising than Chuck Tanis does as pro of the Olympia Fields Country Club on the south side of Chicago district.

Chuck's method of shopping, display and advertising have resulted in development of a volume that compares favorably with that of many a sports goods store or department operated on a 12 months basis.

His percentage of the total golf buying done by his members probably is among the highest enjoyed by any of the nation's pros. His shop volume is added to by many of Olympia's Fields' members bringing their friends to buy at the Tanis shop. That's a clear indication of the high prestige as a golf goods merchant Tanis has built with his advertising, merchandise and service.

Tanis is by no means a high pressure salesman. He's a quiet, competent, thoughtful worker. There's no forcing in his methods. The keynote of the Tanis operations is helping the members to buy right.

That, of course, means careful selection of merchandise as the first step. Chuck makes buying trips to see what's the best he can get to sell. During recent years of merchandise shortage he's picked up merchandise that not many pro shops or sports goods stores have been able to stock. One main reason for that is his practice of ordering far in advance. Hats, caps and other apparel items, for instance, he orders in the fall for delivery at various times the following summer. His cash and credit position qualify him as a first class customer for some of America's top manufacturers of sports ap-

parel. He has brands usually carried only by the exclusive sports apparel stores. But don't let that make you think Tanis fails to make a sound price balance in his stock so he can supply the needs of buyers who don't throw much money around when they come into a pro shop.

## An All-Star Staff

Another prime reason for Chuck's successful operation of the pro shop as a service station for members is the staff he has assembled and trained. He's got four men. That gives Tanis a quite hefty overhead as he pays his assistant well. But, by their qualifications, training and work they boost sales and customer satisfaction and make their salaries good business for Chuck. Irv Kleinedler who was with Chuck for 3 years before he went into the army now is back on the job as teaching assistant. Ernie Davidson has been with Tanis for 5 years and is in the shop all the time. Bob Rossing, who was with Chuck 3 years before enlisting in the Marines is back in the repair and rack room. Richard Scott, who has been 2 years with Tanis in the repair and rack room, is the youngest of the group.

Tanis has developed an exceptionally high class staff all of whom are keenly ambitious to make their department a model of pro department operation. The boys are on their toes looking for chances to improve their work and discuss in frank, friendly manner where they think any of them have missed a bet. The work of the department is well organized. The shop is dusted daily and the floors are mopped 2 or 3 times a week, or oftener if traffic on muddy days so requires. All of the fellows regard themselves as being engaged in an exacting and unique business and take pride in having established and maintaining their shop as a

place many golfers consider the outstanding golf retail shop of the district.

### Displays Changed Often

Shop and window displays are studied thoroughly by Chuck and his assistants and are changed frequently. There is one big showcase that the shop maintains in the lockerroom. That often has about \$500 worth of merchandise on display. It isn't crowded looking but Chuck takes great care to show a wide price range of merchandise. From a \$95 Hotze 2-suit bag to a box of tees this case shows leading items, with changes often enough to make sure that members and guests get a look at the full range of the shop's stock. This showcase is located where it's bound to be seen by members passing from the lockerroom to the dining-room.

There are two show windows; one facing the first tee of the No. 1 course and the other facing the entrance of the men's lockerroom. These are changed about every 2 weeks. They have handsome backgrounds that give a rich look to the displays. The show windows and display cases are well lighted.

In the shop the merchandise is placed on top of show cases, on tables or on wall displays so the goods can be freely handled and examined by the customers. All shirts, sweaters, etc., are wrapped in cellophane so they don't get soiled in handling. Tanis is a strong advocate of displaying, for easy handling by customers, as much merchandise as possible.

Merchandise in boxes and stowed in lockers or cupboards isn't helping to sell itself and it demands time in locating and hauling out for display. Tanis also is a great believer in having merchandise carry price tags.

### Good Range of Sizes

Another feature of Tanis' operations is his judicious selection of enough sizes in his stocks of apparel to really do big business. Here again his policy of ordering far in advance for delivery as seasonal demand requires, pays off. He is sure of getting the needed sizes. This has been especially true in the case of shoes. Chuck already has sold more than 250 pairs of golf shoes which were ordered last fall. The shoe business has surpassed his expectations and he believes he'll be able to sell another 200 pairs this season if he can get deliveries.

We have seen quite a few pros who are pretty good users of advertising to sell shop merchandise and lessons but until some of the fellows can show exhibits and results to prove otherwise, we are disposed to think that Chuck Tanis does the most effective advertising job in pro golf.

One of his members who is in the advertising business helps Chuck edit and lay out his copy and arrange the photographing of the material he used for cuts. The illustrations in the Tanis ads cost a bit of money but he makes good use of the cuts in preparing distinctive

You can handle and inspect almost everything on sale in the Olympia Fields pro shop. The wall panels for glove, hat and sock display are handsome, colored boards with a linoleum covering.





A few small specialties are in the showcase at the Olympia Fields shop, otherwise the stock is displayed where it invites handling by prospective customers. They see plenty that they want.

and forceful advertising that seldom is beaten by the advertising departments of large stores.

#### Advertises Persistently

Tanis makes his advertising click by keeping at it instead of making a shot at intervals when preparing of the ads or editorial publicity just happens to be convenient. The advertising and publicity job is as much a regular detail of his departments operations as is club cleaning. His ads and articles are features of every issue of the club magazine.

Chuck says:

"My own experience is that a double-page folder, advertising merchandise on one side and with a simple article, preferably with illustrations, on instruction or some other phase of golf, on the other side registers strongest with our members and their friends. It is rather costly, but in percent of cost compared to shop sales volume, it works out to be much the cheapest method over the season. It certainly has an accumulative value. The members get to looking for such advertising.

"Mailing this material should be by first class postage to both the home and office addresses of the members. Sales literature stuffed into an envelope along with a members' club statement looks rather cheap and hits them when they are thinking of their club expenses and

are not too strongly in the mood for additional spending.

"All copy should carry the pro shop telephone number and make clear that mail or personal delivery service is available. The copy must make buying attractive and easy, and make the merchandise appear to be something that will add greatly to the member's enjoyment of the game and represent one advantage of belonging to the club."

Chuck went to Olympia Fields in 1924 under Jack Daray and in 1936, after Jerry Glynn left as head pro of the club, became Jerry's successor. Tanis has kept up his early artistry in clubmaking and does quite good business in special sets of woods and irons, as a sideline to his main focus on standard brands of clubs. Like practically every other pro these days he quickly sells all the clubs he can get from manufacturers. The stock of shafts and heads he had for his own clubs he had made up in an effort to come nearer to filling the demand his wise and persistent merchandising and the normal big demand of the times have created.

The Tanis success at conducting a pro tournament so it's a decided factor in warranting club initiation and dues cost, as well as a profitable operation for Tanis and his assistants, is a standout example of how the steady pull on smart selling beats the unplanned intermittent efforts.