

*How every item in your shop
can be made to sell itself*



Jack Murphy's shop at Vestavia CC.

Visual Merchandising

By Henry Leopold

Display Creations, Detroit, Mich.

If you'll get your June copy of *Golfdom* and turn to page 36 where there is an article describing Jack Murphy's shop at Vestavia CC, Birmingham, Ala., you'll get an idea of the new concept in your business, Visual Merchandising.

This simple term or description means exactly what it says. It places your stock out in the open where it constantly tempts your members to self-selection. If you display your merchandise as tastefully as possible, you are in effect hiring an extra salesman or perhaps even more, depending, of course, on how much space you have and how appealing the layout is.

Visual merchandising in golf shops should be set up the same as it is in specialty stores. The next time you have occasion to go into one of these places, a men's shop, for instance, note how the stock is arranged to stimulate impulse buying. Also note that these stores don't have many salesmen. They let their merchandise sell for them. If you're attracted to one of the items that is displayed and buy it, you'll be wise to stop and try to figure out what prompted you to make the purchase.

The Impulse Item

That happened to me a few weeks ago. I went into a store to buy a couple neckties and came away with not only the ties but a sport shirt. After I had paid the clerk, I thought to myself: "What moved me to buy this shirt." I walked over to the other side of the store and took a second look at the spot where the sport shirts were displayed. A model of the one I purchased was displayed on a manikin in a kind of offset in the open case where the shirts were arranged. The fluorescent light, softly tempered by a sandblasted glass sheathe in the canopy, beautifully empha-

sized the rich green color of the shirt. As far as I was concerned it had "Take Me" written all over it.

If the store had been rather dark and dismal I probably wouldn't have noticed the shirt even if it had been displayed on a manikin. The rich green would have been there, but I wouldn't have seen it.

Follow the Curves

I'll say, too, that even if that shirt had been displayed as it was, even to the soft lights, but the surrounding displays and fixtures weren't provocative, my eyes may never have reached it. If you ever have noticed, you are kind of led into these things. Your eye is caught by one display, and if it satisfies you, you keep looking around. If it doesn't, you're apt to say to yourself: "This place is a junk shop. There's nothing here I want."

To put it in terms all of us can understand, a display is a great deal like a woman: one pleasing curve deserves a further look.

Now for Jack Murphy's shop. Take a look at those photos on page 37. As a pro, you understand tempo and timing. This shop has got both, only I'd rather use the word, harmony, in describing it. Everything kind of flows together. A glance at one display provokes a look at the next one and so on. Nothing overwhelms the display next to it, and that is the way it should be. Every piece of merchandise in Murphy's shop has a good chance of selling itself.

There is one thing that the shop at Vestavia has that I would like to see installed in every pro's place of business. That is a lounge area (at front of top photo on page 37.) Members love to lounge at a club — that is one reason why they join it. So, why not let them come in and do that at your shop — if you can manage the space? A few, of course, will wear out

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Visual Merchandising

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their welcome, but the overall result from a dollar and cents standpoint will weigh heavily in your favor.

The Vestavia shop is not a large one, especially when you consider that much of the potential display space is occupied by windows. But that center panel makes up for this. It is merchandised on both sides, yet the unit is a look-through affair that doesn't close off any part of the room. The beauty of an arrangement like this is its flexibility. There are a thousand merchandising mixtures that can be woven around it.

There are numerous other features about this shop that I would like to describe in detail in calling them to your attention, but space doesn't permit this. But I do want to point out these highlights:

All clubs are displayed at eye level with the exception of putters and wedges;

The shoe dept. is an open-end arrangement. Shelves for display can be added or subtracted here, depending upon need;

There isn't a showcase in the shop. You

may or may not like this. It has one advantage, though, in that everything is kept out and within reach of the customer.

There is quite a bit of vertical staggering of shelves in Murphy's shop. This is in keeping with what we said before — leading customers to look from one item to another and forever tempting them to buy;

The shop at Vestavia has complete perimeter lighting. This does away with dark corners and in effect, enables every item merchandised to stand on its own. Every pro shop should strive for this.

Visual Merchandising is a salesman who never stands around doing nothing. He'll work for you from the minute you open the shop until closing time — but first, as Jack Murphy has done — you have to put him on the payroll.

Just off the press is the new PGA Tournament Sponsors' Manual, revised and rewritten to conform to present conditions and rules. More than 100 pages long, it covers everything from Admissions to Transportation. Copies can be obtained from PGA headquarters in Dunedin, Fla.



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