

Welcome Back!

Welcome back to a very busy semester for bookstore sales! Right now, you are probably just trying to cope with the initial rush of fall. Yet, there are so many upcoming events that will help keep your sales steady all semester long. Remember to keep those in mind as you gear up for the new year. If you haven't already, start planning promotions and merchandising displays for:

- Parents' Day
- Homecoming
- Alumni Weekend
- Big Games
- Holiday

Through upcoming issues of GEAR for Sports Reports, we look forward to offering display tips and merchandising ideas that will help prepare your store for a successful season! 📖

Working With Props

Props are such an effective element of a display that they can virtually sell your merchandise for you. They grab attention and evoke a feel for the merchandise. But how do you select and find props? Jeane Slusher, display stylist and owner of Window Images, offers the following advice:

1 Make a list of items that have anything to do with the theme of the display—even bizarre things!



2 Narrow down your list. Visualize what will work well together and eliminate items that won't.

3 Determine what is owned and what can be borrowed. Many places will let you borrow items for free if you will give their establishment some acknowledgement. It also helps to take another look at your store—you may have more

props available than you think.

4 Shop for props that you do not own and cannot borrow. Places to look include: garage sales, auctions, estate sales, flea markets, gardening centers, hardware stores, dime stores, craft shops and children's stores.

5 Have fun with it—be creative! 📖

A Rush of Olympic Proportions

Consider for a moment the amount of time that it takes to prepare a bookstore for the fall semester. Now imagine being faced with that responsibility as well as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity—the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, GA. This world-wind experience has kept some fellow bookstore retailers in Georgia very busy!

It's not often that an American city, much less a college campus, serves as a host to the entire world. And with little information or expectations to work with, the Emory University Bookstore and the University of Georgia Bookstore took advantage of that



Univ. of Georgia creates an Olympic shop.

exciting and lucrative sales opportunity. In the first few days of the games, representatives from the two stores took time out of their busy schedules to talk to GEAR Reports about what was happening on their campus.

Both stores decided to offer options to the international travelers by bringing in early their University of Georgia and Emory University fall apparel merchandise. "Little booths set up along the street, Wal-Mart, Target, you name it—they've all got Olympic merchandise," explained Beth Baker, Buyer at the University of Georgia Bookstore. "But it's hard to find good quality Georgia stuff. We're hoping these people coming in from overseas or out of state will be more apt to buy Georgia merchandise that they can't get everywhere." Ellen Torrence, Asst. Buyer at Emory University Bookstore, found that people wanted unique stuff and were bored with what they were being fed. "They wanted things associating Emory with the Olympic Games in Atlanta," said Ellen. "But licensing restrictions prevented us from doing that."

Motivated by the upcoming event, Emory University updated their store and installed fresher, more contemporary fixtures. "It looks

more like a Gap or an Express than a bookstore," said Ellen. "We were already leaning towards re-designing the store in certain areas. We are changing things all the time." The University of Georgia also gave their bookstore a face lift. "We made an Olympic shop in the front," claimed Beth. "We added a register, put up glass cubicle walls and hung a sign that says, 'Olympic Shop'." She felt that the new store arrangement attracted attention and made the merchandise more accessible.

Both campuses experienced their share of Olympic attention. "We are housing the international media and there were a lot of athletes who were practicing here before the games," stated Ellen. "There were a lot of athletes in last week as well as ACOG (Atlanta Commission of the Olympic Games) people and the media." Ellen also noted that the Olympic Torch passed right by their store. "We had a lot of response from that as well."

The University of Georgia Bookstore was in a prime location as their campus hosted the soccer event. "They are expecting 95,000 people a day—the fans for the soccer games," Beth said. "And our stadium holds 85,000!" She explained that their store is located right next to the stadium. "That's a plus for us on college football game days and we're hoping

Georgia Tech Makes a

Kerri Strug won our hearts as she, though injured, helped clinch the gold during the women's gymnastics team competition. And the women's softball team made us want to cheer as they won the gold in the first ever Olympic softball event. However, before our Olympic teams made their moves to win the gold, the Georgia Tech Bookstore made a major move.

Georgia Tech's campus served as the Olympic village for the athletes. Therefore, the bookstore employees were forced to move out and store their merchandise in a trailer! The upstairs of the store, where the



Emory University Bookstore gets a new look.

it will be a plus for us now.”

Emory University opened their off-campus apartments to accommodate approximately 700 alumni. With that type of clientele in for the two weeks of the Olympics, Ellen expected to sell more Emory stuff than anything else. “We are putting a store over in the University apartments where our alumni will be staying,” she said. “It’s a small store that will carry Emory merchandise.”

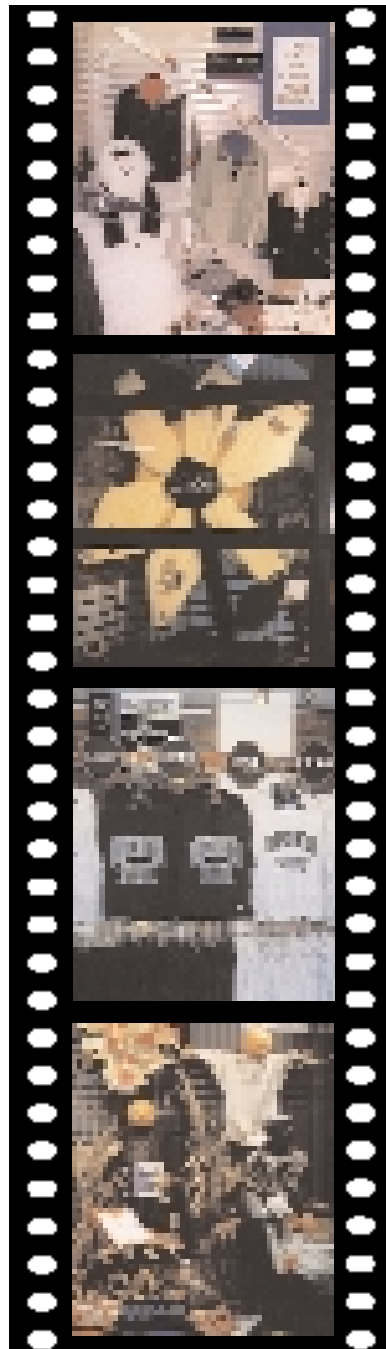
By the time you read this article, the Olympics will be over and the University of Georgia and Emory University will join the rest of you in experiencing the fall semester rush. Yet, there is little doubt that the memory of their exciting Olympic experience will ever leave their minds. 📖

an Olympic Move

textbooks are located, was blocked off and the downstairs was transformed into a store for the athletes.

The move took place in early June and they did not return until August 12. In the meantime, their campus turned into a high security complex complete with electrical fences and armed guards.

It goes without saying that the Georgia Tech Bookstore employees had to make some fancy, fast moves to get their store back together for the fall semester rush. Their quick maneuvering may not have won an Olympic medal, but it sure was impressive! 📖



Can You Picture It?

Can you picture winning thousands of dollars worth of merchandise plus national recognition? To make that picture a reality, just take advantage of your staff’s creative energy and load your camera!

GEAR for Sports is once again launching our Annual Merchandising Photo Contest. We’re so excited about this fifth annual contest that we want to give you the essential information you need to develop your displays. The details concerning deadlines and prizes will be announced in the next issue of *GEAR for Sports Reports*.

- Submit one or more color photos or slides depicting your store’s merchandising concepts that feature GEAR for Sports apparel. There is no limit to the number of photographs that can be submitted, but please be sure to include a description of the concept with each one.
- The judges will base their selections on creative use of color, GEAR for Sports graphics, multiple styles, and theme/merchandising idea.

Go ahead and get your merchandise in GEAR. We look forward to seeing your best shot! 📖

CORNER

PROMOTIONAL

Welcome new students as well as upperclassman back to school with a GWP (GEAR With Purchase). Although there are many different GWP options available, we suggest that you offer a “Class of 2000” T-shirt or other T-shirt free with a \$50 purchase. With this type of offer, the perceived value is greater than the cost. For example:

- 1) The cost of a T-shirt is \$8.
- 2) The value of a T-shirt is \$16.
- 3) Now compare that to the standard discount of 20%.
- 4) Twenty percent of \$50 is \$10.

Everyone likes free gifts. Your customers are likely to perceive the free T-shirt as a better offer than the standard 20% discount and the cost is less to you. GEAR With Purchase—It’s a win-win promotion! 📖

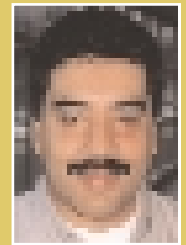
Spotlight

CARLOS IBARRA

GRAPHICS MANAGER, GEAR FOR SPORTS

GEAR for Sports is proud to introduce your new Graphics Manager, Carlos Ibarra. Carlos joined our company in 1986 and has almost 13 years experience in the garment decorating business.

The Kansas State University graduate once had aspirations of becoming an architect. "I decided that my interest was just in making things look good," said Carlos. "So I went for a BFA in commercial art instead."



CARLOS IBARRA

As the Graphics Manager, Carlos oversees a department of five artists and one specialized embroidery digitizer. "Our main goal is to be the creative support for the company, representatives and customers," explained Carlos. "We introduce a new line of graphics each season. The rest of the year we focus on research and development, retailing, fulfilling requests and meeting with customers."

Carlos said he is excited about his new position and is challenged by the new opportunities it presents. "In this market, there are set art elements to work with such as mascots, school colors and school seals," said Carlos. "The challenge is coming up with new and innovative ideas to best utilize those elements."

He said that the entire graphic team closely watches current trends and constantly tries to incorporate those ideas into collegiate decorated apparel.



Mary Cimpl, Director of Merchandising at GEAR for Sports, visits over a hundred factories a year to assess quality and conditions of our manufacturing sights.

A Stand for Human Rights

By Larry Graveel, Sr. Vice President of Merchandising

There has been much attention in the media recently concerning the issue of human rights being violated in apparel manufacturing sweatshops.

I have traveled throughout the world on behalf of GEAR for Sports and I have no doubt that sweatshops do exist both internationally and on American soil. However, I believe that there is a small percentage of garment manufacturers who succumb to these types of practices. The few that do are tainting the reputation of legitimate manufacturers.

The policy of GEAR for Sports concerning this issue is that we do not condone these sweatshops nor do we have any interest in associating with them. We ensure quality working conditions by monitoring our world-wide factories on a regu-

lar basis and maintaining long-standing working relationships with our vendors. Every factory we use throughout the world is visited weekly by a representative of our company. And through our established working relationships, our vendors appreciate and share our standards for working conditions.

It costs us more to manufacture our apparel because of our high standards and refusal to work with sweatshop organizations. Therefore, our product is not the least expensive. Yet we are not willing to sacrifice our ethical position or quality. We trust that you will support us on this stand for human rights. Rest assured that when you choose a GEAR for Sports garment, you are choosing a no-sweat, quality product.