

by Tara Poole
photo by Amanda Lindley



Fans Score Big at Sports Fanatic Plus

There are sports fans and then there are sports fanatics. There are sports stores and then there is Sports Fanatic Plus in Warner Robins. For the die-hard sports fan, Sports Fanatic Plus is a Mecca of collegiate apparel, accessories, jewelry, gifts, collectibles and novelty items—a true sports fan's utopia.

Michael Felix, owner of Sports Fanatic Plus, says the difference between his store and other area sports stores is collegiate selection and customer service. "We stock a number of different colleges and universities including the Pac 10, ACC and SEC—we currently have 14 in stock—as well as the local high schools—Warner Robins, Northside, Houston County, Perry and Westfield," he explains. "If the customer wants something that we don't have or a school that we don't currently stock, then we will get it for them at no extra charge."

Felix notes the diverse population of the Houston County community is what drives his store's large selection of collegiate colors. "We started out with a table at Smiley's Flea Market selling University of Georgia hats, and from that we saw there was a need in the local area for a store such as this," he says. "We studied the demographics of Houston County and realized there is a constant influx of people into the area from all over the country mainly because of Robins Air Force Base. We wanted to provide a little bit of that home team spirit to those in our community who are living far from home."

Since its opening in April of 2004, Sports Fanatic Plus has rung up more than 4,200 customer sales. A true sports fan can understand why the store has garnered such popularity with just one visit to the store. Sports Fanatic Plus offers its customers

3,000 square feet of collegiate clothing and accessories for women, men, adults, children, golf enthusiasts, pets, computers, automobiles and tailgate parties as well as home decorating novelties such as stained glass lamps and crystal ware. The store also offers a complete line for infants that includes clothes, toy chests, diaper bags, stuffed animals and novelties such as mobiles that play a school's fight song.

The "plus" part of the business is its ability to offer custom embroidery and custom silk-screening in-house. "Anything in the store can be customized with either embroidery or silk screening," he says. "Our custom embroidery is digitized onsite and we have an artist on staff that can create custom designs. We can silk screen T-shirts for churches, school bands, family reunions—basically any monogramming we can do."

Sports fans of all kinds are welcome at Sports Fanatic Plus—NASCAR fans included. "Everyone here is a fanatic and we love all sports," comments Felix. "We want to build relationships with our customers by learning which schools and rivalries are their favorites, which sports they enjoy and stock our store accordingly. We just have lots of fun here."

For Felix, building those relationships with his customers extends beyond the brick and mortar of his storefront. "Our philosophy is to give back to the community," he states. "We routinely sponsor local children in all kinds of events, sports related or not. We are also a huge supporter of the Cure for Cancer for Kids organization. We just want to give back to Houston County because God has given so many blessings to us."

Sports Fanatic Plus is located at 1240 South Houston Lake Road in Warner Robins.