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Equine Affaire A Harbinger?

*Record attendance,
strong sales seen as
good sign*

If attendance numbers and sales figures from Equine Affaire held in November in West Springfield, Mass., are an indicator, the future of the equine trade is looking up. Attendance exceeded 105,000 over the four-day run and many of the 450 exhibitors reported record or near-record sales, despite chilly temperatures and snow.

A number of the leading national manufacturers and retailers were on hand for the event, which is one of four such equine expos held annually.

The timing of the Massachusetts version makes it the perfect spot for early Christmas shopping, a fact not lost on many vendors who tailored their approach to sales accordingly.

More than 200 different clinics are held over the course of Equine Affaire, given by many of the big-name clinicians in the industry. This year, Pat and Linda Parelli and Monty Roberts were on hand, as well as Jane Savoie, Sharon Camarillo, Richard Shrake and others. Topics included everything from barrel racing to jumping.

Equine Affaire will come to Pomona, Calif., Feb. 3-6, 2005.



Top: The main arena on the Eastern States Exposition grounds is filled nearly continuously with activity during Equine Affaire.

Middle: Despite being held in Massachusetts, typically the heart of English riding disciplines, Western fashion was popular at Equine Affaire.

Bottom: Lines to get into retail booths and to pay were often lengthy during Equine Affaire, a sign many interpreted as strength in the equine trade industry.