

Richmond Trade Show Turns Contentious

Hundreds of vendors and retailers flocked to Richmond, Va., for the AETA Expo in mid-August and found themselves attending the IEBA (International Equine Business Alliance) Trade Show instead. The name change was made to avoid confusion with the American Equestrian Trade Association, based in Wakefield, Mass.

The Richmond-based expo is owned by Jim Herbert and his company, GlobalStrat, and was originally envisioned as the AETA trade show. However, differences between Herbert and AETA President Tom MacGuinness led to a splitting of the two groups earlier this year.

The potential split was the topic of discussion at nearly every booth, in the hallways and restrooms.

The American Equestrian Trade Association (AETA), now headed by MacGuinness and a board of directors, announced at a meeting Saturday, Aug. 18 in Richmond that it had signed an agreement with Kent Hopper of Hopper Expositions to produce two markets annually.

The group plans to hold an International Fair in Orlando in February and Baltimore in August, where the show will be held thereafter. AETA also used the sometimes raucous session to outline future plans and solicit members.

The AETA name is one of several issues that group has raised with Herbert. In February, Herbert applied to register "AETA" in the Trade Show and the Trade Organization categories.

"The fact is, that AETA has legal and undeniable rights to the name ... as it was well established before Mr. Herbert was contacted by the executive working group in August 2006," said MacGuinness.

Herbert has not announced whether he plans to form a trade association in support of the Richmond expo, but he has emphasized his group's commitment to hosting a Richmond market in 2008. According to Herbert, the 2008

Richmond dates are set for January 25-27 and August 8-10.

"I remain committed to organizing an event that is inclusive for all industry participants, small and large alike, serving the industry as a unified gathering place," Herbert said in a statement prior to the trade show.

The Richmond event ended with the likelihood that the East Coast trade show scene would once again be fractured.

While the number of vendors grew for the August event, the number of buyers remained near the level of attendance in January. ☐

Saddle Barn[®] INC.

Harlequin Series

Quality Manufactured Products

Contact a Sales Rep to place your fall booking

(back view) #28-94

(back view) #28-93

#28-95

1102 N. Garden, Roswell New Mexico
1-800-759-2276 * www.saddlebarn.com
info@saddlebarn.com

