



SOUTH CAROLINA EQUINE PARK OFF TO A GREAT START!

By Janice Coley

Many people have supported the beginning of a grand plan to establish an international equine facility in South Carolina, located in Camden, Kershaw County. Within five weeks from opening the first phase, the South Carolina Equine Park has drawn local, regional, national and international groups, crossing over several disciplines including quarter horses, hunter jumpers, professional entertainers, bulls, cattle and more.

The two-day economic impact of the SC Equine Park's official grand opening weekend was over \$175,000. This represents money spent on lodging and food from a record crowd who turned out for the Carolina Starz Hunter Jumper show September 26-27. Stalls were rented for 183 horses, 98 from South Carolina, 84 from North Carolina and one from Virginia. Additionally, 37 horses hauled in the day of the show taking the total number to 220.

Just prior to the official grand opening, The Southern Stockhorse Association brought out great crowds and 340 show entries August 28-30. They returned in October and will be back again November 20-22.

Requesting to remain under wraps while they were here, Cavalia, an International Equine Entertainment company that words cannot describe, spent their ten day layover from Washington DC to Atlanta GA at the SC Equine Park. This included 58 horses along with their staff as they prepared for the next show. As one staffer stated, "the covered arena is just perfect for our daily practices." The group's ten day visit raised the local hotel occupancy once again in less than three weeks from the park opening. To find out more about them visit www.cavalia.net.

With over 4,000 people attending, October ended with a bang with the Monster Mash Bulls and Barrels weekend. There were 46 bull riders from 11 states from Florida to Pennsylvania, 15 stock contractors from Ohio to Georgia bringing 50 professional bucking bulls and 25 barrel racers from all across the region. Local stock contractor Tommy Lee won first place in the Bucking Bull 2 year old Futurity held Saturday afternoon.

The National Bull Riding Association sanctioned event brought cowboys and cowgirls to compete for a spot at the Finals to be held in Raleigh, North Carolina on February 12th and 13th, 2010. This was the first event of the PBBA (Professional Bucking Bull Association) Fall Classic Triple Crown. Triple Crown Events include Camden SC, Savannah GA and Ft. Myers FL.

Event promoter Tom Smith said, "We have received very positive feedback from contractors and contestants about this facility. Everyone is looking forward to next year." For more information visit www.PBBAnow.com or www.NBRbull.com.

With two more events still to come for 2009, so far only ten available event dates remain through May 2010. Seven of those are the first seven weeks of the year which is typical, so the SC Equine Park is right on track. For more information visit www.scequinepark.com.

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