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Gigi Stetler Comes Out on Top in USEF Case against Equestrian Show Holdings, LLC

 Wellington, FL - May 21, 2010 - Gigi Stetler, owner of RV Sales of Broward, recently prevailed in her protest against Equestrian Show Holdings LLC, over trespassing charges alleged to have occurred at the 2010 FTI Winter Equestrian Festival. Stetler and RV Sales of Broward have been a longtime sponsor at the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, FL, and have had a standing sponsorship contract since 1992. In 2010, however, the Winter Equestrian Festival chose not to renew Stetler's sponsorship contract after securing her confidential client list under the ruse they were getting in line to prepare files for the 2010 show year.

According to Stetler, she was on the show grounds at the Palm Beach International Equestrian Center as a "spectator, exhibitor and participant of the horse show," the weekend of February 12-14, 2010 and had an enjoyable show. Then on February 16, 2010, she received a cryptic email letter advising her that she was not permitted on any of the show grounds and should she come on the grounds she would be arrested for trespassing. This warning was sent on behalf of property owners, not the show Licensee, and was not defined in time and scope. After attempting to rectify the problem head-on with the property owners and getting nothing but delay and inattention, Stetler filed a protest with the USEF for the horse show refusing her entries and not allowing her on the show grounds. On March 24, 2010, Stetler was given a full day hearing, with all parties in attendance, with the USEF Hearing Committee in Lexington, Kentucky, and on May 17, 2010, the USEF made a unanimous decision in Stetler's favor.

Stetler explained that the warning was issued with no notice of incident, and noted that she has been an exhibitor since the early 1990's and has always been in good standing with the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF). The Hearing Committee received and heard evidence presented by both parties in the matter. Stetler's protest stated that the individuals and entities, as competition management and property owners, violated Federation Rules, including Chapter 7, GR702.lj and Chapter 9, GR914.1. It was a violation in that the Trespass Warning letter was sent to Stetler, a potential participant of the competitions, but did not state any explanation of Stetler not being permitted on any land owned by those entities; thus, wrongfully refusing entries she previously submitted and denying her the right to compete or participate at any future competitions held on said properties.

Stetler claimed she was not apprised of any allegations against her, and was not given any opportunity to defend herself. No effort was made to interview individuals who might vouch for Stetler. Very little effort was made to corroborate the claimed behavior of Stetler or to interview potential witnesses against her. None of that information was compiled in a clear manner to be presented for a vote by competition management or the show committee.

In weighing the testimony, it was apparent based on failed business/sponsorship dealings that there was friction between the parties. Moreover, the Hearing Committee considered that the Respondents decision was reportedly made in order to protect Ms. Stetler's reputation and give her a "time out" so the parties could cool down and avoid potential future hostility. However, as well meaning as that may have been, the fact remains that Respondents did not follow any of the steps required for the exclusion of entries under Chapter 9, 0R914. Accordingly, it was improper to refuse Stetler's entries under these circumstances.

For their violation of Federation rules, the Hearing Committee directed that Respondents be censured pursuant to Chapter 7, GR703. 1a. It was further directed that they be fined collectively \$1,000 pursuant to Chapter 7, GR703.lj, fines to be paid to the Federations office by June 29, 2010. It was further directed that should said fines not be paid to the Federation's office by June

29, 2010, any non-paying individual or entity, and any horses owned by them will automatically be deemed not in good standing and will be immediately suspended from competing or taking any part whatsoever in Licensed Competitions, pursuant to Chapter 7, GR703.lb, GR703.lc, and 3R703 until such time as the fine is paid in full.

GiGi Stetler made the following statement, "I am extremely pleased with the thoroughness of the committee's investigation and focus on getting to the truth and facts. This is not the first and likely will not be the last time in my life that I am attacked and assaulted regardless of motive; but I know only I direct my own present and future through my personal commitment to not only survive, but to thrive! Now I must press forward and restore my reputation and credibility after this character assassination and the tough times that resulted from it."

"People have to know that I was never charged with anything with the USEF; I was pulled out by the property owners, and I was the one who filed the protest with the USEF," Stetler emphasized. "I was the proponent, not the respondent. I filed the protest against the horse show for refusing my entries. People should know the ruling, because it could affect them in the future. Basically, the land owners cannot get involved. Unless you do something objectionable that can be substantiated, then they have no right to rule you off the property, and I did not do anything wrong."

For more information on GiGi Stetler and RV Sales of Broward, please visit www.ridinggigistyle.com and www.rvsalesofbroward.com.



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