

### Acme-McCrary Buys Phantom; Holds Top Private Label Role

Acme-McCrary Corp. of Asheboro, NC, the nation's largest producer of women's private label sheer hosiery, has reinforced its position with the acquisition of Phantom USA Inc.

The acquisition was completed January 31. Assets in the purchase included all inventory, machinery and equipment used for Phantom's domestic hosiery production. The purchase also included a 55,000 square-foot warehouse and distribution facility in Liberty, NC, and assumption of a lease for the 200,000 square-foot manufacturing facility in nearby Siler City.

Acme-McCrary President and CEO Bill Redding released a statement saying "This is an exciting opportunity ... we look forward to the Phantom USA operation becoming part of our company and we welcome their employees.

Redding reported that after the acquisition, Acme-McCrary will employ over 1,000 people and operate 900 knitting machines. "We are committed to the USA hosiery industry and retail trading partners and believe this acquisition will enable our company to remain competitive and continue to be a market leader," Redding said.

Acme-McCrary began in 1909 and has operated continuously for 95 years. Products include ladies hosiery, tights and trouser socks. The company also produces and distributes men's, women's and children's socks.

In 2000, Acme-McCrary entered into a joint venture with Wells Hosiery Inc. to produce and distribute seamless products that include active wear and intimate apparel.

Utilizing Santoni knitting machinery, the joint venture is currently the largest domestic producer of private label seamless apparel.

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### Home, Sweet Home Alabama

The 2004 THA Annual Convention will go to the home state of Chairman Charles Cole, it has been announced. The national gathering of manufacturers and suppliers in the hosiery industry will take place at the Marriott Grand Resort in Point Clear, Alabama.

Cole, president of Alabama Footwear, is a leader in the industry centered around Fort Payne which produces 30 percent of the nation's socks and is touted as "the Sock Capital of the World."

Point Clear is located on the Alabama Gulf Coast and is one of the Southeast's most popular resort areas.

### Bayer Now Dorlastan Fibers

The fibers group of Bayer Polymers LLC has announced it will operate as a separate legal entity under the name of Dorlastan Fibers LLC. Although separate, it will be linked to its parent company, Bayer Polymers.

Werner Nahl, president of Dorlastan Fibers LLC and head of Global Dorlastan Marketing, says the separation and new name mark a new direction for the fibers group.

"With this fresh beginning, our group looks forward to more entrepreneurial approach to conducting business," Nahl continues. "We will continue to concentrate on our strengths and work with customers on their specific needs."

The Dorlastan Fibers facility in Goose Creek, SC completed its first major expansion in 2000 and plays an integral part in helping the business meet customer needs. The North American expansion, combined with an expansion in Dormagen, doubled global production capacity of Dorlastan, using the new polymerization and spinning technology.

During 2003, the fibers group introduced a new hosiery waistband technology that made it possible to run Dorlastan directly from the spinning supply package, virtually eliminating the rewinding process. In addition, the group introduced the new Low-Finish Generation used in Dorlastan deniers that enhances fiber performance and offers important environmental benefits.

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### Slane Hosiery Closing Doors

Slane Hosiery Mills of High Point, NC, recently announced it will close its doors.

The 241 production personnel were laid off in mid-January, with final closing set for early February, it was reported.

The rising cost of materials for production and health care insurance for employees, as well as competition from lower-priced goods from abroad made it impossible to be profitable, Slane President Jim Hooper said.

Slane Hosiery was a landmark on the High Point scene which once was home to scores of hosiery manufacturing companies. Harriss and Covington Hosiery Co. Inc. and Four Star Hosiery continue to operate in High Point.