

# Aerial Advertiser Doesn't Know Who Paid for Miller Banner

08/12/2009 6:47 PM by Larry Altman Staff Writer

An official at the aerial advertising company that flew a banner ripping former NBA star Reggie Miller over South Bay beaches said Wednesday he has no idea who paid for the job.

Nick Mendoza, director of corporate services at Arnold Aerial Advertising Inc., acknowledged that the New York City company carried the banner through the skies from Malibu to the South Bay on Friday and Saturday, but said it was a cash deal with no names exchanged.

"To be honest with you, I don't know who did it," Mendoza said.

The Daily Breeze reported Wednesday that the banner that said "Reggie Miller stop pursuing married women" was purchased by the Web site Hollywoodstreetking.com to publicize its story about Miller's confrontation with Alex von Furstenberg in a dispute over a woman.

A manager at the company acknowledged buying it as a publicity stunt.

Von Furstenberg believes the former Indiana Pacer and current TNT analyst was trying to steal his fiancée, Ali Kay, but Miller's camp told TMZ.com that she text messaged provocative pictures of herself in pursuit of him.

The New York Post and several tabloid Web sites, however, have identified von Furstenberg as the ad buyer in stories Tuesday and Wednesday.

But Mendoza said he talked to his anonymous buyer, who said von Furstenberg was not linked to the ad.

"This thing was totally confused," Mendoza said. "This guy Alex had nothing to do with this."

Mendoza said he received a phone call Aug. 1 from a man asking if he could fly the banner. Mendoza said yes.

The following Monday, the man called again and said someone would come to Mendoza's office to set it up.

Three hours later, a woman showed up with cash, stating "I'm here for the Reggie Miller banner." She did not provide a name.

She paid in cash, not wanting an invoice or contract. The woman did sign paperwork, but in scribble.

"It was an all-cash deal," Mendoza said. "I pretty much don't have anything in regard to who actually paid for it. We don't know."

Mendoza did not disclose the cash amount.

The company, which works with a network of 360 pilots across the United States, and 400 internationally, hired a local pilot to display the banner.

He flew it two hours each on Friday and Saturday. The anonymous male caller canceled the final two hours on Sunday when the banner set off a firestorm of tabloid reports on the Internet, television and newspapers, Mendoza said.

Mendoza's company's Web site on Wednesday posted a photograph of the banner with the headline, "We flew it!"

"I knew this was going to make the news, but I didn't know it was going to be this big," Mendoza said. "We flew it. As to who paid us, that's what I'd like to know."