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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY
NOMINATION FORM

Continuation Sheet

Item Number

Page

Name Historic Aiken Mile Track Location Banks Mill Road
Common Same Classification District

Owner Summa Corporation
c/o Eddie Strickland
Westside Associates
111 S. Belair Rd., Augusta, Georgia 30907

Representation in Existing Surveys

South Carolina Inventory of Historic Places

Description

The Aiken Mile Track complex consists of three concentric tracks and eight contributing buildings. The tracks are flat, oval, dirt tracks: the center one-half mile track is used for training; the middle seven-eighths mile track is used for jogging; and the outer mile track is used for training and racing. The entire track system is surrounded by a rail fence. Among the buildings included in the complex are a brick stable building, three frame stables, two grooms' cottages, a barn, and a grandstand. The entrance to the complex on Banks Mill Road is marked by a brick and iron entrance gate and a wrought iron fence. Also included in the complex are four modern barns and a blacksmith's shop.

Significance

The Aiken Mile Track was constructed ca. 1936 by Ira Coward for Fred Post, Dunbar Bostwick, and Roland Harriman on the old Hassler Polo Fields. The track was designed to train and race trotters. About 1937 Pete Bostwick built a turf track in the infield (middle track) for flat and hurdle racing. In 1938 another strip of turf was added for steeplechasing (center track) making the Mile Track capable of handling a diversified training and racing program. The Aiken Mile Track was the home of the Imperial Cup hurdle race first run in 1938. The construction of the track added a new dimension to sport in Aiken, and contributed to its continuing success as a horse training center during the lean years of the Depression.

Area approximately 60 acres

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Aiken Mile Track is shown as the black line on the accompanying Aiken County Tax Maps #'s 30-101, 30-088, 30-089, and 30-102, drawn at a scale of 1 inch equals 100 feet. It includes the historic track and the major contributing support buildings.

UTM Reference Point

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|----------------------|----------------------|
| A. 17/435320/3711860 | D. 17/435000/3711730 |
| B. 17/435150/3711245 | E. 17/435110/3711950 |
| C. 17/434780/3711700 | |

Other Information

In a survey which identified properties associated with the Aiken Winter Colony, the Aiken Mile Track emerged as one of the properties which best illustrated the later years of the Winter Colony. The Aiken Mile Track is of exceptional importance to the Winter Colony theme because its construction between 1936 and 1938 added a new dimension to equestrian activity in Aiken and was instrumental in Aiken's continuing success as a horse training center during the Depression and during and after World War II.