

# Gulfstream Park Horse Stalls

Hallandale, Florida



The Stronach Group, one of America's leading thoroughbred racetrack owner/operators, owns the track at Gulfstream Park in Hallandale, Florida. Gulfstream Park is celebrating its 75th anniversary and continues to improve its facilities for the horsemen of Florida. As part of the improvement, funds were approved for a \$4 million 380-stall facility to be built within eight weeks, in time for the Champions Meet.

Time was of the essence, not only to fabricate, galvanize, and erect the facility on a tight schedule, but also to design a structure that could withstand the test of time. The track is located in South Florida, less than five miles from the ocean, and the horse stalls would be in an open-air building. As the park is a multi-million dollar industry, long-term corrosion protection for the facility was critical. As the facility will house the heart of the industry – expensive, thoroughbred race horses, it makes sense to use the best corrosion protection system available – hot-dip galvanized steel.

Hot-dip galvanizing was the selected corrosion protection system for several reasons: it could survive the salty, humid atmosphere of South Florida, the durability of the coating would withstand abrasive horse activities as well as the various types of equipment hung on it, hot-dip galvanizing could meet the timeline of the project with no weather delays and a quick turnaround time, and lastly, the metallic finish would blend in well and be aesthetically pleasing.

Hot-dip galvanizing (HDG) is popular among zoos and farmers/ranchers because the coating does not chip or flake off like other corrosion protection systems, which leads to fear of the animals ingesting the coatings. Furthermore, hot-dip galvanizing uses natural, healthy zinc to coat steel, which is already in the animal's diets. HDG will provide unmatched corrosion protection to the horse barn, while enhancing its aesthetics and reducing maintenance. Eliminating the need for maintenance means the animals and facilities will not be disturbed, and significant cost savings will be realized over the life of the project.

Double R Manufacturing worked closely with the galvanizer to ensure the material was fabricated according to best design practices to ensure a quality galvanized product. The thin walled tubing required proper venting and drainage as well as consideration to avoid distortion. The galvanizer ran samples for Double R, and once the sample parts were approved, the material flowed seamlessly from the fabricator to the galvanizer to stay on track with the schedule.

The final structure is comprised of three fabric-covered structures 600 feet long and 84 feet wide.

The horse facility can be utilized as a permanent structure or removed and placed elsewhere if needed. Gulfstream Park announced that 4,523 stall applications were received for the 2,720 stalls it had available at Gulfstream and Palm Meadows for the Champions Meet. The overwhelming response confirmed what the Stronach Group already recognized – additional facilities such as these are necessary here and at other race tracks.

Gulfstream Park President Tim Ritvo said, "We are pleased and honored by the response of so many great horsemen from throughout the country who want to winter at Gulfstream and Palm Meadows." As horsemen travel the country and house horses at various tracks, the need for similar facilities will grow. Hot-dip galvanizing is now well positioned to meet this demand and to protect their investments for decades to come. ■



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