

Miller Motorsports Park Closing

Posted by joeblow - 09 May 2015 10:59

Unfortunately I have to report that MMP just announced they will NOT renew their lease and will be shutting down MMP after October.

There is some hope the city might find another operator but until then it seems we are losing one of the best tracks out there.

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Re: Miller Motorsports Park Closing

Posted by KDJones2000 - 09 May 2015 13:17

More information:

www.deseretnews.com/article/865628232/So...ease-operations.html

sportscar365.com/industry/miller-motorsports-park-to-close/

TOOELE — One of Larry H. Miller's dreams is coming to an end.

In an unexpected move, the Miller Motorsports Park will cease operations on Oct. 31 of this year, the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies announced Friday, confirming a Deseret News report.

“On behalf of my family, I would like to thank all of those who have supported the track over the years, both locally and worldwide, for their enthusiasm and use of the facility,” Larry H. Miller Group of Companies owner Gail Miller said in a statement released by the organization.

In its press release, the Miller group announced that it had indeed decided to not renew the lease on the land in Tooele County and to close the track, as was first reported by the Deseret News.

It is not known whether another entity will take over ownership of the track, which was a pet project and passion for the late Larry H. Miller.

This development came as a big surprise to Tooele County commissioner Shawn Milne. As of late Friday morning, he had not heard anything from the Millers about their company not renewing the lease.

The report is "absolutely news to me," Milne said. "How unfortunate."

Tooele County commissioners had a meeting scheduled with Miller Sports Properties and former LHM Group of Companies CEO Greg Miller on Friday afternoon.

Milne said the meeting had been in the works for three months. It was supposed to focus on "tourism expectations."

The Miller Motorsports Park will remain open throughout the racing season. The full schedule of summer racing events, driving schools, public karting and group activities will be held as planned, the organization announced. An all-day season-opening party will take place Saturday, May 16.

Miller Motorsports Park opened in 2006 and was touted as being one of the finest racing facilities in the world. However, it was also a huge financial drain on the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies, losing millions of dollars since its inception.

At the time of its opening, the 511-acre facility featured North America's longest road-racing track for motorcycles and all cars except Formula 1 race cars. The park also had a 4.5-mile course divided into western and eastern tracks of about equal lengths, along with a 0.89-mile track for go-carts. Over the years, the Alan Wilson-designed track has hosted high-profile events, including the American Le Mans series, a NASCAR race (Grand National West Series), the FIM Superbike World Championship and the AMA Superbike Championship, among others.

Land adjacent to the track facility in Erda is one of five sites being considered by the Utah Legislature for the new Utah State Prison. While the decision may have seemed somewhat sudden, a company

spokesman said it had been a long time in the making.

“We were facing a land lease renewal deadline and made the decision to transfer the land, track and buildings to Tooele County,” explained Linda Luchetti, executive vice president of communications for the LHM Group. “We made a significant investment in the facility over the years and tried a variety of business approaches. We had some of the best talent in the motorsports industry working to make the park viable.”

Despite those efforts, she said the property was never able to reach profitability.

“This decision helps us to position ourselves for long-term success, which is in line with other recent changes in our management structure,” Luchetti added. “As a multi-faceted company, our focus continues to be on the core businesses where we excel.”

When it opened, Larry Miller said the track was “a realization of a dream.” But it was an expensive dream — \$100 million to be exact, Miller said in his biography written by Doug Robinson. That expense continued long after it began operation, Miller said.

“To tell you the truth, the motor speedway has been an ugly stepchild for The Miller Group company,” Miller commented. “It’s losing \$2 million a year. It’s just too far ahead of its time. Auto racing has taken the country by storm in the last few years, but not Utah. It’s just difficult to get people out there for race events as spectators. The track has worldwide recognition, but few know about it in Utah.”

Former company CEO Greg Miller said of the racetrack, “It was bad timing. Sponsorships have been cut back and entertainment dollars are not being spent. But my father held it close to the vest. He wouldn’t involve the sports entertainment group (of The Miller Group). He did it personally.”

In the end, those close to Larry Miller were philosophical about the track.

“Some people build swimming pools in their back yards or tennis courts,” Greg Miller said. “He wanted a racetrack and his yard wasn’t big enough.”

The Millers didn’t divulge what would happen with the classic automobiles, including Larry Miller’s collection of vintage Shelby cars, that are on display in the motorsports park’s museum.

Robert Yardley, owner of Yardley Racing, is worried about how the closing of Miller Motorsports Park will impact his small go-kart business.

"Larry would be devastated," Yardley said.

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Re: Miller Motorsports Park Closing

Posted by early70scamaros - 11 May 2015 12:55

One of the nicest facilities I have ever been to.

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