

In Kaufman County, a place for drivers to race

Two car enthusiasts are developing a 1,200-acre ranch with tracks and country club-like amenities

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By *TERRY BOX/ The Dallas Morning News*

In the next few months, Matt Page plans to catch frequent blurred glimpses of his ranch from the windshield of his new Mustang GT 500.

Occasionally, he might even see some cattle out the window as he power-slides out of a bender. Longhorns and steel Mustangs. Is that a righteous ranch or what?



Longhorns and horsepower can be found at Racers Ranch in Kaufman County.

Actually, it will be Racers Ranch in Kaufman County.

"I hope to put a car on the track there by the middle of next year, if not sooner," said Mr. Page, 35, of McKinney, a self-described car nut and an investor in Racers Ranch – one of the newest private race track developments planned for the Dallas area.

Bill Georgas and Dan Gage, both former telecom guys and Porsche enthusiasts, are developing the 1,200-acre site on a working cattle ranch east of Terrell – sort of a country club and ranch for sports car enthusiasts.

They plan a 3.4-mile track, 5-acre home lots, a clubhouse with swimming pool and dining room, a kart track, a fitness center, an equestrian center, hiking and riding trails – and did I mention the track?

"If you look at the demographics of Dallas and the sale of relatively high-end vehicles like Porsche, Corvette and Ferrari, we have some of the highest numbers in the country," said Mr. Georgas, 44. "Car clubs here are some of the most active in the country."

MotorSport Ranch in Cresson, southwest of Fort Worth, discovered that a decade ago. And David and Linda Cook are planning a private track to be certified by Formula One's governing body, located northwest of Denton and called Eagles Canyon Raceway.

A year from now, this area could have private country club tracks or motorsport resorts to the north, east and west.

"In metro Chicago, there are literally four places like this you can go," Mr. Georgas said. "There's enough demand here to support them."

The group is selling 5-acre lots for \$275,000 and hopes to attract 37 buyers for the first phase of the estimated \$25 million project. Memberships for the track are also available at www.racersranch.com.

"We don't have money in the bank yet, but there's real money behind this," Mr. Georgas said. "We own the land. We have scraped a track and have an office out there, and we think we will sell out the first phase by the fourth quarter."

As you can probably guess, a lot of the growth in private tracks is connected to the sheer number of 300-, 400- and 500-horsepower cars available today – none of which can be fully appreciated on congested city streets full of cellphone drunks.

"Some of the guys I work with think ... [private tracks] will become as common as nice golf courses," said Mr. Page, the enthusiast-investor.

He already has plans for his little piece of Racers Ranch – doing hot laps on some days, just sitting and admiring the cars on others.

"Some guys like golf or fishing," Mr. Page said. "I like to play with cars."

Mr. Georgas said he and Mr. Gage are "very committed to this – or need to be committed, whichever comes first."

"We're very passionate about it," he said. "But you have to have a good business plan, too, which we think we do. Really cool doesn't put asphalt on the ground."