

1118



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Other names/site number Estadio Hiram Bithorn; El Bithorn
Name of related multiple property listing N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & Number Franklin Delano Roosevelt Avenue
City or town Hato Rey State Puerto Rico County San Juan
Not for publication Vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Diana López Sotomayor
Diana López Sotomayor, SHPO/Director

Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date _____
Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official _____ Date _____
Title _____ State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Joe Salas
Signature of Keeper

1-22-2014
Date of Action

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- Public-local
- Public-state
- Public-federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	Buildings
0	0	Sites
1	0	Structures
0	0	Objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Sports facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Sports facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement

Materials (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete/ Steel

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

The largest stadium in Puerto Rico, the **Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium**, located in the West Hato Rey sector in the municipality of San Juan, is a 1962, Modern style, concrete and steel baseball park, that sits in a ninety-one thousand and thirty-five (91,035) square meters lot. The structure was designed by architects Orval E. Sifontes and Alexander Papesh, working at the time for the *Pedro A. Miranda & Associates* firm. Planned to be at the center of San Juan's modern urban core and located within the most important sports complex in the island, the **Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium** is limited to the North by the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Avenue; to the East, it is bordered by the Luis A. Ferré Highway (State Road 52). In the South, it connects to the *Pedrin Zorrilla Coliseum* and it borders the *Roberto Clemente Coliseum* on the West. The **Hiram Bithorn Stadium's** construction took place at a time of great development as a result of the industrialization plan advanced by the government of Puerto Rico. For the last six decades, the property has become the most significant sport facility in Puerto Rico and host to many cultural and social events. Its singular architecture has become also iconic within the area, particularly its roof, which broadcast its modern character. The property retains all aspects of integrity.

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

Responding to sun, shade and wind analysis, the stadium's central axis has a northwest to southeast orientation. The ballpark's position protects the fans from the afternoon sun and provides a spatial orientation favorable to the players. The stadium is surrounded in its immediate northern and western flanks by a greenish landscape. Two large asphalted areas, providing parking space for almost three thousand vehicles, are located at the stadium's northeast to southeast and southwest corners (**Fig.1**). The main entrance is at the northwest façade, facing the FDR Avenue. The ten windows ticket box is located at the main façade, flanked by a bronze statue mounted on a concrete base that honors Hiram G. Bithorn, the first Puerto Rican-born player in the Major League, who played for the Chicago Cubs and Chicago White Sox from 1942-1947. One of the most significant architectural elements of the main façade is the prefabricated, perforated exterior walls of the upper hallway, built as an

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

allegory of the baseball diamond within. The perforated blocks allow for cross ventilation (**Fig. 2**).

At the ground floor, an oval-shaped concourse provides access to a compartmentalized section where offices, services rooms, team rooms; equipment and concessions storage rooms are located. The team rooms have direct access to the dugouts. From this ground floor concourse, twelve (12) portal ramps guide spectators into the grandstand.

The grandstand area is definitely the character defining feature of the stadium. Concrete is the dominating construction material in this section, selected as such in the design's early stage, for its longevity and resistance to corrosion. The sitting stand is in a horseshoe shape with a seating capacity for almost twenty thousand (20,000) people. The prefabricated rows of seats are in a fan-like layout, widening towards the stadium's rear, placed over a pre-cast concrete deck. Longitudinally, several T-shaped concrete supporting elements, anchored to the concrete foundation, provide the main support to the upper and lower decks and the roof above. These supporting elements unite, structurally and aesthetically, the entire composition. Horizontal concrete beams, running parallel to the upper and lower corridors, tie together all the T-shaped supporting elements (**Fig. 3**).

The stadium's grandstand roof is unique; not only in its shape, but also in its construction material, as no other baseball park in Puerto Rico has a concrete roof. The accordion-like shape of the roof is formed by a rhythmical sequence of hyperbolic parabolic concrete slabs, with points tapering downward on the side of the playing field and upward towards the stadium's exterior. In order to reduce its weight upon the structure, the roof's concrete slabs were designed very thin, only two and a half inches thick. To provide rigidity, a thicker rib was added to both the frontal and rear edges of the curved tile. The roof projects outward to protect the spectators from sun and rain. Having the supporting elements to the rear, it seems to float over the grandstand. The forward weight of the projecting roof is itself a counterweight for the bulk of the structure comprising the upper corridor and the rear section (**Fig. 4**).

The functional design of the stadium took in account the visual curves, number of entrances, width of the exits and corridors, the height and depth of the stands, and the accessibility of the main corridor. Able to comfortably seat almost 20,000 spectators, the stadium's design allows flawless visibility of the playing field from any seat. There are two main corridors –one at ground level and

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

another along the upper section of the stands. Both corridors have commercial concessions and restrooms, as well as other facilities such as offices and locker rooms. Two wide lateral ramps, one on the first base side and the other by the third base, allow for safe access/exit to and from the upper and lower corridors.

An original clubhouse, built for the press and the VIP guests, is located at the center of the structure. Combining elements of both steel and concrete, the U shaped clubhouse is suspended from the ceiling above the stands, centered directly behind home base, not interfering with the audience's view (Fig.5).

Four original floodlight towers are mounted on the roof top. To bring the light closer, the steel towers lean forward toward the playing field, at the very same angle as the supporting elements that bore the weight of the entire grandstand. Tensioned cables are used to stabilize the towers (Fig.6).

The **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** was thought-out from the beginning as a multi-uses sport facility. The design planned for the practice of a variety of sports besides baseball, such as track and field, basketball, boxing and other entertainment events. This plan reflected on the actual form and size of the ballpark. The "U" around the baseball diamond, for example, is open, allowing the installation of an athletic track that still runs within the oval. Likewise, there is enough room between home plate and the stands to accommodate either a boxing ring or a basketball court, as the occasion requires. In 2003, the playing field was remodeled to host the Montreal Expos, so it was outfitted with the same dimensions as the Montreal's Olympic Stadium. Today, the outfield walls are three hundred and twenty-five (325) feet down the left and right field lines, and four hundred and four (404) feet from home plate into center field. The fences are eight feet high all around.

The peripheral area of the ballpark, bordering the center field, contains four additional free standing floodlights steel towers. Centered between the towers is the scoreboard, built according to the project's original specifications. The gigantic scoreboard, which is eighty (80) feet wide and thirty-five (35) feet high, was donated to the stadium by a local bank, *Banco Popular de Puerto Rico*. The board features a "magic" panel that offers messages and statistics related to any sport been played, just as information in future events or performances at the stadium (Fig. 7).

Throughout the years, retaining all seven aspects of integrity (location, design, setting, materials,

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

workmanship, feeling and association) the **Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium** still conveys its significance and unique character.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** Removed from its original location.
- C** A birthplace or a grave.
- D** A cemetery.
A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- E** A commemorative property.
- G** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Social History

Period of Significance

1958-1962

Significant Dates

1962

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Sifontes, Orval E.

Papesch, Alexander

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** is statewide significant under Criterion A as the property has been center stage in the sporting, recreational and social development of Puerto Rico. Since its construction in 1962, the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** has served as venue for events of great importance such as sports tournaments and professionals practices; amateur tournaments of baseball, basketball and football; intercollegiate games, boxing, wrestling and car competitions. The stadium has been the preferred location for social events such as trade shows, fairs, circuses, conventions; and educational, cultural, recreational, political, and ecumenical activities. The **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** is also significant under Criterion C in Architecture for its modern mid-20th-century design, which highlights new architectural trends of the moment through the design of its structure, accordion-type roof and building techniques that were beginning to be applied at the time. The structure, elegant and austere, continues today serving Puerto Rico in its full capacity.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

During the 1950s and 1960s, the government of Puerto Rico launched an intensive socioeconomic initiative, officially known as Operation Bootstrap. The project rapid industrialization caused an abrupt transformation in the growth of the population. Initially locating most of the new factories within the metropolitan area, the human displacement toward San Juan was significant. This migration forced large segments of the population to settle in slums and shantytowns, where living conditions were deplorable. Innovative strategies in economic development and better planning in the use of open spaces were applied to meet the population's arising needs.

One of the social problems created within the overcrowded population was the upsurge in juvenile delinquency. Looking for alternatives to fight the problem, the authorities began to pay special attention to the interest that young people displayed in legitimate sports. The youth of that time used the open spaces that they had at their disposal as make shift ballparks. The government seized the occasion to devise adequate sports facilities.

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

In 1956, architect Eduardo Barañano, consultant for the Puerto Rico Planning Board and director of the Master Plan for the Development of the Metro Area, prepared the *San Juan Metropolitan Area Regional Plan*.¹ The project looked to stimulate the active recreation, while promoting the population's social interaction, through a network of urban parks to be known as the *Metropolitan Park System*.

The plan called for the creation of a park centrally located, accessible from both the neighboring areas and from afar. The area surrounding F. D. Roosevelt Avenue came to mind as the perfect location. The Regional Plan included the construction of a stadium, a dog track, an artificial lake, playing fields, tennis and volleyball courts and extensive gardens as well. Only the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** was built as part of this Plan.

On March 24, 1956, a bill was submitted before the Puerto Rico House of Representatives arranging for the allotment of \$200,000 for the purchase of the lands on the Fonalledas and Nevárez properties where the Metropolitan Central Park was to be built.² The land value was quickly increasing and therefore had to be acquired immediately (**Fig. 8**).

The Mayor of San Juan, Felisa Rincón de Gautier, devised a contest for the selection of the design of the future stadium. For this purpose, she appointed an Advisory Committee in charge of evaluating the proposals entered by private firms. This Committee, comprised of representatives from both the state and municipal governments, would then recommend three designs for final consideration and, in the end, decide the winner. The panel of judges was composed of architects Osvaldo Toro, William Reed, and Humberto Espinosa; Carmelo Galíndez; and the State Budget Director, Ramón García Santiago.³ Among the judge's criteria for awarding first prize was simplicity of design, the use of construction materials familiar to the systems used in Puerto Rico and reasonable cost estimates.

Near the end of 1958, all the projects were presented to the municipal authorities, and soon after, the judges began deliberation. In all, eighteen proposals were submitted; among them, the three

¹ Archivo Fundación Luis Muñoz Marín (AFLMM). Sección 5, Serie 16, Subserie 7: Junta de Planificación de Puerto Rico, Caja #6, Sobre 54, Legajo 1.

² Pedro Hernández, "Ley dispone construcción Parque Central." *El Mundo* (San Juan, PR), 25 de marzo de 1956.

³ *Ibid.*

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

finalists were *Pedro A Miranda & Asociados*, *Amaral & Morales* and *R.A. Pérez Marchand*.⁴

Finally, in early 1959, the winners were announced. The event, in an utmost formal activity, took place at the former Puerto Rico Casino, housing at the time the main offices of the *Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña*. First place was awarded to the *Pedro A. Miranda & Asociados* design firm, followed by *Amaral y Morales* in second place, and *R.A. Pérez Marchand* in third. Within the winning firm, architect Orval E. Sifontes was the chief designer for the stadium's project (Fig. 9).⁵

Once the course of action was set, decisions were quickly made. The *Pedro A. Miranda & Asociados* brought the *Osborne Engineering Company* from Cleveland, Ohio, as consultants. The US company had designed many baseball stadiums by the time. The Osborne Co. assigned architect Alexander Papesh as their liaison. However, it was decided early on, that the stadium's construction had to be a local undertaking. The electrical and mechanical design for the stadium, for example, was assigned to *Victor Garcia & Asociados*. Rafael Sarriera was chosen as field engineer. *Martinez & Costa, Ingenieros Estructurales*, were charged with overseeing the structural engineering aspects. The structural elements included the grandstand with its sixteen thousand (16,000) seats and the box seats at playing field level. The facilities included three thousand (3,000) parking spaces. Finally, the landscaping was assigned to Martha Gruson from Cambridge, Massachusetts, whom Pedro Miranda recruited himself.⁶ On April 1, 1959, Governor Luis Muñoz Marín authorized the emission of bonds and recommended the possibility of acquiring ten (10) additional acres of land to be used as parking for the complex.⁷

In mid-1960, the stadium's construction first phase began with the leveling of the site. The site was filled to be level with the FDR Avenue, making the site a non-flooded zone. Once the ground was prepared, all the points where the stadium would to connect to its water supply, sewage, electricity and communications lines, were carefully selected. These points were close to each other and not far from the main structure site (Figs. 10-11).

⁴ Nathaniel Soltero, "Gobierno Capital aprueba construir Estadio Capital." *El Mundo* (San Juan, PR). Mar. 19, 1959, pp. 16, 21.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Fundación Pro Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Inc. *Hiram Bithorn. Visión, icono y estadio*, 2013, 62.

⁷ City Ordinance No. 92. Series 1960-61. For the authorization of credit transfer within the \$3 million loan for the construction of the Municipal Stadium, and for other purposes. City of San Juan.

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

With the site prepared and leveled, and the piles and pile caps properly grounded, the construction of the foundation and the main supporting elements was initiated running in an arc from the east corner (third base line) to the west corner (first base line). As the foundation and frames were completed by section, these last ones were structurally joined together by the use of horizontal concrete beams (**Fig. 12**). Once all supporting frames were completed, the precast floors were set on place in a fan-like shape form.

By early 1962, the project was well along: almost the entire main framework had been erected, and construction of the roof had begun (**Fig. 13**). By mid-1962, the prefabricated intermediate beams and the prefabricated stands were installed (**Fig. 14**). By summer, work was completed on the iconic roof and the upper tiers. Additionally, work was done on the exterior grounds and fences. The final push came between September and October 1962, with the installation of the lighting towers and the prefabricated diamond-shaped exterior walls. At last, the final details were applied- the seats, playing field and finishing's (**Fig. 15**).

An important aspect of the construction is the fact that there were no major accidents during the undertaking. Safety reigned throughout the process, and labor relations were excellent. Equally contributing to the successful effort were the ties developed between the municipal authorities' inspection and supervision teams and the building contractors. All this allowed for the project to progress without incidents and to be completed within the allotted eighteen months timeframe.

On October 24, 1962, on a clear and cool night, the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** was inaugurated. The inauguration was a simple ceremony on which San Juan's Mayor Felisa Rincón de Gautier, cut the ribbon and entered the stadium's front gates. A plaque bearing Hiram Bithorn's name and installed outside the main entrance, was unveiled by Maria Sosa, Bithorn's mother. The Bishop Monsignor Méndez imparted his blessings upon the new stadium and the police band lived up the proceedings. After the players were announced, the umpires came on to the field, the national anthems of the US and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico were played, both flags were raised and the symbolic first pitch was thrown. A gathering of 16,931 paying fans amid the more than 18,000 total spectators that packed the stands, witnessed the long awaited game between the *Leones de Ponce* and the *Senadores de San Juan* at the new state-of-the-art stadium. Present at the game were great sports personalities such as

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

J.G. Taylor Spink, Editor of The Sporting News; Ford C. Frick, Commissioner of US Major League Baseball; and Ralph Houk, the New York's Yankees Manager. Bantamweight boxing champion Sixto Escobar also featured among the special guests.⁸

Once the inaugural festivities were concluded, the *Circuito de Baloncesto Superior* [Professional Basketball Circuit] held a total of thirty-two (32) games at the stadium. At the beginning of the season, the field served as home court for the teams from Santurce, San Juan, and Río Piedras. In order to stage these events, the City acquired a basketball court that was one hundred and twelve (112) feet long by sixty (60) feet wide. The court was removable, which allowed the space to be used for other events and activities.

Since the stadium's inauguration, a great number of extraordinary ballplayers have proven their athletic mettle on the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium's** field. The 1960s defined the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** with the presence of US imported players from the Major League Baseball as Tommy Aaron, Lee Maye, Bob Veale, Don Pavletich, Jim Maloney, among others. Even more significant in establishing the stadium's reputation as the main stage within all the ballparks in the island during the 1960s, was the continuous parade a great local players within its diamond, like Luis Arroyo, Victor Pellot, Felix Mantilla, Julio Navarro, Orlando "Peruchin" Cepeda and Roberto Clemente.

The inaugural ceremonies of the 1966 Pan American Games were held at **Hiram Bithorn Stadium**. The stadium was expanded for this grand event: a new section was added to the grandstand and an Olympic style track was installed, the field was re-sodded and the bullpen was outfitted with a new roof to shelter the players in the event of rain. The facilities were also renovated; for example, the clubhouse was expanded, the locker rooms were freshly painted and new concession stands were added for the display of local cuisine.

During the 70s, the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** hosted a series of Major League Exhibition games to benefit the construction of a multi-sport complex in the city of Carolina to be named "*Ciudad Deportiva Roberto Clemente*", in honor of the great Pittsburg's Pirates outfielder. This decade was distinguished by the presence of star players, both in exhibition games as well as winter seasons.

⁸ Pepe Seda, "Inauguración de Bithorn" *El Mundo* (San Juan, PR), Oct 25, 1962, p. 1

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

County and State

In 1972, the stadium put on the first National Basketball Association's (NBA) game that was ever played outside of a closed-roof facility. The outdoor, preseason exhibition game featured the Phoenix Suns taking on the Milwaukee Bucks.⁹ The *VIII Pan American Games* of 1979, the most important athletic event held in Puerto Rico at that time, was hosted at the capital city stadium. The grounds of the stadium were decorated with the finest trimmings and appeared enormous for the opening ceremonies.

The 1993-94 preseason of Puerto Rico's winter baseball saw probably the most memorable and emotional game ever played at the stadium: an exhibition game between the Cuban National Team and the *Senadores de San Juan* Team.¹⁰ Another one of the most revered events ever staged at this location was the 1995 Caribbean Series.

The **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** has the distinction of being one of only a few facilities outside the United States and Canada to host a regular season MLB game, playing host to the 2001 opener between the Texas Rangers and the Toronto Blue Jays.

In 2003, the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** was remodeled to host the Montreal Expos who played twenty-two (22) "home" games in both the 2003 and 2004 seasons of US Major League Baseball, showcasing the sport in front of nearly 530,000 fans over the course of forty-three (43) games. The stadium was outfitted with the same dimensions as the playing field of Montreal's Olympic Stadium, placing the outfield walls three hundred and twenty-five (325) feet (99 m) down the left and right field lines, and four hundred and four (404) feet (123 m) from home plate into center at a height of eight (8) feet (2.5 m).¹¹

The stadium hosted pools in the 2006 and 2009 World Baseball Classics. In the 2006 tournament, the stadium was the only venue to host more than one round during the inaugural event, with both

⁹ Angel L. Colón, "Hiram Bithorn and the Game of Baseball". *Hiram Bithorn: Vision, icon and stadium*. ProArquitectura y Urbanismo: San Juan, 2013, 130.

¹⁰ "The Cuban squad arrived with invincibility in world amateur baseball that was on full display in front of 23,000 fans. The game remained scoreless into the sixth inning when Cuba scored two runs. In that very inning, the *Senadores* answered, evening things up again two runs apiece. The Cubans scored the go-ahead run in the ninth, but, in the bottom of the inning, *Senadores* would not give in. The import, Ryan Thompson hit a single with one out, and then Javy López rifled a line drive mere inches above the Cuban short stop's glove that had enough on it to keep elevating all that way over the left field wall. With this giant swing, he brought in the tying and winning runs, leaving the Cubans on the field of play by the final score of 4 runs to 3". Colón, Angel F. "Hiram Bithorn and the Game of Baseball", 128.

¹¹ *Ibid.* "Hiram Bithorn and the Game of Baseball", p. 132.

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

Rounds 1 and 2 being played there. In the 2009 Classic, **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** played host to Pool D in the first round. It accommodated six games played by four powerhouse teams: Dominican Republic, Panama, the Netherlands and Puerto Rico. Most recently, the Florida Marlins hosted the New York Mets in a three-game set at the stadium in July 2010.

Throughout its history, the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** has been host to numerous local baseball teams, as well as teams from the United States, the Caribbean and Europe. Besides baseball, the stadium has been also the preferred setting for other athletic, recreational, and cultural events.

In a wider scope, the **Hiram Bithorn Stadium** symbolizes a discourse of modernity and a long-gone proposal for social changes told through its location, planning and architecture. However, besides its architectural and social significance, the Bithorn (as it's popularly known) is just a wonderful ballpark where the 1908 *Take me out to the ballgame's* melody take us back in time, and where, with a little stretch of the imagination, we can almost see Roberto Clemente still running the bases (**Fig. 16**).

9. Major Bibliographic References

Barañano, Eduardo. "Master Plan San Juan Metropolitan Area". Barañano Plan, Puerto Rico Planning Board, 1954.

Curet-Cuevas, Eliezer. *The Political Economy of Puerto Rico: 1950-2000*. San Juan: Ediciones M.A.C., 2003.

Dietz, James L. *Economic History of Puerto Rico*. Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 2002.

Fundación Pro Arquitectura y Urbanismo. *Hiram Bithorn: Visión, Ícono y estadio*. San Juan. 2013.

San Juan, City of. "For the Authorization of Credit Transfer within the \$3 Million Loan for the Construction of the Municipal Stadium, and for Other Purposes." City Ordinance No. 92, San Juan, Series 1960-61.

Vivoni, Enrique. *Klumb: An Architecture of Social Concern*. Río Piedras: Editorial Universitaria, 2006.

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other (Name of repository)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data							
Acreage of property		22.5		USGS Quadrangle		San Juan Quadrangle	
(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)							
UTM References							
Datum (indicated on USGS map):				Mean Sea level			
		NAD 1927 or		X		NAD 1983	
1.	Zone	19	Easting	809992	Northing	2038810	
2.	Zone	19	Easting	809225	Northing	2038933	
3.	Zone	19	Easting	809391	Northing	2038844	
4.	Zone	19	Easting	809381	Northing	2038737	
See continuation sheets for additional UTM's							

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Lot of ninety-one thousand and thirty-five (91,035) square meters, as recorded at the Centro de Recaudaciones de Ingresos Municipales (CRIM), under number 062-059-351-01.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire lot historically associated with the structure.

11. Form Prepared By					
name/title		Sara T. Aponte Meléndez, PPL / Special Counsel			
organization		Pro Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Inc.)		date	
				October 6, 2013	
street & number		200 Winston Churchill, Suite 500		telephone	
				(787) 930-3111 (787) 764-4913	
City or town		San Juan		state	
				PR	
email				zip code	
				0 0 9 2 6	

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium
Name of Property

San Juan, Puerto Rico
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Name of Property: Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium City or Vicinity: Hato Rey County: San Juan State: Puerto Rico

Photographer: Angel L. Colón Date Photographed: March 7, 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera.

1. Main facade; looking southeast.
2. Ticket box; looking southeast.
3. Original four floodlights and partial view of supporting element; looking northeast.
4. Partial view of playing field, grandstand, VIP Box and iconic roof; looking northeast.
5. Perspective of baseball field, Clubhouse, grandstand and roof; looking northwest.
6. Playing field from the grandstand; looking south.
7. Fans at the grandstand and VIP Box; looking west.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

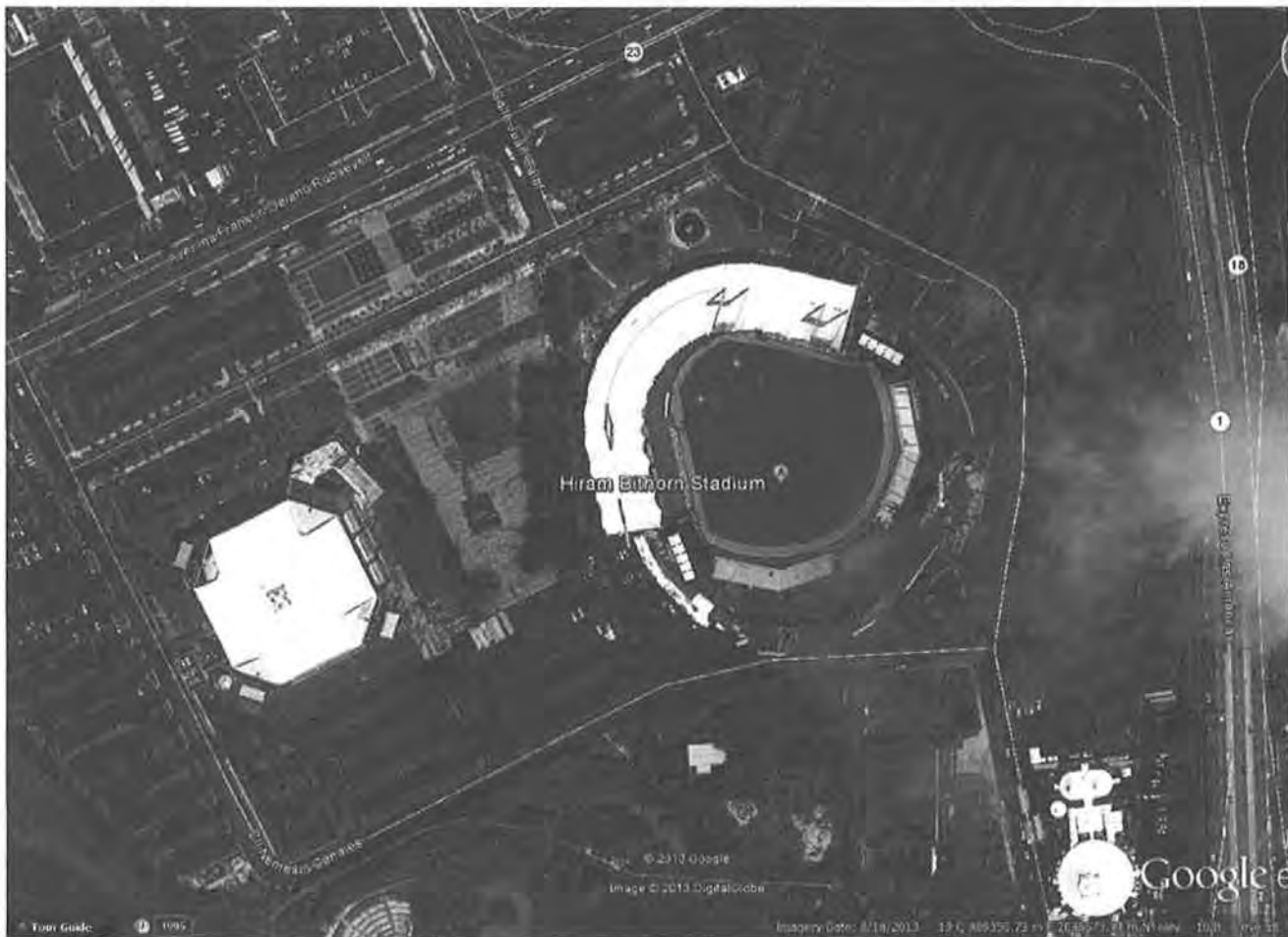
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7

Page 1

Figure 1. Hiram Bithorn Stadium's Site (center), with the Roberto Clemente Coliseum to the west and the Pedrín Zorrilla to the southeast.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7

Page 2

Figure 2. Stadium's main façade with ticket box and Hiram Bithorn's bronze statue.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7

Page 3

Figure 3. Partial view of the grandstand area with its unique roof.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7

Page 4

Figure 4. Partial view of the roof and supporting elements.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 5

Figure 5. Partial view of the clubhouse, upper left.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7

Page 6

Figure 6.. The original four floodlight steel towers.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7

Page 7

Figure 7. Hiram Bithorn Stadium's aerial view.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 8

Figure 8. Site for the proposed Metropolitan Central Park system. Only the Hiram Bithorn Stadium was built on the site.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 9

Figure 9. The 1959 ceremony at the Casino. To Mayor Felisa Rincon's right, Pedro Miranda and Alexander Papesh. Orval Sifontes is first from right.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 10

Figures 10/ 11. Filling and leveling the site.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 11

Figure 12. Joining the foundation and supporting elements frames with the concrete beams.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 12

Figure 13. Construction of the roof.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 13

Figure 14. Installation of the prefabricated stands.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 14

Figure 15. Finishing the final details in 1962.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 15

Fig16. Roberto Clemente in the Hiram Bithorn, standing still while the anthems are playing, 1967.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 10

Page 16

10. Geographical Data

Hiram Bithorn Stadium Site Map



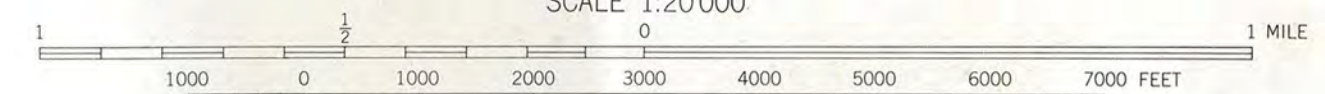
UTM Coordinates

1.	809992E	2038810N	5.	809385E	2038649N
2.	809225E	2038933N	6.	809193E	2038621N
3.	809391E	2038844N	7.	809103E	2038577N
4.	809381E	2038737N			



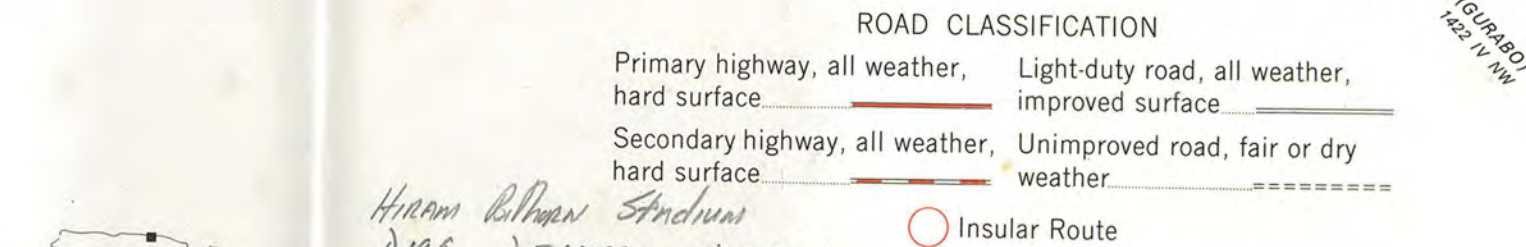
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1962. Field checked 1963. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1967. Field checked 1969
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS charts 903 (1964) and 908 (1965). This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. Puerto Rico Datum, 1940 adjustment 2000-meter grid ticks based on Puerto Rico coordinate system 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19
Barrio and municipality boundaries by the Puerto Rico Planning Board
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edition 1982
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 METERS
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 1-METER CONTOURS
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET-DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 0.3 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS, SAN JUAN, P. R. 00910
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



Handwritten notes:
Hiram Wilson
1) E 200962 - N-2035810
2) E 200925 - N-2035833
3) E 201841 - N-2035844
4) E 201841 - N-2035873
5) E 200935 - N-2035844
6) E 200935 - N-2035821
7) E 200935 - N-2035877

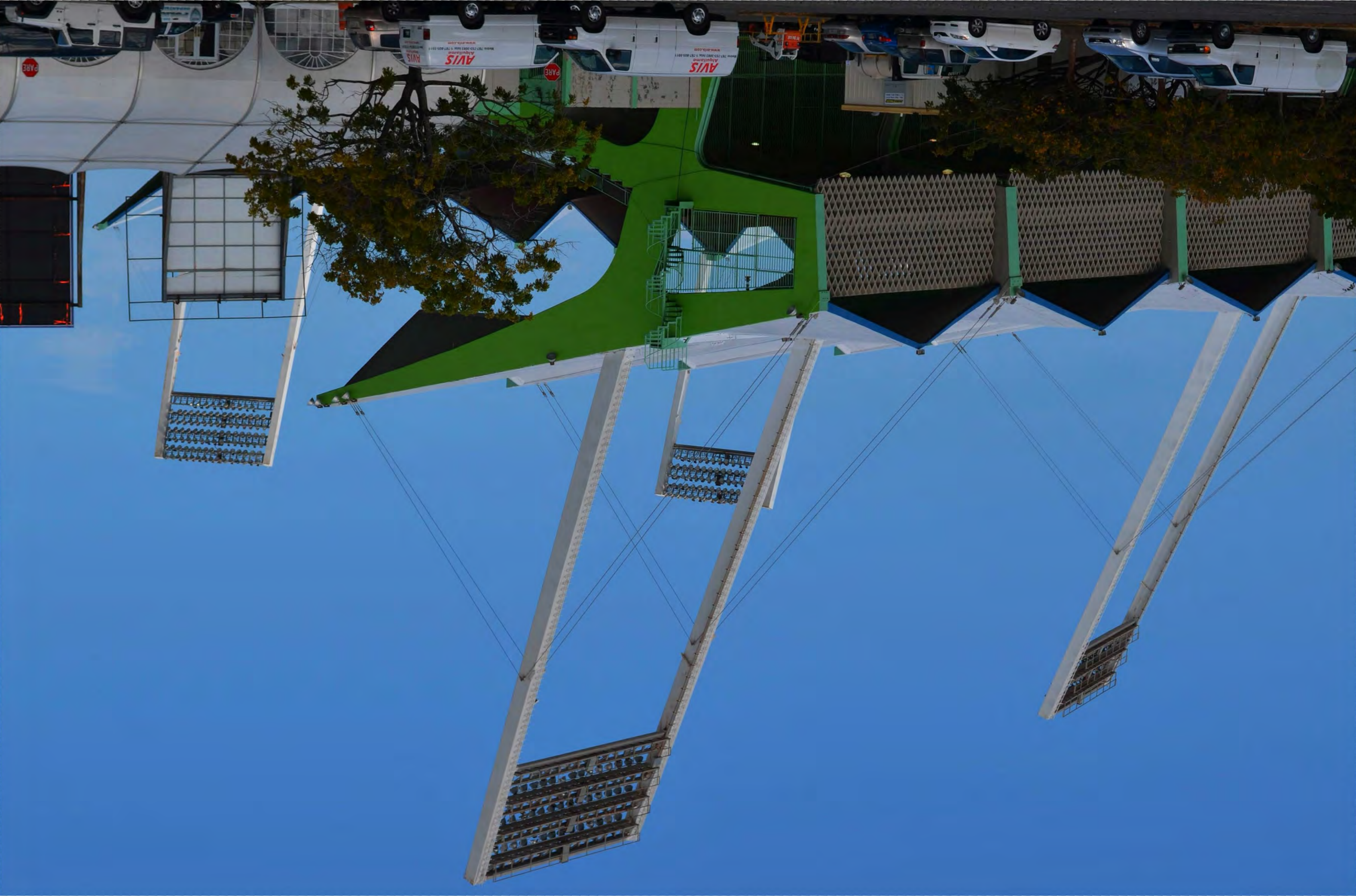
000324
SAN JUAN, P. R.
N1822.5-W6600.7.5
1969
PHOTOREVISED 1982
DMA 1323 II SE-SERIES E835





HIRAM BITHORN STADIUM







WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC 2013

WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC 2013 KONAMI USA DELTA F. Nittai Loggini HONDA LIBERTY



WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC

PALCO 18

PALCO 20

PALCO 22





xerox
50 años en el mundo

Banco BHD

HORA

Budget
BUDGET.COM

T-Mobile

WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC 2013



ALL TIME BY
GUEST HOME
WINNING

WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC 2013

30

SALA DE EMERGENCIA
EXIT

SALA DE EMERGENCIA
EXIT

National Register of Historic Places

Note to the record

Additional Documentation: 2015

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Bithorn, Hiram, Municipal Stadium

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PUERTO RICO, San Juan

DATE RECEIVED: 08/26/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/11/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY:
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13001118

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6-26-15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept
REVIEWER Edson Beal DISCIPLINE History
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 6-26-15

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium (Additional
Documentation)

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Diana López Sotomayor SHPO/Director

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

8. Statement of Significance

Architect/Builder

Orval E. Sifontes, Alexander Papesh and Pedro A. Miranda Rivera d/b/a Pedro A. Miranda & Associates.

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Bithorn, Hiram, Municipal Stadium

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PUERTO RICO, San Juan

DATE RECEIVED: 12/06/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/07/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/22/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/22/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13001118

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 1-22-2014 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Excellent example of use of thin shell concrete in a stadium
Built as part of state effort to modernize infrastructure*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+C

REVIEWER J. Gable DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

OFICINA ESTATAL DE
CONSERVACIÓN HISTÓRICA
OFICINA DEL GOBERNADOR

STATE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION OFFICE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



November 27, 2013

Ms. Carol D. Schull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor (MS 2280)
Washington, DC 20005

SUBMISSION – HIRAM BITHORN MUNICIPAL STADIUM

Dear Ms. Schull:

We are pleased to submit for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places the nomination of the **Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium**, located in the Municipality of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Should you have any questions on the nomination, please contact Nydia Préstamo Rivera, Deputy SHPO, at 787-721-3737 or nprestamo@prshpo.gobierno.pr.

Sincerely,

Diana López Sotomayor, Archeologist
State Historic Preservation Officer

DLS/NPR/JLS/jv

Enclosures

WWW.OECH.GOBIERNO.PR

P.O. Box 9023935
San Juan, PR 00902-3935

Teléfono/Phone | 787.721-3737
Fax | 787.721-3773

PUERTO RICO
VERDE



ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO DE
PUERTO RICO

Oficina Estatal de Conservación Histórica
State Historic Preservation Office

RECEIVED 2280

JUN 26 2015

**Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service**

June 25, 2015

Ms. Stephanie Toothman, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor (MS 2280)
Washington, DC 20005

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION - (HIRAM BITHORN MUNICIPAL
STADIUM)**

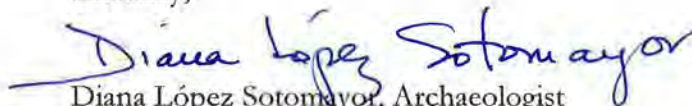
13001118

Dear Ms. Toothman:

We are submitting a continuation sheet with additional information pertaining to the **Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium**, included in the National Register of Historic Places on January 22, 2014 (Number 13001118). The property is located in the Municipality of San Juan, Puerto Rico. The additional information amends the original wording, and corresponds to section 8, page 6 of the nomination form.

Should you have any questions on the nomination, please contact Berenice Sueiro, Historic Preservation Manager, at 787-721-3737, ext. 2002 or bsueiro@prshpo.pr.gov

Sincerely,


Diana López Sotomayor, Archaeologist
State Historic Preservation Officer

DLS/NPT/BRS/JLS/eds