

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0695033

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 15 1979
DATE ENTERED	MAR 2 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Hialeah Park Race Track (8Da387)

AND/OR COMMON

Miami Jockey Club; Hialeah Race Track; Hialeah Park

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER East Fourth Avenue, between East 22nd Street and East 31st Street

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Hialeah

___ VICINITY OF

Thirteenth

STATE
Florida

CODE
12

COUNTY
Dade

CODE
025

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of Hialeah

STREET & NUMBER

Post Office Box 40

CITY, TOWN

Hialeah

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Dade County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Miami

STATE

Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Florida Historic Sites Survey, Miami-Dade

DATE

July, 1972

___ FEDERAL STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management

CITY, TOWN

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida 32304

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Hialeah Park race course occupies approximately 206 acres bounded on the north by East 32 Street, on the east by Flamingo Way, on the south by the Florida East Coast Railroad, and on the west by Palm Avenue. The physical plant consists of the original race track, laid out in 1925; an infield turf track dating from 1931; and other features, including numerous stables. The most notable structures at Hialeah Park are the clubhouse and the grandstand. Both are of relatively recent construction: architect's drawings of the grandstand are dated March 24, 1949; drawings for the adjoining Renaissance Revival clubhouse are dated August 10, 1953. Both structures constitute greatly enlarged versions of the clubhouse and grandstand constructed by Joseph E. Widener after his purchase of the course in 1930. Both are constructed of reinforced concrete and steel frame.

Site acreage has increased over the years of the race track's existence. Until 1930, the Miami Jockey Club occupied only 160 acres of Hialeah Park. The remaining acreage was devoted to the Miami Kennel Club's greyhound racing facility; their races were run at night in order to eliminate potential conflicts between the two organizations. When Joseph E. Widener purchased the horse racing track at Hialeah Park, he also acted to purchase the parcel owned by the Kennel Club. The latter purchase was made in 1930, and Widener built stables on the Kennel Club land. This remains the stables' location. Widener's efforts to make this facility the finest in the area included borrowing the design for the walking ring from Longchamps, France, and borrowing features from English tracks to highlight the paddock area.

During the intervening years, additional efforts to beautify the track and its surrounds were undertaken. These included importation of flamingoes from Cuba and building a lake in the racetrack infield; commissioning a statue to commemorate Citation, a Triple Crown winner; construction of fountains, and extensively planting the site with flora native to the Everglades gives it its present park-like atmosphere. These last efforts were extremely successful, and the park has proved attractive enough to the Cuban flamingoes that they have bred at Hialeah, causing the Florida Audubon Society to designate the park a Sanctuary for the American Flamingo.

Thus by 1931, the Hialeah Park site was complete. While the various structures on the site have been altered or enlarged, their individual styles have been retained. The site, the oldest existing recreational facility of its kind in South Florida, has continued to function as the founders of Hialeah intended, providing recreation for thousands each year.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
—PREHISTORIC	—ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	—RELIGION
—1400-1499	—ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	—CONSERVATION	—LAW	—SCIENCE
—1500-1599	—AGRICULTURE	—ECONOMICS	—LITERATURE	—SCULPTURE
—1600-1699	—ARCHITECTURE	—EDUCATION	—MILITARY	—SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
—1700-1799	—ART	—ENGINEERING	—MUSIC	—THEATER
—1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	—EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	—PHILOSOPHY	—TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	—COMMUNICATIONS	—INDUSTRY	—POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Recreation
		—INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1921 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Hialeah Park is a historically significant recreation complex which both reflects and has contributed to the development of the City of Hialeah and the popularization of southern Florida as a winter resort area since 1925.

The City of Hialeah was formed as a speculative enterprise by James H. Bright, a cattleman from Missouri, and Glenn H. Curtiss, the aviation pioneer, in 1921. The land on which the city was to be built was formed by the drainage which resulted from the construction of the Miami River Canal.¹

Bright and Curtiss planned Hialeah to include many amenities ignored by other South Florida town developers. They donated large land tracts for community use and aided in acquisition of lands for the construction of two churches, a park, the city hall, a school, a golf course, a municipal water plant, and a race track.²

Hialeah's first race track was devoted solely to dog racing. The Miami Kennel Club opened the facility, the first greyhound parimutuel track in America, on March 1, 1921 and was an immediate popular success.³ Although a furor arose over using live rabbits in the races, the introduction of the newly-invented mechanical rabbit enabled the track's owners to overcome criticism, and greyhound racing continued.⁴

Curtiss and Bright were also instrumental in founding a favorable image of Hialeah through such diverse efforts as helping to form the Hialeah Woman's Club (1922), successfully agitating for a school, and offering land for use as the home of the Miami Pan American Exposition.⁵ However, they also foresaw a need for recreation during the peak of south Florida visitation season. Thus, in 1924, when the entrepreneurs were approached by Joseph M. Smoot about investment opportunities, they eagerly helped him to establish the Miami Jockey Club and to construct a race-track and grandstand adjacent to the greyhound track on the site originally intended for the Pan American Exposition.⁶

See Continuation Sheet

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 234

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	5,71	9,0,0	2,85,9	180	20,0	B	1,7	5,72	6,70	28	5,92	200	40
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				
C	1,7	5,72	7,40	2,85,8	120	17,0	D	1,7	5,71	9,40	28	5,81	140	
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the Southeast corner of the intersection of East 32nd Street and Palm Avenue proceed in an easterly direction along the south side of East 32nd Street to the southwest corner of the intersection of East 32nd Street and East 4th Avenue (Flamingo Way), thence South along the west side of East 4th Avenue to the northwest corner

See Continuation Sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John Scafidi, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management 10/5/78

STREET & NUMBER

Department of State, The Capitol

TELEPHONE

(904) 487-2333

CITY OR TOWN

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida 32304

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

[Handwritten Signature] 1/8/79

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Handwritten Signature]
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 3-2-79

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST *[Handwritten Signature]*
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 2/26/79

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Hialeah Race Track (8Da387)

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When the Hialeah track opened on January 1, 1925, visitors could bet horse races, enjoy an amusement park with roller coaster, visit Chief Willy Willy's Miccosukee Indian Village and Trading Post, watch jai-alai played at the Hialeah fronton, and end the day by betting at the greyhound track, which had begun night races as a hedge against competition from the horse track.⁷ Thus, the Hialeah Park race track offered the most complete recreational complex in South Florida at that time.

The Great Hurricane of September, 1926 dealt the City of Hialeah a staggering blow. Twenty people were killed, and over seventy per cent of the homes in the new city were destroyed or materially damaged. The Hialeah Park complex lost its roller coaster and jai-alai fronton.⁸ From that point on, the various owners of the Hialeah Race Course concentrated on horse racing. By 1931, stables occupied the Kennel Club site and the amusement park, jai-alai fronton and Indian village had become landscaped portions of the horse racing facility.

In 1930, the race track at Hialeah Park was purchased by Joseph E. Widener, a wealthy Philadelphian. He redesigned the track, demolishing the grandstand, stables, and clubhouse built in 1925. New structures were built. The area to the west of the track was purchased from the Miami Kennel Club, and stables were located there.⁹

The opening of the new Hialeah racing plant in 1931 set its tone for years to come. It was attended by the rich and notable who rode special trains south from Palm Beach and debarked at a station specially built by the Seaboard Air Line Railway.¹⁰

Hialeah Park has become known as one of horse racing's most prominent tracks. It is the home of such famous races as the Flamingo, for three year olds, and the Widener Handicap. The track has been the major industry of the City of Hialeah since its opening in 1925, and the prominence of the racing complex has helped South Florida to gain and retain a reputation as a worthwhile vacation spot.¹¹

See Continuation sheet for footnotes

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¹Miami Herald, September 14, 1975; C.R. Roseberry, Glenn Curtiss: Pioneer of Flight - A Biography, (New York) 1972, pp. 424-25; Helen Muir, Miami, U.S.A., (NYC 1953) p. 47.

²Hialeah Home News, February 4, 1965.

³Ibid.

⁴Editors of the Miami Herald, Florida "The East Coast," (Miami, n.d.) p. 243.

⁵Fisher and Shepard, Inc., Historical and Architectural Survey, Hialeah Community Development Target Area, Hialeah, 1978, p. 5; John G. DuPuis, History of Early Medicine, History of Early Public Schools, History of Early Agriculture Relations in Dade County, (Miami: Published by the author, 1954) p. 37.

⁶Nixon Smiley, Knights of the Fourth Estate, (Miami, n.d.) pp. 58, 61; Jack Kofoed, Moon Over Miami, (New York, 1955) pp. 133-34; Editors of the Miami Herald, Florida..., pp. 230-231.

⁷Kofoed, Moon..., pp. 134, 142, 147; Miami Herald, January 5, 1925, January 15, 1925; Hialeah Home News, July 4, 1975.

⁸Hialeah Home News, September 5, 1975.

⁹Smiley, Knights..., p. 98; Kofoed, Moon..., p. 134; Muir, Miami U.S.A., p. 198.

¹⁰Smiley, Knights..., p. 98; Kofoed, Moon..., P. 135.

¹¹Fisher and Shepard, Historical..., p. 29.

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of the intersection of East 4th Avenue and the northern boundary of the right-of-way of the Florida East Coast Railroad, thence West along the northern boundary of said right-of-way to the north-east corner of the intersection of said right-of-way and Palm Avenue, thence North along the east side of Palm Avenue to the Point of Beginning.

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Fisher and Shepard, Inc. Historical and Architectural Survey, Hialeah Community Development Target Area. Hialeah, Florida, 1978.

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Kofoed, Jack. Moon Over Miami. N.Y.C., Holt, 1953.

Miami Herald. January 5, 1925; September 14, 1975.

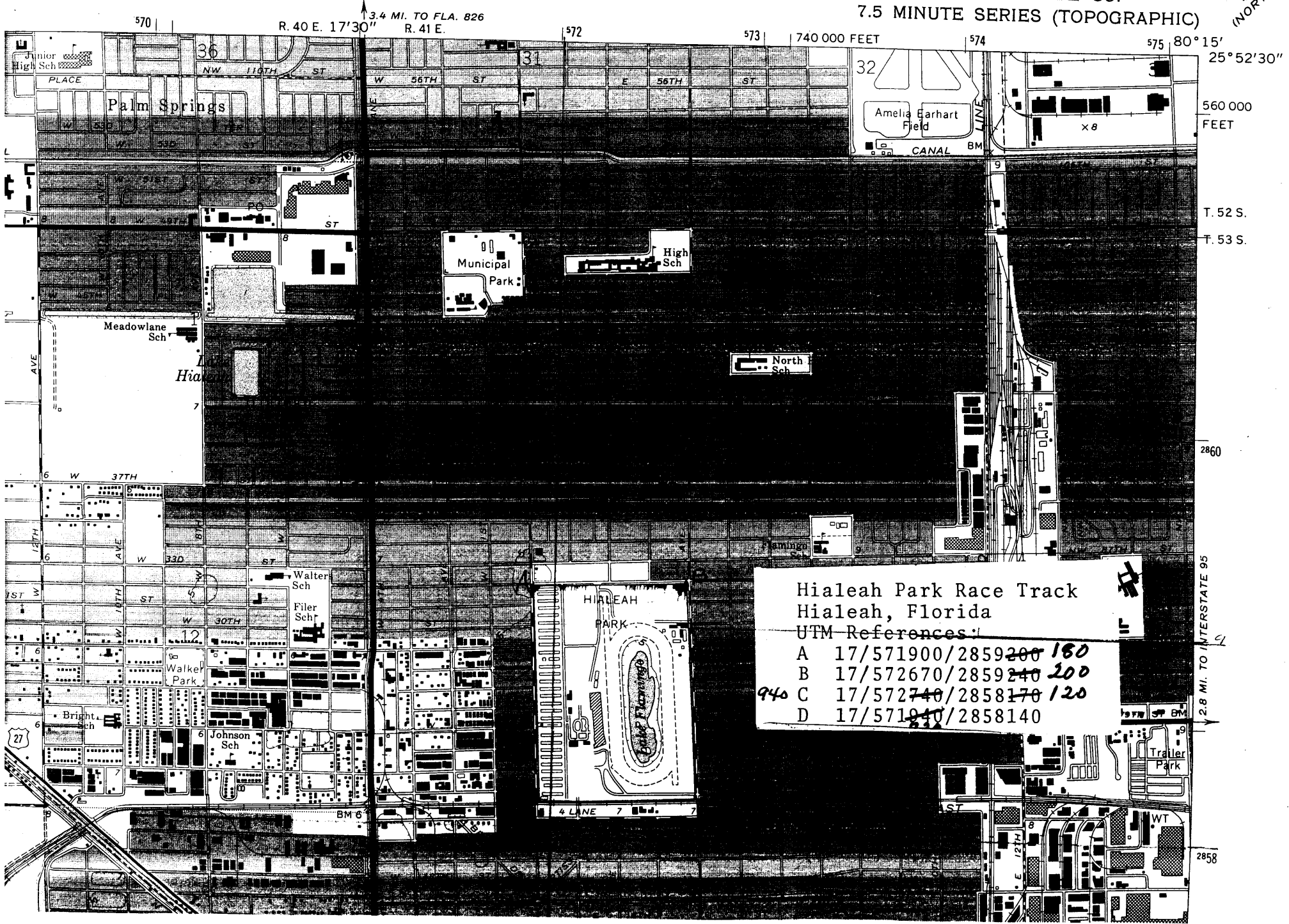
Roseberry, C.R. Glenn Curtiss: Pioneer of Flight - A Biography. N.Y.C., Doubleday, 1972.

Smiley, Nixon. Knights of the Fourth Estate. Miami, E.A. Seemann, n.d.

_____. Yesterday's Miami. Miami, E.A. Seeman, 1973.

HIALEAH QUADRANGLE
 FLORIDA-DADE CO.
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

4935 1 NW
 (NORTH MIAMI)



Hialeah Park Race Track
 Hialeah, Florida
 UTM References:
 A 17/571900/2859200 180
 B 17/572670/2859240 200
 940 C 17/572740/2858170 120
 D 17/571940/2858140

2.8 MI. TO INTERSTATE 95

80° 15' 25" 52' 30"

560 000 FEET

T. 52 S.

T. 53 S.

2860

2858

3.4 MI. TO FLA. 826
 R. 40 E. 17' 30" R. 41 E.

740 000 FEET