

SPORTS DESTINATION: FRISCO, TEXAS



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DALLAS STARS



DALLAS STARS



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The new Dallas Cowboy development, The Star, is a spectacular new addition to Frisco's already impressive sports footprint, offering visitors a chance to see the Cowboys in practice and providing new sports facilities for local Frisco athletic events.

THE FRISCO BOOM A quiet corner of north Texas becomes a sports mecca

Back at the turn of the century — this century — Frisco, Texas, was a sleepy town on the northern outskirts of Dallas. The farming community of 35,000 had more cows than people. The major artery, the North Toll Road, stopped just short of its border.

"My dad said, 'I might not be here to see it, but Frisco is going to be the right place for us to be,'" said Dan Hunt, president of MLS FC Dallas and vice president of the Hunt Sports Group. "My father had foresight in every other area and Frisco was no exception."

Hunt's father is Lamar Hunt, who among many other things was a forefather of Major League Soccer, and whose early soccer-only stadiums set the standard for the sport nationwide.

Lamar Hunt was prescient. "We were considering several other properties, but we ended up in Frisco because of a newspaper article about Frisco's city manager, George Purefoy," Hunt said. "George has been instrumental in the growth of Frisco. Dad went to lunch with him and, an hour later, came out with a handshake deal."

Since that lunch meeting, Frisco's population has quadrupled. Fortune 500

companies such as Toyota and Liberty Mutual Insurance have moved their headquarters nearby, joining powerhouse companies such as the Dr Pepper Snapple Group and Frito-Lay. Last year, Jamba Inc., parent of the Jamba Juice smoothie company, moved to Frisco from California. The Frisco population is young, with more than a third of the population under 18, affluent and well educated. In less than a decade, the Frisco school system has grown from four high schools to 10.

Bringing a wealth of professional sports franchises to town was part of the mission Frisco's leaders had to create one of the most desirable, most livable cities in the world.

FC Dallas, the Dallas Stars, the Dallas Cowboys, the minor league baseball Frisco RoughRiders and the NBA D-league Texas Legends each have a strong presence in Frisco. MLS FC Dallas plays its home games at Toyota Stadium. The RoughRiders play home games at Dr Pepper Ballpark and the Texas Legends play in Dr Pepper Arena. The NHL Dallas Stars practice and are headquartered at Dr Pepper StarCenter. The Dallas Cowboys recently opened



The Dr Pepper Arena serves as home court for the Texas Legends of the NBA D-League.

The Star, which serves as corporate headquarters and practice facilities for the Cowboys and the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders.

Each of the venues was built through a public-private partnership and is owned by the city of Frisco, with teams leasing from the city.

"What stands out is how progressive and visionary the city leaders are in recognizing the important role sports can play in building a great quality of life for their city," said Chuck Greenberg, general partner and CEO of the Frisco RoughRiders. "When you look at the growth of Frisco, you have to look to George Purefoy, the only city manager Frisco has ever had. You have to look to Mayor Maher Maso, Jim Gandy at the EDC, and Jeremy Lyon, the longtime school superintendent. They have created a very positive environment for sports and business to grow and to find creative new opportunities. They've built this city not only for their residents, but for the sports franchises. Frisco is now a sports destination, which is not something you could have said even five years ago."

The Frisco RoughRiders, a Class AA affiliate of the Texas Rangers, were the first pro sports franchise to see the potential of Frisco. Dr Pepper Ballpark was completed in 2003.

"It was exactly as Dan said — that kind of 'back-of-the-napkin' deal," said Matt Ratliff, senior director of marketing

and promotions for the RoughRiders. "Mandalay Baseball, our owner at the time, had looked all over the country for a place to bring this fledgling team. The owners had no ties to the area at all. But they agreed, 'Frisco is going to be big,' and, on a handshake, that was it. And it's all worked out."

Part of the attraction for pro sports franchises, as well as corporations, is the old real estate trope "location, location, location." Situated on the affluent north end of the DFW Metroplex, Frisco boomed as the Dallas North Tollway was extended through town and the Sam Rayburn Tollway was upgraded, making Frisco an easy commute to downtown Dallas and Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

But a much bigger factor has been the vision and mission of the city's leaders and their determination to bring a top quality of life to both residents and corporations.

All of the sports facilities, Toyota Stadium, Dr Pepper Ballpark, Dr Pepper Arena, The Star — the newly opened world headquarters of the Dallas Cowboys — have come to life through a private-public partnership that involves the city of Frisco and the Economic Development Corp., as well as the Frisco Independent School District.

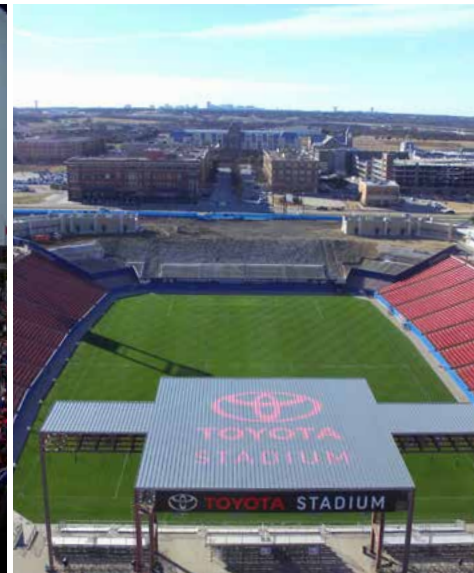
"Frisco is attractive in small part because of the financial incentive," said Marla Roe, executive director of the Frisco Convention & Visitors Bureau. "But in the bigger picture, all of our sports teams can see how our city management and leadership embrace the teams. Not only did we invest in the facilities and teams at the outset, but Frisco has been dedicated to reinvesting again and again into our facilities."

The RoughRiders' 74-acre Dr Pepper Ballpark opened in 2003 to accolades from baseballparks.com as the "best new ballpark in baseball." But just as importantly, Ballpark Digest awarded the stadium "Best Ballpark Improvements" in 2008 and "Best Ballpark Renovation" in 2015.

The ballpark's masterpiece is the 174-foot-long Choctaw Lazy River, a one-of-a-kind experience in professional



A fan favorite, the Choctaw Lazy River situated in right field of the Dr Pepper Ballpark, is just one of the distinctive elements that make the minor league RoughRiders a hit in Frisco.



Soccer has established a strong presence in the Frisco area as evidenced by the success of the MLS franchise FC Dallas which plays all of its home games at Frisco's Toyota Stadium.

sports. Greenberg lauded Frisco for keeping facilities fresh and up-to-the-minute to keep attracting fans. The lazy river winds its way outside right field, making it possible for fans to watch baseball while floating in a tube.

"Altogether, the different organizations, such as the city, Frisco ISD and the Economic Development Corp., have reinvested about \$36 million in Dr Pepper Ballpark and Dr Pepper Arena and about \$39 million in Toyota Stadium to keep each of our facilities at the top of their game," said Roe.

Between the Dr Pepper Ballpark and The Star lies the \$5 Billion Mile, a stretch of the city with four mixed-use developments in various stages of progress. In reality, the developments now represent more than \$6 billion in capital invest-

ment in Frisco, well over the initially projected \$5 billion. The Star itself accounts for more than \$1 billion of the Mile. The projects, when completed, will add thousands of hotel rooms, apartments and condos to Frisco, along with millions of square feet of retail and commercial office space.

To make the city even more diverse and livable for its residents, sports-centric Frisco has plans underway to build a \$10 million cultural and performing arts center.

"The decision to come to Frisco in 2003 was well ahead of the curve," said Greenberg. "I first came for a game in 2010 and, other than a hotel, there was nothing around the ballpark. By the time I bought the team three years later, there had already been dramatic

growth. But in the last four years, the growth in Frisco has been exponential."

In the last three off seasons, the city has invested \$8 million in renovations at Dr Pepper Ballpark, which, Greenberg said, has been transformational for the team and for game attendance. Installing the best video board and sound system have extended the ballpark's use for other activities, such as movie nights. In addition to the vaunted Choctaw Lazy River, the ballpark has added the Bull Moose Saloon Sports Bar, the InTouch Grille, a new team store and a state-of-the-art "road to the show" wall, as well as beautification projects.

"We've become a year-round fixture in the community," said Greenberg. "We're an entertainment and events company that also happens to play

some great minor league baseball."

Because all of the facilities are a public-private partnership, each of them serves as a community fixture and a hub of activity for residents.

The high school teams, the band and cheerleaders all utilize the pro facilities for games and practices. In the fall, the Cowboys' brand-new 12,000-seat Ford Center at The Star showcases varsity football in its Whataburger's Friday Night Stars.

As the Frisco population swelled in the early 2000s, the school district needed additional sports facilities fast. The city leadership invited the district to invest in the new pro sports facilities and save on managing, owning and maintaining its own venues. The first project, the Dr Pepper Ballpark, was so successful



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DALLAS STARS

Frisco's expanded sports facilities are appropriated for multiple uses, not all in sports. From pro workshops for young athletes to venues for high school graduations.

the district has continued to use the model.

"Frisco ISD has saved millions and millions of dollars from not having to build and maintain new sports facilities, even as the school population has exploded," said Roe. "Frisco is the fastest growing school district in Texas. Having each of these professional sports franchises has had an enormous economic impact for Frisco."

"If you look at the geography of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, the bulk of growth is on the north side," said Jason Farris, chief operating officer of the Dallas Stars. "Since the extension of the toll-way, 160,000 people have come to Frisco. Frisco really got ahead of that growth. The city leaders identified what they wanted Frisco to be and have built

an outstanding community. The city has good, new housing stock, outstanding schools and a terrific quality of life. A number of Fortune 500 companies have been drawn here."

It's common for the professional players themselves to live in Frisco to take advantage of the quality of life and schools for their own families.

Toyota Stadium was one of the first soccer-dedicated facilities in the U.S. and the first to incorporate a stage to extend the facility's use to concerts. And one of the only to incorporate 17 fields into a 145-acre sports park. Toyota Stadium and its adjacent Toyota Soccer Center is a unique sports and entertainment facility that is a top venue for adult, youth and high school soccer, as well as top-quality MLS soccer action.

FC Dallas designed Toyota Stadium with tournament-quality soccer fields, to turn a small youth club into an organization with 6,500 players under 17 across the Southeast with a goal of bringing up 10,000 soccer players as a feeder program for FC Dallas.

"It's astonishing what the city leaders have been able to do, considering the very low stature of pro soccer in the early 2000s," said Hunt. "Now the whole world is watching us. We've achieved incredible traction with ticket sales. Our first game, against Pachuca, a Mexican team that is one of the best in the world, was sold out. Our second game, against Minnesota United — sold out."

Twelve-year-old Toyota Stadium is in the midst of a multiyear, \$39 million renovation that will create an international

mecca for soccer.

The crowning glory will be the National Soccer Hall of Fame Museum, the first major sports hall to be built into a stadium. The renovation, set for completion in 2018, will feature a new private club, the National Soccer Hall of Fame Club, with premium seating and private access. The renovation also encompasses a party deck with an outdoor bar, new locker rooms, a new team store and upgraded video boards and sound system. The new locker rooms are designed to reconfigure to host not only FC Dallas, but Frisco ISD players and the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS).

In the last decade, FC Dallas has built a solid pipeline of young players from Frisco and has sent players to play

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DALLAS STARS

With the Dr Pepper arena as a center point, Frisco has been aggressive in creating facilities for ice hockey. Increased youth participation accompanied and Dallas Stars outreach has greatly expanded Frisco's footprint in the sport.

professional soccer internationally.

"We're seeing a steady trickle of two or three kids a year from our academy making the jump to pro soccer," said Hunt. "We're already projecting that around 10 kids in our under 13-14 age group will eventually go pro."

Hunt said professional soccer in Frisco now spans generations. FC Dallas' youngest player, 16-year-old Jesus Ferreira, is the team's 16th homegrown member. Ferreira's father, David Ferreira, is a former MLS MVP and FC Dallas captain. The young Ferreira first joined the FC Dallas Academy at the age of 8.

Some of the players for the old Dallas Tornado stayed in the area after they retired from pro soccer and went on to develop their own youth camps. The Tornado, also owned by Lamar Hunt,

played in the North American Soccer League in the 1960s and 70s.

"We have clubs come from all over the world to see how we've achieved our success with the stadium and the team. They also come to scout our players," Hunt said. "People recognize the level of play we've achieved here and the pipeline we've developed for the future. Our midfielder, 17-year-old Paxton Pomykal, had opportunities to play internationally, but he, like others, has decided to stay home and play for FC Dallas. It's incredible how much talent we've grown right here in the area."

"The Dallas Stars have grown right along with the city of Frisco," said Farris. "When we came to Texas in 1993, people were confused. Hockey in Texas? Since we came to Frisco in 2001 and

established ourselves with our corporate offices and practice ice at Dr Pepper Arena, we've grown — and interest in hockey has grown — by leaps and bounds."

Dr Pepper Arena seats 5,000 and is also used for NBA D-League play and for events such as the Ice Capades, concerts and religious conferences. The adjacent Dr Pepper StarCenter seats 750 and has two sheets of ice for high school hockey and figure skating, as well as amateur leagues.

Dr Pepper Arena conveniently sits next door to Frisco's convention center and a hotel to maximize the possibilities for sporting events.

More than \$36 million in renovations have been completed since the arena was built in 2003, including expanding

the space to accommodate every Frisco high school's graduation ceremonies.

"When we came, there was virtually no hockey in the Metroplex," said Farris. "Now, our Frisco high school combined team has just won the High School Hockey Division II National Championships, the first time ever for a Texas team. They beat a team from Montana, of all things."

In early April, the Stars and Frisco also hosted the 2017 USA Hockey Championships for boys 16 and under, with teams arriving from all over the U.S. to compete.

"It's an ant farm at the Dr Pepper Arena," said Farris. "We have open practices so we always have kids and families at the arena. When we're not prac-

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The AA RoughRiders are a big draw in Frisco with an impressive 74-acre stadium that is often cited as one of the best in the minor leagues.

ticing, the ice is used constantly by Frisco residents and the surrounding communities. Frisco identified, early on, that it wanted all its facilities to be hospitable to its residents, in addition to being attractive to its pro sports franchises."

That openness has worked to the Stars' advantage, too, said Farris. "Seeing players practice, for example, gives kids something to aspire to," he said. "Then knowing they get to play on the same ice is a great feeling for them. It helps them visualize themselves as NHL players, which can set them on the path to becoming players."

The Dallas Stars have 350 programs in schools around the DFW Metroplex and own six StarCenters in addition to the one at Dr Pepper Arena, which means the Dallas Stars operate more

sheets of ice than any other NHL team.

"Our goal is to get sticks in hand," said Farris. "The byproduct is that residents become interested in hockey, not only as fans from a young age, but as players. We're going to see a lot of outstanding professional hockey players come from Texas in the next decade."

"It's amazing how the StarCenter has changed the culture of hockey here," said Ratliff of the RoughRiders. "Simply having sheets of ice available and the presence of the Stars has turned Frisco into a hockey town. The Stars are turning kids into players and fans."

The newest sports development, the Dallas Cowboys World Headquarters at The Star in Frisco, opened to wide acclaim in the Fall 2016. The 91-acre campus, home to the team's corporate

offices and practice facilities, is a premier sports and entertainment district anchoring Frisco's \$5 Billion Mile.

One of the complex's highlights is Ford Center at The Star, a state-of-the-art, 12,000-seat indoor football stadium. The Ford Center opened last fall with all of the Frisco high school football teams kicking off their seasons in a single day of competition.

"When we were looking to build a new practice facility, we considered a lot of different locations," said Stephen Jones, executive vice president, chief operating officer and director of player personnel for the Dallas Cowboys. "We'd done a lot of business in Frisco and we were already comfortable with everyone involved. At the end of the day, Frisco is not only friendly to sports but also to

business. For us, this public-private partnership has been a great return. With Frisco's vision and its leaders' commitment to sticking to that vision, they've turned Frisco into one of the most vibrant communities in the U.S."

As part of the partnership, Frisco ISD, which invested \$30 million in the project, wanted a place for high school football, cheerleading, lacrosse and other sports to play. The city of Frisco contributed another \$60 million.

"It was very appealing to us to have a partnership with the school district," said Jones. "At a time when parents are reading so much about safety in the sport, this gave us a great platform for us to show the benefits of football. There is so much to be gained by playing a team sport."



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The Dallas Cowboy's multi-use facility offers Frisco sports fans multiple attractions from the opportunity to watch the team practice to a state of the art high school stadium to a 60,000 square foot gym. More than 5,000 people have already signed up for memberships.

As with Frisco's other pro facilities, by being a solid fixture in the community, the Ford Center is expected to grow young people's interest in football as both fans and players, Jones said.

In addition to the Ford Center, The Star complex houses Baylor Scott & White Sports Therapy & Research, a rehabilitative and health and wellness center, which is open to the community.

One of the most popular attractions at The Star is Cowboys Fit, a 60,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art gym for fans to work out like — and possibly with — the Cowboys. Jones said more than 5,000 people have signed up for memberships. The facility is scheduled to open in May.

The Cowboys also worked in partnership with the Frisco school district as part of the district's Career and Technical Education Center, giving students first-hand knowledge of the behind-the-scenes workings of major sports.

"We now have high school kids working on major events, getting the same experiences many young people in sports business only gain after college," said Roe.

The sports franchises have responded to the city's forward thinking, said Roe. "They see our city manager and city leadership embrace the teams. And they see us reinvest again



JAMES D. SMITH

and again in facilities and teams to keep them at the forefront of emerging trends."

One more reason sports franchises love being in Frisco: The city fosters a spirit of community and cooperation among the pro teams themselves. The teams' leaders get together for brainstorming sessions. In early April, they appeared together on a panel to promote the city of Frisco and the economic impact of their public-private partnerships. They also support each other's promotions and projects.

Before the Frisco RoughRiders' opening day, the team invited FC Dallas' Jacori Hayes to play soccer with some of the baseball team's players, such as pitcher Yohander Mendez and Juremi Profar. In turn, they invited the soccer star to a game of catch.

"It's genius," said Ratliff of the RoughRiders, "And I've never heard of it being done anywhere else. We're all very Frisco-centric. We know we can call on anyone at the other franchises and they will help us with anything. We do the same for them. We're incredibly supportive of each other, even as we're competing to sell tickets to the same fans. Something that happens for one team is good for all of us. When The Star opened, for example, it brought a level of buzz to not just the Cowboys but to all the franchises. It elevated the excitement about the city of Frisco as a whole."

"Timing is everything," said Hunt of Frisco's transition to a pro sports hub. "And it's all worked hand in glove. We, as a soccer club and league, have been on a gigantic upswing exactly as Frisco has been on a gigantic upswing."

"There are a lot of cities around the country that could be like Frisco, but aren't," said Greenberg. "The credit for Frisco's success with professional sports and its success as a world-class, booming city all goes to the leadership of this community and their forward-thinking vision."



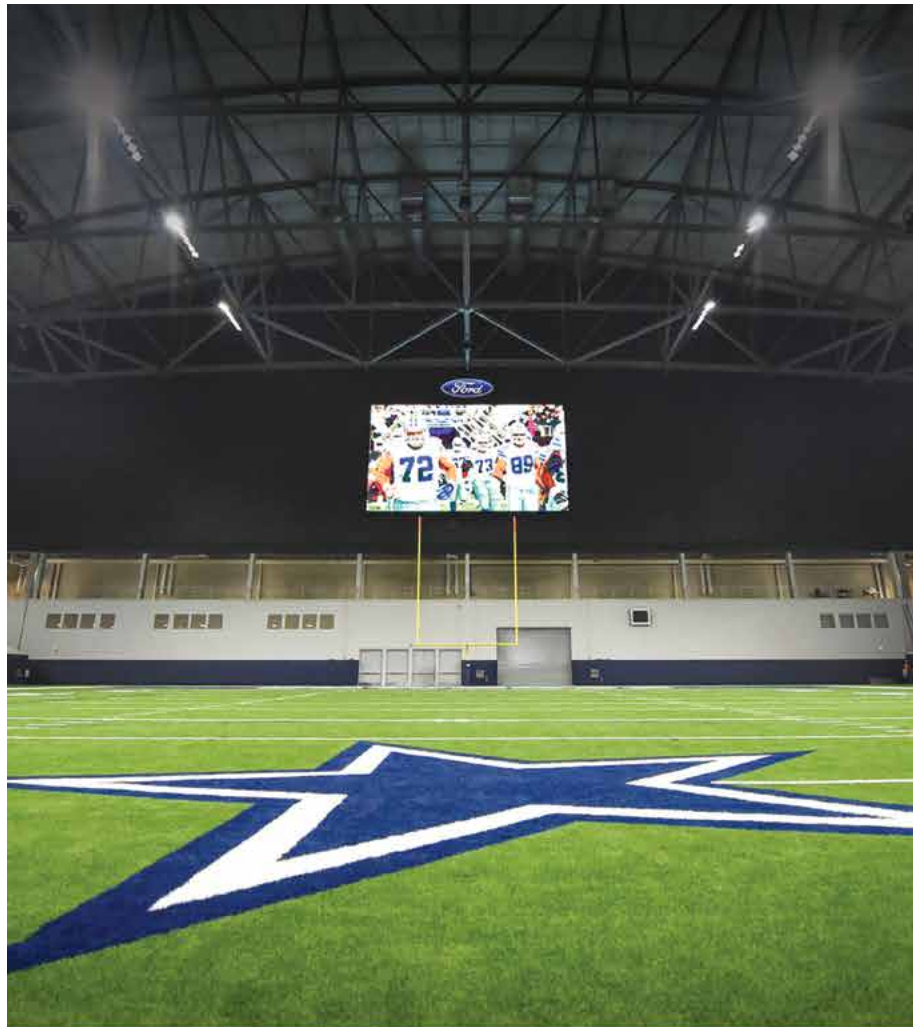
FC DALLAS

MLS action in Frisco as FC Dallas takes on the New England Revolution.



FRISCO ROUGHRIDERS

The unique architecture of the RoughRider's Dr Pepper field contributes to the great fan experience and is one of the features that makes it stand out as one of the best in the minor league.



THE STAR TOURS AND EVENTS

The Dallas Cowboys World Headquarters delivers an upscale ambiance and versatile event areas that can accommodate groups up to 12,000. Whether intimate gatherings in the team's theater or unveiling your latest product on the digital board in Ford Center, the campus offers a unique atmosphere to engage your employees, customers, social group or host a sporting event.

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