

Horse gate manufacturer finds products are more durable with Orrcon Steel



SIMTRACK Case Study

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customer profile

Customer Simtrack
 Location Adelaide Hills, South Australia
 Orrcon Steel
 Products ALLGAL® RHS, ALLGAL® SHS and pipe

Simtrack is an Australian manufacturer of high quality horse starting gates and running rail systems based at Mount Barker, 33 kilometres east of Adelaide. The company has gone from strength to strength over the decades, and become world-renowned for producing products which truly stand the test of time.



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According to Simtrack’s Director, Kieren Sims, making horse starting gates has been in the blood from when the Sims family dynasty first started making them in 1956, trading as Steriline.

Kieren started Simtrack in 1996, producing finished products which are used by some of the top racing clubs around the world in countries such as Russia, South Africa, Malaysia, Vietnam and New Zealand. However he recalled the most memorable order to be the one made by France Galop in 2009, one of the preeminent racing bodies in Europe.

“France Galop had a locally made barrier installed for its premier event the previous year, the Prix de l’Arc de Triomphe. Apparently a number of the starting gates failed to open, leaving some of the race favourites rooted to the spot. It was a huge embarrassment, some heads rolled, and it led the body to want to find an immediate replacement,” Keiren said.

“We decided to put ourselves out there by air freighting a small sample of horse starting gate to Paris and flew my father over to present it. Within half an hour of looking at our product, the translators were telling my father that it was definitely the standard they were after. Following further negotiations they signed off on an order which saw us producing 27 starting gates over a period of six months.”

Kieren said the process of sending a Simtrack representative to personally supervise the horse starting gate setup process has been one of the keys to success in the international market.

“There’s a lot of technical know-how involved in the installation process – the gates must be set up absolutely accurately because it’s so important they open consistently. If a client has a big race coming up, we’ll aim to coordinate things so that the container arrives a week prior. We’ll then put it together, stay for the event and watch that everything goes smoothly,” he said.

Kieren credits the durability of his company’s products to an ongoing supply partnership with Orrcon Steel, from who they receive ALLGAL® RHS and ALLGAL® SHS along with Hot Dip Galvanised (HDG) pipe. Kieren said the initial decision to go with what Orrcon Steel had to offer was a “no brainer” and very timely.

“Before Orrcon came along we were getting a standard product at a reasonable price. However being an international exporter, we wanted to have something that was seen as better than the standard. Orrcon managed to find us – a feat seeing as we’re tucked away in the Adelaide Hills and generally keep to ourselves. A rep showed us what Orrcon had to offer and we liked what we saw: it was a quality product at an extremely competitive price,” he said.

“The main reason Simtrack has been around for so long is because of the quality of their product, and that’s something we work hard to maintain for them. Before us they were buying from a merchant, who tend to offer different brands from a variety of suppliers. Brands can often differ – whether it be the shape, processing characteristics or consistency of the material,” said Orrcon Steel Gillman Account Manager Chris Sargent.

“To supply Simtrack we can only use steel from BlueScope. That enables us to ensure the product is consistent and always meets the exact needs of the customer.”

“Orrcon products have a high amount of resistance against degradation and corrosion, which is conducive to the manufacturing of our starting gates and rail systems. Our barriers are well built and designed to last a lifetime. We’re not one of those businesses that have the ideology: ‘Let’s make a product that’s going to be useless in 10 years so we can sneak another sale in.’ We aim to make gates and rails that are going to last for at least 30 or even 40 years,” said Kieren.

“ALLGAL® is galvanised on both the outside and inside, so it has that extra protection which is important – especially after the manufacturing process.”

Simtrack also benefits from the overall reliability of Orrcon Steel’s stock and the genuine support they receive. The value-added services also help them provide a better quality service to overseas contractors.

“They always have stock on hand to meet our requirements and the local rep is readily available should we need any help or advice,” said Kieren.

“Orrcon Steel has assisted us in the past with looking at different painting methods, surface preparation, material data. If an overseas contractor wants to know the specifics about a batch of steel – the batch lot, where it came from – our Orrcon Steel Account Manager will be able to provide all that kind of information for us very quickly and efficiently. That way we’re not delaying the contract.”

Simtrack’s supply partnership with Orrcon Steel is one that has allowed the manufacturer to be a leader in the global racing market as a maker of premium quality, long-lasting equipment.



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