

Jake Paul Pays \$39 Million for Georgia Hunting Ranch with Winnings From Mike Tyson Match



Nancy Ruhling

YouTube personality and boxer Jake Paul just paid a record \$39 million to get the keys to a storied sporting ranch in Georgia's Decatur County.

Paul, on the podcast "The Iced Coffee Hour" earlier this month, said that he used the \$30 million or so he won defeating heavyweight legend Mike Tyson in their 2024 match to purchase the 5,653-acre property, named Southlands..

"I've wanted to buy a ranch for the last 15 years," Paul said on the podcast. "It's always been a dream of mine. I wanted a place where I can wakesurf, hunt and build a racetrack."

He noted that during his childhood he had spent time at a cabin with his father and said he looked forward to growing his own vegetables at Southlands.

The plantation, which is populated with wild quail and trophy white-tail deer, came on the market in October for \$42.5 million, and Paul closed on the deal at the end of April, according to Jon Kohler, who co-listed it with colleague Walter Hatchett of Jon Kohler & Associates.

The seller, Brian Philpot, the CEO and principal owner of AgAmerica Lending, which makes agricultural loans, bought the property in 2023 in a private deal for an undisclosed price, Kohler said.

Paul's purchase "is one of the largest recreational land sales in Georgia history," said Kohler, who noted that the property had not been offered for public sale for nearly 90 years. "Southlands is an institution; it's like owning your own professional football team. You get history, culture and traditions, and you're a land steward dictating its future."

The property, in Decatur County, is 8 miles from Bainbridge.

It's less than 3% wetlands and includes frontage on Lake Seminole. The ranch encompasses many of its own bodies of water, including a stocked lake, a duck pond, a 60-acre irrigated field, and 5 miles of spring creeks that include waterfalls and feeder creeks.

The remodeled 4,884-square-foot main lodge has eight bedrooms, five full bathrooms and one half bath.

There are numerous outbuildings, including a new four-stall barn for horseback and quail hunts, a new manager's house, an old manager's house that's been remodeled, a remodeled guest house, a shop, a pavilion, an equipment shed and a cooler building for deer cleaning.

Southlands's storied history spans more than a century.

Its original 26,000 acres were put together by pioneering conservationist Herbert Stoddard, the co-founder of the iconic land stewardship nonprofit Tall Timbers.

U.S. Sen. Houghton Metcalf of Rhode Island became owner No. 2 in 1937. In the late 1950s, International Paper bought the property from him and used it as headquarters for its 12-million



acre empire and as a teaching forest.

Southlands had to wait until 2010 to get its next owner, philanthropist Jim Dahl, the founder of the Florida-based investment firm Rock Creek Capital. The 160,000 acres Dahl bought from the paper company spanned 10 states

and included what became the Southlands Plantation that Paul has now acquired.

Southlands, a sportsman's paradise, has hosted scores of notable guests, including U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, who died in 2016 at age 79 while on a hunting trip in Texas.

Paul, who is 28, launched his eponymous YouTube show in 2014. Forbes has ranked him as one of the channel's highest paid creators five times. He didn't respond to a request for comment.

The 6-foot-1 cruiserweight/heavyweight began his boxing career in 2018. He's won 11 of his 12 matches.

A record 65 million viewers tuned in when Netflix streamed his Arlington, Texas, bout with Tyson, the world heavyweight champion from 1987 to 1990, on Nov. 15, 2024.

Paul's victory was a unanimous decision. For those eight two-minute rounds, Paul made, he said on the podcast, "in the low \$30 millions."

Throughout his career, Paul has been dogged by controversy, including allegations of sexual assault, which he has denied. He was also charged with criminal trespass and unlawful assembly in 2020 over his alleged involvement in looting at an Arizona mall. Those charges were later dropped.