THE BLOCK ZONE: THE CURIOUS CASE OF ARIEFORCE ONE



An aerial view of ArieForce One. The attraction was formally at Fun Spot Atlanta.

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Welcome back to another edition of The Block Zone. This week we are zeroing in on a peculiar case. ArieForce One, formally at Fun Spot Atlanta, is regarded as a top roller coaster in the world. So then why is the coaster in transit? Let's take a look at this spectacular coaster with a short, detailed history.

Fayetteville, Ga. is 20 minutes south of Atlanta and became the home of an amusement park in 1990. The park was originally called Dixieland Fun Park then was later renamed Fun Junction USA. In 2017, the little park was purchased by the Arie family and would forever be called Fun Spot Atlanta beginning in 2018.

The park was not a thrill destination for its entire existence. Rather it was a borderline carnival with two E&F Miller coasters. Then in 2021, the chain announced a partnership with coaster manufacturing company Rocky Mountain Construction.

That announcement was about an investment of $13 million, the largest in the history of the Fun Spot company. The investment would be called ArieForce One, a custom RMC steel box coaster. The name would pay homage to the family name of Fun Spot and John Arie, the original founder of the company in 1979.

It wouldn't be the first RMC in Georgia, however. Forty minutes north, Six Flags Over Georgia is home to Twisted Cyclone. This is the RMC conversion of Georgia Cyclone, so while ArieForce is fully steel, Twisted Cyclone is a hybrid.

ArieForce One would officially open to the public on March 31, 2023. The ride takes riders up 155 feet in the air, reaches 64 miles per hour and and stretches 3,400 feet in length.

The ride drops 146 feet at 83 degrees and it inverts riders four times. The first of those inversions was dubbed the "Raven Truss Dive" and is a classic dive loop. Next, the ride zooms through a bunny hill into the largest zero-g stall in the United States. The outer-baked airtime hill over the station whips riders into the second half of the ride. ArieForce One has an "L" shaped layout, which will become very important later.

A double up follows before dropping riders into the famous "arcade roll," a tight zero-g roll that flies right over the Fun Spot arcade. Some whippy twists and a turnaround take riders into the final zero-g roll. The finale of the ride is a relentless quad down which is followed by the brake run. While far from the longest ride out there, the ride is jampacked with power.

The ride had a great first year; it took home the Golden Ticket Award for Best New Attraction Installation and debuted at number 25 on the Top Steel Roller Coasters list. The only issue was that the $13 million investment was not bringing in the crowds the Arie family anticipated.

For most of ArieForce One's tenure, there was never much of a line. Fun Spot Atlanta was not drawing any more people than before the ArieForce era. Arie told USA Today that they normally see a 30% increase in attendance at their Orlando parks after a big investment. This increase was not seen in Atlanta.

ArieForce One operated safely at Fun Spot Atlanta for three years. Then, in June 2026, Fun Spot America announced that the Atlanta location would close permanently on Aug. 2, 2026. The announcement gave enthusiasts and anyone interested just over a month to get to the park for one last visit.

This also created speculations of what would happen to the three-year-old world class coaster. Something like this had never been seen before; a top regarded coaster closing so early into its lifespan without any mechanical issues or controversy.

The closing day came and went. Enthusiasts flocked to Atlanta to say their sudden goodbyes (including yours truly). Then on Aug. 3, 2026, ArieForce One sat dormant, with no confirmed future. Could it be demolished? Was it going to be relocated? Or will it stand but not operate for years?

Luckly for everyone, the future of the coaster was saved a month later. On Sept. 3, 2026, it was announced that the coaster had been sold to an unnamed buyer, revealed to be Six Flags a week later. The plans were vague, the property the ride was going to was still unknown and the opening date would be some time in 2028 or 2029.

This was massive news; there have not been many custom layout coasters of this magnitude fully relocated. Dominator at Kings Dominion was relocated from the defunct Geauga Lake in 2008, being fully rebuilt on site. ArieForce One is a taller task, however. The aforementioned "L" shaped layout proved to be a tricky variable to get around, along with the natural topography, which featured a total elevation change of 180 feet in its original spot. This is not going to be an easy or cheap relocation.

Speculation grew on which park would receive ArieForce One. Kings Island came out as the favorite with Carowinds, Six Flags Great Adventure and Canada's Wonderland trailing behind. ArieForce One would fit almost perfectly in any of these park's lineups.

Then on Oct. 29, ArieForce One track was spotted arriving in Valencia, Calif. at Six Flags Magic Mountain. Six Flags announced the ride would be heading to southern California. A shock to pretty much everyone, this came as what could be framed as a quick replacement for the legendary X2 that just closed in the summer.

It is not set in stone that ArieForce One will ever operate at Six Flags Magic Mountain. There is no confirmed plot of land; the current spot X2 still stands on is a potential location. The ride layout may have to be altered a bit for some areas to suffice, not only to make the ride fit, but to improve capacity with a larger break run and create the possibility of three train operations.

The ride's chances of being sent to Carowinds or Kings Island are not zero. Siren's Curse at Cedar Point opened when it was originally slated for Six Flags Mexico.

All we know is the ride will still operate as ArieForce One, paying homage to its former home. It's an interesting decision for sure. Let's just be glad that ArieForce One will soar on for more years to come, wherever that may be.

SUBOG Weekly Events:

October 19th - November 8th

GTA VI Trivia - 11.4 @ 7 pm in the Student Union Theater

Coffee House - 11.5 @ 4:30 pm at the Benton Museum

Jersey Day - 11.6 @ 6 pm at SU 325

Harvest Fest - 11.7 @ 12 pm on the Student Union Mall

Amazing Race - 11.8 @ 11 am across campus
Any questions? Email subog@uconn.edu and check out @subogatuconn on Instagram for updates on our events!