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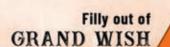
Fernungs see potential in Journeyman Stud's Khozan, St Patrick's Day BY CYNTHIA McFARLAND PHOTOS BY LOUISE E. REINAGEL

**NOT MANY PEOPLE** can say their careers started with a budget vacation to Florida, but that's the case for the Fernungs.

Brent and Crystal met in their hometown of Sharpsville, Ind., when she was 17 and he was 21. There was a shared general interest in horses, but neither imagined the extent to which it would define their future. Crystal would ride on occasion at a nearby stable after her chores

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## 2020 LEADING SIRES IN FLORIDA



u .				ВТ	Rstrct				Cumu			
Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB, Sire), Where Stands	2020 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	SWnrs/ Wns	SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2020 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index	
_	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,					, , , , ,						
1	FIRST DUDE (07, Stephen Got Even), Double Diamond Farm	\$7,500	75/19	0/0	0/0	(Super Dude, \$61,680)	\$498,816	387		1.19	1.21	
2	KHOZAN (12, Distorted Humor), Journeyman Stallions	\$8,500	37/8	1/1	0/1	(Liam's Lucky Charm, \$109,000)	\$469,136	*106		1.38	1.42	
3	ADIOS CHARLIE (08, Indian Charlie), Ocala Stud	\$4,000	51/12	1/2	0/1	(Jean Elizabeth, \$134,280)	\$404,333	220		1.51	1.22	
4	SONGANDAPRAYER (98, Unbridled's Song)	Pnsd	64/15	0/0	0/0	(Boston Cadillac, \$35,735)	\$353,227	*1049	37		1.38	
5	GONE ASTRAY (06, Dixie Union), Northwest Stud	\$4,500	46/11	1/1	1/1	(Noble Drama, \$121,520)	\$350,319	*271		0.94	1.09	
6	BRETHREN (08, Distorted Humor), Arindel Farm	\$7,500	57/9	1/1	0/1	(Cookie Dough, \$92,070)	\$347,927	171		1.34	1.56	
7	BIG DRAMA (06, Montbrook), Oakton Farm Stallions	\$5,000	48/12	0/0	0/0	(Min It to Win It, \$31,300)	\$280,265	256		0.87	1.25	
8	AWESOME OF COURSE (00, Awesome Again), Ocala Stud	\$4,000	32/6	1/1	0/1	(Shivaree, \$94,935)	\$253,119	*266	12	1.30	1.29	
9	HANDSOME MIKE (09, Scat Daddy), Pleasant Acres Stallions	\$4,000	44/12	0/0	0/0	(Real Doozie, \$20,030)	\$234,737	107	0	0.71	0.82	
10	THE BIG BEAST (11, Yes It's True), Ocala Stud	\$6,000	22/8	0/0	0/0	(Sweet Mia, \$50,300)	\$230,881	74	0	0.93	1.37	
11	TREASURE BEACH (GB) (08, Galileo), Pleasant Acres Stallions	\$7,500	68/7	0/0	0/0	(La Renoleta, \$52,800)	\$230,205	*414	2	1.13	1.41	
12	OVERDRIVEN (09, Tale of the Cat)	Pnsd	28/5	0/0	0/0	(Sassy But Smart, \$43,150)	\$205,267	160	3	0.94	1.15	
13	FIELD COMMISSION (05, Service Stripe), Solera Farm	\$2,500	34/5	0/0	0/0	(Drafted, \$60,011)	\$202,471	160		0.82	0.97	
14	J P'S GUSTO (08, Successful Appeal)	N/A	21/7	0/0	0/0	(Vinnie Van Go, \$31,440)	\$124,668	92	3	1.04	1.06	
15	WINSLOW HOMER (07, Unbridled's Song)	N/A	15/6	0/0	0/0	(Home Run Trick, \$51,600)	\$117,889	73	0	0.77	1.05	
16	RATTLESNAKE BRIDGE (08, Tapit)	N/A	29/8	0/0	0/0	(Loriloupies, \$23,900)	\$117,870	134	0	0.48	1.01	
17	GREATNESS (99, Mr. Prospector), Solera Farm	\$2,500	17/3	1/1	0/1	(Lady's Island, \$49,400)	\$116,451	*262	8	1.30	1.00	
18	HIGH COTTON (03, Dixie Union)	Pnsd	23/9	0/0	0/0	(Legacy Azteca, \$22,135)	\$116,259	*409	11	0.94	1.21	
19	FURY KAPCORI (10, Tiznow), Journeyman Stallions	\$2,500	9/2	0/0	0/0	(Napa Rules, \$27,930)	\$84,848	53	1	0.61	1.48	
20	FLASHSTORM (04, Storm Cat)	N/A	20/3	0/0	0/0	(Flashndynamite, \$47,700)	\$79,771	119	3	0.87	0.93	
21	HEAR NO EVIL (00, Carson City)	N/A	11/5	0/0	0/0	(Friendly Fella, \$19,800)	\$67,193	139	8	1.37	1.40	
22	AMIRA'S PRINCE (IRE) (09, Teofilo), Pleasant Acres Stallions	\$2,500	12/4	0/0	0/0	(Our Fantasy, \$17,730)	\$61,791	33		0.34	0.92	
23	CAJUN BREEZE (08, Congrats), Stonehedge Farm South	Private	7/2	0/0	0/0	(Cajun Casanova, \$38,813)	\$57,398	29	2	1.66	1.35	
24	TELLING (04, A.P. Indy)	N/A	11/1	0/0	0/0	(Hotty Toddy, \$18,930)	\$40,611	53	0	0.63	1.28	
25	BROOKS 'N DOWN (05, Montbrook), Ocala Stud	\$2,500	5/2	0/0	0/0	(Two Cents Worth, \$18,010)	\$38,930	30	1	1.32	2.21	
26	BACKTALK (07, Smarty Jones), Oakton Farm Stallions	\$2,500	13/2	0/0	0/0	(Backcat, \$10,658)	\$34,156	59	2	0.94	0.77	
27	CHITU (11, Henny Hughes), Bridlewood Farm	\$4,500	12/3	0/0	0/0	(Bronx Rumble, \$11,660)	\$32,811	62	0	0.40	0.85	
28	BAHAMIAN SQUALL (09, Gone West), Double Diamond Farm	\$3,000	9/0	0/0	0/0	(Assertiko, \$9,060)	\$31,757	50	0	0.83	0.90	
29	WROTE (IRE) (09, High Chaparral)	N/A	13/1	0/0	0/0	(Susies Who, \$7,320)	\$27,040	*74	0	0.57	0.80	
30	IN SUMMATION (03, Put It Back), Ocala Stud	\$2,500	9/1	0/0	0/0	(Awsum Roar, \$18,640)	\$26,605	*231	5	0.90	1.30	

were finished. Brent had followed his older brother John to the racetrack to work after high school.

Once Brent started attending Purdue University, he spent summers working at Lasater Farm near Louisville, Kv.

"When I began working there full time,

I kind of forgot about classes," he said. "After Crystal and I got married in 1975, I tried to get a job like normal people do, but that didn't last long. Then we went to Florida on vacation in 1976."

"We took all the change out of our pockets every night and saved it in a piggy bank,"

recalled Crystal. "By the time we went on vacation, we had a little over \$100 saved up. Driving down to Florida cost us \$15."

After some fun in the sun at Daytona Beach and Disney World, the couple stopped at Lasater's farm near Ocala. Brent was offered a job as a groom and spent 12 years at Lasater, working his way up the ladder to broodmare manager. The couple's only child-daughter Casey-was born in 1980. Brent stayed on as manager after Southland Farm bought the operation in 1984 and remained with the farm until 1988, when Southland became Franks Farm.

It seemed an opportune time to try a different venture, and the Fernungs decided to do some bloodstock work on their own until Brent took another farm manager position.

"I was trying to come up with a name because we were buying and selling some horses and I knew 'journeyman' meant someone who was skilled in a given trade or craft. Plus, we were on a journey, so it represented that, which is also why our logo includes a compass," said Brent.

After years of leasing, the Fernungs purchased an 80-acre property in northwest



The Fernungs with Khozan, who ranks second on Florida's 2020 sires list





New for 2020: St Patrick's Day, a full brother to Triple Crown winner American Pharoah

Marion County where for more than a decade they bought and sold horses, doing all the sale prep and farm work themselves. One of their most fortuitous success stories of those years was purchasing Eileen's Moment, dam of 1992 Kentucky Derby winner Lil E. Tee.

"We purchased Eileen's Moment for \$25,000 two months before the Derby," Brent Fernung said. "It was a tremendous shot in the arm for us when he won."

In 2000 he accepted a farm manager position at Cloverleaf Farms.

While at the helm of Cloverleaf, Brent purchased I'll Get Along, eventual dam of 2004 Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes (G1) winner Smarty Jones. When Brent sold the mare as agent for Cloverleaf in November 2004 at the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky November sale, she brought a final bid of \$5 million, making her the highest-priced mare to sell that year. Other top mares Brent helped purchase include the dams of stakes winners Backtalk, Bsharpsonata, Diva Delite, and Crown of Thorns. Also during his tenure at Cloverleaf, Brent arranged for the purchase of Congrats (by A.P. Indy), who became North America's leading first-crop sire in 2010.

When farm owner John Sykes decided to close Cloverleaf in 2007, the Fernungs found themselves at another crossroads. In addition to Congrats, several other stallions at the farm needed a place to stand, among them Wildcat Heir. The couple decided to launch their own stallion operation, using both their original property and a second nearby farm they'd purchased in 2006.

### 2020 FLORIDA SIRES BY WINNERS

Sire	Rnrs	Wnrs
First Dude	75	19
Songandaprayer	64	15
Adios Charlie	51	12
Big Drama	48	12
Handsome Mike		
Gone Astray	46	11
Brethren	57	9
High Cotton	23	9
Khozan	37	8
Rattlesnake Bridge	29	8
The Big Beast		
Treasure Beach (GB)	68	7
J P's Gusto	21	7
Awesome of Course	32	6
Winslow Homer	15	6
Field Commission	34	5
Overdriven	28	5
Hear No Evil	11	5
Amira's Prince (IRE)	12	4
Flashstorm		
Greatness	17	3
Chitu	12	3
Backtalk	13	2
Fury Kapcori	9	2
Cajun Breeze	7	2
Brooks 'n Down	5	2

"After Cloverleaf closed, it wasn't that big a leap for us to start a stallion operation," said Crystal Fernung. "Brent said we could do it on our original property, and laid out the paddocks and barn. Our goal, originally, was to find a suitable farm to move the Cloverleaf stallions to, such as Wildcat Heir."

"We started building Journeyman Stud in the spring of 2008 and moved in October 2008, about the time the entire economy collapsed. I told Crystal then if we can make it through this, we can make it through anything," said Brent. "It was quite a ride."

#### LOOKING FORWARD

Drawing on their decades of industry experience, the Fernungs see plenty of potential for young stallions Khozan and

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in the states featured in this section (stallions that are dead or exported prior to 2016 are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through February 23, 2020. As supplied to BloodHorse by The Jockey Club Information Systems, Inc., earnings include adjusted money from Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Adjusted earnings are put on par with average North American earnings from the previous year. For example, the average North American purse in 2018 is \$25,300 or 50% of the 2018 average purse in Japan. To put earnings on par, all Japanese progeny earnings are multiplied by 53% before being credited to a sire's progeny earnings. Hong Kong earnings are adjusted by 17%; Singapore by 85%. Current year stakes winners include all Northern Hemisphere black-type stakes results from all available countries. \*Foal counts include Southern Hemisphere. Cumulative stakes winners include all countries. (A ¶ indicates a sire represented by his first crop to race)

\*AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX and COMPARABLE INDEX: Lifetime AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX indicates how much purse money the progeny of one sire has earned in relation to the average earnings of all runners in the same years; average earnings of all runners in any year is represented by an index of 1.00; COMPARABLE INDEX indicates the average earnings of progeny produced from mares bred to one sire, when these same mares were bred to other sires. Only 32% of all sires have a lifetime AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX higher than their mares' COMPARABLE INDEX.

## AWESOME PEDIGREE

# ムリソビニシリングデ

FIRST FOALS

1st Dam

SLEWFOUNDMONEY, by Seeking the Gold. 4 wins from 6f to 8½f, Calder Hollywood S., Dolly Jo S., 2<sup>nd</sup> Aqueduct Top Flight H. (G2), Calder Cinnamon Girl S., 3<sup>rd</sup> Gulfstream Park First Lady H. (G3), Calder Ema Bovary S. Sister to SEEKING SLEW, half-sister to CANADIAN FRONTIER. Dam of 5 named foals, all raced, 4 winners, incl. – AWESOME SLEW (c. by Awesome Again). Subject stallion.

HE'S BANKABLE (g. by Arch). 3 wins, 1 at 2 at 1m, 8½f to 2019, \$177,300, Gulfstream Park English Channel S.,
Tampa Bay Downs Sophomore Turf S.

Souper Lucky (g. by Giant's Causeway). 7 wins from 7f to 8½f, \$305,876, 2<sup>nd</sup> Laurel John B Campbell S., 3<sup>rd</sup>
Belmont Westchester S. (G3), Monmouth Majestic Light S., Laurel Harrison E Johnson Memorial S., etc.
Souper Jackpot (c. by Ghostzapper). Winner at 2 in 2018, 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulfstream Park Smooth Air S.

2<sup>nd</sup> Dam

BORODISLEW, by Seattle Slew. 10 wins, 1 at 2, from 1300m to 1700m, 424,000fr., \$597,560, Del Mar Chula Vista H. (G2),
Hollywood Park Hawthorne H. (G2), Longchamp Prix de la Porte Maillot (G3), Santa Anita Lady's Secret H. (G3),
3rd Del Mar Chula Vista H. (G2), Longchamp Prix des Reservoirs (G3), etc. Halfsister to BREATH OF LOVE (Dam of
BEAUTY OF LOVE, BOCAIUVA, etc.) Arabian Sky, Bene Erit. Dam of 9 named foals, 7 to race, all winners, incl. –
CANADIAN FRONTIER (c. Gone West). 6 wins at 6f, 7f, \$251,142, 7,700Dhs, Belmont Bold Ruler H. (G3), Monmouth
Teddy Drone S., Longfellow S., etc. Sire.

SEEKING SLEW (c. Seeking the Gold). 2 wins at 1m, 9f, \$327,265, Delaware Park Kent S. (G3).

3rd Dam

BREATH TAKING, by Nureyev. 3 wins, 2 at 2, at 1000m, 1300m, Saint-Cloud Prix Eclipse (G3), Deauville Prix de Meautry (G3), 2<sup>nd</sup> Longchamp Prix d'Arenberg (G3), 3<sup>rd</sup> Longchamp Prix de la Foret (G1), etc. Half-sister to SIAGNE, French Current. Dam of 9 named foals, all raced, 5 winners, incl. –

BORODISLEW (f. Seattle Slew). See above.

BREATH OF LOVE (f. Mutakddim). Champion Older Female Miler in Italy. 5 wins from 1400m to 1750m, €110,496,

Milan Premio Chiusura (G3), etc. Dan BEAUTY OF LOVE, BOCAIUVA, Blast Echo.

## LEADING SIRES BY 2019 COMPARABLE INDEX (CI)\*

STALLION	CI		
Justify	4.56		
Accelerate	2.43		
Collected	2.25		
West Coast	2.23		
AWESOME SLEW	2.15		

and a nationally-ranked leader by

Class Performance Index (CPI) at 1.73\*

\*source: BloodHorse, Nov. 16, 2019



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Awesome Again – Slewfoundmoney, by Seeking The Gold Fee: \$5,000 S&N



The Fernungs started Journeyman Stud in 2008

St Patrick's Day; and the initial reaction from breeders suggests their foresight is on target.

Knowing there are no guarantees for stallions that boast even the most accomplished racing careers, it's an even higher hurdle to select less-accomplished runners that still might prove attractive to breeders. In making those decisions, the Fernungs draw on their understanding of quality runners who could make the transfer to the breeding shed.

"You look for certain things in a stallion," said Crystal Fernung. "He has to have racing talent, a good female family, and, of course, good looks."

In standing Khozan, who ranked seventh on the second-crop sires list through March 2 and first on that list for any stallion outside of Kentucky; and St Patrick's

Day, a full brother to Triple Crown winner and 2019 leading freshman sire and second-leading juvenile sire American Pharoah, it seems Journeyman Stud is checking those boxes. It's a formula the Fernungs used in landing farm stalwart Wildcat Heir, who in 2009 set a North American record of 39 winners as a freshman sire and topped Florida's sires list multiple times.

Both young stallions boast top female families. An 8-year-old son of Distorted Humor, Khozan is out of multiple grade 3 winner Delta Princess, by A.P. Indy. Delta Princess also produced Racing Hall of Famer Royal Delta, by Empire Maker, who earned 3-year-old champion filly

honors in 2011 and champion older female titles in 2012 and 2013.

Bred in Kentucky by Prince Saud bin Khaled's Palides Investments, Delta Princess, who died in 2014, produced seven winners from as many starters, including grade 1 winners Delta Prince and Crown Queen, as well as grade 1-placed Carnival Court and grade 2-placed Empire Way.

Khozan, born in 2012, would be her penultimate foal (ahead of Delta Prince, who died in 2019). While Khozan failed to earn black type, he also didn't do anything wrong on the track—winning his debut maiden race as a 3-year-old in January 2015 by 3¾ lengths at Gulfstream Park. Stretched out to a one-turn mile a month later—a final prep for the Florida Derby (G1)—Khozan would turn heads with a 12¾-length victory in an allowance op-



Young horse at Journeyman on its way to being turned out

tional claiming race there.

After that effort an injury forced Khozan to be retired. Fernung liked what he had seen and heard as he talked with people around the horse, a \$1 million Fasig-Tipton Florida 2-year-olds in training sale runner whom Al Shaqab Racing had purchased out of the Hartley/DeRenzo consignment.

The Fernungs began looking into Khozan in earnest in the fall of 2015, when they became aware that Khozan was available as a stallion prospect. Brent Fernung immediately contacted Bradley Weisbord, Al Shaqab's representative in the United States.

"I had heard the scuttlebutt about how good Khozan was when he raced at Gulfstream that previous winter and was well aware of his pedigree, so it didn't take me long to get to Kentucky to look at him," Fernung said.

After inspecting the stallion, Fernung contacted Gilbert Campbell of Stonehedge Farm, who agreed to purchase a portion of Khozan. The deal came together, and the Fernungs note that the stallion stands as the property of a syndicate that includes Al Shaqab, Stonehedge, and Journeyman.

Khozan's leading runner to date is multiple stakes winner Liam's Lucky Charm, with earnings of \$342,800. He won the Pasco Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs Jan. 18 after last year winning the Affirmed Division of the FTBOA Florida Sire series and placing in the other two races in that

series.

Other stakes winners for Khozan include Sebs Princess, who scored in last year's Louisiana Jewel Stakes at Delta Downs; and Airbus, who took a group 1 race in Peru in 2019. Khozan has 56 current 2-year-olds.

The Fernungs also are excited about standing St Patrick's Day. The son of Pioneerof the Nile is out of Broodmare of the Year Littleprincessemma, by Yankee Gentleman. Littleprincessemma has also delivered the grade 1-winning filly Chasing Yesterday, by Tapit; and grade 1-placed American Cleopatra, also by Pioneerof the Nile.

St Patrick's Day earned a maiden victory at Del Mar in his juvenile

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## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES Nicole "Nikki" Fried, Commissioner

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season. He then placed in a pair of stakes at 3, including a runner-up finish in the group 3 Renaissance Stakes in Ireland.

After starting his career in Southern California before racing in Europe, St Patrick's Day traveled back across the Atlantic to join the Journeyman stallion roster for 2020. The Fernungs note that he is the property of a syndicate that includes Stonehedge, Journeyman, and Climax Stallions.

In bringing St Patrick's Day to Journeyman, Brent Fernung said he was contacted by Sean Feld of Climax Stallions, who let him know Climax had purchased the horse and was looking for a farm for the stallion.

Florida mares," Fernung said.

"St Patrick's Day has been extremely well received," said Crystal Fernung. "He will breed well in excess of 100 mares this breeding season, which is still a bellwether number here in Florida."

Rounding out the roster at Journeyman Stud is Fury Kapcori, a graded stakes winner of \$521,040. By Tiznow out of the Go for Gin mare Gin Running, Fury Kapcori's first crop were 2-year-olds of 2019. His leading earner is High On Gin, a stakeswinning 3-year-old filly who was third in the Feb. 1 Martha Washington Stakes at Oaklawn Park.



A mare on her way to the breeding shed at Journeyman Stud

"Sean said that they also wanted to sell up to half the horse to the standing farm if possible. I immediately told Sean that I thought we could do the horse, but I needed to make one phone call first. I called Gil Campbell of Stonehedge Farm, also one of the co-owners of Khozan, and he signed on right away," Fernung said. "St Patrick's Day is an impressive physical horse that could run and a full brother to a Triple Crown winner, so it was a no brainer for us. Crystal and I are really excited to have him here at Journeyman."

He added that the horse's impressive, but light race record and incredible pedigree were reminiscent of Khozan, making him a natural fit. St Patrick's Day stands for \$5,000.

"With his pedigree and his talented but abbreviated race record, St Patrick's Day reminds me of Khozan, and I think, like Khozan, he'll benefit from these tough

Brent Fernung noted that once a stallion arrives at the farm, they're just getting started.

"In Kentucky, stallions are typically made by the industry breeding to them, but historically in Florida, stallions are made by the people who own them, which you can see by looking back at Tartan Farms, Hooper Farm, and Lasater Farm," Fernung said.

"We put a bunch of mares under Khozan, and we will do the same for St Patrick's Day this year," added Crystal Fernung. "It can make all the difference in a stallion having a chance."

Brent Fernung has had first-hand experience with the Khozan foals and likes what he saw from the start.

"We mostly sell at 2-year-old sales, so I get to break a number of yearlings each year by our stallions, which we feel is a benefit to the stallions we're standing,"

Fernung said. "The Khozan yearlings have been special; they have great brains and do everything right."

Khozan runner Untitled won his 2019 debut—earning a triple-digit Equibase Speed Figure-for Fernung and Michael Sebastian. He now races for the latter and Gary Barber. He ran second to the wellregarded Gouverneur Morris in a February allowance-level race at Tampa Bay Downs.

The Fernungs, quick to credit Wildcat Heir with putting Journeyman on the map, are feeling good about their present stallion roster.

"When Wildcat Heir died in January of 2015, it left us without the successful, commercial stallion that we had always had, and those are extremely hard to come by," Brent Fernung said. "The stallion business is one where you can kiss a lot of frogs in search of a prince."

#### **JOURNEY CONTINUES**

Brent is the immediate past president, and current treasurer, of the Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' and Owners' Association, and is a board member of Ocala Breeders' Sales. In addition to supporting the horse industry through Chamber of Commerce programs, Crystal is active on the board of Marion Cultural Alliance.

"The Fernungs have been longtime shareholders of OBS, and Brent has been a member of the board for many years," said Tom Ventura, OBS president. "They've seen this community be transformed from a regional marketplace to one of international prominence. Both the industry and the community around it have developed dramatically in the time they've been here."

Crystal and Brent continue to work alongside each other at both farms. While Crystal runs the office, including bookings and contracts, Brent takes care of the mares and trains yearlings: together they handle all foalings.

"I don't think people outside the horse industry realize how many family institutions there are. Some of my non-horse girlfriends wonder how Brent and I can do this together all the time, but it's been a blessing for us to share this," said Crystal. BH

Cynthia McFarland is a freelance writer based in Ocala, Fla.