

CALIFORNIA IDAHO NEVADA OREGON UTAH  
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Nick Alexander in the Santa Anita winner's circle after taking the 2019 Sen. Ken Maddy Stakes with Just Grazed Me

## At Home at Horse Haven

**California owner Alexander stays close to his Thoroughbreds**

BY TRACY GANTZ

**FOR SOMEONE WHO** plays the claiming game frequently and successfully, California breeder/owner Nick Alexander is surprisingly sentimental. That doesn't keep him from running his horses where they can win, even if it means losing them to claims.

But both of his stallions, Grazen and Tough Sunday, owe their lives to Alexander's love and determination to do whatever it took to nurse those two horses back to health.

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# OM

Higher First-Crop Mare CPI than  
YOSHIDA, AUDIBLE, CATHOLIC BOY,  
VINO ROSSO and MITOLE



## QUALITY OF MARES BRED (FIRST FOALS IN 2021)

The table below lists stallions bred to 20 or more mares in 2020, their first year at stud. Stallions are listed by leading CPI. Farm is where the stallion stood at stud in 2020. Listed for each stallion are the number of mares bred during the 2020 breeding season, the number and percentage of unraced mares bred, and Comparable Index (CI) and Class Performance Index (CPI) for mares bred. CI represents the quality of mares as producers, and CPI indicates the racing quality of mares bred. Data are through Oct. 22, 2020. BLOODHORSE MARKET WATCH. November 21, 2020

Stallion	'20MB	Unr MB (% '20 MB)	'20 CI	'20 CPI	'20 Fee	Loc.	Farm
Omaha Beach	215	34 (16%)	2.18	3.21	\$45,000	KY	Spendthrift Farm
<b>Om</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>4 (8.3%)</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>\$7,500</b>	<b>CA</b>	<b>Harris Farms</b>
Catalina Cruiser	148	36 (24%)	1.98	2.59	\$20,000	KY	Lane's End
Yoshida (JPN)	148	22 (15%)	1.69	2.27	\$20,000	KY	WinStar Farm
Audible	220	39 (18%)	1.86	2.24	\$25,000	KY	WinStar Farm
Preservationist	102	17 (17%)	1.46	2.18	\$10,000	KY	Airdrie Stud
Sporting Chance	52	5 (9.6%)	1.17	2.17	\$5,000	NM	A & A Ranch
Demarcheller (GB)	102	29 (28%)	1.28	2.09	\$5,000	KY	Claiborne Farm
Catholic Boy	131	17 (13%)	2.38	2.06	\$25,000	KY	Claiborne Farm
Copper Bullet	51	7 (14%)	1.26	2.05	Private	KY	Darby Dan Farm
Vino Rosso	238	30 (13%)	1.57	2.02	\$30,000	KY	Spendthrift Farm
Mitole	230	37 (16%)	1.51	2.00	\$25,000	KY	Spendthrift Farm

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## 2020 LEADING SIRES IN CALIFORNIA


 For daily updated sire lists  
 visit [BloodHorse.com](http://BloodHorse.com)

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2021 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstret SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2020 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	<b>I'LL HAVE ANOTHER</b> (09, Flower Alley), Ocean Breeze Ranch	\$10,000	218/115	2/2	1/2	(Another Truth, \$300,020)	<b>\$5,204,213</b>	367	3	0.96	1.10
2	<b>STAY THIRSTY</b> (08, Bernardini), Lovacres Ranch	\$10,000	180/94	8/12	2/8	(Mind Control, \$251,729)	<b>\$3,759,794</b>	*498	13	1.25	1.37
3	<b>SQUARE EDDIE</b> (06, Smart Strike)	Pnsd	95/50	2/2	2/2	(Rookie Mistake, \$209,837)	<b>\$2,834,634</b>	241	18	1.51	1.16
4	<b>SIR PRANCEALOT (IRE)</b> (10, Tamayuz), Rancho San Miguel	\$15,000	125/54	3/4	0/3	(Beau Recall, \$430,900)	<b>\$2,357,187</b>	*289	9	1.29	0.93
5	<b>GRAYDAR</b> (09, Unbridled's Song), Milky Way Farm	\$4,000	141/64	0/0	0/0	(Dream Marie, \$198,340)	<b>\$2,282,367</b>	*291	5	0.91	1.41
6	<b>SMILING TIGER</b> (07, Hold That Tiger), Harris Farms	\$7,500	96/40	5/5	5/5	(Smiling Shirlee, \$188,620)	<b>\$1,810,234</b>	228	9	1.08	1.00
7	<b>GRAZEN</b> (06, Benchmark), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds	\$6,000	78/31	3/3	3/3	(September Secret, \$135,960)	<b>\$1,752,544</b>	186	11	1.55	1.04
8	<b>CLUBHOUSE RIDE</b> (08, Candy Ride), Legacy Ranch	\$3,500	49/25	1/4	0/1	(Warren's Showtime, \$425,160)	<b>\$1,625,620</b>	87	2	1.39	0.90
9	<b>LUCKY PULPIT</b> (01, Pulpit)	Died, 2017	96/40	3/4	2/3	(Fashionably Fast, \$190,500)	<b>\$1,550,578</b>	*478	12	1.23	1.03
10	<b>JERSEY TOWN</b> (06, Speightstown), Daehling Ranch	\$3,000	81/42	1/1	0/1	(Angelus Warrior, \$89,745)	<b>\$1,388,321</b>	*178	4	1.02	1.08
11	<b>UNUSUAL HEAT</b> (90, Nureyev)	Died	52/27	2/2	2/2	(Cali Caliente, \$142,420)	<b>\$1,326,901</b>	*831	51	1.85	1.16
12	<b>VRONSKY</b> (99, Danzig), Harris Farms	\$3,500	75/34	0/0	0/0	(On Mars, \$167,610)	<b>\$1,280,246</b>	300	10	1.22	1.04
13	<b>MINISTERS WILD CAT</b> (00, Deputy Minister), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds	\$4,000	97/45	1/1	0/1	(Coit Fiction, \$87,000)	<b>\$1,269,062</b>	515	20	0.94	0.88
14	<b>ACCLAMATION</b> (06, Unusual Heat), Harris Farms	\$4,000	58/29	0/0	0/0	(Take the One O One, \$148,800)	<b>\$1,081,154</b>	152	3	0.97	1.21
15	<b>MR. BIG</b> (03, Dynaformer), Rancho Temescal	\$4,500	45/13	2/3	1/2	(Big Sweep, \$212,750)	<b>\$871,257</b>	88	4	1.49	0.90
16	<b>MISREMEMBERED</b> (06, Candy Ride), Barton Thoroughbreds	\$2,500	39/18	0/0	0/0	(I Recall, \$89,830)	<b>\$780,217</b>	117	6	0.98	1.15
17	<b>RICHARD'S KID</b> (05, Lemon Drop Kid), Rancho San Miguel	\$2,500	28/18	0/0	0/0	(Sheza Girly Girl, \$146,926)	<b>\$761,889</b>	67	0	1.11	0.97
18	<b>EMPIRE WAY</b> (09, Empire Maker), Heinz & Michelle Steinmann Farms	\$2,500	79/30	0/0	0/0	(Mucha Woman, \$52,360)	<b>\$755,345</b>	150	2	0.64	0.91
19	<b>IDIOT PROOF</b> (04, Benchmark), Victory Rose Thoroughbreds	\$3,000	32/21	1/1	0/1	(Bulletproof One, \$195,762)	<b>\$648,006</b>	109	2	1.14	0.92
20	<b>CYCLOTRON</b> (00, Grand Slam), Old English Rancho	Private	35/21	1/1	0/1	(Tee Em Eye, \$112,143)	<b>\$646,310</b>	150	3	0.98	1.10
21	<b>SLEW'S TIZNOW</b> (05, Tiznow), Rancho San Miguel	\$3,000	44/20	1/1	0/1	(Trapalanda, \$59,755)	<b>\$593,755</b>	146	6	0.90	0.98
22	<b>CHAMP PEGASUS</b> (06, Fusaichi Pegasus)	N/A	79/28	0/0	0/0	(Tap It Champ, \$64,480)	<b>\$575,585</b>	205	0	0.33	1.00
23	<b>INDIAN EVENING</b> (09, Indian Charlie)	N/A	18/11	1/2	0/1	(Sneaking Out, \$260,110)	<b>\$526,738</b>	62	3	1.19	1.06
24	<b>COMIC STRIP</b> (95, Red Ransom)	Died, 2017	24/14	1/1	1/1	(Indian Peak, \$143,940)	<b>\$508,113</b>	361	13	0.84	1.09
25	<b>U S RANGER</b> (04, Danzig)	Pnsd	62/17	0/0	0/0	(Zelaia, \$52,886)	<b>\$505,390</b>	*407	3	0.64	1.21
26	<b>ANTHONY'S CROSS</b> (08, Indian Charlie), Special T Thoroughbreds	\$2,500	18/8	2/4	1/2	(Joy's Rocket, \$230,944)	<b>\$490,425</b>	56	2	0.93	0.93
27	<b>DESERT CODE</b> (04, E Dubai), Harris Farms	\$2,000	38/20	0/0	0/0	(Songofthedesert, \$84,046)	<b>\$484,430</b>	165	4	0.84	0.99
28	<b>DECARCHY</b> (97, Distant View)	Died, 2017	42/17	0/0	0/0	(My Friend Tony, \$81,072)	<b>\$447,728</b>	438	13	0.96	0.93
29	<b>EDDINGTON</b> (01, Unbridled), Ballena Vista Farm	\$3,500	23/11	1/1	1/1	(Fast Enough, \$134,000)	<b>\$408,550</b>	*468	12	1.14	1.35
30	<b>GOVENOR CHARLIE</b> (10, Midnight Lute), Lovacres Ranch	\$3,000	30/12	1/2	1/1	(Governor Goteven, \$171,000)	<b>\$402,102</b>	54	1	0.65	0.73
31	<b>SMART BID</b> (06, Smart Strike), Milky Way Farm	\$2,500	35/12	1/1	1/1	(Arthur's Hope, \$108,486)	<b>\$400,242</b>	89	1	0.60	0.96
32	<b>CURLIN TO MISCHIEF</b> (11, Curlin), Rancho San Miguel	\$3,500	23/9	1/2	1/1	(Good With People, \$203,000)	<b>\$399,743</b>	56	1	0.83	0.89
33	<b>THE PAMPLEMOUSSE</b> (06, Kafwain)	Pnsd	20/10	0/0	0/0	(North County Guy, \$80,140)	<b>\$370,736</b>	127	0	0.59	1.02
34	<b>HEATSEEKER (IRE)</b> (03, Giant's Causeway)	Died, 2016	39/17	0/0	0/0	(Peace Seeker, \$56,545)	<b>\$368,992</b>	*232	8	0.93	1.19
35	<b>SOUTHERN IMAGE</b> (00, Halo's Image), Gray's Farm	\$1,500	27/14	0/0	0/0	(Do You Hear That, \$54,598)	<b>\$361,130</b>	*527	7	1.02	1.11

With Grazen, Alexander spared no expense to see that the horse recovered from a career-ending injury. Tough Sunday was born with just about every foal ailment imaginable, which in most cases would have meant euthanasia. Alexander refused to give up on the foal, however, resulting in

Tough Sunday's surviving and thriving to such an extent that he won the 2018 Sensational Star Stakes and twice placed in the Midnight Lute Stakes (G3).

Grazen has repaid Alexander many times over, becoming one of California's leading sires. Alexander has bred and

raced most of Grazen's top runners, including Tough Sunday, who went to stud last year as a private stallion for his owner/breeder.

"We wanted to see what Tough Sunday's babies looked like first before we asked anybody else to trust us to breed to him," Alexander said. "We bred him to seven mares last year. After we see a few of them, if we like them as much as we think we will, then we will offer him to the public."

That consideration for his fellow breeders makes Alexander popular in racing circles. Before the pandemic Alexander spent many days in his box at Santa Anita Park, where he chats with everyone—owners, ushers, and bettors.

His loyalty to his trainers spans decades. He had horses with Mike Mitchell until that trainer's death in 2015, and Alexander pays tribute to Mitchell by racing in Mitchell's silks. Alexander today in Southern California uses Phil D'Amato, Mitchell's longtime assistant and now a leading trainer himself; and Steve Miyadi in Northern California.



Alexander's Lieutenant Dan scores in the 2019 Real Good Deal Stakes at Del Mar

That loyalty also extends to Alexander's farm, Horse Haven, in Santa Ynez, Calif. About 15 years ago he hired Carrie Drake to manage the farm, and Drake continued in that capacity until her recent retirement. To replace her, Alexander promoted her longtime assistant, Frankie Rodriguez, who heads up the eight employees at the farm.

The team has delivered for Alexander, who annually ranks in the top two or three breeders in California. He has yet to crack the No. 1 spot, primarily because Paul and Zillah Reddam are usually ranked ahead of him. Like Alexander, the Reddams have done well with a homegrown stallion, the recently pensioned Square Eddie.

Alexander gives back to the industry as well, serving as chairman of the Thoroughbred Owners of California. It is a thankless job at the best of times, as fashioning agreements among all of the racing industry's factions, both at the state and national level, can be as difficult as herding cats.

After years of running Nick Alexander



Alexander with jockey Tyler Baze and trainer Phil D'Amato at Santa Anita

BMW in the Los Angeles area—where the company's famous slogan is "Nick Can't Say No"—Alexander put the business in the capable hands of his son, also Nick Alexander. Today, he and Mary, his wife

of 52 years, live at Horse Haven and their home in Pasadena. They also have a grown daughter, Elizabeth, who rode competitively as a youth. Alexander proudly notes that she was a national champion junior jumper.

During these pandemic, stay-at-home times, Alexander relishes his life at Horse Haven. He has added to the acreage over the years, and the farm now encompasses 280 acres in three separate sections. The Alexanders live on about 25 acres that include their house and the foaling barn. On 160 acres they grow alfalfa and keep pastures for the yearlings. And on the third 95-acre parcel, they grow forage hay.

Alexander doesn't breed his stallions on the property, but he has an unusual arrangement. While most other people board their stallions at a breeding farm year-round, Alexander prefers to keep his stallions at Horse Haven during the off season. They travel the short distance to nearby Tommy Town Thoroughbreds, a major California breeding facility, and stay there

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during the breeding season.

Grazen, now 15, has followed this schedule since he went to stud. Alexander bred the son of Benchmark—Hazen, by Rubiano, and raced the graded stakes winner with Mitchell. The tendon injury that ended the horse's career after seven starts required surgery. Since then, Alexander has admittedly spoiled his leading sire.

Any telephone call to Alexander at the farm and inquiry into how Grazen is doing usually results in the reply, "I'm looking at him right now." Grazen has a paddock within sight of Alexander's house, and the owner has regular conversations with his equine buddy, always interspersed with a generous supply of treats.

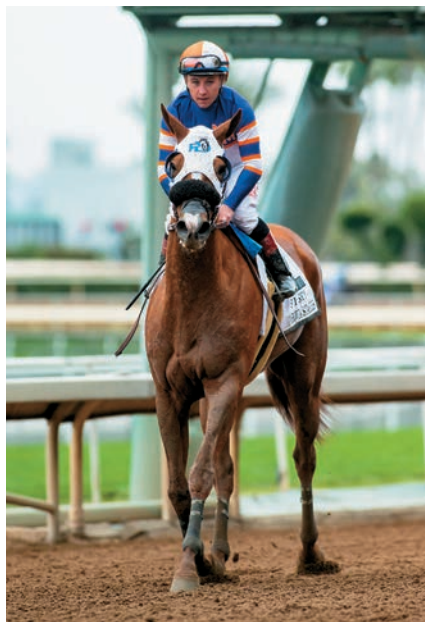
"He's totally white now," Alexander said of his favorite.

While Grazen stands to outside mares, Alexander has always supported him with mares of his own. Many came from Alexander's racing stable, often hard-knocking runners who excelled in claiming and allowance ranks. Several offspring have become stakes winners, and two won year-end California-bred championships.

Alexander bred Grazen's daughter Enola Gray out of the More Than Ready mare Unsung Heroine, a \$40,000 purchase at the 2007 Keeneland November sale. Champion Cal-bred 3-year-old filly of 2016 and trained by D'Amato, Enola Gray earned \$585,100 and won six stakes, including the 2017 Wilshire Stakes (G3T). She performed especially well on Santa Anita's downhill turf course, and like many other Grazens she could run on dirt and turf.

"Grazens are flexible, but grass seems to be their favorite surface," said Alexander. "Enola Gray is a perfect example. She broke her maiden on the dirt. Then she won the Fleet Treat at seven furlongs at Del Mar (in a stakes-record 1:21.24 on dirt). Then later she ran a mile on the grass in a graded stakes at Santa Anita (the Wilshire) in 1:33 flat (1:33.03). She went wire to wire in that."

Enola Gray currently has a Cal-bred



**S Y Sky, with a bankroll of \$709,540, is Grazen's top earner**

yearling colt by Arrogate and is in foal to California sire Sir Prancealot. Alexander plans to breed her this year to Audible, a grade 1-winning son of 2020 leading sire Into Mischief.

Alexander-homebred Lieutenant Dan is Grazen's second Cal-bred champion, winning the 3-year-old male title in 2019. Out of the Indian Charlie mare Excusabull,

Lieutenant Dan has earned \$426,020. Trained by Miyadi, the gelding scored in the 2019 Echo Eddie Stakes and Real Good Deal Stakes and in the Sensational Star Stakes in 2020.

Off since last June, Lieutenant Dan is back in training after recuperating from a tendon strain.

"Steve just doesn't want him to come home," Alexander said. "He loves that horse so much. Steve has kept him at the track and watches him every day. That's his project. Lieutenant Dan is now galloping. We'll see him again hopefully before the Santa Anita meet is over."

Miyadi also trained Tough Sunday, though the health challenges for that son of Grazen occurred well before his racing career. Tough Sunday was a large foal, causing birthing difficulties for his dam, the General Meeting mare Sunday Dress. The umbilical cord was severed before Tough Sunday could begin breathing, leading to a long list of ailments, beginning with the colt's being blind and deaf and developing pneumonia.

Alexander sent the foal to the well-respected Alamo Pintado Equine Medical Center not far from Horse Haven. The owner refused to give up hope. With the help of the Alamo Pintado team, headed



**After the '18 Joe Hernandez Stakes with *Daily Racing Form's* Steve Anderson and Joe Talamo**

**Special Note For Sire Lists:**

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in the selected region (stallions that have died or been exported prior to the 2015 breeding season are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available Northern Hemisphere statistics through January 10, 2021. As supplied to *The Blood-Horse* 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 2019 is \$25,300 or 53% of the 2019 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 N.H.-foaled black-type stakes winners worldwide. \*Foal counts include Southern Hemisphere. Cumulative stakes winners include all countries. (A ¶ indicates a sire represented by his first crop to race).

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2/10/20 Db/Br Colt  
o/o Rockin Dorita by Rockport Harbor



3/24/19 Bay Colt  
o/o Holladay Visit, by Lonhro (AUS)



4/6/19 Dk B/Br Filly  
o/o Lauren's Export, by Lonhro (AUS)  
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4/14/19 Gr/Rn Filly  
o/o Passionville, by Petionville



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Two-time graded stakes winner Pee Wee Reese earned more than \$500,000

by Dr. Erin Byrne, as well as Drake and Rodriguez, Tough Sunday survived and succeeded at the track.

After Tough Sunday had won the Sensational Star at Santa Anita, an emotional Alexander thanked everyone who helped Tough Sunday overcome his ailments.

“Back home, Carrie and Frankie—this is for you guys,” Alexander said at the time. “You’re the ones that saved his life. I love you both, and this is for you.”

S Y Sky, trained by D’Amato, is Grazen’s top earner. She debuted by winning the 2017 Evening Jewel Stakes and captured four more stakes, including the 2019 Monrovia Stakes (G3), en route to earnings of \$709,540. Alexander claimed Sky Marni, S Y Sky’s dam, for \$16,000.

Alexander wishes S Y Sky could have earned a Cal-bred championship.

“She spread it around where there was always somebody that had a bigger year,” he said. “But I don’t think anybody the last three or four years has had as good an overall campaign as she did. She was first, second, or third in 15 out of 16 starts.”

S Y Sky only missed third in that 16th start by a neck. Alexander has her currently in foal to Kentucky stallion Kantharos. Because so many of his mares are now by Grazen, Alexander not only breeds in Kentucky and brings the mares back to California to be Cal-breds, but he purchased a share in Sir Prancealot.

Grazen hasn’t sired every Alexander

stakes winner. Pee Wee Reese, a homebred by Tribal Rule, earned \$532,901 and won four stakes, two of them graded.

Pee Wee Reese is one of many runners Alexander names for baseball players. Lieutenant Dan derives his name from one of Alexander’s favorite movies, “Forrest Gump.” Current runner Althea Gibson honors the tennis player and golfer who became one of the first Black athletes in international tennis and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame. Alexander named Alice Marble after another tennis star. The equine Althea Gibson and Alice Marble are by Grazen.

Alexander also likes to remember war heroes. He named Annie Graham, a 3-year-old daughter of Grazen, for an Army nurse who served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Ruby Bradley, a 5-year-old stakes-winning daughter of Grazen, is named for an Army nurse who was a prisoner of war during World War II noted for her bravery in helping other prisoners and who successfully evacuated many patients from a hospital during the Korean War.

Alexander’s penchant for crediting people he admires extends to his tenure on the TOC board. One of the many issues the TOC has had to wrestle with during the pandemic’s challenges is funding for Southern California’s stabling and vanning fund.

Because of the reduction in bricks-and-mortar simulcast wagering facilities during the pandemic, that fund experienced a huge drop in revenue. TOC and Southern California racetrack managements worked out a deal to add funds and cut costs as an interim measure to keep the program afloat for 2021.

Alexander acknowledges he has spent a tremendous amount of time on that and other issues as TOC chairman. But he prefers to compliment others.

“Our goal was to avoid closing any of our training facilities and close the budget gap going forward,” Alexander said. “Our president, Greg Avioli, led talks between the tracks that led to an acceptable solution.”

That was not the only issue TOC had to deal with in 2020. Alexander noted that board member Gary Fenton worked with track racing secretaries to keep purses as high as possible to keep horses in the state. Alexander also cited efforts by Bob Liewald, Avioli, and Fenton on advance-deposit wagering contracts and Joe Hesson and Avioli on workers’ compensation.

“Without these four men, I’m not sure California racing could have survived as we know it and be well positioned going forward,” Alexander said.

California recently has been especially hard hit by the pandemic. Golden Gate Fields in the northern part of the state was closed from mid-November until mid-January due to a COVID-19 outbreak. While owners were not initially allowed to see their horses compete at that track once it reopened, they have been allowed on a very limited basis during the current Santa Anita meeting.

Alexander remains at his farm and hasn’t been to see his runners recently. Like the entire industry, he hopes that both owners and fans can return soon.

“Part of the fun of horse racing is when you do win something special and you do get recognized for it,” Alexander said. “All my guys here (at the farm) in the middle of winter love the fact that they get to see the horses that they’ve helped raise in the winner’s circle. If you do all this without any recognition, it’s not as fun.” **BH**

*Tracy Gantz is the Southern California correspondent for BloodHorse.*