



- News, views and insights that matter to breeders, owners and racing industry professionals - April 2025 -

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## Book'em Danno repeats as New Jersey-bred Horse of the Year

**B**ook'em Danno has been named the New Jersey-bred Horse of the Year for the second consecutive year. Additionally, he has received the titles of Champion Three-Year-Old and Champion Sprinter from the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey. Owned by Atlantic Six Racing LLC and trained by Derek Ryan, this gelding had an impressive season, achieving three wins and two second-place finishes in seven starts, accumulating total earnings of \$807,500.

Book'em Danno began his 3-year-old campaign with a commanding 12½-length victory in the \$100,000 Pasco Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs, setting the stage for a strong season. His next challenge was the \$1

million Saudi Derby-G3, where he narrowly lost a photo finish to Japan's Forever Young. Following that, he raced at Saratoga and made history as the first New Jersey-bred to win a Grade 1 race since 2017, claiming victory in the \$500,000 Woody Stephens on the Belmont Stakes undercard. He continued his success with a win in the \$100,000 Jersey Shore Stakes at Monmouth Park before finishing in the money at both the Grade 1 Allen Jerkens and the Grade 3 Perryville Stakes.

Bred in New Jersey by Gregory Kilka and Bright View Farm, Book'em Danno is a son of Bucchero out of the Ghostzapper mare Adorabella, also the dam of multiple stakes winner Girl Trouble.

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## Champion Two-Year-Old

JJ Zo Zo was named Champion Two-Year-Old after winning the \$100,000 Smoke Glacken Stakes against open company at Monmouth Park by 8½ lengths. The son of leading New Jersey sire Sea Wizard out of Lost Princess, by Stephen Got Even, is a Jose Garcia homebred trained by Jose Sanchez. He earned \$125,343 during his championship campaign.



## Champion Older Female

Holly Crest Farm's homebred Riding Pretty earned the title of Champion Older Female due to her two stakes wins. The daughter of Jack Milton out of the Girolamo mare High Renaissance, won the \$85,000 Smart N Classy Handicap at one mile on dirt by 7½ lengths and the \$100,000 Eleven North Handicap going six furlongs on dirt. Trained by Eddie Owens, Jr., Riding Pretty also finished second in the Jersey Girl Handicap at Monmouth Park, which was contested at one mile on turf. She has career earnings of \$378,070.



## Champion Older Male & Turf Runner

New Spice Stable's homebred Smithwick's Spice was named Champion Older Male and Champion Turf Runner after winning five races in 2024. He captured his first stakes victory in the \$100,000 Leinster Turf Dash Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs. His next two stakes wins were the \$100,000 Select Stakes and the \$85,000 Joey P. Handicap, both run over the Monmouth Park turf course. The now 9-year-old son of Frost Giant out of Spice McHaggis, by Good and Tough, secured his fifth win in the \$100,000 Extravagant Kid Handicap at Gulfstream Park. Trained by Douglas Nunn, Smithwick's Spice has won 14 races for total earnings of \$730,542.

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## Broodmare of the Year

**A**dorabella received the title of Broodmare of the Year for the third consecutive year. Bred by Tracy Farmer, this 9-year-old mare is by Ghostzapper out of Alydorable, by Arch. Gregory Kilka purchased her out of the Keeneland January 2020 Horse of All Ages Sale while she was carrying her first foal to the cover of Fast Anna. That was 2022 New Jersey-bred Champion Two-Year-Old Filly Girl Trouble (\$288,540). Adorabella's second foal is 2023 and 2024 New Jersey-bred Horse of the Year and Grade 1-winning millionaire Book'em Danno.



**Book'em Danno, the second stakes winner from as many foals to race for three-time Broodmare of the Year Adorabella, became a Grade 1 winner and millionaire in 2024.**

## Stallion of the Year

**S**ea Wizard has been named New Jersey Stallion of the Year for the second consecutive year after his progeny earned \$1,099,568, for average earnings per runner of \$47,807, in 2024. From three crops to race, Sea Wizard's runners include the New Jersey-bred Champion Two-Year-Old J J Zo Zo, and additional 2024 stakes winners Sea Streak and Ship to Shore. Sea Wizard is standing the 2025 breeding season at Pegasus Farm in Colts Neck.



**Sea Streak, shown winning the Long Branch Stakes last May, was one of three stakes winners in 2024 for Stallion of the Year Sea Wizard.**

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# Sea Wizard has a big week at Gulfstream Park

by Bill Finley

At a racetrack and during a race meet where the entries are loaded with horses by all of the top sires in the sport, you would think that New Jersey-based stallion Sea Wizard would be in over his head. That wasn't the case the week ending Feb. 9, as Sea Wizard's progeny won two races at Gulfstream, a \$75,000 optional claimer with Dumb Money and an allowance with Great Navigator.

For those who have been following Sea Wizard, that probably wasn't much of a surprise. From the time he entered stud in 2019, he has, with limited opportunities, produced a slew of horses who are fast, consistent, and have piled up sizeable earnings. But outside of New Jersey he's gone largely unnoticed, one of the sport's most underrated sires. If he has too many more weeks like he had in February, that may finally start to change.

"Mares should be flocking to this horse," said Doug Nunn, who trains Dumb Money. "He's not just a Jersey stallion, in my opinion."

Sea Wizard stands at Pegasus Stud in Colts Neck, and his stud fee is \$5,000. He was trained by the late John Mazza, who convinced Sam Fieramosca that he had to stand Sea Wizard at stud. A son of the late Uncle Mo, Sea Wizard ran just twice, breaking his maiden at Belmont in his second career start. At the time, Fieramosca owned and operated Colonial Farm, which was subsequently turned over to Carmine Spinella and renamed Pegasus Stud.

Trained by Eddie Owens Jr., Great Navigator is from the first crop of Sea Wizard, and the Holly Crest Farm homebred wasted little time showing he had quality. He broke his maiden at first asking at Monmouth, then rans second

in the Grade 3 Sanford Stakes at Saratoga in his second start. When he won at Gulfstream in February, he pushed his earnings to \$400,417.

"He's a very underrated sire," said Owens, who is the private trainer for Holly Crest Farm. "He had two winners in the same week at Gulfstream and they were in tough races. When we first started breeding to him I never thought he would be this good. He's been a surprise to me. Most of them have been running pretty good. Among mine, I have some that are not as talented as others. But you'll never be in a situation where they are all good."

Dumb Money, stakes-placed at the Belmont At The Big A meet last November, was making his first start for Nunn after running for Greg Sacco. Running in a 5-furlong race over the Tapeta surface, he won by 1½ lengths.

"I have been watching Sea Wizard for the last couple of years, and what he has done has been remarkable," Nunn said. "We haven't had a top stallion like him here in New Jersey for years. The way he has taken off is pretty unbelievable. This is the only horse I've ever had by Sea Wizard, and I've trained for a lot of Jersey breeders over the years. This owner changed trainers, and once he came to me, he trained like a good horse. He's nothing to look at. He gives you no reason to think he's a race horse. It's mind boggling. But when you train him, it's a totally different story."

Nunn said he hopes to add more Sea Wizards to his barn.

"We are looking for Sea Wizards," he said. "People have tried to sell us horses by the regular Jersey stallions and we're trying to find Sea Wizards. I have owners

who are breeders and yes, absolutely, they're booking some of their mares to Sea Wizard. We definitely want to get a little better quality of mare to breed to him. What he's done so far is to produce these horses out of the normal Jersey-bred mares that you see."

But until now, people haven't really caught on.

Sea Wizard has had 17 winners from just 25 starters, a remarkable percentage for any stallion. He's had four black-type winners and one black-type-placed horse – five black-type horses in total from those 25 starters. That's 20 percent black-type horses to starters. And 11 of his winners won at 2.

After Great Navigator, his best horses have been Sea Streak, a two-time stakes winner who beat open company in the Long Branch Stakes, ran fifth in the Haskell-G1, and won or placed in seven of 10 starts while earning \$309,110 to date; and Ship to Shore, who beat open company in the 2024 Limehouse Stakes at Gulfstream.

J J Zo Zo is still another Sea Wizard who has won an open company stakes race, winning the 2024 Smoke Glacken Stakes last year at 2.

"I remember when Sam Fieramosca at Colonial Farms first got him, and I kind of laughed at it," Nunn said. "I was wondering what they were doing with a stallion that had only run twice and only broken his maiden. But that he's by Uncle Mo definitely helps.

"Sea Wizard's horses can run on the dirt, the turf, the Tapeta. They can run long or short. Some of these stallions are pretty one-dimensional when it comes to their runners. Not this one. He has a lot of quality to him."



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