

SMALL FARM...

HUGE SUCCESSES

State Route 169 snakes its way through the countryside of Woodford County, Kentucky. Travelers on the two-lane thoroughfare pass handcrafted stone walls and acres upon acres of pastureland. Near the northernmost end of Route 169 lies Brownstead. At 50 acres, the farm might seem to have little in common with the famed Thoroughbred nurseries of the Bluegrass State. In actuality, the farm shares the same unwavering commitment to horse care as its colossal counterparts.

Purchased almost a decade ago by owners Dr. Stuart and Christine Brown, Brownstead is home to a Thoroughbred breeding operation. Over the years, the Browns have assembled a small group of broodmares with strong bloodlines. The mares are crossed with well-known commercial stallions.

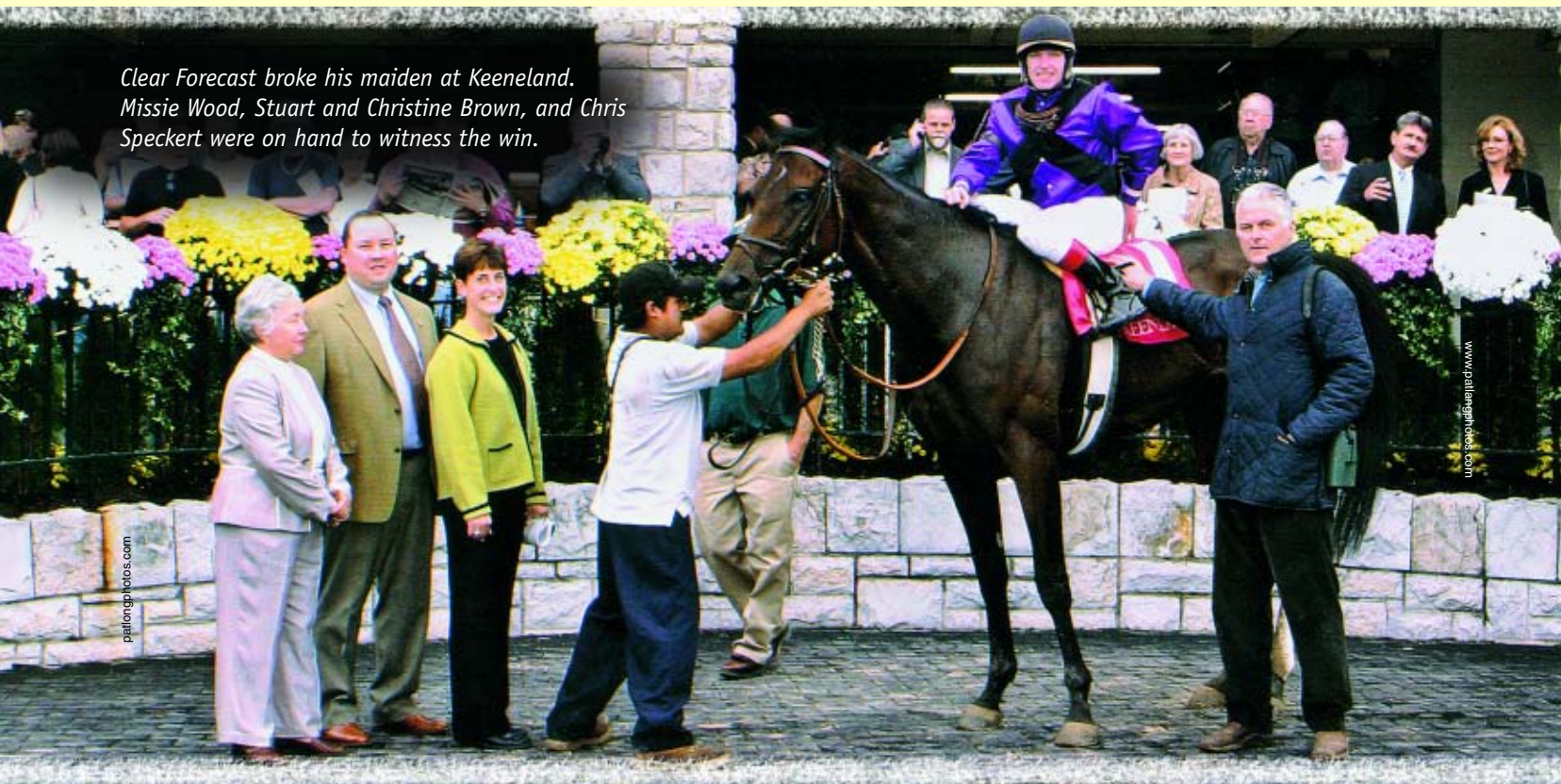
All breeding decisions are made by Stuart, a longtime student of Thoroughbred pedigrees. His knack for nicking has resulted in several successful racehorses including the stakes-winning filly Salty Romance, who won the Delta Princess Stakes in 2003 and ran second in the Santa Ysabel Stakes (Grade III) in early 2004. Salty Romance is

by Salt Lake and out of Checkerspot, a mare by Affirmed. The Browns purchased Checkerspot when she was a young maiden mare after previously owning her half-sister Let There Be Light.

Most of the foals born at Brownstead stay on the farm less than a year and are consigned to public auction as weanlings. However, last year saw the Browns retain their weanlings, deciding instead to sell them at the yearling sales in the fall.

In another break from tradition, the Browns chose to race one of the horses they raised. Clear Forecast, a gelding by Sky Classic and out of Sunshine Holy Cow, made for an exciting entrance into racehorse ownership. Racing in the black and purple silks of Mrs. Christine Brown, the gelding ran fifth on the turf in his first start at Kentucky Downs in late September. A month later at the prestigious Keeneland meet in Lexington, Clear Forecast picked up his first win in The Mill Ridge, an allowance race staged on the turf. The three-year-old gelding charged from behind in impressive fashion to win by a neck. Under the guidance of trainer

Clear Forecast broke his maiden at Keeneland. Missie Wood, Stuart and Christine Brown, and Chris Speckert were on hand to witness the win.



Chris Speckert, Clear Forecast has blossomed into a formidable turf runner and is poised to continue his campaign in the spring of 2005.

Clear Forecast's victory proved thrilling for the Brownstead team. "I've never seen Stuart as excited as he was that day!" commented Christine.

Part of the joy, no doubt, stems from their lifelong association with Clear Forecast. "We foaled him, raised him, and broke him. We even tried to sell him a couple of times," Christine laughed. "Now, I'm glad we didn't sell him!"

The small scale of the operation allows the Browns a hands-on approach to horse ownership. The daily attention afforded to the horses comforts Christine. "If I didn't put my eyes on them every day, I think I would eventually overlook something. I learn so much just from watching them. And because I know all of their idiosyncrasies, I can usually tell when something is even slightly amiss."

Like many Thoroughbred breeders, the Browns are conscientious of what happens to the foals they raise once they leave their possession. It's not unusual for Christine to follow the horses through their racing careers. If one should drop into the lower claiming ranks, Christine is the first to track down an owner and offer a fair price. That very thing occurred last summer. A colt bred by the Browns in 2000 was just ending a racing career after a disappointing performance in a claiming race. Christine managed to locate the trainer of the colt, purchase him, and bring him to Brownstead for a well-deserved respite. This particular gelding needed not only rest but also surgery to remove a bone chip in his ankle. She arranged for the surgery, and once the horse had healed, he traveled to Alabama to live with his new owner, an eventing enthusiast.

In addition to their Thoroughbreds, the Browns own a few other horses including Rivella, a Dutch warmblood mare that Christine competes in eventing. While many warmbloods tend to become overweight when given access to the lush pastures of central Kentucky, Rivella tends to drop condition during the competition season.

"Rivella is huge. Not only is she over 17 hands, but she has a long frame, and it takes lots of groceries to keep her in great condition," explained Christine.

To ensure Rivella maintains optimal weight, Christine adds En-Dure to the mare's ration. En-Dure is a high-fat

supplement designed to help maintain horses in optimal body condition. (For more information about En-Dure, go to kentuckyperformanceproducts.com.)

"The great thing about En-Dure is that I can cut back on the feed. Rivella is not an enthusiastic eater. Before I began her on En-Dure, she rarely finished a meal. That's not a problem now because she can actually sustain her weight on less grain, so long as she's fed En-Dure."

Once the changes in Rivella became apparent, Christine began feeding En-Dure to a broodmare that is a notoriously picky eater and hard keeper. "I think En-Dure's going to do the trick for this mare, too!"



Christine Brown and Rivella compete at the 2004 American Eventing Championship.

Feeding to Win

The Browns realize that nutrition plays an important role in the health and future of their horses. Since their farm was established, the couple has called on Woodford Feed Co. of Versailles, Kentucky to furnish feeds for all of the horses on their farm, from weanlings and broodmares to show horses and pensioners. Woodford Feed Co. is a family-owned feed and farm store that has been serving the central Kentucky agricul-

tural community since 1940. The company became a Kentucky Equine Research (KER) Team Member in the late 1980s, and since then nutritionists from KER have formulated a line of premium feeds for the store.

There is no doubt that high-quality feed contributes to the success of the Browns' horses. In addition, the couple relies heavily upon their pastures to provide nutrition to their horses; therefore, pasture care has become a top priority. In addition to careful rotation of horses and timely mowing and harrowing, the Browns hire Woodford Feed Co. to apply fertilizer and lime at appropriate intervals. Keeping the pastures in tiptop shape ensures that they are contributing as much as possible to their occupant's nutrient intake.

"I could not be more pleased with Woodford Feed," remarked Christine. "The store is committed to awesome service. Every employee is unbelievably helpful."

Little by little, the Browns are carving a niche for themselves in the competitive world of Thoroughbred breeding. By providing the best care and nutrition to their horses, the Browns are assured success for generations to come. ☺