

Winndevie a very nice surprise

November 13, 2019, by Ken Weingartner, USTA Media Relations Manager

Hightstown, NJ — Wanda Polisseni is the type of person who, in her own words, prefers to fly under the radar. But after her Winndevie won last month's Breeders Crown for 3-year-old filly trotters, providing Polisseni's Purple Haze Stables with its first trophy, that became a little more difficult. Not that Polisseni has any complaints.

"I was surprised at the number of people that congratulated me and follow my horses; I'm very appreciative," Polisseni said. "I'm not infatuated with the winner's circle. That's not what I'm all about. But I fully appreciate it. Winning a race like the Breeders Crown makes it all worth it.

"There are so many people that have been in (the sport) so much longer than I have and I'd like to see these other people win too. I feel like I've had more than my share of blessings and good fortune. I just love to see my horses race, no matter where they end up, as long as they're healthy and happy."

Winndevie returns to the races Thursday in the \$176,150 Matron Stakes for 3-year-old filly trotters at Dover Downs. In fact, all four 3-year-old Breeders Crown champions — with Dancin Lou, Gimpanzee, and Warrawee Ubeaut joining Winndevie in that group — will be in action in the [Matron events for sophomore pacers and trotters](#).



Winndevie won last month's Breeders Crown for 3-year-old filly trotters, providing Wanda Polisseni's Purple Haze Stables with its first trophy. USTA/Mark Hall photo.

Trained by Trond Smedshammer and driven by Brian Sears, Winndevie is the 5-2 morning-line favorite in a field that includes Hambletonian Oaks winner When Dovescry, who was second in the Breeders Crown, as well as Crown third- and fourth-place finishers The Ice Dutchess and Only Take Cash, not to mention Elegantimage Stakes winner Evident Beauty.

Winndevie, by [Credit Winner](#) out of Vida De Vie, has won six of 14 races this year and hit the board a total of 13 times. Her earnings of \$559,804 lead all 3-year-old filly trotters.

For her career, Winndevie has won 12 of 21 starts, including the 2018 New York Sire Stakes championship, and \$787,682. Her trip to the Breeders Crown was her first Grand Circuit appearance after spending her career to that point on the New York circuit. Polisseni called the filly's Breeders Crown triumph at Woodbine Mohawk Park, "really a very nice surprise."

It is probably fitting because her arrival in Smedshammer's stable was a surprise as well. Polisseni thought she had completed her shopping for yearlings at the Standardbred Horse Sale two Novembers ago until she looked over her list of purchases and realized she did not get a [Credit Winner](#)-sired filly.

So, after a review of the remaining possibilities, she bought Winndevie (then named Hello Dolly De Vie) for \$45,000 on the final day of the yearling auction.

"I never told Trond I was going to buy her," Polisseni said, laughing at the circumstances surrounding the purchase. "I knew I wanted a [Credit Winner](#) filly and she was the best one that I liked that day. I liked the way she looked on the floor, the way she moved, and the video. I loved her. She's a beautiful filly.

"I put her on the truck to go down to Trond's (stable). It was a surprise to him. But he's told me many times in the winner's circle that he's so glad I bought her."

Polisseni, who lives in upstate New York, got her start as a harness racing owner about 15 years ago. Smedshammer has trained her horses for a decade. Her Purple Haze Stables has ranked among the top 10 in earnings for owners on multiple occasions, including in 2018 and 2019.

"I feel really blessed with the success that I've had and having Trond as a trainer," Polisseni said. "He's the best. He knows how I want my horses treated and it's always the horse comes first. I never have to worry with Trond, there is no stress. That makes the racing so much more fun.

“(The Breeders Crown) was all for Trond. That’s how I felt. I wanted him to get all the attention and accolades. I was thrilled.”

Racing begins at 4:30 p.m. Thursday at Dover Downs. For complete entries, click [here](#).