

Winndevie ready to defend New York crown

by Ken Weingartner, USTA Media Relations Manager

Hightstown, NJ — If not for the whirlwind known as Woodside Charm and a world-record-shattering mile, filly trotter Winndevie could have completed her 2-year-old season with an undefeated record. But there was no shame in finishing with a 6-for-7 slate, capped by a victory in the New York Sire Stakes championship.

On Tuesday (May 7), the filly returns to the site of last year's final triumph — Yonkers Raceway — to begin her defense of the title as the 2-1 morning-line favorite in the third of three NYSS divisions for 3-year-old female trotters. The race, with a purse of \$54,833, will be Winndevie's seasonal debut for trainer-driver Trond Smedshammer and owner Purple Haze Stables.

"She's been good all winter; I've been happy with her," Smedshammer said about Winndevie, a daughter of Credit Winner out of Vida De Vie. "She's more mature, looks good. She's good and healthy. She only has one qualifier in her, so she's not super ready, but we'll see.



Winndevie (foreground) enjoys the view from her window at White Birch Farm. USTA/Ken Weingartner photo.

"She was great (last year); you can't knock that. It was as good as it could have been. She's a nice filly. I like her speed and her stamina. She's pretty good on a (half-mile track), maybe not better than some, but like most of the Credit Winners is good gaited. If she stays healthy, she should be good in New York this year too."

Winndevie spent 2018 exclusively in New York Sire Stakes competition. She won her first five races of the season before finishing second to eventual Dan Patch Award-

winner Woodside Charm at Saratoga Casino Hotel. Woodside Charm trotted the mile in 1:53.4, history's fastest mile by a 2-year-old trotter on a half-mile track, bettering the previous record of 1:55.2 for a 2-year-old filly, not to mention Don Dream's 1:55 mark for a male. Winndevie was timed in 1:54.1.

Nine days later, Winndevie captured the New York Sire Stakes championship with a sustained first-over grind over the race's last five-eighths of a mile. Smedshammer decided to end the filly's season there rather than go on to compete in the Breeders Crown.

"If she was really good in the final, I was going to put her in the Breeders Crown, but I thought she bounced a little bit off that big mile at Saratoga," Smedshammer said. "I thought that big mile at Saratoga would have improved her, getting stretched out like that, but she took a step backwards. She won, but she wasn't at her best. She was bumpy on the turns, so I put her away. Hopefully it will pay off this year."

Winndevie is eligible to this year's Breeders Crown as well as the Hambletonian Oaks, so she could have opportunities to see the Grand Circuit in 2019.

"We'll see if she's going to go into anything other than New York later on," Smedshammer said. "Our primary goal is New York, to try to win as much as we can there."

The 6-5 morning-line favorite in the first NYSS division, with a purse of \$53,833, is Stella Jane, the 2018 Kindergarten Classic winner. She will have Jason Bartlett in the sulky for trainer John Butenschoen. With Out A Doubt, a winner on the NYSS circuit last season, is the 5-2 choice in the second division, with a purse of \$54,833, for driver Andy Miller and trainer Erv Miller.

Racing begins at 6:50 p.m. (EDT) Tuesday at Yonkers. For complete entries, [click here](#).