

Whereshetoldmetogo, Jaxon Traveler Clash in \$75,000 Not For Love

Fillie d'Esprit Looks to Dethrone Kiss the Girl in \$75,000 Conniver

LAUREL, MD – Defending champion Whereshetoldmetogo and fellow multiple stakes winner Jaxon Traveler, the latter recently voted his second straight Maryland-bred championship, are set to clash for the first time in Saturday's \$75,000 Not For Love at Laurel Park.

The six-furlong Not For Love for 4-year-olds and up is one of two stakes restricted to Maryland-bred/sired horses on an 11-race program, along with the \$75,000 Conniver for fillies and mares 4 and older sprinting seven furlongs.

Headlining five stakes worth \$450,000 in purses are the \$100,000 Private Terms for 3-year-olds and \$100,000 Beyond the Wire for 3-year-old fillies. First race post time is 12:40 p.m.

Madaket Stables, Ten Strike Racing, Michael Kisber and BTR Racing, Inc.'s Whereshetoldmetogo won last year's Not For Love by 2 ½ lengths over 2020 Maryland Million Sprint winner Karan's Notion, who also returns.

The victory was his third straight for the 7-year-old El Padrino gelding, who will be looking to start a new streak after finishing a troubled fifth, beaten two lengths, in the Dec. 26 Fire Plug at Laurel off successive neck triumphs in the New Castle at Delaware Park and Laurel's Howard and Sondra Bender Memorial.

"He's awesome," trainer Brittany Russell said. "We tried to get everybody worked the other day even if it wasn't like their ideal work day just because of the weather rolling in. He came by me and everybody was like, 'Holy smokes, who's that?' He looks like a monster. He comes by and he just looks so powerful right now. He seems to be just doing so well and hopefully he runs well."

By design, the connections took their time getting Whereshetoldmetogo's season under way. He has won 13 of 32 career starts with \$747,791 in purse earnings including 10 stakes wins, six of them coming over his home course of Laurel.

"We weren't disappointed with the effort last time. He ran good that day," Russell said. "At the end of the year, he's always looking for a little freshening. I think he's done well since we haven't run him since December. He always kind of appreciates being backed off of a bit. But he always needs time between races, too, and it seems like he's kind of shown us that. If you really want to see his best efforts you have to give that horse quite a bit of time between runs."

West Point Thoroughbreds and Marvin Delfiner's Jaxon Traveler was named the champion Maryland-bred 3-year-old male of 2021 as a follow-up to his 2-year-old state championship in 2020. The Munnings colt finished third or better in all nine of his starts last year, led by wins in the Star de Naskra at Pimlico and Bachelor at Oaklawn Park.

Second as the favorite to Hall of Famer Steve Asmussen-trained stablemate Mighty Mischieff in the 2021 Chick Lang (G3) at Pimlico, Jaxon Traveler is two-for-three lifetime at Laurel, suffering his first loss when fifth to Grade 3 winner Wondrwherecraigis in the Fire Plug. Wondrwherecraigis is set to run next in the Dubai Golden Shaheen (G1) March 26.

Air Token, owned and trained by Jose Corrales, became a stakes winner in the 2021 Maryland Million Sprint. Third by a neck behind Whereshetoldmetogo and Youngest of Five in the Bender, he was most recently fifth to Cordmaker in the seven-furlong General George (G3) Feb. 19. Larry Rabold's Youngest of Five, placed in three consecutive stakes, is also entered.

Completing the field are Joanne Shankle's The Wolfman, racing second off the claim for trainer Rodolfo Sanchez-Salomon, and McCourt Racing's Big Engine, a last-out optional claiming allowance winner Feb. 19 at Aqueduct for trainer Rudy Rodriguez.