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Contact: Kevin Kerstein
Kentucky Racing Communications
Churchill Downs, Ellis Park, Turfway Park
(610) 420-6971 (mobile)
(502) 635-4712 (office)
Kevin.Kerstein@KyDerby.com

MACHADO 'AT HOME' ON KENTUCKY CIRCUIT

FLORENCE, Ky. (Friday, March 3, 2023) – It's been four years since jockey **Luan Machado** moved from his home country of Brazil to Florence, Ky. but quickly established a new home.

"I first came to the United States in 2015 to Miami but it was just temporary and not anything permanent," Machado said. "That visit really helped me get started to know several people in the United States. After my Visa expired, I went back home and began riding full time in Brazil. In 2018, I won the country's biggest race (the Group I Premio Brasil). Soon after that race, (trainer) **Wesley (Ward)** called me and I decided to come to Kentucky."

Machado, who comes from a storied horse racing family in Brazil, arrived in the U.S. for the 2018 Turfway Park Holiday Meet at the urging of Ward and former agent **Jimmy McNerney**. Machado's pedigree certainly led him to becoming a jockey. His father, **Ronaldo**, was a jockey for seven years and helped him get his start riding racehorses in Brazil.

"I was around 11 or 12-years-old when I first started riding racehorses," Machado recalled. "My father brought me to a farm back at home and I started working with horses and riding them in match races and non-sanctioned events. I was pretty young at the time. I remember one time my brother (**Muriel**) came to visit me and within a week they had him working horses. Then, when I was 16, I attended jockey school (at Hipodromo da Gavea in Rio de Janeiro) to become a professional rider. It was a really good start because my brother and I ended up starting at the school together.

"Once I got to the racetrack, everyone knew my brother and me because of our dad. Everyone always told us that even though my dad wasn't a jockey for very long that we had big shoes to fill."

During Machado's first meet at Turfway Park, he tallied 21 wins and tied veteran **Rodney Prescott** for leading rider at the Holiday Meet. At the 2018 Winter/Spring Meet, Machado's 36 winners topped the standings and he was off and running in Florence.

"I've learned to adapt myself to many situations throughout my life so it wasn't really a difficult transition coming to Kentucky," Machado said. "I had a lot of support that helped me get started."

Now represented by **Cory Prewitt**, Machado has his sights set on becoming more established on the year-round Kentucky circuit.

"My agent and I are working hard to get business that will help us all year in Kentucky. I really feel at home here," Machado said.

Machado, who is known around the racetrack as the "Ax Man" because his last name translates to "ax" in Portuguese, will attempt to win his fourth stakes event this meet at Turfway when he rides **Scoobie Quando** in Saturday's \$150,000 John Battaglia Memorial – the finale of the Prep Season on the Road to the Kentucky Derby.

"He was very impressive when he won first out (in the Turfway Prevue)," Machado said. "He's been working at Keeneland on the training track which is smaller than most tracks so his workouts have all been around two turns. I think in his last race, when he went one-mile for the first time, he needed that race. I worked him last week and you can tell he's learned a lot since that race and has continued to mature. I'm really looking forward to him in the John Battaglia."

Scoobie Quando was tabbed at odds of 6-1 in the John Battaglia Memorial, which will go as Race 8 on Saturday's Turfway Park card at 9:25 p.m. ET.

Off the track, Machado has a lot to look forward to in the upcoming weeks, including a visit from his family.

"Now, my younger brother (**Dylan**) has really done well to start his career in Brazil," Machado said. "He's already won 100 races as an apprentice and is just getting started. I think he's probably too young to come here to ride right now but in the future I think he'll do very well."

Last Saturday, Machado won his 350th North American race aboard **Grand Ave Girl** in the \$125,000 Wintergreen Stakes. Overall, he began the week tied with **Chris Landeros** for No. 4 in the Turfway riding standings with 19 wins. He trailed **Walter Rodriguez** (33 wins), **Gerardo Corrales** (29) and **Fernando De La Cruz** (29).

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