

Blues banished with Sparkling run

SPARKLING BLUES got the expected win in the first of the Spring 600 semi-finals, and it will be a surprise if she doesn't follow up with another in this weekend's decider.

Rita Downey's former Thurles tracker, bred on staying lines being by Pacific Mile and Minnies Sparkler, was an odds-on shot, with Kewell Blue the only other runner to come in for consideration in the betting market.

The pair of them were the only ones to show with a chance in the race, which was one of the features on an 8-race card.

Owned by John Ferncombe, Kewell Blue was first to show, but Sparkling Blues, displaying more early zip than on her track debut the previous week, was quickly on the Thurles bitch's case, taking over in the back straight.

Kewell Blue stayed on well, but was no match for the favourite, whose 33.12 was a big improvement on her first round 33.93, on a track rated .30 slow.

Three lengths divided them, with Laoises Pal taking third, five lengths back.

Kielduff Millie came in as a replacement for Quivers Flame in the second qualifier and caused a big surprise.

Derek Murtagh's Drogheda racer had finished a poor fifth in the opening round, failing to get in a blow after taking a knock at the opening round.

This time the 9/2 chance negotiated the opening bends in style, but was still well back as Zafrons Alica and Jaxxy Fantasy cut out the running going down the back.

But the Toms The Best

bitch began to pick off the leaders, and turning for home was right in the hunt.

She went on from there to score by almost three lengths from the well-fancied Crory Rumble in 33.71, with Morell Lass doing enough late on to take the third spot.

Highlight of the card's graded section was King Astro's win over the 525.

There are few more consistent runners on the circuit right now than this syndicate-owned, Martin Lanney-trained Brett Lee dog. He's been a regular in the Dowdallshill and Harold's Cross winners' enclosures, and while it seemed he was going off the boil in his most recent outing on the Dublin track, this 525 showed him to be in good heart.

King Astro's main market rival, track newcomer Nighthawk Boy, didn't have the best of luck, but nothing should take from the winner's performance.

He was fast into his stride from the inside, and while he had a trouble-free round the opening bend, Nighthawk Boy was involved in crowding.

King Astro was coming back to Nighthawk Boy in the home straight, but the line came in time, a half-length being the winning margin.

Race 1: First-timers and non-winners were lined up for this sprint, victory going to one of the former.

Killaculla Boy is owned by Co Down's Gerard McInerney, and the Westmead Hawk dog wasn't in the picture going to the opening bend.

But he got a nice run on the inside, and after that had the pace to get up to score by a length from Newells Tyrur in 22.29.

Races 2 and 3: Spring 600 semi-finals.

Race 4: In an open bet-

Dundalk Friday, March 12



ting race, Graces Sparkle followed up her February 27 success with an even more impressive win, running once again over the 525.

The Jimmy Slevin-trained bitch was in one and was up quick to take over from Trapper Sally.

At just 50lbs, she was giving weight away all round, but had the speed to keep ahead of the field. She won by four-and-a-half lengths from Picability in 29.09.

Race 5: Tas made it three from seven for Meath-based owner Eva Abedi, scoring over the sprint distance.

A close-up second in each of her two previous races, the Premier Fantasy bitch made this race hers from the very start, breaking fast and quickly building a big lead.

The issue was never in doubt after that, with the 7/4 favourite coming in just over four lengths ahead of Lady Panache in

a career-best 21.84.

Race 6: Seaview Lad got back to winning ways, running a blinder to score easily.

Running for Anthony Naughton and Christy Mahon, the Tyrur Ted dog was one of three 525 winners to wear the red sheet.

He was led early on by Royal Frolic but, taking the shortest course, got up to score by three lengths from another fast finisher, Hard To Live, in a night's fastest 28.91.

Race 7: Trainer Lanney closed out the night with a double, initiated by Surpassing Beauty in this 525.

The syndicate-owned bitch tracked Gibbstown Turbo in the early stages, but was in charge where it mattered.

She took over at the second-last bend, before going on to win by a length-and-a-half in 29.49.

Race 8: Won by King Astro.

RACEDAYS: MONDAY-FRI-SAT

PUBLIC TRIALS: Thurs morning, weigh-in 10-11am
UNRECORDED: Monday 10am-2pm.

Thursday 2pm-4pm. Saturday 10am -12.30pm

Trials MUST be booked with racing office

No booking, no trial. No excuses, no exceptions

DUNDALK

GRADING TIMES

350y - 20.10sec

400y - 22.70 sec

525y - 30.70 sec

TRACK RECORDS

350 - 18.71 sec

400 - 20.95 sec

525 - 28.39 sec

550 - 29.47 sec

575 - 31.14 sec

600 - 32.59 sec

620 - 33.51 sec

670 - 36.47 sec

900 - 49.99 sec

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