

Dog Chat: Joker vs Jack to make for ace final contest

PUBLISHED 13/04/2010 | 05:00

The final of the College Causeway/ Killahan Phanter Easter Cup at Shelbourne on Saturday heads a very busy week on the greyhound front, with the Red Mills Produce Stakes at Clonmel also progressing to the quarter-final stage.

The Owen McKenna-trained Thurlesbeg Joker will be all the rage for the Easter Cup final after a third successive victory in the preliminaries on Saturday. However, the proximity of Toomalone Jack at the line has ensured that this will be no one-dog race from a betting viewpoint.

Dolores Ruth's Toomalone Jack really is an amazing tracker and has clearly benefited from his short but successful career over hurdles. Indeed, it is probably fair to suggest at this stage that this dog could be a serious contender to complete the Irish Derby and Irish Grand National double. It's not often you can make such a claim about a leading tracker.

boasting

Don't be fooled into believing that it is just a two-dog race either as any contest boasting the likes of the Derby finalists Shaneboy Lee and Faypoint Man cannot be thus described. Add in Tyrur Chris and Olympic Double and we have a race that lives up to the great traditions of the oldest competition in the Irish calendar.

Saturday's card at Shelbourne also includes the finals of the Shelbourne Aston Unraced, the Killahan Phanter 525 and the College Causeway Open 600.

The Paul Hennessy-trained **Colorful Champ** produced a fabulous run of 28.29 in the second round of the Red Mills Produce Stakes at Clonmel on Sunday and he has been rewarded with a very tough quarter-final draw next weekend when he will be opposed by his chief rival Broadstrand Lad.

There are four interesting heats in prospect but that opening heat clash is the show-stopper. However, Puckane Craft has done nothing wrong so far and looks a Heat 2 banker, while Olympic Sunrise appeals in the third heat.

The final of the McCarthy Insurances Cork Oaks will be run at Curraheen Park on Saturday and it is difficult to oppose John Kiely's magnificent bitch Rossa Baby.

On the clock she only has five spots in hand over Fraser Blacks' Droopys Kina from semi-final running, but her style of running and an ideal six draw makes her banker material here.

Irish Independent