



Friday 10 September, 2021

Racing update

Ferdinand Boy eyes 'bonus' \$100K payday in Sunday's Healesville Cup

Country cups 'king' **Ferdinand Boy** is chasing a monster \$100,000 payday in Sunday's \$71,250 Group 2 SEN Track Healesville Cup final (350m).

Trained by David Geall, **Ferdinand Boy** (Box 5) is not only eyeing off the \$50,000 Cup winner's purse, but will also receive a \$50,000 bonus offered by Greyhound Racing Victoria (GRV) for winning three provincial cups in a calendar year, courtesy of victories at Ballarat and Shepparton.

Ironically, one of **Ferdinand Boy's** major rivals is kennelmate and close relation **Hill Top Jonah** (Box 1), last Sunday's fastest heat winner.

A litter brother to the brilliant Koblenz, **Hill Top Jonah** improved his unblemished Healesville record to six from six with a fast 19.13sec qualifying effort, while **Ferdinand Boy** advanced as one of the fastest seconds after being edged out by undefeated youngster **Aston Geneve** (Box 4).

Trained by Jacqui Greenough, whose husband Kel claimed back-to-back Healesville Cup victories in 2014 and 2015 with Frosty Jay Jay and Allkel To Excel respectively, **Aston Geneve** boosted her perfect record to six from six when upstaging **Ferdinand Boy** in a fast 19.17sec.

Aston Geneve will be joined in the Cup final by her even more sparingly-raced litter brother **Aston Merit** (Box 2), which ran second in his heat at just his third start for Jessica Sharp, who along with husband Jason and family celebrated an upset Healesville Cup triumph with Kouta Mayhem in 2018.

Superstar **Tiggerlong Tonk** (Box 6) was the fastest qualifier for last year's Cup and started favourite when running sixth to Zambora Lou, and Correy Grenfell's evergreen dual G1 hero once again heads TAB's Cup market at \$2.50, ahead of **Hill Top Jonah** at \$3 and **Ferdinand Boy** at \$4.50.

In addition to the Greenough and Sharp kennels, the remaining three trainers also know what's required to reign supreme in the Healesville Cup.

Anthony Azzopardi (**Aston Titan – Box 8**) won the Cup in 2019 with Myrniong And All, Jason Thompson has his sights set on back-to-back victories with **Mr. America (Box 7)**, having been successful with Zambora Lou in 2020 as well as El Brooklyn in 2013, while Brooke Ennis (**Barooga Smoke – Box 3**) is also a two-time winner with Size Does Matter (2014) and Zinzan Brooke (2017).

Prolific owner/breeder Ray Borda boasts three finalists in littermates **Aston Geneve** and **Aston Merit** along with **Aston Titan**.

Here's a rundown of the contenders:

\$71,250 Group 2 SEN Track Healesville Cup Final (350m)

1 HILL TOP JONAH

Trainer: David Geall (Lara)

Breeding: May 2019 Fernando Bale x Up Hill Jill

Comment: Won 14 from 27. Regally bred speedster that's gone to a whole new level, winning his last six starts, all at Healesville. Continued his unbeaten straight track record with the fastest heat performance and ideally drawn, having won four from four 'off the red'. (PB - 18.95sec)

2 ASTON MERIT

Trainer: Jessica Sharp (Avalon)

Breeding: April 2019 KC And All x Secret Spell

Comment: Won 2 from 3. After winning heat and final of Highway 31 Maiden series was thrown in the deep end in the Cup heats at just his third start and was up to the challenge, finishing second to fastest qualifier Hill Top Jonah. This is harder again but looks to have huge upside. (PB - 19.28sec)

3 BAROOGA SMOKE

Trainer: Brooke Ennis (Lara)

Breeding: July 2018 Ferdinand Bale x No Sparkle Leica

Comment: Won 14 from 33. Resumed from a break when winning his heat at Healesville debut and first appearance for Brooke Ennis. Dead-heated for second in G2 Horsham Cup in March so up to this class but will need to find plenty on the clock and others look to have his measure. (PB - 19.53sec)

4 ASTON GENEVE

Trainer: Jacqui Greenough (Pearcedale)

Breeding: April 2019 KC And All x Secret Spell

Comment: Won 6 from 6. Yet to taste defeat and passed her biggest test to date with flying colours when edging out dual country cups winner Ferdinand Boy in thrilling heat duel. Still on the up and no reason she can't win again. Litter sister to Aston Merit. (PB - 19.09sec)

5 FERDINAND BOY

Trainer: David Geall (Lara)

Breeding: January 2019 Fernando Bale x Nayla Swift

Comment: Won 26 from 48. Top class sprinter with phenomenal strike rate. Chasing his third country cup in 2021 after wins at Ballarat and Shepparton. Trainer feels he's not ideally suited to the straight but Healesville form is hard to fault, being edged out in Cup heat and The Arrow match race series in fast time at past two starts. A major player. (PB - 19.00sec)

6 TIGGERLONG TONK

Trainer: Correy Grenfell (Anakie)

Breeding: February 2018 Dyna Double One x Tiggerlong Dot

Comment: Won 42 from 88. Grand campaigner, two-time G1 winner this year and racing as well as ever. Doesn't know how to run a bad race. Was the fastest qualifier for last year's Cup and started favourite when finishing sixth. Likely to start favourite again and is an undeniable chance to make amends. (PB - 18.93sec)

7 MR. AMERICA

Trainer: Jason Thompson (Pearcedale)

Breeding: April 2019 Se Tali Sundance x Motel Girl

Comment: Won 9 from 17. Talented sprinter that resumed from a lengthy injury lay-off in The Arrow match race one week before the Cup heats. Showed the benefit of that outing when winning his heat. Open to further improvement at third run back and champion trainer must always be respected. Capable of figuring at odds. (PB - 19.32sec)

8 ASTON TITAN

Trainer: Anthony Azzopardi (Rowsley)

Breeding: January 2019 Fernando Bale x Fantastic Dotty

Comment: Won 16 from 40. Enjoying a purple patch of form, winning 4 of his last 5 starts, and impressive heat winner at his Healesville debut. Each way prospects. (PB - 19.32sec)

Reserves

9 GREEN BLAZER

Trainer: Jason Sharp (Avalon)

Breeding: April 2019 Mepunga Blazer x Shima Song

Comment: Won 6 from 22. Been racing well at Healesville and not beaten far in heat but likely to find some of these too sharp if a starter. (PB - 19.14sec)

10 DREAM WIZARD

Trainer: Sean Lithgow (Devon Meadows)

Breeding: March 2018 Walk Hard x Gotham Queen

Comment: Won 22 from 60. A three-time country cups finalist that chased home Tiggerlong Tonk in heat. Ultra-consistent and capable of making his presence felt. (PB - 19.15sec)

HEAT WINNERS (fastest to slowest)

19.131sec Hill Top Jonah
19.167sec Aston Geneve
19.269sec Tiggerlong Tonk
19.317sec Aston Titan
19.384sec Mr. America
19.532sec Barooga Smoke

KEY TIMES

10.48am First race
12.22pm Healesville Cup final (Race 6)
12.56pm Healesville Members Trophy final (Race 8)
2.27pm Last race (Race 12)

RECENT HEALESVILLE CUP WINNERS

2013 El Brooklyn (Jason Thompson, Pearcedale VIC)
2014 Frosty Jay Jay (February) (Kelvyn Greenough, Pearcedale VIC) & Size Does Matter (September) (Brooke Ennis, Lara VIC)
2015 Allkel To Excel (Kelvyn Greenough, Pearcedale VIC)
2016 Zipping Arnold (Ian Cockerell, Buckley VIC)
2017 Zinzan Brooke (Brooke Ennis, Lara VIC)
2018 Kouta Mayhem (Jason Sharp, Avalon VIC)
2019 Myrniong And All (Anthony Azzopardi, Rowsley VIC)
2020 Zambora Lou (Jason Thompson, Pearcedale VIC)

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