

Wild celebrations as Miss Evecatcher wins at Tipperary



The Bar One Lacken Stakes at Naas won by Only Mine with Gary Carroll in the saddle

The 'junction' hardly ever saw anything like it! Last Thursday, there were massive celebrations at Tipperary following the hugely-popular success of Aghlish-based handler Roger McGrath's Miss Evecatcher in the closing Tipperary Mares' (Pro/Am) INH Flat Race over two miles.

The five-year-old Miss Evecatcher, who won the two and a quarter mile mares' point-to-point bumper at Tipperary just two weeks earlier, was sent off a quietly-supported 8/1 chance (from 10/1) as Jessica Harrington's Katy P held sway at the top of the market at 9/4.

In the 19-runner race, Miss Evecatcher held a quite prominent position on the inner until appearing to drop back towards the rear with five furlongs remaining.

Finian Maguire, son of former Cheltenham Gold Cup winning jockey Adrian Maguire, however refused to panic and he brought Miss Evecatcher through to challenge between horses from the two-furlong marker.

With extremely loud screams of support from the winning The Connery Family Syndicate, Miss Evecatcher readily stormed to the front as the line approached to eclipse Kilbrien-based handler Dermot O'Brien's Glendine River by three parts of a length. The four-year-old Katy P meanwhile returned a further one and three quarter lengths adrift in third spot.

Members of the winning syndicate then dashed down from the main stand to greet Miss Evecatcher in the winners enclosure to massive whoops of delight. Miss Evecatcher, who showed clear signs of talent in point-to-points without winning earlier in the year, is now likely to be left off with a view to being brought back in the autumn. On the form that she has shown so far this year, Miss Evecatcher remains a seriously-talented prospect and one that appears to hold genuine black-type aspirations.

There was another Waterford-trainer winner at the Junction on Thursday evening as the John Kiely-trained Henry's Girl came home as she pleased in the Tipperary BBQ Evening Handicap in the hands of Niall McCullagh.

The seven-year-old mare Henry's Girl, owned and bred by Mrs Ranka Pollmeier from outside Dunhill, made smooth progress from the turn into the straight in this extended one and a half mile contest. She eased to the front some one and a half furlongs out to beat veteran Black Benny by five lengths and by doing so, she was recording a third career success.

This was Henry's Girl third career success and, as she also won at last year's Tramore August festival, this former bumper performer clearly one to keep on the right side of over the summer months.

Fethard, County Tipperary trainer Joe Murphy was the big winner at Naas on Sunday where his Only Mine landed the Group 3 Bar One Racing Lacken Stakes. Ridden by Gary Carroll, the 16/1 chance comprehensively reversed Navan form with Aidan O'Brien's 1/1 favourite Washington DC to win by two and three-quarters of a length and might run in the Ballyogan Stakes at the Curragh next weekend. O'Brien and Ryan Moore had earlier combined for a double. The pair won the Listed Rochestown Stakes with 15/8 chance Peace Envoy and followed up when Cuff ran out a hugely impressive winner of the Listed fillies' sprint. Another to ride two winners at the meeting was William Buick who was paying his first visit to the racecourse. He teamed up with Michael Halford's Anamba to win the 7f listed race and added to that with a ready success on Willie McCreery's Aridity in the handicap over 8f. Dermot Weld and Pat Smullen were on the mark with Hazmiyra who was very taking on her debut in the fillies' maiden while Pat Harney, who like the champion jockey hails from Rhode, County Offaly, saddled Johann Bach to win the 8f handicap under Gary Halpin. The opening leg of the Corinthian Challenge Series was won by the Neil Corkery-ridden Red Aggressor. The 14/1 shot is trained by Shark Hanlon.