

H. HARNESS

Donnelly sounds a warning ahead of big night out in Auckland

Jonny Turner
@turnitupnz

Cambridge horsewoman Arna Donnelly has issued a warning ahead of taking four big winning threats to Alexandra Park on Friday night.

Outlaw Man, Perfect Bet, Pacing Hope and in-form trotter Aflyin Spur each head north in the hope they will continue their strong form in the Donnelly colours.

Outlaw Man is sure to capture plenty of attention from punters following his win in his last start at the same venue. But not everything has gone perfectly since, and while the pacer will step out in excellent order, he may not be at his absolute peak fitness.

"He was a little bit crook last week, he had a bit of a 24-hour bug," Donnelly said. "He had a high temperature, so he might need the run this week.

"If it is not this week, he will definitely be one to watch the week after."

It is closing in on a month since Outlaw Man ran strong sectionals to defeat Zarias who he clashes with again in Friday's Powel Transport Mobile Pace.

It is that gap between races that concerns Donnelly, rather than the horse lacking any class.

"He takes a few runs, he is quite a big conditioned horse so it always takes him a few runs to get him hard and fit.

"The more racing he has the better he goes."

There are few doubts about the shape Aflyin Spur is in heading into Friday night's feature trot, the Primor Produce Handicap.

He comes into the race on the back of a huge effort for third, chasing hard from a 45m handicap behind Gaz Man.

Though Aflyin Spur rises slightly in class, he should find the 20m mark in the 2700m event a much more suitable handicap.

"He is definitely in a great space at the moment," added Donnelly. "He had a big handicap last time and it was a great run.

"He is racing super at the moment and I would expect him to go a good race."

Perfect Bet starts off Donnelly's night off when stepping out in Race 2. The



Arna Donnelly has sounded a warning about the prospects of her Alexandra Park candidate Outlaw Man.

“

“He takes a few runs, he is quite a big conditioned horse so it always takes him a few runs to get him hard and fit.”

three-year-old has produced consistent efforts in her four starts, mixing it with some smart maidens.

Donnelly is hopeful the ringcraft the pacer has gained from her recent outings is edging her towards a maiden win.

"She has been going good races. She is still quite green and she's learning how it all goes at the moment but hopefully after her last couple of experiences she should be a bit better for the run this week.

"She seems well."

At a rating of just 36, Pacing Hope takes on better assessed rivals in Friday night's South Of The Bombays event.

That rating brings her into barrier one under the race's preferential barrier draw conditions.

And on the back of a tidy effort, running on strongly into fourth in her last outing at Cambridge, the four-year-old looks a cheeky hope.

"She went super last week, I thought she got home really good over the 2700m.

"The draw is going to be a big asset for her, there are a couple of nice ones drawn out wider but all going well with the right trip, she shouldn't be too far away."

The winter months could be something of a quiet before the storm for the Donnelly stable. The trainer is set to be thrust into the New Zealand Cup spotlight given the outstanding recent progress of her stable star Kango.

The classy pacer made an outstanding transition from fringe player to genuine big race contender through a string of strong performances through the summer and autumn which included a win in the Gr.2 Superstars Championship and a third placing behind Self Assured in the Auckland Cup.

Donnelly reported that Kango is currently enjoying some downtime before his getting ready for his big spring campaign. 