

Flatter This recovers from lackluster start to get win

By Jim Freer

Special to The Miami Herald

Flatter This broke awkwardly from the gate and rallied from 10th and last place after a quarter mile to beat He's Spectacular by 1 1/4 lengths in Saturday's feature race at Calder Casino & Race Course.

Brother Pat finished third, another 3 1/4 lengths back in the \$50,000 allowance at one mile on dirt. It was the final leg in the three-race Tropical Starter Series for 3-year-olds and up.

The come-from-behind effort ended a 13-race winless streak for Flatter This, a 5-year-old gelding who runs mostly in Calder stakes races.

Flatter This, trained by Kathleen O'Connell, won in 1:40.02 on a track listed as fast. He was the third betting choice at 6-1 and was ridden by Antonio Gallardo.

"He's been in tough races and had some bad racing luck," said Larry Stumpf, who with his wife, Vicki, owns Flatter This. "We were concerned after the start, but Antonio was patient and got him outside where he runs best."

Brother Pat finished first in the series with nine points including four for Saturday's third place finish.

Steve Dwoskin, trainer of Brother Pat, earned a \$5,000 bonus from Calder as trainer of the winning horse in the series.

In his only other race in the Starter Series, Flatter This finished seventh in a one mile turf race on Sept. 29.

Since Sept. 1, he finished third in two dirt stakes at Calder — the Darn That Alarm and the Spend A Buck. Gallardo rode him in both races.

Those races indicated that Flatter This was returning to his form of the fall of 2011 when he won the Band is Passing and Darn That Alarm stakes at Calder.

Foggy Mountain was pulled up by jockey Jozbin Santana during Saturday's race. Foggy Mountain was later euthanized after it was determined that he had suffered a broken leg.

Little Mike

Little Mike has been one of this year's top turf horses with wins in major stakes at Gulfstream Park, Churchill Downs and Arlington Park in Arlington Heights, Ill.

The 5-year-old gelding will seek a fourth big win this year in next Saturday's Breeders' Cup race at

Santa Anita Park in Arcadia, Calif.

Owners Carlo and Priscilla Vaccarezza, of Parkland, have pre-entered Little Mike in the Breeders' Cup Turf, at 1 1/2 miles, and in the Breeders' Cup Mile, also a turf race.

They will join trainer Dale Romans in deciding on a race by Wednesday for Little Mike, who has become known for winning gate to wire at distances as long as 1 1/4 miles.

"We are looking at how the fields might shape up," Carlo Vaccarezza said Friday.

The Mile will probably have several other horses that will seek the lead, setting up an early duel that might not help Little Mike. He has not won at 1 1/2 miles.

In 2011, Little Mike won three Grade 3 turf stakes at Gulfstream.

This year, he won the Sunshine Millions Turf at Gulfstream on Jan. 28, the Woodford Reserve Turf Classic (Grade 1) at Churchill Downs on May 5 and the Arlington Million (Grade 1) on Aug. 18.

Little Mike will face a tough field with European invaders in either Breeders' Cup race. Ramon Dominguez, an Eclipse Award winner, will ride Little Mike and rivals will have to catch them if they want to be a Breeders' Cup champion.