

By John Manzi

After sitting on the shelf for the past three weeks Southbound Trucker returned to action on Tuesday afternoon, July 26 in the weekly \$7,600 Winners Over pace and once again he had the backing of the betting public despite having to start from post position seven.

Maybe it was the lay-off, or maybe being parked the entire mile but the veteran pace, named horse of the year last season here at Monticello Raceway couldn't overtake pace-setter Bilmar Rustler in the stretch and had to settle for second money .



The winner, the Lisa Krom trained Bilmar Rustler, second choice in the wagering would not fold on the front-end and driver Zeke Parker hustled the 5 year old Rustler Hanover gelding to a one length victory in a time of 1:57:3.

Owned by Elisha Lafreniere, Bilmar Rustler paid \$10.00 for win.

Perhaps overshadowing the pacing feature's results was fourth consecutive victory for Future Fan driven again by Mike Merton. Future Fan, in for a \$15,000 claiming tag, toured the Mighty M oval in a swift 1:55 and notched his 10<sup>th</sup> seasonal triumph. Last week the pacer was victorious in a 1:54:4 clocking

This week Merton chose the front-end route and he and his pacer were never seriously challenged and as they headed for paydirt they drew off to a three-length triumph over Smarty Merit and Bruce Aldrich, Jr.

Future Fan, trained by Tom Merton for Derby Racing Inc of Allentown, NJ paid a paltry \$2.70 for win.

Photo: [Geri Schwarz](#)