

# Sutton fastest in Bluegrass Colt Trot

*By Ray Cotolo for The Red Mile*

LEXINGTON, KY—Taking the lead after the quarter, Sutton gradually gained separation from his rivals to win by open lengths in the first of two divisions for the \$163,500 Bluegrass for three-year-old trotting colts in 1:52.

Celebrity Express led the field around the first turn before Sutton tipped out of the pocket to brush to the lead through a :28.2 quarter. Leading through a :56 half, Sutton began to kick away from Celebrity Express trotting in the pocket and Mavens Way, who fanned first over before diving back to the pylons.

In front by three lengths through a 1:24 third-quarter, Sutton coasted towards the finish while Waitlifter K fanned off cover to get second and Kanthaka, recovering from a break before the start, closed to finish third.

Sutton, by Donato Hanover out of the Muscles Yankee mare I Wanted Wings, paid \$2.60 for his sixth win in 21 starts, earning \$369,931 for owners Andy Miller Stable Inc. and Jason and Douglas Allen. He is trained by Julie Miller and was driven by Andy Miller.

“He likes to follow horses, but I thought he was the one to beat in here,” Andy Miller said. “He was pretty sharp coming into this race, so I thought it was alright to put him on the front.”

“He has been a little up and down. With a couple of steps he might have won the Hambletonian, but he still raced really good there. He has been a bit of a challenge, but when he’s on his game, he is tough to beat.”

“The track was a little dead from all the rain [Saturday]; it was a little punchy, but a good horse could overcome it.”

Grinding to the lead around the final turn, Bar Hopping edged past tempo-setter Blenheim to win the other Bluegrass split in 1:52.3.

Leading through fractions of :28.3 and :57, Blenheim was soon challenged by Bar Hopping, pulling first over from fourth, into the far turn. The two were on equal terms through a 1:25.4 third quarter before Bar Hopping took a narrow lead. Blenheim tried to retake control at the pylons in a stretch-long battle until Bar Hopping extended his lead slightly to win. Love Matters, sitting the pocket for the mile, angled off the rail and chased the duelers to get third.

Winning his seventh race in 23 starts, Bar Hopping, by Muscle Hill out of the Credit Winner mare Cocktail Hour, has earned \$848,813 for owners Christina Takter, Hatfield Stables, Marvin Katz, and Al Libfeld. He is trained by Jimmy Takter and was driven by Tim Tetrick. He paid \$2.40.

“He fought [Blenheim] well,” Jimmy Takter said. “The pace wasn’t that hot and he came first up against a good horse, so I was very happy with him.”

“He was one of those horses that actually filled out during the season. His game is a form game, and he’s in great form. We look forward to next Sunday [for the Kentucky Futurity].”