

Brandon Parker wins his career driving debut

by John Manzi, for Goshen Historic Track

Goshen, NY --- The third and final Sunday matinee card at Goshen Historic Track on June 21 was well attended and offered seven races -- six for pacers and trotters hooked to sulkies and a trotting race under saddle. Arguably, the most interesting one was the sixth race when 16-year-old Brandon Parker made his first drive a winning one.



Brandon Parker drove Wizard Of Art to a 2:10 victory at Goshen.

two lengths.

The son of Billy "Zeke" Parker Jr. drove his dad's Wizard Of Art to an easy two length victory over Pine Bush Princess and driver Jordan Stratton. The race time was 2:10 but a short four-horse field and early fractions of :33.3 and 1:07.2 dictated the relatively slow final time.

Brandon drove a good race, fell into the two hole on the first turn and after anticipating the slow early pace set by the leader, Peter Lutman III with MBC Alison, he moved Wizard Of Art to the front even before the first quarter was reached. From there Wizard Of Art raced unchallenged and won easily by

There was large group of family and friends along to watch young Brandon drive his first race and he didn't disappoint. He was calm and collective when he and his pacer entered the winner's circle, but the same couldn't be said for his dad.

And like his dad, who was always short on words and let his driving do his talking, young Brandon simply said, "I'm happy and I feel real good."



Geri Schwarz photos

Although Brandon was raised around harness horses and worked with them every chance he got, it still was understandable that Zeke was nervous before the race. **Brandon, Zeke and Brodie pose in the winner's circle at Historic Track.**

"I don't think I was ever this nervous before I drove in a race but to see your son out there for the first time it's different and would make any dad a bit uneasy," Parker acknowledged.

But all that dissipated as Parker walked across the track for the winner's circle presentation. However, his nervousness was replaced by teary eyes which he wiped consistently as he walked along with younger son, Brodie, to take a photo with Brandon and Wizard Of Art.

On that jaunt, fighting back the tears, the elder Parker murmured half choked up, "I wish TJ (his deceased wife and Brandon's mother) was here to see it. This was such a great Father's Day present."

The next action at Historic Track will be on July 2 when the Grand Circuit meet gets underway.