

Cop encourages youth to race cars this summer

(in soap box derby, that is)

BY LINDA JOHNSON
Staff Writer

Even Paul Newman realized it can be a long, hot summer.

Which is probably why the actor took up race car driving.

"All the kids say, 'Yeah, it's the last day of school.' But, come mid-August, they're bored," said Det.-Const. Garry Vosburg, a York Regional Police youth coordinator organizing a soap box derby for area youths.

While the Great Maple Cart Derby takes place Sept. 17, there's lots to do before then. That's because participants are responsible for building and painting their cars.

The officer, who worked in high schools for 3 1/2 years, set out to find a positive way for youths to spend the summer. He knows a lot of young people run out of ways to spend their time, ending up watching TV, playing video games or hanging out at the park.

He was also looking for a project parents and children could do together. With most sports and activities, parental involvement is limited to watching — a game, a competition or concert.

"With baseball, hockey or soccer, unless you're the coach,

you're not participating with the kids. Here, you've spent the time working with the kids. It's a family project.

"You design it; you plan it; you go out and get the materials; you spend the time working on it and, at the end, you have this race car," he said.

While it all culminates in the race, the goal is the time spent together as family to create the car, he added.

TIME SPENT TOGETHER

"I like the expression, the journey is the destination," he said. "The time spent together working on this is really what it's all about. And if, at the end of the summer, we have a nice little race, it's almost beside the point."

By building the car, young people also achieve a sense of pride and ownership. That's another reason buying carts and cart kits are not permitted.

Organizers welcome local sponsors for cars.

For first-time cart makers, event organizers are holding three construction workshops — in Richmond Hill Saturday, Vaughan Sunday and Newmarket July 17.

Participants receive free

plans, but are encouraged to try designing their own cars, which must be made of wood.

Special building skills are not needed, Mr. Vosburg said, noting his sons, aged 11 and 13, started out with no special skills and built most of their cars.

The event is open to York Region boys and girls between the ages of eight and 15. Registration costs \$25. However, registration is not required to attend the workshops.

Aug. 1 is registration deadline. Each racer receives a GMCD T-shirt and ID card with registration.

Seat belts and rollbars are mandatory for all cars. Drivers are tested in August to ensure they can control the carts and vehicles must pass inspections.

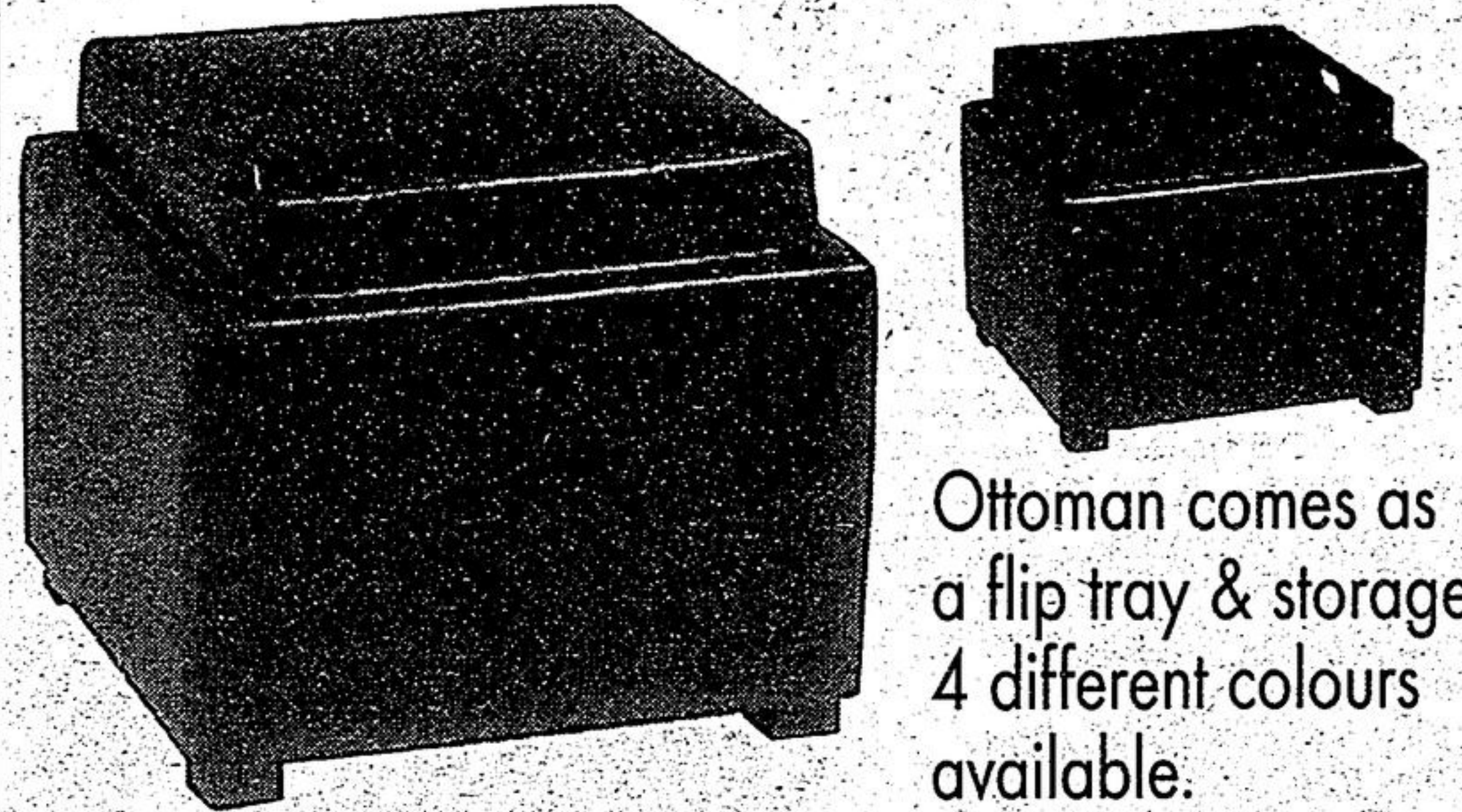
The race takes place near the entrance of the old Keele Valley landfill in Maple.

Organizers hope there will be more races in future and then there could be a regional championship.

They will also lend their ramp and other facilities to groups who want to hold races.

Visit maplecartderby.com or call 905-773-1221, ext. 8183.

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Strawberry Festival Thank You

Well Stouffville wasn't that a Party! The 21st Strawberry Festival is over and each year seems to be better than the last. The weather could not have been better and to have Stouffville win the Ontario Amateur Softball Association Pee Wee elimination qualifying tournament to go to Newfoundland for the provincials was just the icing on the cake. Good luck to them!

Thank you to all our sponsors who gave so generously. Without their support we would be unable to put on such a successful Festival. We look forward to their continued support.

Thank You To Our Sponsors

A special thank you to Bruce Hatt and his staff from the Town. What a great job you did to keep the Main Street and the Park looking its best for all our visitors. Your cooperation throughout the Festival made our job a lot easier. What A Team! Thank you.

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Thank You To Our Committee

To my committee the biggest thank you. All of you worked so hard to make this the best Festival. You did it with smile and that's why it was a pleasure to work with all of you. Your dedication to making this Festival happen for the love of your community has to be admired. You are to be congratulated by myself and all those attending the Festival.

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|--|--|
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Thank You To Our Volunteers

To all the spouses and partners and friends who jumped in to help set up and take down, we are so appreciative. Thank you so much.

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| Marie Adams
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We volunteer our time because we want to. Our reward is seeing people of all ages enjoying themselves at all the venues we have provided.

I hope you had a wonderful time at the 21st Strawberry Festival. We look forward to seeing you next year at Strawberry Festival 2006... Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Sandy Stronach, Chairman.