

Stouffville benefits from Canadian Open

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"Many of the media comes from the United States, but coverage will be wall-to-wall," Mr. Alfred said.

"The media corps will have the big guys here," Mr. Clark added. "It'll be dateline Markham."

It has been five years since Angus Glen hosted a Canadian Open. Millions of dollars were injected into the economy during the 2002 tournament. Local businesses are looking forward to a similar, if not bigger, bonanza.

"There are some 1,100 hotel rooms in the area and the event will keep them filled," Markham Board of Trade chairperson Darlene Klemchuck said. "It's good for restaurants and shopping in places like Markham, Unionville and Stouffville."

Hosting such vast numbers of visitors will also benefit the region's cultural and historic attractions, she said.

"It's really good for the entire community," Ms. Klemchuck said. "With the eye on Markham, it tells everyone we're a well-rounded community, not only the high-tech capital of Canada."

'ON THEIR RADAR'

From an financial and brand recognition perspective, the reverberations are "big time," according to Darren Ciasto, the town's senior business development officer.

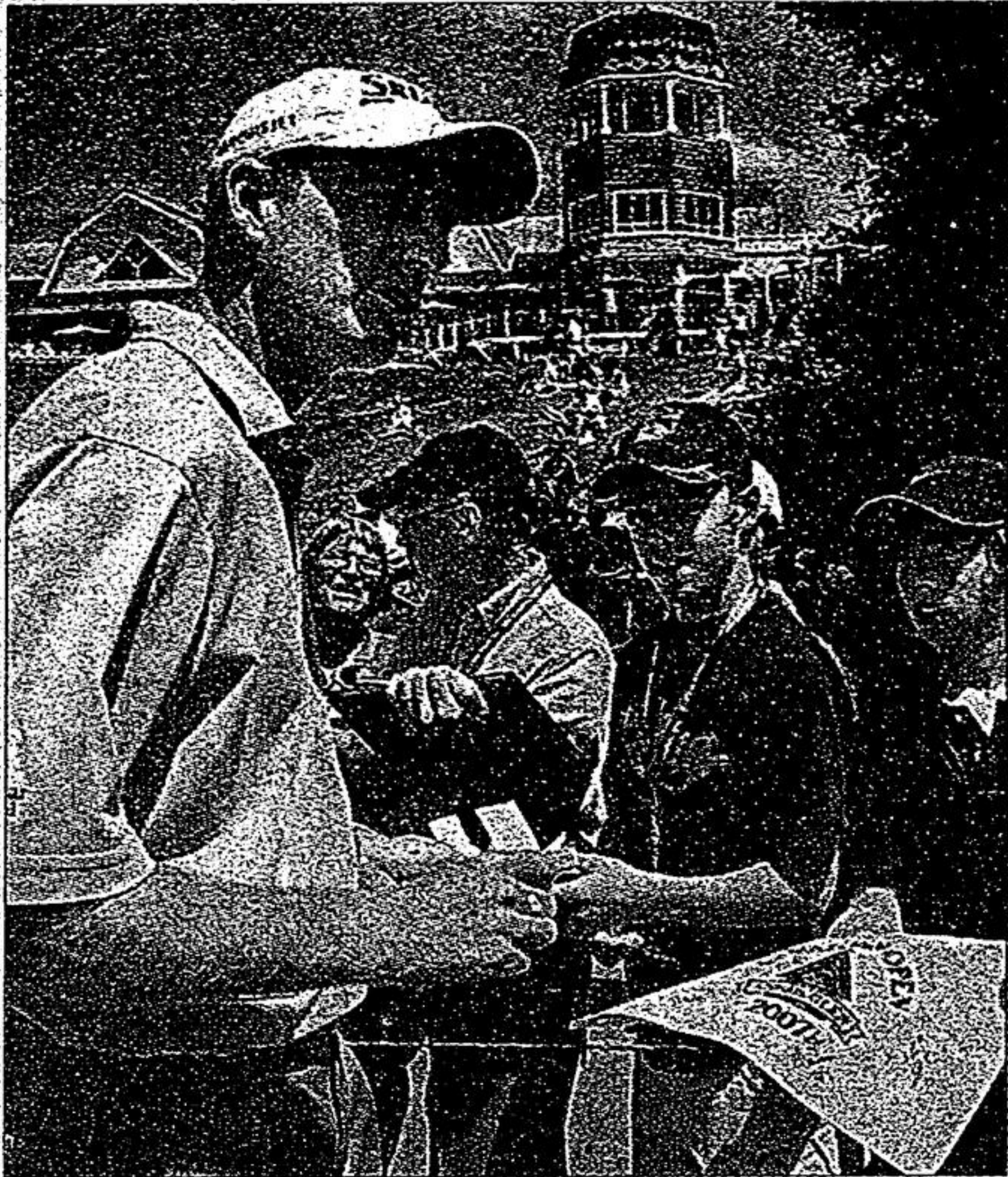
"Apart from the direct impact, I think and hope it'll be positive from an economic development perspective. Companies looking to relocate within the Greater Toronto Area will put us on their radar."

Savvy merchants and organizations have parlayed the championship's draw to their benefit. Unionville's Varley Gallery is featuring special Canadian Open programming today to Sunday. There's a Unionville golf street party tonight.

"It's a fabulous thing," Markham Village Business Improvement Area manager Phil Howes said. "Markham has one of the best (main) streets in the region and many of the restaurants have lined up extra entertainment. Many of our merchants have special promotions and extra products."

"There's no question we'll attract a lot of people and when they're here, we'll treat them very well."

The Canadian Open will undoubtedly line the pockets of local enterprise and with US\$5 million in prize money on the table, many of the players who make tomorrow's cut will be guaranteed a substantial payday. The champion, to be determined Sunday, receives US\$900,000.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Defending champion Jim Furyk signs for the gallery after finishing his round in yesterday's Canadian Open pro-am. The tourney continues through Sunday at Angus Glen.

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this may have caused.