

**Who are
Whitchurch-Stouffville's
2008
Citizen
&
Sports Person
of the year?**
See Saturday's Sun-Tribune

Stouffville man charged in \$2.8 M bust

BY JOE FANTAUZZI
Staff Writer

Two Markham men and a Whitchurch-Stouffville man are among six charged in connection with the seizure of millions of dollars of fake cigarettes.

On May 31, storage units in Markham and Scarborough were raided as part of a probe involving the RCMP and Canada Border Services Agency.

Almost 52,000 cartons of counterfeit Players, Du Maurier and Belmont smokes, as well as Chinese brands, worth approximately \$2.8 million were seized, police said Tuesday.

The smokes, which investigators believe originated in China and destined for the Toronto market, were shipped in a freight container to Canada.

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"These seizures represent just under \$2.3 million in duties and taxes lost by the federal and provincial governments," said RCMP Insp. Greg Johnson, officer-in-charge of the GTA customs and excise section.

"The distribution of contraband

tobacco products in Canada has serious consequences for the Canadian economy. Illicit sales of contraband tobacco is also a significant source of income for all levels of organized crime, it contributes to an underground economy and supports other criminal activities.

"It also exposes the public to a higher health risk and facilitates young Canadians to obtain tobacco products through the illicit market."

Two Markham men, aged 44 and 45, a 46-year-old Stouffville man, two Scarborough men, 45, and 46, and a 48-year-old Richmond, B.C. man are charged with unlawful possession of tobacco products contrary to the Excise Act. They are also charged under the Customs Act.

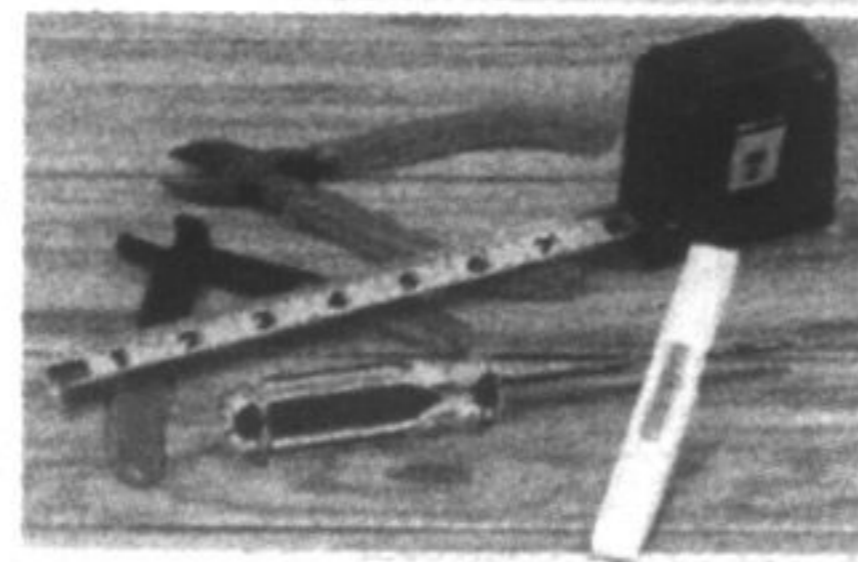
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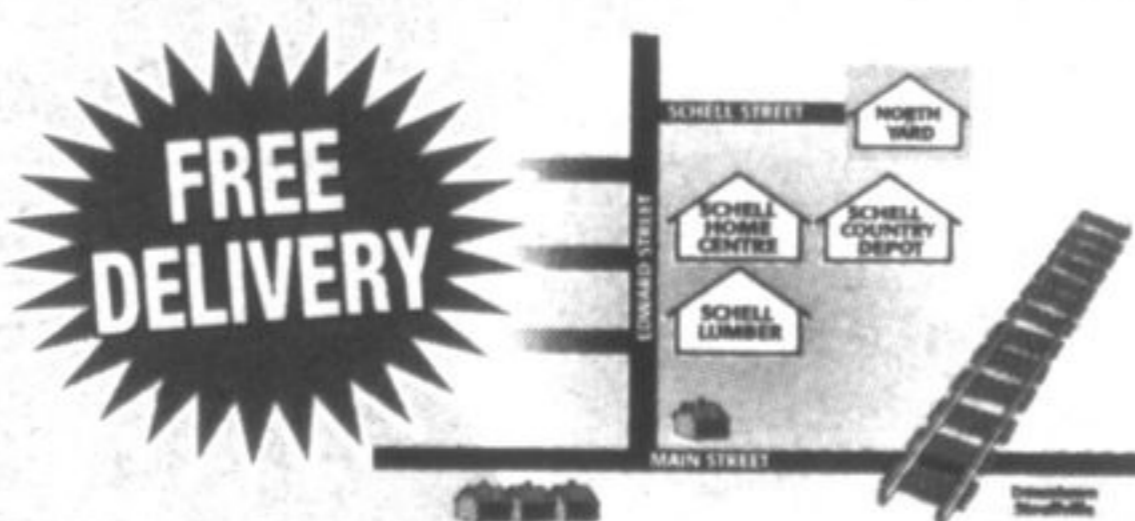


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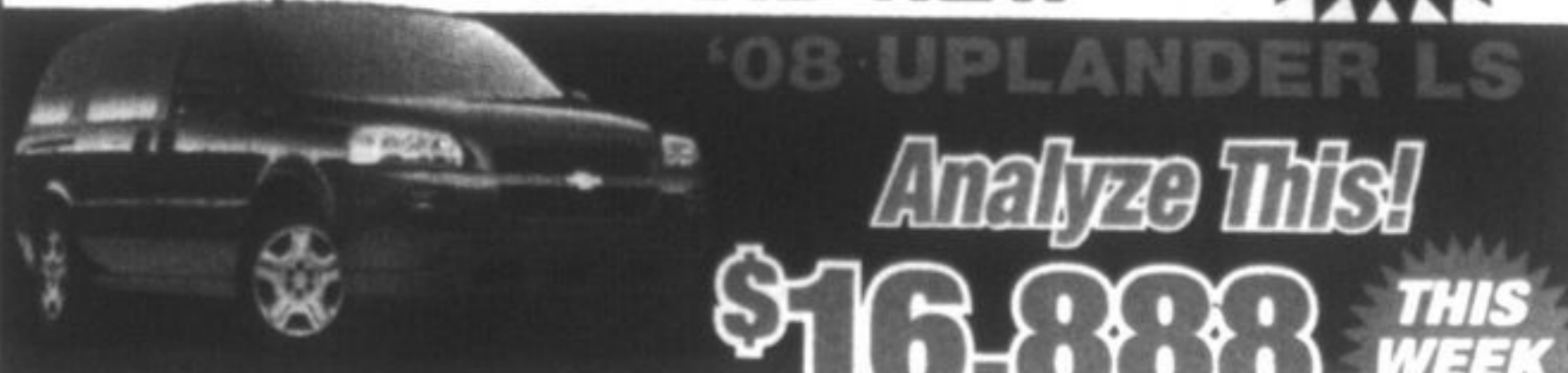
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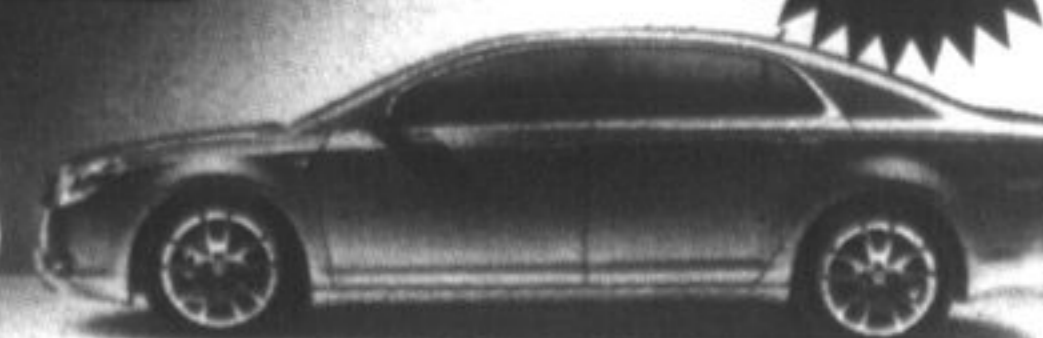
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