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Topic: Motorcycles What's Hot and What's Not

## **Police bust illegal street races**

CHARLOTTE -- Police seized more than a dozen cars in a drag racing bust over the weekend. It was carried out as part of a joint operation between the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, the State Highway Patrol and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Officers say it's a clear sign they're committed to putting the brakes on illegal street racing.

Cars built for speed now sit idle in a police impound lot, seized on Saturday night for being used in an underground south Charlotte drag racing circuit.

"I have family that lives right around here and it's scary to think they could have been in danger from something like that," said Dr. Grant Coleman.

Police will hold the seized cars until the case is resolved in court.  
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The drivers and spectators routinely met at the Stonecrest Plaza every week at which time they'd pick where to race. Sometimes they'd race at an empty business park but more often on I-485 between Rea Road and I-74 at speeds faster than 150 mph.

"They like the idea of the fast cars and a lot of them, this is their hobby," said CMPD Major Dale Greene.

Major Greene explained how police surveilled the operation for months. It led to Saturday night's bust where 15 cars, many with stolen parts, were seized.

While thrill seeking is an obvious draw, police say often times participants race for cash.

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"We had one individual tell us he paid for the whole vehicle with money that he would earn racing and winning," Major Green added.

Among the 11 arrested and charged is Emanuel Fakhori of Charlotte who at just 20 years old faces 14 counts of reckless driving and pre-arranging an illegal speed competition.

"Lots of my patients are teenagers," said Dr. Coleman, an orthodontist. "I've

seen how their lives can be torn up by tragedies in the family.?

Police say the weekend bust sends the message that drag racing will not be tolerated.

Police say they still have 60 warrants related to this drag racing crew pending. They expect to serve them all by the end of the week.

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