

TIP, TRAP NABBED SUSPECT IN NOTORIOUS SMUGGLING CASE AGENTS SAY MAN ADMITS ROLE IN HIGH-SPEED CHASE

San Jose Mercury News (California)

MAY 8, 1996 Wednesday MORNING FINAL EDITION

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Section: CALIFORNIA NEWS; Pg. 3B

Length: 330 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: LOS ANGELES

Body

Authorities laid a **trap** to catch one of the border's most wanted coyotes. They didn't want to **chase** him again.

After getting an anonymous **tip**, federal **agents nabbed** Rigoberto Sosa Padilla, who **admitted** driving a pickup full of illegal immigrants on a now-**notorious** April 1 **high-speed** run from the border, authorities **said**.

The **chase** ended in an east Los Angeles County suburb, where two of the passengers were clubbed on the roadside by Riverside County sheriff's deputies as helicopter news cameras recorded the scene.

An attorney for one of the deputies **said** the arrest would bolster his defense.

Sosa Padilla, 36, was charged with **smuggling** people into the United States from Mexico.

He told an immigration **agent** after his arrest Friday that he was to be paid \$50 for each person he took to the Los Angeles area, according to court records.

An anonymous call last Wednesday gave **agents** their lead, according to an affidavit by Special **Agent** Larry Rios of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The coyote would be driving a 1971 white-and-green GMC pickup on his usual run, he was told.

Teams in unmarked cars spotted the truck about 4:45 a.m. Friday in northern San Diego County, INS officials **said**. **Agents** waited until Sosa Padilla stopped to buy gas or drop his passengers.

"We wanted to get him out of the vehicle to eliminate the chance of a pursuit," **said** Richard Rogers, INS district director in Los Angeles.

Sosa Padilla was arrested at a store in Winchester, between Temecula and Hemet on Highway 79. About six people were in the truck cab, and another dozen were in the back partially covered with blankets and a tarp, **agents said**.

The immigrants were being held by the INS.

At a U.S. District court hearing Monday, Sosa Padilla was charged with two counts of **smuggling**. He has three previous convictions.

Agents believe Sosa Padilla is part of a ring that moves at least 50 people across the border each week, Rogers **said**.

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Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: IMMIGRATION (92%); ARRESTS (90%); **SMUGGLING** (89%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (78%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); US FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (77%); ADMISSIONS & CONFESSIONS (77%); CRIMINAL OFFENSES (77%); SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE FORCES (77%); SHERIFFS (76%); CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS (75%); LAW COURTS & TRIBUNALS (73%); LAWYERS (71%)

Organization: IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (82%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (55%)

Industry: LAWYERS (71%)

Geographic: LOS ANGELES, CA, USA (79%); CALIFORNIA, USA (79%); UNITED STATES (92%); MEXICO (79%)

Load-Date: October 23, 2002

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