December 20, 2001

U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Northern District of Ohio
Robert W. Kern
Assistant U.S. Attorney
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Man Pleads Guilty to eBay Auction Fraud

Emily M. Sweeney, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, today announced that on December 20, 2001, Brian D. Wildman, age 31, of 10295 Collins Avenue, Apt. 1012 North Bldg., Miami, Florida 31154, formerly of 1650 3rd Street Apt. 2, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221, pleaded guilty to 2 counts of Mail Fraud in U.S. District Court in Cleveland, Ohio.

On September 19, 2001, a federal grand jury in Cleveland, Ohio, returned an indictment, charging Brian D. Wildman with twelve counts of Wire Fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343, and two counts of Mail Fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341.

The indictment charged that between on or about April 25, 2001, and on or about May 23, 2001, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, Brian Wildman, knowingly executed and attempted to execute a scheme and artifice to defraud bidders of certain e-Bay Internet Auctions, and to obtain money from said individuals by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations and promises, and for purposes of executing and attempting to execute said scheme and artifice, did knowingly cause the transmission of certain interstate wire communications (Wire Fraud), as well as the mailing of certain items by means of the U.S. Mail (Mail Fraud).

The indictment alleged that Brian Wildman advertised for sale on e-Bay Internet Auctions, certain rare, valuable and collectable baseball and basketball card sets, including a 1952 Topps Baseball card Set, a 1948-49 Leaf Baseball Card Set, and a collection of Basketball cards. The successful bidders for each auction received Internet E-mail messages from Wildman informing them that they were the successful bidders, and contained instructions regarding payment and shipping. After the successful bidders sent payment to Wildman, either via the U.S. Mail or via Paypal (an Internet payment service), Wildman failed to ship the items as agreed.

The indictment alleged that Wildman fraudulently received the following payments from the successful bidders: $12,000.00 for the 1952 Topps Baseball Card Set; $10,011.20 for the 1948-49 Leaf Baseball Card Set; and $1,175.00 for the basketball card collection.

Wildman will be sentenced by U.S. District Judge Dan A. Polster on March 4, 2001, following a presentence investigation by the U.S. Probation Office. Wildman is facing up to 5 years imprisonment, a fine of up to $250,000, or both, on each count of Mail Fraud.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert W. Kern, following an investigation by the Akron Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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