

Cabbies bid to be own boss

Medallions go for \$277K and higher

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Mahmoud Sadakah walked away empty-handed Thursday from a taxi-medallion auction after his bid of \$220,000 failed to win him the priciest piece of aluminum in the city.

Sadakah hopped in his cab and got back to work, surprised and deflated. But he was also relieved, because the loss clarified one important thing: His cabbie career of two years would soon be over, since without that medallion, he knew he couldn't control his future.

"I can't give the attention to my kids that they need," the Lebanon native, 42, said between fares. "Where I came from, that's what we value — we live for our kids."

Other cab drivers' futures looked brighter Thursday, however, with 63 people winning medallions for disabled rider-accessible taxis, giving them the right to own and operate such cabs without answering to a boss. The bids started at \$189,000, and were sealed in envelopes before the auction.

Taxi and Limousine Commission staff unsealed 155 bids one by one and ranked



Bidder Vladimir Nisanov, left, watches as TLC officials review bid papers and add up totals at the TLC Medallion Auction. He bid \$300,100 — and won. (Jefferson Siegel)

City: Union should pay

The transit union should still be punished for its illegal, city-crippling strike in December 2005 and not regain the ability to automatically collect dues from members' paychecks, the city told a judge Thursday.

The city said that Roger Touissant, the

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head of the Transport Workers Union Local 100, did not make a "complete renunciation" of the union's right to strike in his plea to reinstate dues. However, the MTA, the plaintiff in the case against the union, asked the judge, Bruce Baker of State Supreme Court in Brooklyn, to restore dues on a probationary basis. A hearing in the case is scheduled on Wednesday. Dues collection was revoked on June 1.

(Marlene Naanes)

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2 Trains skip 28, 23, and 18 sts in both directions, 12:01 a.m. Sat to 5 a.m. Mon.

5 No trains between 149 and East 180 sts, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sat.

7 Free shuttle buses replace trains between Main and 111 sts, 4 a.m. Sat to 10 p.m. Sun.

C No trains running, 12:01 a.m. Sat to 5 a.m. Mon.

them on a large screen based on their size. The highest winning bid was \$384,999, and the lowest was \$277,777.

Vladimir Nisanov was the only winning bidder present at the end of the auction — he walked away

with a medallion for a cool \$300,100.

Nisanov took pictures of his name on the bid screen — he ranked 39 out of 63. The two-year veteran driver was planning on leaving the industry if his bid didn't stick.

"If you don't see your

kids and you don't see your wife, after you pay off the medallion, you get the divorce and then she asks for half," he joked.

Buying a medallion is out of reach for many cabbies, drivers said yesterday, with the previous auction's average bid for a hybrid vehicle medallion coming in at about \$404,000.

In October, the going rate to buy an existing medallion from a broker was \$426,000.

For those who lost out and haven't given up hope, they can try again in the spring, when the remaining 87 disabled-ride medallions go up for auction, along with a few medallions for hybrid vehicles.