

EDITORIAL

Smoking with the locals

I don't consider myself an especially well-travelled geezer, but when I think about it (as I have been), I've smoked weed with the locals on five continents over the years. And whether its been with New York hipsters or Mombassa street kids, I think they have had one thing in common. An evolved sense of common humanity, coming from a sense of identity that was bigger than that of tribe or nationality.

Now whether they smoke because they had that essence in the first place, or whether smoking fosters this spiritually cosmopolitan attitude, I don't know. But the international fraternity of stoners, united by prohibitionist laws as they share a sort of 'distributed global bike shed', is inspiring in its fostering of comradeship and common bonds that transcend language and nationality.

For this reason, smoking with the locals is one of the great pleasures of travelling. There's even a great book on the subject (Pot Planet: Adventures in Global Marijuana Culture, by Brian Preston, pub: Grove Press). At the very least seeking out some good dope takes you out of the Holiday Inn tourist bubble and into the reality of back street, underground, hipster life inhabited by party animals, contemplative intellectuals, dodgy dealers and plain old regular tokers, all brought together by their shared interest.

As a result, smokers tend to be less judgmental, conformist and small-minded members of a population. They have a real internationalist perspective and veer towards the anti-authoritarian. Jeez, why else do you think it's kept illegal?

Holland, or more specifically, Amsterdam is our shared capital, our TAZ and our Mecca rolled into one, a place to visited at least once by all devout stoners, where some sort of 'better future state' is being played out, albeit imperfectly.

All of these fine sentiments bring me around to this disappointing rallying cry by our brothers over at Weed World magazine in the publicity for their first London Hemp Fair, held at the Wembley Exhibition Centre in October.

Explaining why they had decided to organise a fair now, they reasoned: "a Dutch company would have muscled into the U.K. to try and take over the market. We are proud of our heritage and our nationality and we feel it only right that the first U.K. show should be organised by a British company for the British public.

This tub-thumping, flag-draped UKIP nonsense, as you can imagine, was met with dismay here at Soft Secrets. We take the attitude that we are all – smokers, growers, traders, breeders, manufacturers and publishers - working to build an increasingly legitimised market in which we all win, by being able to grow, sell, smoke, whatever, without the risk of going to jail and/or losing their livelihood.

What's more, not only are the majority of contributors to Soft Secrets British or American, we feel we have been pioneers who have raised the bar of professionalism in the new frontier of legitimate British cannabis culture. We have

Table of contents

From the editor	3
Page 3 girl	3
Dear Soft Secrets	5
Product Flash	13
Highlife Fair Barcelona	17
Weckels: Strawberry	21
Column Joe Kane	23
Growing for Dummies 6	25
Grow with Jorge Cervantes	29
Weckels: Ice-o- Lator	31
Underworld	38
Shop reviews UK	41
International growers	43
Champion strains: Crystal	46
Column Fraser Clark	46
DIY: making clones	47
Shop reviews NL	49
Hot Wax	50
Soma	53
Poster	54
Trimmed for you	55
The Z-Men	64
Colofon	70
Index of ads	70

moved cannabis publications beyond the stereotypically psychedelic staples-andphotocopies era, and are actively helping usher in a new era of quality home growing, while supporting a quality retail and wholesale network to catalyse that.

We don't think our 'Dutchness' hinders that; in fact, as the first country in the world to take and hold this legitimate path, we think our experience in Holland has helped us start off in such a professional manner. Nor have we "muscled in" to anywhere to "take over" anything. We're just doing our best to help float a raft we can all live on.

Then, bizarrely, as the Weedies wax lyrical about the business possibilities of their wannabe fair, the press release goes all gooey-eyed internationalist on us: "We have exhibitors from Australia, Canada, the U.S.A. Spain, Holland, Germany, France and of course the very best from good old blighty."

So what's it gonna be boys: auslanders raus! or a happy-happy global club of green entrepreneurs? We think the smokers of Blighty (that's capital B) deserve an answer.

Jules Marshall

Page 3 Girl

Belladonna

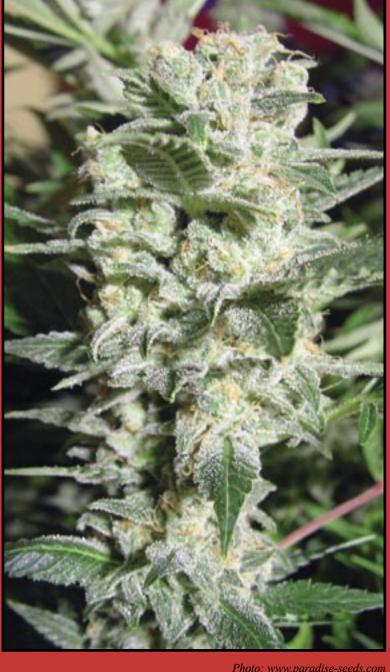
Specifics: This mostly Skunk type is a real beauty, with very tight, compact orange buds. This beauty absorbs the light of the world in 60 days. During this blossoming process she develops to maturity. Her tempting signals are of the kind you want to experience, but be warned, her tripping high is of a hallucinogenic nature!

Genetics:

Flowering time: Yield per m2:

Yield per plant (outdoors): Harvest time (outdoors): Growing tips:

A cross of Superskunk and a F1 hybrid potent male of 60% Sativa and 40% Indica origin. 55 - 60 days 400 to 450 gram 400 grams is feasible Middle of October (at 50° N.L.) She performs well in a SOG (Sea Of Green) technique.



PoBox 17250, 1001 JG, Amsterdam, Holland or E-mail SSUK@softsecrets.nl

Dear Soft Secrets



Dear Soft Secrets,

Have not missed a copy since I've discovered you – top read - , great job, guys. Thanks for all you have taught me. Here is mother dreamtime who's clones live on 1 year later, and strong too. She was one of my first attempts, am getting great results now, thanks to you.

Mr. K.

Small yield but it looks like some excellent quality. The plants must have been very healthy since only healthy plants grow buds on top of buds during the last weeks.



Dear Soft Secrets,

Enclosed are some pictures of my plants & pest control.

O.G., Bristol

Mate, your plant looks pretty sick because you probably over-fed it. Or you are using an organic mix that is too heavy for this plant. Thats why it produces those strange leaves. The same kind of leaves are

produced when plants have been returned from bloom to vegetation. The grasshopper looks pretty happy though, so no sweat...





Dear Soft Secrets,

Here are my plants that I have grown organically in Spain which mum helped me water. Love the paper, can you give me any advice on drying in a hot climate as it dries too quickly.

Farmer, Spain

Well, read Jorge Cervantes' story on page 29!

Dear Soft Secrets,

This is my first time growing and I would like to thank you at Soft Secrets for all the wonderfull tips. Here is my Northern Lights in early flowering stage. I first picked up a copy of Soft Secrets early this year in Amsterdam. I must say it's the

best I've ever read.

Joe, Belfast



Joe, nice tits but your plants look very stressed. Get yourself a decent light because lacking enough lightpower, your plants will stretch and become skinny. We growers prefer our ladies fat and short, remember? So top your plants in the future, mate, to make 'm grow wide. Your yield will certainly be better.

Dear Soft Secrets,

Love your paper, it's outstanding with all it's great tips. Enclosed a few pics of my outside Chronic & Super Skunk baby's from seedlings untill now, nearly ready to harvest. Keep up all the good work!

Chu & Steve, Kent

Nothing beats the sunshine, with enough light during the fall. Your little outdoor plants will produce a fair amount of buds. But they still

have a long way to go from the looks of it. Don't be too eager to harvest, guys.





Hope u like my girls one of them is my sexy wife and the other a Shiva Cross. DM, UK

Fanfuckingfan-tastic!! Those whoppers made us drool.. Prime Black Label seeds are on their way, mate! You the man! With the wife!



Dear Soft Secrets.

Here's some pictures of some mothers I've flowered off. They are White Widow, PP, Crystal in 1 l. pots, seeds from Nirvana.

Matt, Leicester

Matt, did you remove the leaves before harvest? If not then that's an excellent strain with little leaves. The advantage of such a strain is that the light can shine

deep into the plant and thus allows big buds to be formed down below. You may want to keep of mother of this strain.



Dear Soft Secrets.

Finally a result. Here is one of the 9 buds we got from a 26oz yield from 20 plants indoor of Blueberries from your seeds. So well done all.

Mr. J, Bournemouth

Fucking fat buds, mr. J! We would have loved to see the plants that produced those bastards...

Hi,

Here are my simple organic plants (indica & sativa's), grown from selected and non-selected seeds. The result is great, I can smoke a month from it. I live in northern Italy, at 600 m alltitude. **Linda. Italy**

Hi Linda, great shot, and nice to know SSUK has some female admirers from Italy too! Did you know we run an Italian version of Soft Secrets as of two months ago?



Attention Guerilla Growers!

Fancy a FREE packet of High Quality Seeds? Feeling up to growing Master Kush, Holland's Hope, White Widow, Oké 47, BlueBerries, Sensi Star, Jack Herer or Neville's Haze? Yes? Then send us a picture of your garden, and we'll send you the seeds. And should your garden pic contain a visible copy of Soft Secrets, we'll send you 2 HQS packs of choice. Wait, there's more! If your garden should happen to feature your topless girlfriend or wife, you even get 3 packs, of prime Black Label stock! (They don't have to show their faces.) Don't have a wife or girlfriend? Your dog is fine too (no cats!), but that's 3 HQS packs, not Black Label. Send all entries to Soft Secrets, PO Box 17250, 1001 JG, Amsterdam, Holland, or e-mail them to SSUK@softsecrets.nl (New email-adress!) NOTE: Naturally, all entries are handled with the utmost discretion. Names, letters and addresses will be destroyed as soon as seeds are sent. We don't publish out of focus pics, and we're not too fond of photos of plants in their vegetative stage, or even worse; young clones. It's fat buds we want to see!



Dear Soft Secrets.

Just felt the need to share our first grow with you all. What do you reckon, not bad ey? The hog seems the tacking over the place (just what we need). Your paper has been like a bible to us, so cheers guys

Love A & K, York

A fine choice of strain that Hog, awesome buds!



This is my second crop but the first in a while. As you can see these Voodoo outdoor ladies are a few days away from harvest. I aquired two cuttings from a reliable source, and was pleased to find that this paticular strain flowered in only 7 weeks. I was worried at first to find out that they were an outdoor variety, but they seem to have thrived using NFT hydroponics, a 250w sodium, and some CO2 enrichment. Some problems with

overheating but overall a tidy little garden. Don't know of the yield yet because the buds are drying as we speak, but a healthy 1/4 of a kilo. But never mind all that, check out the buds on that lovely Irish chick, who jumped at the chance when I told her of the lovely flavours and strains that would grace my doorstep if my garden was shown. Keep up the good work.

G-MAN, Birmingham

 $\textit{G-Man, is that mylar or aluminium hanging on the wall? If its \textit{mylar - which reflects } 99\% \textit{ of }$ the light - , you may want to hang it straight, to fully maximize your yield. When mylar is not perfectly hung, then you lose a lot of its reflecting strength. If it's aluminium, you may want to tear it down and replace it with mylar.



Hallo,

We're from Greece. This is our first project to grow but not very succesfully. We're learning

from a book, but still we've lots of good reading to do. Thank you very much.

Anna, Athens (Greece)

Judging from those pathetic bean stalks you got there, you guys sure have a LOT of reading to do... But who needs books when you got Soft Secrets, ey?

Dear Soft Secrets,

This is my first hydro crop. My babies turned out real good. Thanks for your great advice. Cheers. SS, Edinburgh

Next time SS, cut the crap with that autoshutter and get some decent gal to pose for ya, okay?





Dear Soft Secrets,

We believe these are fine specimens of White Rhino and K2, grown outside England's natural. The Green Meanies, Kent

We sure would have liked to see the end result, it's one thing to veg plants in the English outdoors, it's auite another matter

to raise them to full

bloom...

Dear Soft Secrets,

Picked up your paper when I was in Amsterdam. Here's some pics of some lovely Chronic Lady bought from Serious Seeds last year. Going to put Soma to the test now (Rockbud, NYC Diesel and Somango).

Undercover Brother, Birmingham

Wow, we're sure you're gonna squeeze every $inch\ of\ THC\ out\ of\ those\ Soma-seeds..$



Hi Soft Secrets,

Great paper. Here's a picture of my girls Top 44 at 5 weeks.

J, South Wales

Congratulations mate, that sure looks like an authentic Adjust-a-Wings light reflector. State of the art equipment!



Just like to say, great paper!! Here's a pic of my first plant, with my lovely girlfriend, got no idea what strain it is. I know it's a poor attempt of a plant, but with

some decent seeds I can do better!! Mr B, Surrey

Mr. B.that's not looking bad at all...



Dear Soft Secrets,

Here's a photo of my lovely girl and some Californian Orange Bud & White Rhino, 3 weeks into flower. Our first attempt.

J, Essex

Wow, what a well run little cabinet! Those buds look right on track! Next to those lovely tits, you guys are growing a green thumb too... Well done!





Dear Soft Secrets,

Just wanted to say that your paper has helped me open up to a new life of joy. I've always wanted to grow my own but did not much untill I came across your publication. The plants are Skunk and they bloom 9-12 weeks but these took 16 weeks and still going.

Wicked plants, did you get some seeds from friends abroad? It sure looks like it. A lot of little buds though, it must be a pain in the ass to cut those little basterds.



Howdy Soft Secrets dudes,

I don't have a pic of my girlfriend or your mag. But I've got one of my baby girl & one wild Jack! He's never cooked as good!

Ric, Cumbria

That's quite a bucket full you got there, mate.. And well guarded too!

Hello Soft Secrets,

Great work you're doing! Here's some pictures of my lastest grow NLxBB just before harvesting on day 68, looking and smelling outta this world. The seeds were from Nirvana, thumbs up to them. This is my biggest plant of 5, the rest have already been harvested in the pictures. All were grown with Advanced Nutrients in an NFT tank, amazing stuff I tell you! All the best M@jestic, Cornwall

That sure looks like a future majestic smoke, Maiesty!







Dear Soft Secrets.

Here's a photo of some AK-47's and my lovely girlfriend. Love the mag, keep up the good work.

Bob, Dorset

Excellent looking plants, Bob! Lovely wife!



Hi Soft Secrets,

disorder...

Dear Soft Secrets,

grown, thanks for all.

Ash, Lancashire

Your paper blooms and buds anywhere

even on a rainy day. KC Brains 33

grown from seeds outdoors. She's

Lovely Siamese plants, Ash. The

double stem could just be some genetic

got double stems, I don't know why.

Grown in Canna Pro soil, feed her on

Hydrotops Earth grow, now on bloom feed. She's the first plant I've ever

Thought you might like these photos of our local crop; Mango, Spearmint and Jock Horror. 14 weeks from germination, problem is I wrote the names on tags in the pots in felt tip. Watered them one day and washed the ink off. So will be putting the Big Book of Buds to the test.

Respect! Wonky Chef, Essex

Wonky Chef, you're not growing plants but trees. The most incredible yields can be achieved in greenhouses - when you do it right. Let's have some fat bud-shots in the future, ey?

Hoi en groetjes uit Wales,

I've grown outdoor since '80 and indoor since '90 and very much enjoy reading your publication. With the exception of your 'reader's wives' section. Is it your intent to be

thought of as 'the Sun' of the weedcounter culture? You must surely be aware that you're being sexist and homophobic. Do you think only men grow weed – are you Jamaican? Or, as seems more likely – wanckers!

Tim, Torfaen

Take a hike, you total twat! And you're overfeeding your plants too...



Hi,

I was at the shop yesterday and got given a copy of your paper. This is the first time I've seen it... Fantastic! Here are my girls: 5 Sativa divas, lone Durban Poison (front left) and Nubian Queen (centre). Lights on 12:12, 24hrs ago under 600 watt HPS. All in BioBizz organics, soil & nutes. Started from seed and vegged for 7 weeks, topped and lowest branches taken off. Had a bit of stretching when seeds first popped due to



incorrect lighting, and two plants to left of my woman have been tied down due to sativa stretch to keep even canopy. Sativas are my all-time favourites, read much about the famous Neville's Haze, reckon I have the patience, so what do you say?

Daniel, London

We'd say you have a sexy girlfriend but your plants don't look impressive, they even look a little sick. Too much water? Is your soil airy enough? We guess that with a better quality soil your plants would have been doing a whole lot



Dear Soft Secrets,

Here is a photo of my finest specimen yet. It's called 'Lil T', grown in soil using Hydrotops. It's a 10 weeker but judging by the results and the taste, it's well worth the wait.

Jay, Lancashire

You did well stripping the plant of it's leaves, Jay. In that way all energy is directed at making strong and compact buds... Well done!



Thanks for the OK 47 seeds, they're growing well. Here's some pics of my White Widow growing under a 600w HPS, it's like 30 days or so in flower.

Justanotherstoner

Hey guy, is it just the strain or are those stems red from over-feeding?

Dear Soft Secrets, This is a photo of my girlfriend and my first crop which is



Shiva. Thanks for the great tips softies, brilliant paper!

LB, South Wales

Brilliant boobs too! The buds however could get a bit better, don't you agree?

Dear Soft Secrets,

The photos are of my latest crop Super Silver Haze from Greenhouse seeds. Grown totally organically – thumbs up for BioBizz! Grown under 1 600w adjuster shade. First pure Haze pheno, won't be the last. Excellent yield, 13oz of top quality bud. Only one small problem – those blasted spidermite from infected cuttings – you live

and learn. Great paper, keep it up – and organic definitely tastes best.

D, West Midlands

Mate, don't dry your buds in the grow room, that'll cost you in taste and THC. Light breaks of THC in dried buds, so you better hang them to dry in a well ventilated, totally darkened room.





get away from the hassle of getting a bit of something to smoke "euro-dope", ya gotta be a dope to keep smoking it, headache land. Pictures enclosed are present past, not brilliant compared to some of your pies, but it keeps me happy. They are mainly Jack Herer, which has been great but this is the last of the seeds new strains would be great, something afghanyish? I don't mind really,it's a brilliant offer. Thank you. Yours in a cloud of smoke,

Pete, Devon

Pete, is that a white strain you are growing? Crystal galore! You might want to cut the lower branches because you seem to have a lot of fluffy lower buds. No fun trimming those! Light can only penetrate the canopy to a certain extent, all parts with little or no light will produce small, forgettable buds. When lower branches are cut off, the upper branches will gain in size. It's best to do this three weeks into flowering.



From a reader in Spain

Well, that's it! This must be the Garden of Eden, we've finally found it! Muchos gracias, senorita!



Dear Soft Secrets,

Jack Herrer, 48 plants, 3 x 1000w, 9th week, started flushing today, what do you think of my beautiful women?

Bert, Essex

The buds are a bit too scrawny for our taste, but your wife on the other hand...



Dear Soft Secrets,

Bloody excellent paper, ain't missed an issue. Read from cover to cover. Good work! Been growing for a couple of years now and now find hydroponics the best. Here's some Orange Bud we grew. I say 'we' coz I trained up my aunty and we run the system together. Sorry, no tits but dind't fancy photoing my aunty you understand.

Big Bub Corporation, London

BBC, with such perfectly flowered plants we don't even want to see your aunty undressed... Now that's quite rare, isn't it? It goes to show that we were really impressed, mate!



Hola Amigos,

Here's my indoor garden containing Sensi Star. All the best from sunny Spain!

Éva, Coruna (Spain)

Eva, you did extremely well, the plants look just the way they should look so soon before the chop. Perfectamente, baby!



Hi all at Soft Secrets,

Hope my garden of Jack Herer and Marley Collie girls are ok for publication.

. John, Middlesex

They're ok of course John, but it sure looks like your garden run out of control. Are we seeing it right? Are those buds too heavy for the stems? That of course would be excellent on the other hand...



Hello and a good day to you,

I have a lovely pair of breasts for you, just like my buds.

Shane, W-Yorkshire

Shane, what the fuck are the gallows for ..?



No letter

No letter luv? Have you got nothing to say to the chaps at Soft Secrets? Or are you just plain shy, you poor little thing?



G'day to all from down under,

Love your paper, these babes are an Afgani cross I got from my mate. I'm growing them under $4 \times 600 w$ in a $2 \text{m} \times 2 \text{m}$ room. I've heard so much about your Dutch White Widow and would love to get my hands on some.

Kevin, Australia

Good to hear from our readers from down under, mate! It looks like you mastered the art of indoor growing pretty well down there, cheers!



Hi

Thought I'd send you some pics of my lovely White Russians that have only got a week to go. They have been grown under 4x600w HPS and are sitting in big pots. Keep up the good work! Mr J, Ipswich

It's getting better and better, these pics from our readers... Here's another fine example, what buds!



G =

Hi There Soft Secrets.

What a top class news paper. I just picked up a copy that my mate had & it blew me away a bit. I sent you a couple of pics of me babys buds in full bloom in me garden

& I'm hopin you'll be splashin 'em across your hallowed pages. I'm not sure as to wether my babies are Sensi Star or Armagedon as my supply of cuttings is a bit irregullar so it would be great if you send me some seeds to start me own mothers. Nice one.

Bob from Somerset

Bob, your seeds should have arrived by now, so good luck with your future mothers!

Dear Soft Secrets.

Thought I'd send you a few pictures of my only surviving girl, she started out as 1 of 12, don't know what strain I was given. I thought I would try an outside garden this year but half way through the summer my kids rabbits took a liking to my girls and munched 11 1/2 of them in just 1 night. The 1 surviving was then protected by

chicken wire and turned out to be a nice little plant, shame about the others. Hopefully stoned again the General, Wales

General, your plant looks too green for being stripped of it's leaves... Stop with feeding your plants about two weeks before the chop, that will greatly increase the potency of your crop...



By Chris Marchand

ssuk@softsecrets.nl

Earthworm fertilizer

A new product of the Ata Organics line. This organic fertilizer is a excellent support for your existing breeding ground. The optimal contents of nitrogen (N), fosfor (P) and potassium (K) see to it that the plants will develop better and faster which will result in a higher yield. Available in 20L bag.

Info: Atami, The Netherlands Tel (+31) (0) 73-5223256 Fax: (+31) (0) 73-5213259

The New GT205i from Nutriculture

This little NFT system has been a favourite among first-time and small-scale growers for years. Ideal for placing under one light and small enough to fit into any decent sized cupboard the GT205 has given many growers their first taste of hydroponic cultivation and the Nutrient Film Technique. This little tank is particularly useful for those with limited height in their grow space as you can grow up to six single stem plants in a miniature Sea of Green, also cutting down on grow time giving you your crop quicker.



With this new "GTI" model Nutriculture have tweaked the design and added a few new features to overall improve the system and make it more user-friendly. For a start the tank and tray have been re-moulded in superior quality recycled plastic, whilst a hinged tank cover incorporated into the channel prevents light getting to the roots and gives easier access. Maximum and minimum levels have been put into the tank to make sure even the most inexperienced of growers knows how much solution to use, and cable slots have been cut out to keep pump and heater cables neatly out of the way. So far these improvements can be seen as largely cosmetic. However, where Nutriculture have greatly improved the system is in the design of the channel. Previously the GT systems suffered from pooling of nutrient solution around the base of the plants and often roots could suffer directly under the rockwool blocks. With this new design the plant rests on less surface area allowing more air as well as solution to pass underneath and around the roots. More channels on the tray prevent the pooling of stagnant solutions thus giving a fresher feed to the plants. And to top it off the system comes with a silver top plate for added reflectivity. What more could you ask for?

For info: www.nutriculture.com

Available from all good Grow Shops including: Beaver Hydro, Dartford +44-(0)1322 273444 Grow Systems, East Anglia +44-(0)1603 662655 Starlight Systems, Plymouth +44-(0)1752 551233 Greenstream Hydro, Birmingham +44-(0)01322 273444

Spyphones: eavesdropping by mobile





A Spyphone is a mobile telephone that has been altered so that it not only picks up conversations, it can also pick up any sound made in the room in which the phone is placed. The telephone is indistinguishable

from an ordinary mobile phone. A special telephone number has been programmed into the Spyphone. Only when you call from this number is the Spyphone's 'Spymode' activated. In 'Spymode' you can not only hear everything said on the phone but everything said in the vicinity of the Spyphone too. If the person with the Spyphone is called from another number, the phone will function just like any other. In other words, that person with the Spyphone will not notice that it is something other than an ordinary mobile. In this way you can listen in on anyone, in any room, boat, car, etc. Since the eavesdropping occurs over the GSM network there are no limits to your reach. If you wish you could call the Spyphone from Hong Kong. The telephone is delivered in an original box, including charger, handbooks, and so on, and so it can be given as a gift to anyone without raising suspicions. This innovative security product is available in various models of phone.

Info: Detect Nu. Tel: +31 (0) 26 445 9343 www.detectnu.nl

BioBizz & General Hydroponics Join Forces to Bring Organics to North America

After an exhaustive quest for the ultimate organic fertilizer, General Hydroponics has teamed up with the premier European organic producer BioBizz of Holland. BioBizz is the first European company to successfully acquire OMRI certification. BioBizz has the most



extensive lines of organic products available today.

BioBizz is acclaimed as Europe's finest manufacturer of organic fertilizers and supplements. The combination of GH and BioBizz is "a match made in heaven" BioBizz extensive knowledge of organics coupled with their excellent reputation and growing following in North America matched perfectly with GH's esteemed standing in the Industry. It will be readily apparent to gardening enthusiasts that This match up will enhance the GH mineral nutrient line while Adding a missing organic component. General Hydroponics' Reputation for manufacturing excellence, astute marketing and extensive market penetration will make BioBizz products widely available in North America. Both companies are delighted at the prospect of working together to advance and innovate with new and exiting products. The synergy of these two companies will be obvious and exiting to the hydroponic industry. BioBizz products are OMRI certified. As we all know: If it's not OMRI approved, it's not organic!

For info: Biobizz

tel: +31-(0)50-5414650 or fax: +31-(0)50-5425223 • www.biobizz.nl



PK Trading: Don't be conned by the **Hammertone** copies

Our Hammertone caps are made from miro 9, a highvalue (99 %) aluminium material. The high quality of the caps is reflected in the price. The Hammertone 'look alike' caps that are on the market at the moment simply do not match the real thing in quality, even if at first sight they look pretty similar. They may be offered to you at a price that is considerably lower than our Hammertone originals. Having been tested (something that several of our clients have had done) it appears that the copy caps are no better than the normal run-of-the-mill caps. What's worse, the 'look alike' Hammertone caps still cost significantly more than standard caps. Why should you pay more if a product is qualitatively no better?

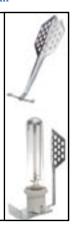
Info: PK Trading b.v.

Tel: +31 (0) 10 280 9878. • Fax: +31 (0) 10-280 9875. • www.pktrading.nl

Better yields with Daedalus

However much light you give your plants, the biggest and most ideal amount always falls on the plants sitting directly under the lamps. The plants that sit to either side of here do not get this ideal amount. Thanks to its revolutionary concept, called the Daedalus light splitter, the distance between plant and lamp can be drastically reduced. At the same time, light and heat are better spread out, which gives an ideal light level to a much larger area. Thanks to this the grower gets a more evenly developed crop, and therefore a higher-yielding harvest. The Daedalus is simple to mount on any lamp. Give your plants a taste of the Daedalus effect too! Info: V&L.

Tel: +31 (0) 299 666911. • Fax: +31 (0) 299-666946. www.greenline.nl



Dinoline anti-detection foil offers advantages

This anti-detection foil is used by Lockhead and NASA, and has been certified by the US fire service (as a fire retardant)), and it has an enormous number of advantages. If you line your grow space with it, it will keep the space warm in winter, whilst in the summer the warmth that is too high a temperature is kept outside the space. Normal foil is effective against conduction and convection, but has no effect on 'radiation heat transfers'. These work via trapped air pockets that reduce heat via conduction and convection, but the trapped air warms up and is later released into the grow space, sometimes hours after the sun has gone down. With this great foil, that does not happen. What is more, the foil also holds onto 95 % of the invisible infra red. With the foil comes a special sticky tape made of the same material so that you can fit the foil exactly as you wish. When you come to make your foil-purchasing decision, watch out because there are many imitations on the market but this is the one and only super foil. Buy it from dealers authorised to stock the Dinoline top foil (class1/classA fire rating) in their range.

Info: E.C.J. Tel: +31 (0) 478 516 496 • Fax: +31 (0) 478 514417

www.dinoline.nl

The BioFiltre from General Hydroponics Europe

Any experienced hydroponic grower should be aware of the dangers of root disease. Keeping the root system healthy is essential for growing a healthy plant and it does not take long before a poorly maintained system becomes the perfect environment for the dreaded pythium, fusarium, verticillium et al to thrive in and destroy your precious plants from the roots up. Root disease can happen in any system where temperatures get too high, substrates are poorly aerated and ventilation and circulation are inadequate. In these environments the plants lack oxygen at the root level and



become stressed to the point of producing ethylene. Harmful pathogens recognise this as a sign of weakness and take it as their cue to attack and colonise the oxygen-starved root system.

Up until recently the only ways to treat these root diseases were UV sterilizers, enzyme formulas and trichoderma powders, all of which work (or don't) with varying degrees of success. Obviously, prevention is the best form of treatment, which is why the labs at General Hydroponics Europe have created the BioFiltre. Extensively tested in their Greenhouse facility; the BioFiltre is a 100% Biological filter that purifies, detoxifies, cleans and oxygenates your water and nutrient solution in a similar way to aquatic filters. The BioFiltre catches all floating debris and organic matter as well as boosting oxygen content. It will also detoxify the solution by eliminating all detrimental volatile compounds emitted by the roots, leaving the solution clean and safe for the plant.

Furthermore, as well as cleaning your water the BioFiltre will bring it to life with the addition of BioMagix, a mix of living micro-organisms which colonise the roots and impede pathogens as well as help decompose organic residues into readily available elements that the plant can easily absorb.

The BioFiltre is easy to use and maintain and offers a biological and safe solution to the potentially devastating effects of root disease.

Available at all good grow shops. For more information check out www.eurohydro.com

Follow safely at a distance with the GPS/GSM tracking set





This is the smallest and most advanced GPS/GSM tracking transmitter that is currently available on the market. The transmitter can be easily hidden under a car. With the aid of your own PC, laptop or even your PDA you can see where the GPS transmitter is. It can be kept on standby for a period of several months, and can store a thousand locations. It is easy to set up for motion detection (gives an SMS when the vehicle begins to move), or sleep mode (saves energy). Using the software that comes with it you can easily see (to street/house number level) where a vehicle has been and where it is now. You can also see how fast the vehicle has been travelling and how long it has been sitting still somewhere. You can program it to send an SMS to you whenever the vehicle arrives later than expected in a particular town. Or you can be notified

by SMS when the vehicle enters a particular region. Then you can easily look at the map on your computer where the car is exactly and where it has been. With the aid of the watertight case and super-strong, anti-slip magnet that comes with it, the transmitter is simple to position under a vehicle. It is advisable to place it on the side-, front- or rear-side, so that the transmitter can maintain constant contact with the satellite system. We're talking a complete plug and play set, the lonely things you need are a GSM modem or a mobile telephone.

Info: Detectnu. Tel: +31-(0) 26 445 9343. www.detectnu.nl

Healthy Hemp Foods from Yorkshire Hemp Limited



This range of hemp food products goes just a little way to show how versatile and beneficial the cannabis / hemp plant can be. We are all aware of the effects of eating THC rich cannabis but what about it's hemp cousin?

Hemp seed has been part of the staple diet of millions of people around the world for literally thousands of

years. It is only since America's worldwide ban on the production of hemp in the last century that humans have denied themselves the benefits of eating hemp seed. Lucky for us that there are some who haven't forgotten or ignored the hemp plant and we can begin again to benefit from this remarkable plant.

Hemp oil and seeds provide the body with our best-known source of Essential Fatty Acids including Omega 6 linolic, Omega 3 linolenic and Gamma Linolenic Acid (GLA), which are present in a composition unique to hemp oil among all plant oils. Hemp seeds contain these same fatty acids as well as being rich in protein (edestin) and all 9 essential amino acids. Omega 3, 6 and GLA can help to improve skin conditions such as acne, eczema and psoriasis as well improving inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. As if that wasn't enough hemp seeds provide antioxidants such as Vitamin E and, as is well known with Omega 3 in fish oil, make you brainier.

Making Hemp seeds and oil part of your diet is a particularly good idea as Omega 3, 6 and GLA are hard to find in any other food, especially in such easily absorbed ratios. Much of the hemp used to make these products is grown, legally, in the UK but it is a sad fact that the UK does not produce enough to supply the demand and imported hemp has to be used.

The world has been denied the benefits of hemp for far too long so if you love the plant then include it in your diet as well as pipe or spliff and you'll actually be healthier for it

Available from Health Food shops and at www.yorkshirehemp.com Tel: +44-(0)1924375475 email: info@yorkshirehemp.com

One plus one = The First Worldwide certified Organic manufacturer

Biobizz is proud to present the approval of the European organisation SKAL/EKO

Skal International is an inspection and certification organisation, which certifies organic products, processes and inputs. Furthermore, Skal International also inspects and certifies sustainable forest/wood and textile. Skal International operates worldwide. Through the network of the shareholder nearly all countries in the world are covered. Skal International has been authorized as an international inspection and certification organisation in the EU member states under the Regulation (EEC) Nr. 2092/91.

The EKO quality mark

Skal International is the only inspection and certification organisation that may issue the certification mark, EKO quality symbol, outside the European Union. The consumer can recognize an organic product, inspected and certified by Skal International, by the EKO quality symbol. The EKO quality symbol is an international quality symbol for organic products. It is used when raw materials originate from organic cultivation and are processed using organic methods.

For further information: www.skalint.com



Besides SKAL/EKO Biobizz is also the first Dutch company to be OMRI listed.

OMRI is a non-profit organization created to ensure and benefit the organic community and the general

public. OMRI certification is worldwide recognized as a high standard for Organic manufacturers, distributors and of course for the end consumer.

Its primary mission is to publish and disseminate generic and specific (brand name) lists of materials allowed and prohibited for use in the production, processing, and handling of organic food and fibre. OMRI also conducts scientific research and education on the use of materials by the organic industry.

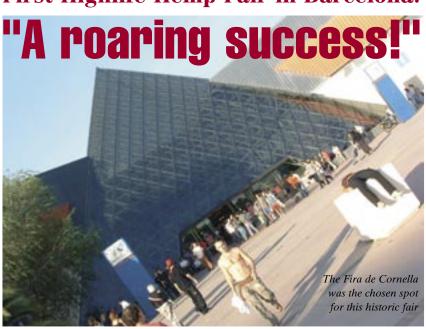
For further information: www.omri.org

With the latest certification Biobizz can proudly say: we have worldwide certified products.

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CANNABIS EVENTS

First Highlife Hemp Fair in Barcelona:



After the - to a greater or lesser extent - disappointing hemp fairs of Berlin (InterHanf, a total flop), London (London Hemp Fair) and Cologne (CannaBusiness) this year, everyone was holding their breath to see what happened with the first audacious international adventure of the Highlife Hemp Fair. Spain was the chosen land, Barcelona the lucky city in which the international debut of what has become such a famous event in the Netherlands. Would the public, and of course trade visitors themselves, have perhaps become am little tired of all these European hemp fairs? Happily, it was very soon apparent that the experience - and the Highlife name – still stands as a guarantee of success: the first international Highlife Fair in Barcelona was visited by more than 15,000 people which made it by far the most successful hemp fair in Europe this year!

The Fira de Cornella, located in a suburb of Barcelona, is a superb glass construction in the shape of a pyramid. Being based in the Cornella district meant it was near the city's airport and yet not too far from the beating heart of the city, the Ramblas. In short, it was an outstanding location in which to organise a fair, one that the inhabitants of the city as well as the international visitors could easily get to.

On the morning of Friday 8th October, the doors of this modern congress centre swung open at 11 O'clock, marking the first edition of the international Highlife Hennep Beurs a fact.

The first curious visitors began to stream in immediately, which was as huge a relief to the organisers as the stand holders, since as they say in Holland: a good beginning is half the work. But what was to play out over the course of the weekend exceeded everyone's wildest expectations: on Saturday and Sunday the whole fair at various times was black with people, while long queues of visitors stood outside the building trying to get in.

Spaniards and French clearly made up the majority of the visitors, although there were so many languages to be heard it seemed sometimes as if the whole damn world was represented there. Only once the clouds of smoke had disappeared and the organisers had had the chance to tot up the number of tickets sold and the number of invitations presented, did it become clear that a total of 15,000 visitors had made their way through the doors, the lion's share coming on Saturday 9 October

Also in terms of atmosphere and the craic, Highlife Barcelona exceeded expectations. The thousands of Spanish who paraded between the stands had clearly come with plans not just to check out the latest developments in the world of hemp, but also to make a fine day out of it. They were helped in this by the stand holders themselves, who generously plied the crowds with free drinks and promotional gee-gaws,

At some stands such as Atami, BioBizz and Futurola it sometimes looked as if a famous pop star or something was present: stand holders tossed T-shirts, lighters or other promotional paraphernalia to the public, which fell on the freebies like a pack of ravenous wolves. It was a pretty unbelievable sight, one that seemed to confirm that something pretty extraordinary was going on.

Performances by hip Spanish bands such as Desinovan and Chocadelia raised the not exactly placid atmosphere in the fair's hall, and a fashion show of hemp clothing (there was even a cool 'street' in which there was only hemp clothing and products) went on throughout the day, so that there was always something going on on the main stage.

Highlife Cup

The high point of the fair for many was undoubtedly the presentation of the first Spanish Highlife Cup. Around 40 Spanish shops had entered for one or more of the 13 cups that were being given away. To this end they had handed over samples of their best hash and weed, and these were then judged by a professional jury of knowledgeable Spanish authorities, such as Juan Robledo, Carlos Ballesteros (editor in chief of the Spanish edition of Soft Secrets, actually named La Maria) and the 'Spaniard' and world-renowned cannabis-



Proud, filled with fire and passion: the Spanish winners of the various cups.



The fair appeared black with people and blue with smoke



There was a marvellous vibe





The band Chocadelia laid down a perfect set authority Jorge Cervantes.

The shops were competing for prizes in the following categories: Hydro, Bio, outdoor weed and Hash.

The overall winner of this, the very first and very prestigious Spanish Highlife Cup held in Spain (and the first national cup ever awarded in the country (since there has previously never been a national cannabis competition) was award to the bio-variety Critical Mass, from the Ortue grow-shop from Barcelona. Some Spanish growers came up to collect their prizes from the podium with tears in their eyes; such is the passion and pride brought out by this competition.

That the fair was not remaining unnoticed by the local media was also made quickly apparent, when on Saturday and Sunday pretty much every local and national newspaper covered the activities in the Fira de Cornella. That for three days there were people – OK, most people – quite openly smoking in the congress hall (Evert was there with his Vaporisers as usual, and also as usual, public attraction number 1), was evidently not newsworthy, and much respect was paid in the media to the normalisation of cannabis use in Spain and to the flourishing cannabis-related industry.

Soft Secrets asked a few of those involved for their reactions to the fair:

Sergio Martinez, together with Boy Ramsahai organiser of the fair: "The preparations for the fair have been going on for more than a year. For me personally, this was the first trade fair of this size that I have organised. As you can see it has been a roaring success, but next year it will all be even better, as we have naturally learned a lot on the fair floor. I am happy and content with this fair. I am happy that so many visitors came, but if I am honest, I am even happier with the fact that the stand holders are so satisfied. We have all been walking around congratulating each other on our successes, but what's great is that so much of it can be even lovelier and better.

"I have noticed that a lot of visitors really have come because of the Highlife name. We have had an enormous amount of pre-publicity in the Spanish media, in which the names 'Holland' and 'Highlife' have figured prominently. For this public perhaps, the name Holland has perhaps something of a magical sound to it, but Highlife has that even more. They are aware of the existence of the magazine (Soft Secrets' sister publication, in Dutch only – ed) and of the Highlife beurs in the Netherlands, and thanks to this everyone here was extremely curious as to what the 'Highlife 'experience' in Spain would be like.

"I too have been to the Highlife beurs in Utrecht," said Martinez, "and thanks to that I could get a much better idea of just how much organisation is involved. There is not a huge difference with here, but you do have to bear in mind that Spain has a very different culture, and that things here still run a but differently to how they do in the Netherlands. I think that we can say that we have brought everything to a nice conclusion and that everyone, visitors, stand holders and organisers, have been very well pleased."

Jorge Cervantes (who gave two seminars at the fair): "This really is a magnificent fair. There has been perfect publicity and I can see Spanish radio and TV reporters walking around; fantastic! It is now Sunday afternoon, but it is still incredibly busy, there are people everywhere when normally in Spain everyone stays at home on Sundays. Everyone I have spoken to so



A beautiful sight: Holland's Glory abroad



The Vaporiser once again was the centre of attention



Spanish visitor with the Sensi-twins Shanti (r) and Shiva.



The organisation

Winners of the first Spanish Highlife Cup:			
Category:	Variety	Shop	
Hydro			
1	Chronic	Mundo Ganja	
2 3	Chronic Real Mackoy	Tjamba Loratzen	
	Real Wiackoy	Loratzen	
Bio			
1	Critical Mass	Ortue	
2	NYC Diesel	The Plant	
3	NLX	In Out	
Outdoor			
1	Dator	Good House Seeds	
2	Sensi Star	Yerbaloca	
3	Sweet Tooth	Tecniques de Horticultura	
Hash			
1	Jack Herer/Fuma con Dios	El Bruixot	
2	Hash HOG	Cogollo Santander	
3	Hash Kali Mist	Sant Yerbasi	
HIGHLIFE CUP SPAIN 2004:			
Critical Mass/ Ortue			
Best stand:			
Hortitech / Hesi			
Best Products:			
1	Mix'n'ball	Inspirational Ergonomics Ltd.	
2	Vaporiser	Delta 9	
3	Bubble Bag	Bubblebags	
Photography: Cliff Cremer and others. With thanks to Rob from Aardvark			

far has been very enthusiastic. The stand holders have done good business and are walking around with huge grins on their faces. "At the moment it is harvest time for outdoor weed in Spain, and everyone is really excited about that. The Spanish are an emotional folk; they go for things with their heart and soul. They are also hungry for new knowledge and information and people are keen to make new contacts in this business. It seems to have gone amazingly well; I don't know how else to describe it.

"I have lived here for years, and each

year I see the quality of the marihuana getting better. I've been walking around here hoping to give my joint to someone, but everyone seems to have one of their own already. This is not something I have come across before. It is also very un-Spanish, because normally people do not have much dope. Indoor growing is really on the march in Spain, even if outdoor growing is still the most popular, thanks to the superb climate. Today is the 10 October and outside it is still 30 degrees. Obviously, that is hard to compete with using a few lamps.

"The popular varieties at the moment coincide exactly with the ones that won cups. I predict that the winners will become even more popular after this weekend. Dator for example is a variety that is very hot at the moment. All the varieties that have won here are varieties that will be totally 'in' next year. Previously it tended to be Dutch varieties that were the most popular, but that is beginning to swing towards local Spanish varieties now. White Widow and Jack Herer were - and still are - immensely popular, but are now a little bit on their way out here. Don't forget either that this Highlife Cup is the first really national weed cup. Before this there were only local, regional cups. Highlife has set a new standard, and that is worthy of wonder!'

To end, a few words from Boy Ramsahai, the man behind Highlife: "When I came with my plans for an international edition of the Highlife Beurs, people were a bit sceptical. There have been a lot of cannabis fairs in Europe this year, but most have fallen short of expectations regarding visitor numbers. Many people therefore assumed that our fair would also not be a success, but happily we have proved the opposite: the fair was in one word super. Even only counting the numbers of international visitors - I estimate that a good 20% of them came from France - we can claim to have made an impression on the French market. The success of the fair came as something of a surprise to many, but really not for met. I do know that the Highlife name is a real crowd-puller, and we have now confirmed our reputation once and for all. Next year things will be on an even bigger scale, and nicer; we're really going to dot the i's. Also regarding the Highlife Cup. I have been absolutely convinced thanks to all the positive publicity we have generated that more Spanish shops will be here next year to enter the Cup one way or another. I would go so far as to say that I expect a doubling of the number of participants. I believe that with this fair we really have made history."





By Weckels, the grow specialist from Atami

The Big Strawberry

In this issue we are going to be looking at a very lovely weed variety that goes by the name of the Big Strawberry, thanks to her fine, sweet taste. This plant is very popular with smokers, while the positive growth traits of the strain make her well loved by growers

The Big Strawberry comes originally from Canada, more specifically that stretch known as British Columbia. Here the plant is often grown on a large scale, outdoors. Sadly for European outdoor growers the plant comes in to bloom very late (when you let her grow outdoors here) and for this reason, is not ready for harvest until mid-November.

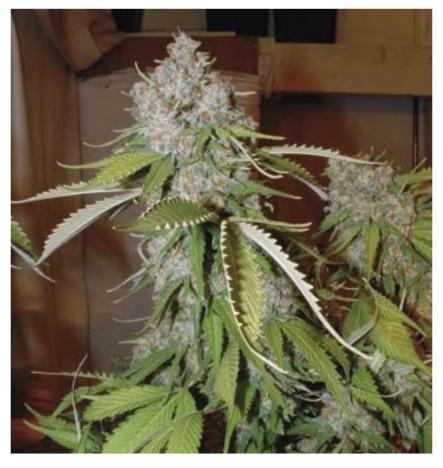
In Canada this did not present a problem; they just left the plants outdoors growing in pots until the first signs of Autumn came along, then they dragged them en masse indoors to finish off their blooming. In the sparsely-populated lands of British Columbia, the growers nearly always tended to have a whole farm at their disposal or know someone with a large barn, so finding a suitable space in which the plants could finish their blooming was often easier than caring for the plants themselves.

After the growers of Canada had booked some great successes with Big Strawberry, it was the turn of the growers down in San Francisco. As the Southern neighbours grew increasingly interested in this beautiful plant, it was not long before it (in the form of seeds) was smuggled to San Francisco. Then not long after that the plant popped up in the Netherlands and since then the Big Strawberry has been increasingly grown there too.

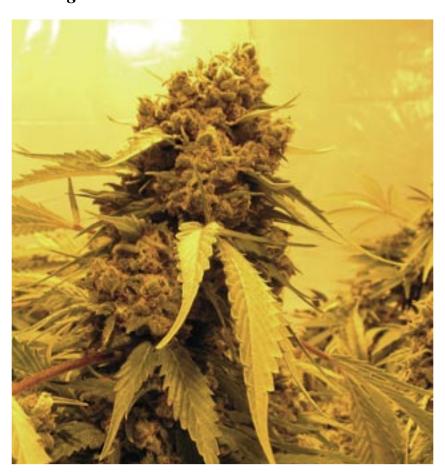
Seeds

The biggest problem with growing Big Strawberry is that there are almost no clones available. In fact you can count vourself very fortunate if you get your hands on a couple of seeds. A grower who over many years has built up great experience with various and unusual cannabis strains is Lucas. Together with a number of other growers he has set up a sort of club in which the members exchange seeds with one another, or swap each other's clones. In this way Lucas has also managed to get hold of some Big Strawberry, and it is mostly thanks to him that I can now tell you more about this plant.

The most unusual thing about Big Strawberry is that she finishes blooming earlier if she is grown on stone wool rather than soil. The difference is about a week, and that is enough to make it more interesting for us to grow on stone wool. That a plant is ready earlier when grown on stone wool is actually very strange, because with the vast



The most unusual thing about Big Strawberry is that she finishes earlier with blooming if she is grown on stone wool rather than soil.



majority of hemp varieties, such as White Widow and K2, it is the plants grown in soil that are most often ready earlier for harvest. The Big Strawberry is one of the very few varieties in which this is not the case.

Clones

Should you be lucky enough to be able to get your mits on a couple of clones, first check them for spint and

other pests. You would not be the first grower who with the help of another's clones also fall victim to someone else's troubles; namely pests that you bring into your growing space. You also need to watch out that the clones look healthy, i.e. they have lovely green leaves, and are preferably all of the same height. Buying good clones is half the job, and without good clones the growing experience for most growers can turn into a regular drama. It does not matter how well experienced you are; without good clones the frustration quotient can rise and rise, and that is not doing yourself any favours.

Before you stick the clones into stone wool, it is a good idea to soak your stone wool slabs first in a mixture of hydro nutrients and root stimulator. In this way you make it easier for the clones to get off to a flying start in developing their root system, while providing them with a little bit of food too. Count on planting four clones per slab (per stone wool mat); that's more than enough. More clones per slab will not improve your eventual harvest, since the plants will grow too close to each other and only end up in each other's way. What's mor,e there will can be a lot of moisture trapped between the plants which will serve to raise your chances of mould infection. Fortunately the Big Strawberry is not particularly susceptible to moulds. which is another reason it is so well loved.

Lamps

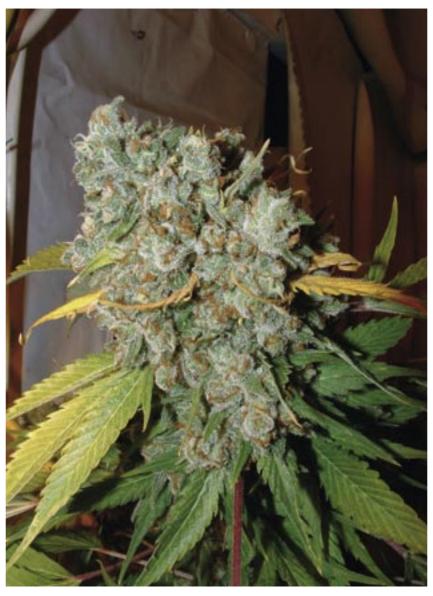
Once the clones have been safely placed into their stone wool mats then we need to sort out the lamps, making sure they do not hang too closely above the clones. Failure to do this could lead to the clones rapidly drying out, which in turn would mean you having to start again from scratch. Which is always a pity, the more so since the clones of a Big Strawberry are so hard to come by. You can also reduce the evaporation or transpiration from the clones somewhat by snipping off the tips of the large leaves. Simply cut across the breadth of the leaf. Of course you need to make sure that the clones still have enough (healthy) leaves left over so that they can take up enough light.

As for the lamps, it is perhaps a good idea to hang them as high as possible in the beginning. Once the clones have succeeded in gaining a good toehold by developing a full root system, then you can lower the lamps to their usual height above the clones. For setting the lamps at the correct height then a chain with links in it is a good idea, otherwise you can end up with the lamps all hanging at different heights, which will lead to your clones growing to different heights. And plants that are not growing at the same rate increase the chances of getting burnt patches on them.



Talking of the development of the roots, the Big Strawberry is one of the few varieties that takes root really well, and that can save you a pile of time and money, because nearly all your clones will make it through the first week (the critical phase) and therefore succeed. The clones, that with the passage of time (about a week) begin to develop into lovely plants, thrive best with a temperature of about 25 degrees Celcius, accompanied by a humidity of about 65%. The first week you can keep things more to the liking of the young clones by spraying them with leaf nutrient.

The young plants will now get lovely, green leaves and that is to the benefit of the light absorption. For a good supply of light, we let the plants grow under 600 watt lamps. These lamps have the best amount of light as regards the amount the plants can take up. In addition to this is the fact that, 1000 watt lamps for example use considerably more power, while the temperature in your growing space will be significantly raised by them. This can lead to problems, especially when you are growing in the attic and Summer arrives. The sun often warms the roof quite a bit, and if you have 1000 watt lamps blasting away as well, the two heat sources combined can



During the blooming phase you are best off removing as many of the large leaves as possible,.
The flower heads on the branches below will thank you dearly for it!

frazzle your whole crop to kingdom come. Of course, such events can also occur when using 600 or even 400 watt lamps, but such problems will occur proportionately sooner when using 1000 watt lamps.

In fact growing in an attic is often accompanied by problems in addition to this one just mentioned. For example, in the Winter you are at risk of your carefully concealed growing space being betrayed by a suspiciously snow-

free roof. Once the flakes begin to fall, transforming everywhere except your roof into a Winter wonderland, your temperate grow room will transform your roof into a homing beacon for Mr Plod. The turners of the wheels of justice will thank your for the simplicity of their task, and your un-seasonal harvest will be toast.

Blooming

Once we have allowed the plants a week of pre-growth, then we can crank the dial back to giving them 12 hours' light and thereby set the plants into bloom. From now on we give the plants a bit more hydro nutrition, boosters and a bloom stimulator. We need not worry ourselves unnecessarily when giving these babies nutrients; they love the stuff – although do not go crazy, all the same.

Since the roots at this stage are more than sufficiently developed, it does not make any sense to keep adding root stimulator to the feed water we give them. But we do want to add once a week some enzymes to their water, which will keep the stone wool slabs free of root diseases. These enzymes destroy and remove any dead root remains. And they help to prevent over-fertilization of the plants, because they also leach out the excess salt accumulations.

During the blooming phase you are best off removing as many of the large leaves as possible, since these produce serious amounts of moisture and in doing so raise your chances of getting bud rot. Also, large leaves can quite easily work against your chances of a good harvest, by stopping important light getting through to the flower heads that are lower down on the plants. As a result these will not develop as well as they might have done and you will end up with flower heads that are less potent. So bear this in mind.

COLUMN

Rock and a hard place

Joe Kane

Sometimes, just when you think life is shit and just cannot get any fucking worse, fate just kicks you in the balls again. Just for spite. And so it's been with my associate, Bob. I told you last time that he'd been busted in possession of a fair amount of weed, resin, money, blah blah, and how the amounts stated on the charge sheets were considerably less than the actual amounts he'd had, but still enough to put him away for a few years.

Well, the dibble let him out on police bail so at least he's not stuck in some nick on remand locked up with 3 other guys twenty four seven or any of that shit. At least he can drop the soap when he's in the shower and not have to worry about picking it up.

So I ran into him a week or so after the bust and he looked a fucking mess: broken nose, two black eyes, cracked ribs, fat lip, you get the picture. My first thought was that the police had given him a leathering, so I asked what the story was and it turns out he'd

had his head kicked in by some fucking goon on behalf of the people he was dealing for. I'd

always thought he worked for himself. You learn something new about people all the time.

Anyway, turns out he's working for some sociopathic little hood with anger issues. A really bad fucking call, as it turns out. Not only is he busted and facing a stretch in the big house, but now some tough boy wants his money and/or his gear. The kicking he got was just "a little taster" of what's to come if he doesn't cough up. And of course, little hard man knows lots of other little hard men currently enjoying the hospitality of Her Majesty, so whichever way you look at it, Bob's probably fucked.

Okay, we're talking about what to some people might be a serious amount of money - somewhere in the region of 5K - but to the characters I'm talking about this is like small fucking change, you know? The problem with tough guy gangster wannabes is that they're all piss and testosterone, always feel the need to prove themselves, and always feel that everyone should show them "respect". Add to this heady mix constant use of the Columbian marching powder and you've got

a recipe for trouble.

Bob, rightly, is shitting himself. His argument is that, yeah he was a twat and got busted, but that he's taking the rap for it all, told the police he was working on his own and is therefore (unless he gets a pretty sharp lawyer) facing a hefty sentence. Bottom line: this is a high risk business and he lost out and he's going to face the consequences. End of story.

Except, of course, that it's not. If the tough boy sat and thought about this straight and reasonably, he'd understand Bob's situation and write it all off, no hard feelings and see you when you get out. But no, cranked up on charlie, reason goes down the shitter and he thinks he's Al Capone, and he thinks Bob is taking the piss.

What the fuck do you do in a situation like that? What Bob's done is to continue his run of unwise decisions by skipping out on his bail and going to ground somewhere. Nobody apparently knows where he is, not the dibble, not the psycho, and certainly not me. Wherever you are man, be cool.

Joe horribly stoned boy@hotmail.com

Growing for Dummies Part 6

The Growth or Veg phase

By Bart B.

The germinated seeds peak out above ground and immediately spring up into small, blade-like green plants. They are still very fragile at this stage, and they look it too. What we are now going to discuss is the growth of this plant. The growth period is an important factor in determining the eventual size of the yield you will get from your plants. A good growth is even more important than the bloom itself.

Putting a plant through pre-growth means that we will keep the plants in their growth (also known as 'veg') period for between one day and several weeks, and we do this by putting the lamp timer on 18/6. This means 18 light and 6 hours night/sleep for the plants. The plant is now equipped to take advantage of the light in full and begin to develop in breadth and height.

The more growth you allow the plant, the more leaves it will develop, and develop them on stronger sidebranches, thanks to which growth will accelerate even more. A plant that a week previously had only 10 leaves and now has 25 can naturally grow far quicker thanks to the increase in the amount of light it is able to make use of. So it is that in the beginning of the growth it always goes slowly until the plant has made enough leaves to reach a certain growing speed. At this moment you will quite clearly see that just one day's growing makes an enormous difference, and you will notice that the plants have made great progress with just that single day. More growth means more nutrients to be given, more oxygen needed... To achieve a good growth you have to continually keep all factors under firm control. If at any time there is a deficiency of oxygen in your growing space thanks to too little or no vacuum extraction, then your plants are going to be retarded in their growth potential.

Message of the Mediums

Various mediums (or media) can offer various growing speeds to your plants. The most common are still soil, coco and hydro (growing in water). Each medium has its own qualities, advantages and disadvantages.

Soil only enables a rapid growth as long as it is well aerated and light in structure. Because roots can best develop by growing through light, airy soil, this is what we have to try and give them. The faster the roots grow and spread, the quicker the plant

To achieve a good growth you have to continually keep all factors under firm control.

above ground can grow. Roots need oxygen, and hard ground that has been compacted contains less oxygen than a lighter mix. The advantage of using soil is that it contains nutrients and so one does not need to start so early with adding liquid feed. What can be important for beginning growers is that this prevents difficulties in the early stages of the growth. A poor start can be disastrous for the future blooming and harvest. Soil or earth is therefore a perfect medium for beginner-level growers and by learning with this you can build up your growing knowledge. Learn to grow well in soil and you can always fall back on it in the future.

Coco is an even more aerated substance to grow in. It is a favourite medium of mine and ensures the plants get an outstanding start thanks to the oxygen-rich coco fibres. Plants that have been growing in a more oxygenrich medium are stronger and develop more - and more powerful - side branches. The drawback with using coco is that it contains no nutrients; it is food-poor. That is why you have to begin very early with adding liquid nutrient. This could create problems, but coco is very user-friendly and difficult to over-fertilize. It is perhaps even more difficult to over feed it than

Over feeding comes about from an accumulation of salts that are present in all feedstuffs. With the passage of time, if you are using too high a dose of nutrients (being a beginner grower), the plant can not take them up quickly enough any more. The leaves will begin to develop ugly stripes, first visible at the edges where the leaves are expanding in size, then the leaf dries out and dies. To prevent this you have to flush your medium. Flushing is giving extra water so that the accumulated salts are washed out of your medium. If you have a plant with very deep green leaves then this is a sign that there is sufficient nutrient present, and to give it more food at this time could well lead to overfeeding. If you are not sure about it, wait without giving any more nutrients and the plant leaves will turn a lighter shade of green, and then you know it is okay to give it more food. If you leave it too long the leaves will begin to turn vellow.

Growing on hydro gives you the greatest growth speeds as long as you go about it in the right way, thanks to the presence of a wealth of oxygen available to the roots. It is far more work-intensive than growing in soil or on coco. I personally choose coco because it is a good middle way between soil and hydro. You achieve good growth results but do not have to give it too much attention. It must be said that once you have hydro growing off pat, it goes really smoothly. But with hydro you are more dependent on electrical apparatuses, and if these play up or you get a power outage, then you are up the Swannie, or you have to lash out on back-up power.

A good start is worth gold

Nearly all growers use root-stimulating compounds to ensure a powerful growth. As has been the case so far, all the action here again takes place under the soil in the beginning. A small seedling still has very few roots. The idea is that we are going to stimulate the plant to produce as many roots as possible, as fast as possible, in the medium. The most commonly used is liquid root stimulator, something that all the big nutrient making companies tend to have in their range. Root stimulator makes sure that the roots receive a growth impulse. That it works can usually be best noticed when growing in soil. The root stimulator will also make it possible that other plants in your soil mix also begin to grow. So don't be alarmed if you suddenly find a different kind of green poking its head up out of your soil than vou expected.

We generally dilute root stimulator with water, although it is used undiluted for dunking cuttings into to prompt them with a powder which contains spores of these beneficial moulds, which you mix with water. With this you soak the cutting blocks in which your seeds or clones have been planted. The mould works as a symbiont and needs the plant in order to survive. The plant in turn uses the mould as an 'extra root system'. Wherever the mould grows the plant can also take up nutrients from. The effect you get is that the plant gets a much stronger and healthier start and has access to much more of the medium's nutrients. Almost all products that have a stimulating effect on roots are useful for the start of the growth period. Your mission if you encounter them is therefore to mollycoddle your roots until they're nice and strong.

The importance of the growth period

With the growth phase you can largely determine the dimensions, shape and yield of your plants. There are various ways of raising cannabis and these are to a large extent dependent on their way of growing. You can put many plants into a square meter; then it is important not to give them much growing time. The plants may not be allowed to get too big or they will suppress each other. The fewer plants you choose to raise, the more growth you can allow them.

Seed plants and clones have different growing preferences. Clones are older plants than seed plants and therefore are already adult and so need less growth before being induced into blooming. A seed plant goes through various stages and becomes mature after about a month of growth. The better you are as a grower the faster you can bring a seed plant to adulthood. This does not only depend on time but also the bulk. If you look at a clone then you'll see that the side branches run step-wise. If you look at an immature seed plant then the side branches are proportionately straight. Once the seed plant has become adult then the side branches will also begin grow step-wise.

If at any time there is a deficiency of oxygen in your growing space thanks to too little or no vacuum extraction, then your plants are going to be retarded in their growth potential

to root during clone making. We do not use root stimulator together with liquid fertilizer, since this reduces the effectiveness of the stimulator. So in the plant's first few days we need to add root stimulator – do not mix it with any nutrients. In this way we can get off to the optimum start.

There are also friendly (symbiotic) fungi that we can apply to promote good root development. Nova-Star-T from BioNova is a small bag filled

By giving them more or less growth then, you can determine the dimensions of your plants. But remember that simply making a plant bigger does not necessarily mean you will get a bigger yield from it. It is especially important as a beginner grower to appreciate that a plant undergoes a tremendous rate of development once it is put into bloom and will continue to increase in size for a good three weeks before it reaches its eventual size.

If at any time there is a deficiency of oxygen in your growing space thanks to too little or no vacuum extraction, then your plants are going to be retarded in their growth potential

The perfect growth

What is the perfect growth? A perfect growth is when the plants have reached the ideal size once they have been set to bloom, and when all plants can still develop very well without getting in each other's way. The entire square meter therefore is filled by the plants with no gaps left between them, but it is not so full that the plants compete with each other for resources. By allowing them too much growth or using too many plants, all the plants will develop less well. A plant needs space in which to allow her side branches to develop and so increase in girth. If she has not got this then she will increase in height. The drawback with this is that the lowest side branches will be weak and will not develop very heavy buds.

In order to get a good harvest you will have to achieve good bud development in the lower branches as well as up top. Anyone can grow themselves a big head bud; it's something else to get equally good weights off the lower reaches. But if you can, this is how you get really good harvests from just a few plants.



An adult plant



An immature plant

As a good rule of thumb, eight seed plants given three weeks of pre-growth should fill a single square meter under a 600w lamp and will give a yield of 500 grams. That is approximately 63 grams per plant, a figure that is not exactly super-high. I usually keep an eye on my plants and once they are between 25-50 cms high and have become small adults, with small, strong side branches, then they are ready to put into bloom. You can put clones into bloom sooner, since they start out more mature. For the same reason, do not let them get much bigger than 25 cms. Clones are more branchy which means they let less light through to the lowest branches. A plant that is too big will allow little to no light through to the lowest branches, which will therefore not develop buds. Letting your plants grow too big is therefore a waste of time and energy. You are restricted by the power of your lamp and this will ensure a good, heavy bud development only in the top 20 cms of your plants. The lower you go, the smaller the buds will be. By making sure that you let as much light as possible get through to the lower reaches of your plants you will maximise the development of the buds down there.

Nutrition

During the growth period the plants most need nitrogen and potassium. If your plants become deficient in either of these during the grow period they will turn yellow. If you choose to grow in soil and use a good mix from a grow shop, that will contain enough of these key nutrients for three weeks to a month. The advantage of this is that you do not need to add extra liquid fertilizer until the bloom period. The extra price that you pay for the better soil is therefore worth it. You also save yourself a load of potential problems. Cheap soil mix can quickly lead to deficiencies because there is little nutrient in it that is readily available to our plants. So you have to begin adding liquid fertilizer earlier, which is not a problem in itself although some people do manage to over-fertilize, and so it is always better to wait as long as you can before you have to start fertilizing.

Now you cannot avoid making mistakes while growing cannabis. In fact, the more the better. If you learn from your mistakes and know what you did wrong then you won't make the same mistake again. Above all follow the instructions on the bottle and use a millimetre syringe to exactly measure out the quantities you want to add to your feed water. Sufficient nutrition without going overboard will result in wonderful, healthy growth in your plants.

The bigger your plant gets the more fertilizer you will have to give it. So you will notice that if you continue



to give the same concentration of nutrients to your plants, at a certain point they will start to develop yellow leaves. The plant is trying to make it absolutely clear that she needs more food. The dose (strength) of your feed water needs to be raised or nutrients should be given more frequently.

The first two weeks growth

After coming up, the seedlings pictured above were planted in Plagron's Royalty Mix. This pre-fertilized soil contains enough nutrients to last for a few weeks. During these first weeks I gave root stimulator to the plants. As time passed the plants began to grow ever faster. As an extra boost, during this growth period I also gave them Alga Groei, a liquid growth feed from Plagron. This is not absolutely vital since there is enough nutrient in the pre-fertilized soil mix, but by giving some extra nutrient I am able to maintain the soil's nutritional value level. If we were to now give no more food then eventually after a few weeks the soil would be worn out and depleted. If we give regular extra nutrition, we avoid having to suddenly start giving heavy duty fertilizer. Is it clear what I'm driving at here? Naturally, we avoid giving too much food, since this can create to high a risk of over-fertilizing.

Besides applying root stimulator and liquid growth feed, there is actually very little more to do in this growth period. We make sure that the lamp is moved so that it stays between 30-40 cms above the plant. The best way to ensure this is feel with your hand how hot the lamp is burning at leaf level. You place the lamp after a week and a half as close as possible to the plants before they can feel the burning hot, dry air from the lamp.





The correct height varies from grow space to grow space and the number of lamps in the space. If you have a good air circulation then you can let the lamp hang a lot lower because a lot of the dry, hot air is removed from the immediate vicinity of the plants, causing them less stress from the output of your lamp(s).

We keep the air moisture levels during the first weeks as high as possible too because the plants can grow so much faster and make their leaves more easily. A high air moisture content can do wonders, and we can achieve this by turning off the air extraction, or letting it run on a very low setting so that the moist air is not immediately pumped out of the growing space. An air humidifier helps of course too! We aim to keep the temperature between 22-28 degrees Celsius and at night between 18-22 degrees. Just so long as the temperature does not fall below 16 degrees then you will not get any significant loss of growth.

Do not forget to let your lamps do as much of their work as you can at night if you have cheap rate electricity at this time of day, and over the course of your growth you can save a fair bit of cash.

Green plants have now been raised, you can caress their sturdy stems and savour the taste and smell of your future crop already. Now you just need a few more months of patience to practice before you can enjoy your well-earned heavy buds at harvest time.

In the next issue we'll be looking into the start of the the all important blooming period.

Just so long as the temperature does not fall below 16 degrees then you will not get any significant loss of growth.



...for the Most Potent Smoke By Jorge Cervantes

Drying and Curing Cannabis



Yellow leaves like this usually fall off before harvest. If they are strong and green, leave them on the plant when drying the plant upside down. The leaves will form a protective shield for tender resin glands.

Drying and curing cannabis properly will yield the most THC-potent smoke. When dried and cured improperly, potency can diminish substantially. The level of THC in a plant is determined by its genetics. Proper drying and curing will keep the THC level as high as genetically possible. It does not increase potency. A little background on what happens inside and outside the harvested drying plant will help you understand why proper drying and curing are so important to good quality dope.

Drying evaporates most of the 70-75 percent water content in fresh marijuana. Drying also converts THC from its non-psychoactive crude acidic form to its psychoactive pH-neutral form. Once dry, THC-potent marijuana can be smoked and you will get high. Every THC molecule must shed their moisture content before they are fully psychoactive. In other words fresh green marijuana will not be very potent.

When you cut a plant or plant part and hang it to dry, the transport of fluids within the plant continues, but at a slower rate. Stomata, small openings on leaf undersides, close soon after harvest and drying is slowed since little water vapor escapes. The natural plant processes slowly come to an end as the plant dries. The outer cells are the first to dry, but fluid still moves from internal cells to supply moisture to the dry outer cells. When this process occurs properly, the plant dries evenly throughout. Removing leaves and large stems upon harvest speeds drying, however, moisture content within the "dried" buds, leaves and stems is most often uneven. Quick drying also traps chlorophylls and other pigments, starch and nitrates within plant tissue, making it taste "green" burn unevenly and taste bad.



Be very careful when handling leaves and all foliage on mature plants. The rows of resin glands are very easy to bruise and knock off.

Taste and aroma improve when these pigments break down. Slow even drying – where the humidity is similar inside and outside the foliage – allows enough time for the pigments to degrade. Hanging entire plants to dry allows this process to occur over time, about 3-4 weeks at 50-60 percent relative humidity and a temperature range of 60-70 degrees F. (15-21 degrees C.) The large outer leaves also form a protective sheath around buds. This protective foliage shields resin glands on buds from rupture and bruising.

Removing large leaves and stems upon harvest saves time. This is what most growers do, because fresh supple leaves are easier to work with than dry leaves. When you are looking a manicuring 5 kilos, you make it as easy as possible! However, this process often causes uneven drying and keeps moisture inside the foliage. This is why it is important to "cure" the "dry" marijuana.

Curing lets the plants continue to dry slowly. The first week of curing affects potency in that it removes moisture within the bud evenly, so that virtually all the THC is psychoactive. Curing also allows buds to dry enough so that mold does not grow when it is stored. A well-cured bud will also burn with an even glow.

Notes

Rough handling and friction from fondling hands will bruise and knock off resin glands. Even with proper drying and curing, brutal handling of harvested marijuana will diminish THC content.

Drying

Here is one of the best ways to dry plants to retain the maximum amount of psychoactive THC. Cut the entire ripe plant at the base and hang it upside down on a line to dry. Try to keep plants from touching each other to avoid uneven drying and mold. Keep the humidity between 50-60 percent. Keep the temperature at about 60-70 degrees F. (15-21 degrees C.). The room should be relatively dark as light, especially direct sunlight, degrades THC.

A circulation and ventilation fan may be necessary to control heat and humidity. You can also use a dehumidifier to control humidity or an air conditioner to lower ambient relative humidity and control room temperature. Do not train fans directly on drying plants it causes them to dry unevenly.

Depending upon atmospheric conditions and the size and density of plants and buds, plants should be dry enough to smoke in about a week. Plants with outer "fan" leaves intact take longer to dry than if leaves have been removed.

Check for dryness by bending a stem. It should snap. The bud should be dry to



Close up of Yumboldt from Sagamatha shows delicate white- and amber-colored pistils along with a covering of glowing resin. Careful handling and drying of this crop kept the resin glands intact.

touch, but not brittle. The bud should burn well enough to smoke now.

Once dry, carefully manicure buds by cutting large leaves where they attach to the stem. Leaving the petiole (leaf stem) can cause mold to grow. Snip off smaller leaves that show little resin so that buds a beautiful bud remains.

Freeze Drying

Dry ice is frozen carbon dioxide. CO" changes from its frozen solid to a gas without turning into a liquid, a dry (ice) process that is called sublimation. The atmosphere contains little CO2. Dry ice sublimes (converts) completely into a gas leaving virtually no liquid. It is dry.

When moist marijuana is enclosed with dry ice at virtually zero relative humidity, water molecules migrate from the cannabis to the dry ice. The relative humidity of the CO2 increases and the moisture content of the marijuana decreases. This process occurs below 0 degrees C (32 degrees F), preserving the cannabis.

Place equal amounts of dry ice and bud into a container. Dry ice on the bottom and bud on top. Seal with a lid. Make a few small holes in the lid of the container for excess gas to exit. Place in the freezer. Check the dry ice every 24 hours. When the ice is gone, the buds will be completely dry. If not dry, add more dry ice until cannabis is dry. Conserve dry ice by partially drying buds for a few days before enclosing with dry ice.

This method retains potency, freshness and causes very little degradation of resin glands by the bad guys – heat, light, air and fondling hands. The marijuana tastes 'minty' because the chlorophyll does not break down.

Curina

Even though the plants appear to be dry, they still contain moisture inside. This moisture affects taste and potency. To remove this excess moisture, curing is necessary. Curing makes the bud uniformly dry and converts virtually all THC into its psychoactive form.



Another shot of Yumboldt resin glands on a ripe bud demonstrates the importance of post-harvest care. Some growers claim that curing increases potency. The fact is, proper post-harvest care will keep the resin undamaged and not increase potency. It is difficult to improve on perfection!



Any botrytis (bud mold) on buds should be thoroughly removed before drying. Smart growers do not dry buds that have suffered mold attacks with healthy buds. Always isolate buds that have had when drying so that it does not spread to the other drying plants.

Cut stems into manageable lengths – less than 12 inches (30 centimeters) – and place them in an airtight container. Glass containers with a rubber or similar seal on top are the best. Avoid Ziploc plastic bags, which are not airtight. Many growers also avoid plastic containers such as Tupperware, sighting the plastic imparts an undesirable flavor in the buds.

Enclose buds in a container. This creates a microclimate that allows moisture to "even out" within the buds. Internal moisture will migrate to the dry portions of the bud. Gently pack as many buds in the glass container as possible without damaging them. Leave the jar(s) in a cool dry dark place. Check the jar in 2-4 hours to see if buds "sweated" moisture. Check buds by gently squeezing to feel if they are moister than they were a few hours before. Be careful when squeezing buds, they bruise easily. Most often they will be completely dry. If not, leave them in the sealed jar overnight and check the next day.

The buds will be a bit moist. Remove them from the jar and gently lay in the bottom of a paper bag. They can be stacked in the paper bag as high as 10 centimeters (3 inches). Close the top of the bag by folding once. Check the buds



This Haze cross grown in Spain was well-handled and carefully dried over a 2.5-week period. It was later cured using the method outlined in the article. Notice how the resin glands are perfectly intact. Treating harvested buds with tender loving care is the best way to retain maximum potency.

2-3 times during the day to see if they are dry. Carefully turn them in the bag so that different sides are exposed. Remove when they are dry and place back into the sealed glass jar. Check them the next day to see if they are evenly dry and not moist again. If moist, remove and place back in the paper bag until dry. When dry place back in the glass container. Repeat process until buds are evenly dry.

If buds appear to have fairly low moisture content, you may be able to leave them in the jar and let excess moisture escape out the top. Simply open the jar for a few minutes every few hours to let the excess moisture escape before closing the lid again.

Check the container daily, leaving the top open for 5-10 minutes so moisture evacuates. After a week or two, it should be totally dry and ready to seal airtight. Vacuum seal the jar and place it in the refrigerator for storage. Leave it in the refrigerator or a cool dark dry place for a month or longer. The taste and potency will be tops! Refrigeration slows decomposition but remember, refrigerators have a high humidity level, so the container must be sealed airtight. I just checked the relative humidity in temperature in my refrigerator – 65

percent relative humidity and 5 degrees C. (40 degrees F). Do not place it in the freezer. Freezing draws moisture to the surface of buds, which can harm resin glands on the surface.

FAST DRYING

I do not recommend fast drying however here is a brief rundown on several methods for those of you who can't wait.

Method One: Manicure fresh buds. Spread them out evenly and wrap in paper or enclose in an envelope. Place the paper or envelope on top of a warm object – refrigerator, radiator, television, etc. Depending upon heat level, buds will be dry in a few hours to overnight. Buds should be a bit crispy when dry. Place buds in an airtight container until they sweat. Follow curing instructions above.

Method Two: Cut up fresh buds and foliage. Place on a 6-inch (15 centimeter) square of tinfoil. Hold or place it over a 60-80-watt light bulb. Stir every 30 seconds. The weed takes 1-3 minutes to dry.

Method Three: Place cut up buds and foliage on a cookie sheet in an oven at 65 degrees C. (150 degrees F.) for 10-

15 minutes. Check regularly until dry. Follow curing instructions above.

Method Four: Place cut up buds and foliage in a microwave oven. Power the oven to 40-50 percent and give short 5-10 second bursts. Check regularly until dry.

Method Five: Cut fresh buds and foliage into small pieces and place them in a glass jar with an airtight lid. Place several silica gel desiccant packs (the kind that come with electronic devices and cameras) into the glass jar and seal the jar. Moisture will migrate to the silica gel in a few hours. Remove the packets and dry in the sun. Replace silica packs until marijuana is dry enough to smoke. Find silica gel packs at auto parts or electronic stores.

Method Six: Peel stems so they plants dry faster. First remove large leaves. Peel off the outer layer of the stem with a knife. This exposes the inside of the stem and cuts drying time by about 20 percent.

Patient growers smoke no bud before its time!

Note:

Some of the information in this article was extrapolated from the "Frequently Asked Questions" and "Forums" found at www.overgrow.com. The following OG members were sighted in putting together this article: Apollo11Genius, BigIslandBud, Doctor Dangerous, Fatima, Fergetit, Flick, Glass Joe, HashMan, Leaf, Lock, Lord of the Strains, Mr. Beaner, PREMIER, Psychotropic Nomad, SC, and Twofingered. Thanks for the help!

Jorge Cervantes is the author of Indoor Marijuana Horticulture: The Indoor Bible (with 200 ALL NEW color photos), Marijuana Indoors: Five Easy Gardens, Marijuana Outdoors: Guerilla Growing and hundreds of articles. Cervantes writes for 12 magazines in 5 languages. See: www.marijuanagrowing.com.



Frankenstein science

Dr. John Dee

A number of years ago I was working on a cannabis project. By this I mean that my colleague and I ran about the UK asking people about their dope use. We spoke to hundreds of people who had been using weed for at least a decade, and there were very few of them who could imagine life without dope, and therefore couldn't ever imagine giving it up. The majority of them (in fact, almost all of them) had used a whole range of other drugs at one time or another over the course of their lives, but dope remained the constant (if you ignore tobacco and alcohol, that is): they'd been using it for however many years and, as far as they were concerned, they'd continue to do so and nothing would get in the way of that.

Jump forward to 2004, and suddenly the unthinkable is starting to happen: a lot of people with whom I'm acquainted are seriously considering either taking a break from the weed or giving it up completely.

This is an intriguing development. Lifelong, hard-core tokers deciding to give it up. What could be happening? Could it be to do with the cost of decent

weed? The supply? Or maybe it's down to a fear of being caught and going to prison?

Anecdotally, the answer seems to be that it's none of these. As far as cost goes, for example, it's accepted that it's a seller's market and therefore you pay the asking price or grow your own. With supply, no amount of big, high profile seizures have had any impact on availability at all. And the chances of going to prison for possession of a few grams of skunk are pretty remote.

So what is happening?

The reason I've been quoted when I've asked people about this is that quite simply, weed is getting too strong for every day consumption even by seasoned tokers: one can indeed, it seems, have too much of a good thing.

The plant has been hybridised, tweaked and generally subjected to Frankenstein science, and turned from one thing (something natural growing straight out of the ground) into something altogether different and getting to be less and less recognisable. The THC content of some of these new strains of weed is (allegedly) pushing the 25% - 30% mark, which is a far cry from the 3% -10% range found in plants left to develop au naturelle. Not only is this unnatural, there would appear to be some concerns on the part of some long term users as to its safety.

In the end, it's a variation on a mental health theme with the potential quitters. Either they're encountering a number of unfamiliar and unpleasant effects such as instant and acute paranoia, panic and "bad thoughts", or they're seeing old and good friends walking around "like zombies". Of course, whether any of this is actually due to the weed won't be known without a program of scientific research, but nonetheless, a word to the wise: approach with caution

You would think that the easiest way round this would be to buy a different type, but as the current vogue seems to be the stronger the better, this is getting difficult. Nobody seems to grow nice grass that gives a nice buzz any more: these days it's all different degrees of being hit over the head with a hammer. Or that's how it feels. And of course, as the only real alternative to high potency weed is adulterated gangster resin, swapping brands isn't really an option.

What really bothers me is that if very experienced users are finding these strains heavy going, what effect are they having on adolescent brains? Personally, I don't like scare stories, but this particular issue needs to be addressed before it comes back in the future and bites us on the arse.

dimethyl tryptamine 777@hot mail.com



By: Weckels, the grow specialist from Atami

Making Nederhash with the Ice-o-lator



Once we have stuck the whisks through the holes in the plank and clicked them into the mixer, the mixer will be easier to keep in place while it works.

How do we make Nederhash? In this issue, I am going to tell you exactly how in detail you can make a superb quality hashish with the aid of just water, ice and an Ice-o-lator. There is no better method than this for making such excellent hash. The quality is so excellent that it is no exaggeration to describe it as one of the best in the world.

This is also one of the reasons why so many Dutch coffee shops jump at the chance to get hold of an expensive, exclusive hash of this sort. The reason why the price of Ice-o-lator hash is so high is due to the fact that the whole process of making it is so work-intensive. I once spent a good two hours just to end up with a small lump of a few grams. However, the quality of it was so good, it is quite understandable why so many growers do have a go.

The reason why the quality of nederhash is so good is that, with this method making it at least, only the purest THC crystals are kept. When in the past we used an apparatus like the Pollinator, although the quality was good, there tended to be – especially with lengthy operation of the hash maker – fine, pulverised leaf material also making it through the sieve. This problem is not a consideration when using the Ice-o-lator, since everything that is not THC crystal simply remains floating in the bucket and never makes it to the first sieve bag.

The THC crystals once they are in a frozen form are nice and heavy compared with leaf material, and it is their weight that draws them through the first sieve bag, where they eventually accumulate in a very fine sieve. It is therefore a very simple principle, but you can well imagine just how pure a hash this method makes.

Of course it is important that we start out with a fine quality trim waste, one in which the small leaves and buds are



We fill the bucket with trim waste, then we fill the bucket half full with water and finally, spread ice cubes on top.

richly bedecked with a thick layer of THC crystals. This trim waste is what's left after manicuring indoor-grown buds, and is often simply thrown away by many growers or left to rot on the compost heap. They would be much better off just giving it to a grower who has developed the making of top quality nederhash into a nice little hobby.

For that matter, there are also very good results to be had using the trim waste from weed grown outdoors too. Especially since outdoor growing often creates a lot of small buds (from off the lowest branches) that can be harvested, and which are excellent for using in an Ice-o-lator. When we are doing so, it is important to make sure that these little buds are well chopped up, so that the THC crystals easily shake loose during the whole process.

So, in order to end up with a great quality nederhash, first of all we need to accumulate the necessary trim waste. Before we can actually get down to work we need first to make sure that this trim waste is well and truly chopped finely (for example with scissors). In this way the crystals will more easily drop free from the waste at the moment that they freeze.

Once the trim waste is good and fine, we put it in the freezer so that it is ready to use the moment we get hold of the Ice-olator. We also freeze a load of ice cubes in advance (preferably a good quality), where we can also stick a few cooling bags or blocks as well.

But before we get underway, let me tell you a little about the Ice-o-lator itself. The Ice-o-lator consists of a large bucket (with a 20 to 25 litre capacity), two sieve bags (a rough one and a very fine one), a mixer and a plank.

The first thing we do is to suspend the sieve bags in the bucket, before filling



Once we have allowed the trim waste to become nicely soaked, we put the plank with the mixer back on top of the bucket and we're ready to begin!

this with cold water. If we were to fill the bucket first with water and then try and suspend the bags, then we'd find ourselves with a pretty difficult task, since air gets trapped under the sieve bags and is very difficult to get out, and which makes them bob around in the bucket. As a result the mixer would not be able to turn properly, and it can easily tear the finest sieve. Once the sieves are hanging down nicely, we fold the edge of the bags over the bucket and pull their cord good and tight. This is of great importance, since if the rough sieve bag is not well enough secured to the edge of the bucket, then trim waste can get into the mass of crystals that are accumulating in the fine sieve bag. If this happens then we have to start all over again from the beginning, and that ensures a whole heap of hassle, annoyance and time wasted.

Once the sieve bags are hanging securely in the bucket, first we take the trim waste straight out of the freezer and throw it into the roughest sieve bag. For an Ice-olator of normal format we use about 200 to 300 grams of trim waste each time. Once the trim waste is in the roughest sieve bag, we fill the bucket with water that is as cold as possible. We fill the bucket to around half way with water, since there are also ice cubes and cooler packs going into the bucket too (to keep the water temperature as low as possible), which will raise the level of the water. Many hash makers do not take account of this, leading of course to the bucket overflowing and thus to another pile of trouble. It is also for the same reason advisable to lay a few towels around the edge of the bucket. We are always bound to spill some of the water anyway, and since this has been turned brown by the trim waste and has attached to it a rather

By scrunching and kneading the hash ball we break up the crystals and in doing so release the hash oil, the nederhash will get ever darker in colour and come to smell (for its lovers) divine.



After a considerable amount of churning, the water changes in to a green slurry, which we don't throw away but can save and use as an excellent fertilizer for our marihuana plants.

sieve bags now that these are not sitting snugly against the side of the bucket any more but bobbling against the mixer and its whisks. If this happens, it can turn into a pretty expensive mistake, since the sieve bags are one of the dearest parts of the whole Ice-o-lator set up. The sieve bags are of an unusually good and fine quality – they have to be or they would not be able to catch the THC crystals.

To come back to the hanging of the bags in the bucket, we first suspend the very finest sieve bag in the bucket, then the rougher one. The sieve bags have to hang straight down, so that they are given the optimum amount of space and the THC crystals can easily fall to the bottom. The THC crystals will in a later stage of the process eventually be left behind in the





Once we have let the rough sieve bag become empty for the first time, we take out the trim waste and put this into a tub for convenience. Then we freeze it once again.



Once we have removed the trim waste and the rough sieve bag from the bucket, we let the water in the fine sieve bag slowly drain out.



On the outside we can clearly see the mass of crystals.

In total I run the mixer, with pauses (every 15to 20 minutes) of about 5 minutes, for a good one and half hours.

distincti ve odour, believe me, you'll not want it sloshing all over your floor.

Once we have filled the bucket with water, make sure that the trim waste is well and truly soaked, which will turn it into a nice slurry. It is vital that we keep the water as cold as possible, the ideal temperature being between 3 and 5 °C. In order to create this optimal temperature we use the ice cubes and cooler blocks we previously froze in the deep freeze to make the water as cold as we need. I place the cooling elements between the outer sieve bag (on the outside) and the inside of the bucket. Take care that they stay in their place so that they do not push the sieve bags against the whisks of the mixer. The ice cubes are spread among the trim waste, and since these melt they can not do any damage. I usually let the ice cubes melt first and mix in with the trim waste before I proceed, which takes in total about 10 minutes.

Before we let the mixer start its work, we first have to make sure that this is positioned so that the whisks can turn without restriction. The best way of ensuring this is to bore two holes through a plank and push the arms of the whisks through them. Then we click the whisks in place in the mixer and we can begin. The plank holds the mixer in its place

and thereby also balanced. I used to also bore holes in the lid of the bucket, but this had the drawback that the whisks tended to whirl at a slant, which meant they easily got tangled up with the sieve bags. Besides this damaging the sieves, it could also easily make the mixer overheat.

Once the mixer is whirling, the whisks make sure that the trim waste remains in motion, which in turn means the THC crystals can more easily fall loose and to the bottom of the bags. These THC crystals pass through the rough sieve and are caught in the finest sieve, which we then just have to allow the water to drain from

We do not let the mixer do all its work in one go, but turn it off after 15 to 20 minutes, so that the water comes to rest and give the crystals the chance to fall to the bottom. This also has the advantage of preventing the mixer from overheating.

In total I run the mixer, with pauses (every 15to 20 minutes) of about 5 minutes, for a good one and half hours. Once you have let the mixer run for this long and turned it off, we let the water stand for about a quarter of an hour (so that all the crystals have sunk to the bottom). We then remove the mixer and the plank, so that we can easily remove the sieve bag (which

contains the trim waste) from the bucket. We lift the rough sieve bag carefully up and let the water drain out. Once the water is out of the sieve, we place the sieve and its contents to one side.

We do not throw it away, but freeze it again once more, so that we can put it through the process for a second time. I have sometimes had trim waste in which the crystals were so firmly stuck to the leaves and small buds that they were hard to get out. After I had re-frozen them and put them through the whole process a second time, I noticed that the second time, a lot more crystals had been shaken from the leaves, and they were of outstanding quality too.

Once we have put the rough sieve bag to one side and put its trim waste contents back into the freezer, we take the finest sieve bag out of the bucket and let the water drain out of this too. This will take a bit longer, since the sieve is so much finer, which makes it harder for the water to pass through. In any case, do not try to speed up the leaking away of the water by squeezing the bag. If you do this, the water with the floating THC crystals in it will be forced up, which will spread the THC crystals all over the sieve bag where





With the aid of a small spoon we scrape the mass of crystals together. This is much easier than trying to do it with our fingers.

it will stick. Once this has happened, it is almost impossible to get the crystals out of the bag.

We therefore let the water drain out in its own time. One method we can use to speed this drainage up a little bit is to grasp the sieve bag in two hands and to repeatedly rock it with our hands, gently moving first the right and then the left hand up and down. Doing this will make the mass of crystals move on the bottom of the sieve bag from left to right, which will give the water more openings in the sieve through which it can seep.

Once the water has drained away, we fold the sieve bag in half, so that the mass of crystals is surrounded by gauze (from the sieve). Now we lie the gauze between a thick layer of serviettes or towels and stand on top of it. By the weight of us pressing it, the rest of the water is squeezed out of the sieve bag and so out of the crystal mass too, so that finally there is nothing left in the sieve bag except a brown substance, the crystal mass. This pure blob of THC crystals can most easily be removed from the sieve with the help of a small spoon. It is certainly easier than doing it with your hands.

There is a certain art to squeezing the quantity of scraped and spooned THC crystals into a ball. Especially in the beginning it looks as if it is not going to work and will merely be another exercise in frustration. This is a fair assumption, since the temperature of the THC crystals is much too low for them to be able to start sticking together. It is far better to start by placing the THC crystals on a plate, so that the temperature of the crystals rises so they stick to each other better and we can form them into a single ball more easily. We can also stick the plate in the sun briefly, or above a radiator

While I am letting the mass of crystals rise to a decent temperature, I tip the bucket of water onto my other marihuana plants. The brown and sometimes even green-coloured water is an outstandingly good fertilizer for marihuana plants; they are crazy about it!

Once we have emptied the bucket, we can start again from the beginning. I personally find the work most pleasant when we fill the bucket again with cold water than if we have to put the sieve bags back into the same water (from the



Never let the hash crystals stand too long in the sun (or on central heating), or the accumulation of crystals will dry out too much and then it will be hard to press them into a ball.

work has gone into producing it. In

addition, drying the hash balls properly

has the advantage that we can then store

them for long periods of time. Since the

quality is so extraordinarily good that we

royal joint with, it is handy if we can store

need just a small amount to roll a right







With some varieties of hash, it can be impossible to knead the mass of crystals into a single ball. Sometimes a plastic bag (or cellophane wrapper) bring about a change

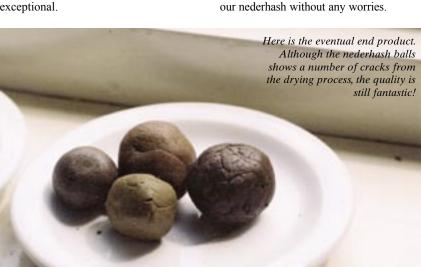
previous time). Filling the bucket afresh, having first hung the sieve bags in it, has the big advantage that there will be no air pockets under the bags.

Once the sieve bags are again hung in the bucket and this has been filled again with cold water and ice, we take the sack of trim waste back out of the freezer and empty it back into the sieve bag, and the whole process can be done again.

When we have the mixer turning again, make sure to keep a close eye on the mass of crystals that you placed on a plate in the sun or over a radiator; the crystals can dry out and/or discolour very quickly. If the crystals are allowed to dry out too much it can be a hell of a job getting them to stick together into a single ball, and if it happens you are best off adding a little moisture back to them so that you have a second chance at it.

By scrunching and kneading the hash ball we break up the crystals and

in doing so release the hash oil, the nederhash will get ever darker in colour and come to smell (for its lovers) divine. I repeat this kneading of the hash ball several times, and in this way make sure that pretty much all the crystals are broken up, and the quality becomes exceptional.



The sieve bags are of an unusually good and fine quality – they have to be or they would not be able to catch the THC crystals

Once you have kneaded a lovely, round ball of nederhash, place this in the freezer for a few hours. By freezing the ball of nederhash any final traces of water are forced out and remain on the outer surface as a layer of ice. Once we take the ball out of the freezer, this ice can be easily wiped away and we will have removed pretty much all the moisture from the hash ball.

It is still very important to leave the hash ball in peace to continue to dry out further at its own pace, in order for the hash to develop a good taste – plus it will also smoke more smoothly. Never stick the hash balls straight into a plastic bag as the chances of condensation are still high, and if this happens, then the risk of mould (yes, the hash balls can go mouldy) is considerably increased.

Drying out the nederhash balls completely is of great importance, as nederhash that has not been properly dried is anything but a nice smoke, and that would be a crying shame if we consider how much

During the drying of the balls of nederhash, you will notice that the hash pretty soon begins to crack as it dries out. It is important that we continue to keep squishing and kneading the ball into a round shape, as long as there are still cracks to be seen. If we do not, then the hash also dries out in the inside and eventually the ball will fall apart.

Over a period of use the water will cease to dribble out of the sieve bag, or it will seem to take an eternity before it is finished. At a certain moment the water may seem to have stopped coming out, especially when we use the finest bags, and be taking forever. To prevent this it is important that you clean the sieve bags well with alcohol. This is available at every pharmacy and as far as I know it is the only substance that will get rid of the deposits of hash. Most growers use alcohol to clean their trimming shears and other tools during harvest, when they can often become coated with hash. This is also the reason that we use alcohol

to regularly clean our sieve bags with alcohol. It works best when we splash some alcohol on a plate and dip the underside of the sieve bag (where the hash accumulation is) in this. We let the alcohol work its way in, so that the hash deposit is well worked loose. Once this has happened, we can rinse the sieve well in warm water. Do this very carefully as we do not want to face the consequences of next time, and the near 100% alcohol coming into contact with the sieve full of crystals!

I hope those of you who love a good piece of hash have enjoyed this article, and I'll finish by wishing all Soft Secrets readers,



It is important that we clean the sieve bags regularly with alcohol. In this way we can prevent the sieve from becoming blocked so that next time we use it the water will not dribble out.

growers and anyone else in the green business a good new year, and a 2005 that will be rich in blooms!





Menu a la carte: 100% pure Nederhash!









UNDERWORLD

A commentary concerning trade in cannabis in the light of semi-organised crime in the Netherlands and the UK. The purpose is to sketch a realistic view of the people in the illegal circuit, who are responsible for a fair amount of hash and weed on the market. From the big boys to the small fry: Soft Secrets' special reporter, Charlie Stone tries to uncover all the facets within this 'underworld'.

By Charlie Stone By Charlie Stone

Part 10 Nol van Schaik's story

A daring escape



Nol van Schaik (l) with Soft Secrets UK editor Clifford Cremer at the recent Highlife fair Barcelona

Nol van Schaik is a well known cannabis activist and owner of several coffeeshops in the Dutch town of Haarlem. Van Schaik recently was arrested in Spain and extradited to France for an old warrant that was still outstanding. After a couple of weeks in jail the French judge decided, much to Nol's relief, that procedural errors were made and Nol was henceforth released. But what was it that warranted his arrest in the first place? This is Nol's story, as told in his own words to Soft Secrets crime reporter, Charlie Stone.

Nol: "I worked as a builder until I was about 23 and then I started my own sports school. With hindsight, I can see that I had reached too high too soon. I was much too young to take on so much and I was declared insolvent six times trying to get that sports school off the ground. At one stage I was in so much debt that the only way out was to commit a crime. So I robbed a bank. The job went smoothly but had not brought in enough to cover my debts, so together with an acquaintance. I robbed another bank. This time I had enough to pay off all my debts, but my accomplice was so proud of the deed that he could not resist bragging about it to everyone, including all the details. Consequently it was only a few weeks later that we were both arrested. I was convicted and was given four years which I served in the Koepel in Haarlem." (The Koepel is a well known Dutch prison - Ed)

"Whilst I was out on parole, I was approached by an acquaintance - let's call him Tony - who asked me if I could customise a camper van to hold 400kilos of hash. I am quite a handyman, so I

knew I was able to do such a job, I just wanted it to be worthwhile and so I asked for a fee of five thousand guilders (about 3000 pounds) which was agreed on. I started working on that camper van and created all manner of stash places for the hash within the bodywork. I had been given the measurements for the hash packages from Tony so that when I removed the inner walls, I could mark off precisely measured areas before insulating the whole thing. I was to receive my fee when Tony returned from Morocco where he had arranged to pick up the hash. I found it all a bit dubious, but as Tony had no money I had no option but to wait. So - he left for Morocco in the camper van."

"On the very last day of my parole, I received a frantic phone call from Tony in Morocco. Apparently he could not get the stash places open in the van and had no idea how to pack them in either. Would I please come to Morocco and sort it out myself? I had absolutely no desire to get involved, but when Tony bumped my fee up to fifty thousand guilders, I thought it might be okay.

A heavy argument could be heard coming from their hotel rooms later that evening. It seems they were trying to rip each other off whilst still in Morocco and before the stash had even been packed!

He had already booked me a ticket and arranged everything. I decided to go ahead with it, primarily because I could really have used the money! By the 2nd of September, I was officially declared a free man so on the 3rd of September I was on a plane to Tangiers, dreaming of the coffeeshop I would open with all that money. It was still possible in those days! I got onto that plane and got off in the noble town of Meknes in Morocco.'

Dysentery

"On a farm somewhere in the middle of nowhere, a huge stash of hash lay waiting and I got to work immediately on arrival. It soon became apparent that only 200 kilos of the 400 kilos were going to fit into the camper. Because of the all the tape covering the packages, the stash places were too small to take the whole load. Tony had obviously got his measurements wrong. We could not discard the additional tape off the packages either as that would result in an overwhelming smell. Our load was suddenly reduced to half.

"There were also four of us in Meknes; Tony and myself, plus the driver and his girlfriend. They would be driving the van back to the Netherlands and I was planning to fly back. Meanwhile, Tony had a partner back in the Netherlands who was supposed to stay in the Netherlands. Would you believe it, one evening I was taking a stroll through the shithole that is Meknes, when who should I come across but the very partner who against all agreements had come to Morocco anyway. A heavy argument could be heard coming from their hotel rooms later that evening. It seems they were trying to rip each other off whilst still in Morocco and before the stash had even been packed!

"To keep a long story short, these two no longer trusted each other and did not want to lose sight of each other. Tony asked me if I would agree to ride back with the load to keep everything under control. I hesitated until they offered me 50 kilos as my reward and I thought, 'Bloody hell, if I don't do it, this load won't go anywhere and I won't get anything at all.'

"So fine, now there are five of us in the camper and we drive to Ceuta to catch the boat to Spain. Fortunately there were hardly any controls in place at the harbour and we made the crossing with no problems. In Spain we drove straight on toward the French border. also without any problem - besides the

uncomfortable fact that I had developed dysentery and so had the squits real bad. And so we arrived at the French border in a small town called Le Boulou, not far from Perpignan.

"We had decided to let just the driver and his girlfriend cross the border with the camper van and that we would follow in a taxi. We arranged to meet up at the first petrol station or parking place inside France. The camper van crossed the border with no problem leaving the three of us behind, along with our bags etc and so we ordered a taxi to take us to the border crossing. We must have looked highly suspect at the border point. Imagine three burly Dutch guys taking a Spanish taxi into France. We were asked to leave the taxi to be searched. Every bag and pocket was thoroughly searched, but we did not have anything with us, so that was no problem."

Customs

"As we were leaving I overheard one of the Customs officers telling the taxi driver to take the next slip road off the highway and return to La Boulou, and let us call a French taxi. So we drive off and as we reach the turn off, Tony tells the driver to continue to the petrol station. I asked him: 'What do you think you're doing?' And he replied: 'What difference does it make for this last bit?' And so we drove on to the petrol station. The turn off was placed within sight of French Customs, about 1200 metres further up, but the taxi had driven on and indeed at the first petrol station, we saw our camper van. The taxi stopped and I said to the other two: 'Hey guys, don't rush up to the van immediately; go into the

"However, as I was paying off the taxi, I see Tony - the Brain - rushing up to the van and tossing his bags into the back of it. Just at that moment the Customs officials arrived with their car onto the parking lot. They had come after us as the taxi had not taken the turn off. When they saw Tony jumping into the van they rushed right up to him. Four Customs officials all pulling out their pistols.

"We all had to get into the van and the driver was made to return to La Boulou with a gun to his head. Once there, the driver and his girlfriend were taken away for questioning whilst the three of us were made to sit on the roof of a car. Then they went through all our papers, drivers licence, passports etc. Then we were made to strip off so that they could look up our backsides too. Suddenly we were more than highly suspect.

"Next thing a bus load of French berettype guards arrive with a bunch of tools to rip open the camper van. Within fifteen minutes, the van had been ripped to pieces and one of the berets starts shouting: 'Hash! Hash!'

"Shortly before that moment I had already warned Tony that if it looked like they were likely to arrest us, I was

Within fifteen minutes, the van had been ripped to pieces and one of the berets starts shouting: 'Hash! Hash!'

going to stomp my way out of there as I would rather be shot down than have to go behind bars again. He had said he would do the same. One of the Customs officials approached me with a pair of handcuffs. I pushed my hands forward as if I were giving up but at the moment he touched my wrists, I gave him an enormous head butt and pulled myself free. I started running. Later I was told that shots had been fired at me, but at that moment I heard nothing. Probably due to the adrenaline. I was jumped by a few of the other guys but just kept running. We had all fallen over together and so I had managed to pull away and keep running.'

Gorge

"I ran like a crazy man and came across a building site which was closed off by a huge fence. My clothes had been literally ripped from my body, so I was just in my jeans. I ran up to the fence and started climbing it and ran like hell again on the other side. I heard later that shots had been fired at me whilst I was struggling to clear the fence. I was trying to reach the bushes behind the fence as I was hoping they would extend into woodlands. This turned out to be a huge mistake - that sturdy fence was not put there for nothing.

"It became like cartoon action - I was running straight on and suddenly there was no ground under my feet any more and I plummeted straight down. It seems I had run into a deep gorge. I fell quite some distance - it was unreal. About halfway down I got caught on a tree, fortunately, as that broke my fall. When I was finally lying still, I realised to my great joy, that nothing had been broken. But I was a mess; my skin was torn open from head to toe and there was blood everywhere. I had a huge hole in my knee, but for the rest I was just covered in big bruises and scrapes. I stumbled down the remainder of the steep slope and at the bottom, I hid amongst the

"Once there, I stopped to catch my breath. I knew I had lost the Customs

guys for now. That gorge was so steep that they had not dared to come after me. Later in the day I made my way back in the direction of the border point and from a safe distance on the next hill I could see all the activity going on down there. Vans riding up and down, loads of cops walking around with dogs.

"I made my way back into the woods and came across an abandoned race course, for greyhounds or suchlike. By happy coincidence, a large pickaxe had been left lying around and so I used it to smash open one of the cubicles standing there that must have been used by the dog owners to groom their dogs. I climbed inside and found a few items that would come in useful later - a pair of pliers, a packet of biscuits and a screwdriver. I quickly pulled on the large green overall that had also been left lying there"

Highway

"That evening I walked back to the parking place. I knew I had to get on the highway. I had to be very careful, of course, because I knew they would still be looking for me. Once in a while I saw a Customs van drive by, but it seems they had lost all trace of me.

"So there I am, in the middle of the night, walking to that parking lot and then lying in the bushes for a long time, in the hope that a truck would stop that I could duck into.

"After a while, a truck did stop - a Scottish rig. The driver got out and took a long piss. I had no other choice but to walk straight up to him. He got the fright of his life when he saw me standing there covered in filth and blood with the strange overall on top. I explained that I had had some problems and that I needed to get away from there as soon as possible and asked if I could perhaps ride with him. He was full of suspicion when he looked at me and told me to 'Come back early in the morning. I am going to get some sleep now.'

"So that was of no use to me.

"Some time later, a Dutch freight truck stopped. It could not have been better. The name of the company was written on the side, Geris in Den Dungen - I remember that very well. Sure you can write that down, I am not worried. At least then the driver will know who shat all over the back of his truck! Ha ha!

"It was one of those trucks with a trailer covered in tarpaulin. I saw no point in speaking to the driver so I just loosened some of the elastic bands on the back and crept inside. The trailer was empty except for a few empty pallets, so it was ideal. I made a crude shelter from the pallets with the help of the screwdriver and pliers I had picked up. I pushed the pallets against the wall and lay underneath them. I was soaked to the bone and deadly cold, but at least I had managed to get away unseen. And all that time, I was still shitting constantly due to the dysentery. Once we were on the road, I opened up some of the elastic bands at the side of the tarpaulin so that I could hang my backside out over the back and just let it rip. The diarrhoea spread itself all over the road, but some of it but some of it managed to stay on the truck. I'm sure the driver noticed it later. Ha ha!

"I must have been in that trailer for at least 36 hours. Without food or water and that was the worst because I was totally dehydrated from all the shitting. All that I had was the biscuits I had found in the dog cubicle. I took a peek at the driver through a crack in the tarpaulin, when we stopped at a petrol station. He looked like a real old fashioned bloke with his conservative haircut, wearing one of those checked lumberjack shirts. I knew right away there was no chance of explaining my story to him - it would be too much for him. So I stayed where I was and tried to make myself as comfortable as possible. Not an easy task, because believe me after a few hours in the back of one of those trailers and your kidneys are ready to pop. Plus it was filthy dirty, an unbelievable mess.

Freedom

"We drove on through the whole day and in the evening we stopped again. The driver slept twice for a full eight hours but I stayed where I was for the entire journey. It would have been far too risky to move. Once we were on the road again, the following morning, I peeked outside and saw that the road signs were in French. 'Oh shit - we are still in France!' was my first thought. Or had the driver turned around again? I knew nothing and nearly panicked. When I took another look some time later, I noticed that the road signs were in fact different and that we were probably in Belgium. So everything was all right. We arrived in Maastricht the same day. I had reached the Netherlands, but I still wasn't ready to leave the vehicle. I staved where I was until we reached Den Dungen and just as the truck slowed to enter the company's premises, I quickly slipped off the back.

"In Den Dungen, I went into a bank to change the few pesetas I still had with me. People in the bank gave me the strangest looks - it was as if they had seen a ghost. As I left there, I caught sight of my reflection in a shop window. I hardly recognised myself with my face blackened with dirt and the astonishing amount of weight I had lost. I went to a supermarket and bought some fruit juice and some yoghurt and then caught the bus to Den Bosch. From there I got a train back to Haarlem.

"The police in Haarlem let me know that there was an extradition order for me from France, but that I did not have to worry too much about it because it was unlikely that it would get that far. Tony, his partner, the driver and his girlfriend each got five years, of which they had to sit four years in a French prison before they were allowed back in the Netherlands. I was also given five years in absentia, and now, almost 14 years later, they are still likely to come banging on the door of the Justice Department.

I had already warned Tony that if it looked like they were likely to arrest us, I was going to stomp my way out of there as I would rather be shot down than have to go behind bars again















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Jungle Fever, London

Back in early 2000, Martin was a builder-plasterer who liked to grow a bit of his own, and annoyed that his local South London grow shop – The Five Weights – always seemed to be shut when he needed it. The shop duly closed, and when Martin passed one day that Summer to see the new owners removing the stock, he decided he could do a better job. A deal was struck and Jungle fever came into being.

Business has been good since the early, near stock-less days, when Martin sold aquariums and fish to make ends meet. But today it's booming – and they still stock the fish. "They go well together, don't they? Fish tanks and hydro," he says.

Jungle Fever now has two full and one part time staff members to help him manage.

Packed into two shop fronts totaling about 150 square meters inside is a huge range - of nutrients, growing media and systems - extending from top of the range equipment to second hand gear, to custom-built cabinets with just one day delivery.

Talking of which, Jungle Fever offers a discrete delivery service (free in South London), and as much help as you need in setting up. As of March 2004, there is a fully-functional web store (www.jungle-fever.co.uk) that you can order everything

and pay by Paypal. The real life store also takes credit cards as of recently.

This twin emphasis on very good personal service and massive stock is proving a winning formula, and this year they added 'innovation' to the killer mix: their own exclusive product. An anti-mite powder (called Killermite), it is diluted for use in the veg phase or to one week in flower to nukes any mites, larvae and eggs - with no repeat infestation. "It's *very* good gear," says Martin. "Blows all the others on the market away."



Jungle fever

85-87 Lee High Road, Lewisham • London SE13 5NS Tel: +44 (0) 20 8318 9919 • www.jungle-fever.co.uk Open: Tue-Fri 9.30-17.00; Sat 9.30-16.30; Thur 14.00-19.00.

Colchester Hydroponics, Colchester

From the moment you start talking to Gavin, owner of Colchester Hydroponics, it's apparent that you're talking to a man on a mission; a mission to make life – well, just plain nicer. It's not just the enthusiasm that the former tree surgeon and qualified arborist brings to discussing his stock, his business and growing philosophy. He also spent his recent years organising raves, parties and running a record shop and otherwise bringing top choonz to the good folk of East Anglia.

Then in March 2003 he decided to re-activate his professional interest in horticulture by opening a grow shop on the outskirts of Colchester (there's parking for 3,000 cars!). How was the fit between his knowledge of trees and the smaller shrubs we all prize so dearly? "Oh, trees, plants – they're all pretty much the same, y'know. Plus I'd been growing myself on hydro and later, organically in soil for years," he says. It's this combination of enthusiasm and hard-won experience that has created great word-of-mouth for the shop, and business has been getting better and better. But Colchester's attraction is also the 1000 square feet of converted warehouse devoted exclusively to growing tech and supplies – that and the five grow rooms running around 15 systems (demonstrating hydro, soil and coco) at any one time.

In stock he has all the usual suspects: Vitalink, Bio Bizz, Canna, Bio Nova, Earth Juice, the full Essentials and GHE ranges, and so on, plus literally anything else that is

available in the business can be ordered rapidly and delivered. His customers tend to come from a 25-mile radius that takes in such towns as Ipswich, Bury St. Edmunds, Clacton, and





Harwich, along with a thriving mail order business and humungous (and at 650 pages, comprehensive) web site slated for launch in December. Gavin prides himself on giving honest advice to newbies, who he will try and steer towards learning their craft organically and small-scale on a small plot of soil, even at the expense of dashing their over-ambitious dreams of a full-on hydro plantation from day one. It's a message that is falling fertile ground, he reckons. "Most growers around here are into the organic, soil-based approach."

Colchester Hydroponics,

Unit 44 • Block A, The Cowdray Centre • Cowdray Avenue • Colchester, Essex CO1 1BH • Switch, Mastercard and Visa accepted.

Tel: +44 (0) 1206 544566 • www.colponics.co.uk

Hydrolight, Nottingham

This family-run establishment was set up in 2001 by Ken and his missus as a one-stop shop for all their customers growing needs, and they'd like to take this opportunity to say thanks to all those who have supported them since then.

Ken has extensive growing experience both indoors and outdoors, as well as a wealth of advice on pest control and other growing issues, and his knowledge is freely-given to all levels of grower. He is excellent at diagnosing diseases and pests, and offering sound advice for their combat, even over the phone.

These days Hydrolight is a busy shop stocking lighting, nutrients, additives, boosters, growing media, seeds, carbon filters, tanks, cloning lights, etc. Situated on the outskirts of Nottingham, just off the A52 and M1, there is ample parking and discretion is guaranteed. "Come to Hydrolight and we'll do our utmost to sort you out with the system that suits your need," says Ken, "and we can all grow together!" Ken's growing philosophy is: "Keep it simple when you start and learn to grow what you grow well." Trendwise, these days he says he's seeing a big return to natural-growing plants raised on coco and clay pebbles, thanks to their low maintenance,

cost-effectiveness and that fact that your garden is re-usable.

This is most definitely one of those 'pop in for a friendly chat' establishments, welcoming of the city's students and with sharp prices to match.





Hydrolight



Hydrolight UK Ltd.

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A very talented innovator

Filipino farmer So Quick

So Quick is an exceptionally talented cultivator hailing from Olongapo City in the Philippines. He is always coming up with innovative ideas that prove to be extremely useful to both starters and professional cultivators.



By making a few personal adjustments to any of the many hydroponic systems available, he shows that outstanding harvests can be easily achieved. So Quick is bursting with tips and info and in this Soft Secrets' exclusive he shows how his system operates, from start to finish. But things do not always run smoothly!

By Bart B.

Let's start with the assurance that anyone can make this kind of cultivation construction. No specific building skills are required. The first requirement will be a number of trestles, those things they use in the construction trade to saw wood on and support table tops. They can be found just about anywhere. The number you will need depends on the quantity of plants that you want to place. Next to those, you will need some planks that are just wider than a bucket to prevent accidents. Nail the planks ends to the trestles. You can place the planks close to each other or somewhat apart, this depends on the growth period you

With a shorter growth period and small plants, it is not necessary to have too much of a gap between planks. Bear in mind that plants grown with hydro are generally smaller and stockier. The length of the plank depends on the size of your room and the number of plants. I use planks that are 2.5 meters long with nine buckets to each plank. After nailing the planks in, place the buckets. You can place these directly next to each other as a bucket has a broader rim than most plant pots.

Feeding and draining

Next its time to install the distribution lines to the buckets, the place where the water runs away after feeding the plants. Use T joints, one for each bucket. For clarity – refer to the photos. Now you can connect all the buckets with tubing. Only use an L-shape join for the buckets at the end of the lines. These have only one possibility for connecting the tube as opposed to the T joints which allow for tube on two sides. Once you are finished with the connecting, you can fill the buckets with any medium that is suitable to hydro cultivation. As you can see from the photos, its all starting to look quite cosy. Another tip – in order to slip the tube easily over the joint, it is useful to soak the tube in warm water first. Then they just slide on real easy. Otherwise you can go crazy with so many tube connections!

Time to select the best clones to place in the system! Use one cutting per bucket. After you have planted in all the clones you can turn on the food line. I use long pins to secure the food lines at about half way down the bucket. That ensures that the food reaches the right place. When I used short pins before, they would go awry, with half of the food ending up on the floor instead of in the bucket. This system works like a drip system except that instead of a continuous feeding process all day, here the food is only distributed in spurts a few times a day. Now all the work has been done. Simplicity itself hey!

Just as in every hydro system, you must connect the tubes to the reservoir. I use a 200L reservoir. So how does it all work? The nourishment runs from the reservoir through the tubes to the buckets. The food is administered three times a day for ten minutes at a time and once at night for five minutes. During the summer I feed them five times per day. The food runs into the bottom of the bucket, through the tubes and back to the reservoir. Then later, the whole process is repeated. I prefer to use 'general hydroponics' food and keep the pH to six.

The growth

After a weeks growth, you will definetly notice a difference but by then the plants have just started to absorb the nourishment properly and so will now start to grow incredibly quickly. The advantage of a bucket is that it allows the roots plenty of room to spread and that is enormously important to a good return. Never limit a plant in its root growth! Sometime later and things start to look really bushy. The plants have shot up considerably. Its starting to look like a small jungle in there. Before I forget, I must state that the plants were tipped after the first weeks growth. Also that these are Sugar Blossoms, an especially sweet weed as the name suggests.

There are no complaints with what they can return either. After three weeks of growth, the flowering period can start and here I will jump rapidly forward to the third week of the flowering phase. It looks wonderful! The plants are rapidly developing buds and have spread out throughout the available space. The buckets and food lines can no longer be seen. The only thing that meets the eye is buds, buds and more buds! It looks like its going to be a very rewarding harvest!.













The cultivation system built by So Quick

The plants are getting a full blast of light from three 1000 watts lamps suspended from light rails. This system makes one lamp do the work of two. The lamp is automatically moved and so shines on twice as much surface area. These lamps have the added advantage in that they are strong enough to penetrate the leaf cover

and so also to sufficiently reach those buds closer to the bottom of the plant. The only maintenance requirement with this system is to fill the reservoir with food occasionally and to keep the pH stable at the desired value. This happens once every three or four days. After only a week or two of growth I can reap 42 - 56 grams per plant with this system. Actually its is more like one weeks growth because the clones need the first week to adjust to the system. This can also be stimulated by letting them grow well in advance of transplanting them in the system. In total I have 54 plants. It is easy with this system to maintain a continuous harvest. That means harvesting every other week. To achieve that you do need both a grow room and a flowering space.

Cuttings

And of course you will need some cuttings. Always make sure that you have more than enough so that you can select the best. I have nine buckets per plank and two rows. Therefore I prepare 25 clones. I will actually only be using eighteen of these but in order to choose from the best I make more than I need. I always grow my mother plants up from seed. In that way I always can make clones to cover my needs plus I can choose for the best plants. The usefulness of investing wisely in mother plants becomes more and more evident. Even when you can obtain high quality clones from a supplier, it is recommended to have your own mothers. Generally speaking, the closer to the source (the mother) the better the quality of the

I grow them up for two weeks in the growth room and thereafter into the buckets in the flowering room.

Transporting is extremely easy when using this system. Every bucket is independently placed, only the tubes have to be moved. Easy as a child's game. Now is also the time to make new clones and place another bucket into the grow room for its two week growth phase. And then everything starts all over again.

The cloning takes approximately two weeks so that you can then place the grown up clones from the grow room to the flowering room whilst you once again let the new clones take root. When the first set of plants has eventually completed their flowering, after about eight weeks of the flowering phase, it only takes another two weeks before the following set of plants is ready for harvest too. Another two weeks later and the next set of plants will have finished flowering. And so it becomes a continuous process. Just until you decide to stop making clones and then the whole system eventually stops. You are also free to choose the amount of time between harvests. You can harvest every day, every week or every month. Its up to you. Allow a bit of time for the initial start up of the system because you have to allow for the full flowering phase of the first plants. Thereafter you can choose the amount of time between harvests. This continual harvest system does require extra labour, because if you are only harvesting every two months,



The system is working at full tilt and the ladies have just a week of growth behind them



Two weeks later and its already a jungle

The only maintenance requirement with this system is to fill the reservoir with food occasionally and to keep the pH stable at the desired value.



Mmmmm – nice



The ladies have been blooming for a full two weeks. The bud development is going well.

there are always some days when you will have nothing to do and that is not a good method with a system of continual harvest. It would only upset your planning. Just thought I'd let you know.

Harvest

Returning to the flowers. The Sugar Blossoms are now into their fourth week of flowering. A small problem has developed that will certainly affect the harvest. The pH dropped to 4.6. Usually at this stage, the pH is pretty stable so I only checked it later. Plus I was trying out a new brand of food so I should have kept a better check on the pH. The hairs are beginning to darken whilst the buds are still filling out. It is always amazing how when you think you know what you're doing, thats when you make a mistake. Unfortunately the quality and the return will both suffer for it. Well shit happens, especially when you're trying out new products.

In the meantime, it's time to harvest and the buds are neatly arranged next to each other in a row. Although they do look good, I know they could have been better. These buds never really got the chance to fill out completely. I have only harvested the tops and left the smaller buds below still on the plant to let them ripen a bit longer. In this way I hope to make up some of the loss in weight. Happily, my next batch of clones also needed a bit more time for good growth so it actually worked out okay. These plants might not have blossomed to their full potential but they were still really fine. I am curious as to how they will perform next time under optimal conditions. The weight of my second harvest (all the small buds) came to a total of 1750 grams. I am satisfied with this as I had expected the loss to be greater. Usually my return comes in between two and three kilos.

Conclusion

In conclusion we asked So Quick a few questions. Our first was the why and how of his cultivation experiences. "Six years ago, I began growing some for myself, friends and family. Some of my friends were faced with medical complications which motivated me to keep producing the best quality marijuana. In addition I have a fascination for the whole process of



Two weeks later.
Only fantastic buds to be seen



The second harvest of the tops that had been given extra time

growing and blooming, from start to finish, germination through to harvest. It gives me enormous pleasure to grow a tiny fragile seedling up to a wonderfully potent plant."

Which qualities do you look for when selecting a mother?

"I regard myself as a perfectionist and so I try to find the the perfect combination of high return, rapidity of growth and taste and the high of course as the best qualities in a mother. I make exceptions if I come across any unusually interesting plants. If the return is not spectacular but the high and taste are, then I will make a clone or two for special occasions. If a plant is an extremely good producer but the quality is average, then I might use such a plant in a cultivation project. I will work it to make my own special plant, like I did with my very own C99 crossed with AK47.

Does your approach differ vastly from other growers?

"Actually I do what every sensible cultivator does, so no, not. I have just taken things from all the different systems and methods that are available and adapted them to suit my manner of doing things."



The harvest of the best tops

I have only harvested the tops and left the smaller buds below still on the plant to let them ripen a bit longer.

How many systems did you try out before you worked out your system?

"Various, ebb and flow; DWC, SOG style and even one time with soil. That was a first seeing as how I've only ever used hydro systems. So that it doesn't become monotonous, I frequently make changes in style or system. I never stay with one system of growing for long. Of course I always have one system operating and that is my hydro system with the buckets. I rely on this system because it always works well and produces excellent results."

What tips do you have for your fellow farmers?

"Have pleasure in what you do and enjoy all the aspects that belong to the whole process of growing. The rest comes. Learn to look at and to listen to your plants. Believe me, they do communicate with you, every time you go into the room. They will tell you by their burned leaves, 'Reduce the strength of the food', with wilting leaves they tell you, 'I'm not feeling so good', or 'I'm hungry' and with bright green leaves stretching up to the light, 'You're the best', and with fat full thick potent and juicy buds heavy with resin, 'I love you too'.

"Ang makapangyarihan na halaman na nagpapagagaling ng isipan at kaluluwa. Magpakasipag para maging payapa" Translated: "May the power of the plant heal your mind and soul. Grow hard and be free"



Mama Mia!

Soft Secrets goes Italian

Soft Secrets - the legendary cannabis publication from the Netherlands is busy taking on the world. This free sheet not only operates in The Netherlands but in Belgium, England, France and Spain reaching millions of readers every second month.

In the meantime, it has become apparent that the thirst for knowledge about the green gold is growing in Italy too, and who better to serve this dynamic new market than Soft Secrets? The number of grow supply shops in Italy is on the increase and so a solid infrastructure for the distribution of cannabis related products begins to gain status. This new bounty on the Soft Secrets platform offers entrepeneurs booming opportunities in the land of pizza and pasta.

Discover Publisher is proud to have produced the very first Italian Soft Secrets!

Interested persons can contact Discover Publisher BV for more information.

Discover Publisher BV Tel. 0031-(0)73-5498112 Fax. 0031-(0)73-5479732 E-mail: maryjane@highlife.nl



Highlife Cup Winners:

Cristal, from growshop Cristal Garden



Cristal is good for growing in un-enriched soil, such as Lightmix. From the first to the eighth week, keep its EC at a maximum of 1.8 (between 1.4 to 1.8) with a pH of 5.8 until the end of the eighth week. After this, wash for ten days with lots of clean water. Absolutely do not use a shooter! This

would certainly affect the taste, smell and THC-level to the negative. With B'cuzz-nutrient the taste and smell will be enhanced, and it is partly thanks to this that Cristal has so evidently been a prize winner!

Next year for the first time Cristal is being used for outdoor growing. We at Soft Secrets UK - along with the wizards of Cristal Garden – are very

curious to see the results.

The effect of the Cristal is nicely stoned and the taste somewhere in the region of sublime. There are people who have used Cristal with good results

winning, the still young Cristal Garden company has placed itself firmly on the international cannabis map. Cristal is a hybrid developed by Cristal Garden with enormous potency. That is not so crazy if you look at the genetic material with which this sensational, winning cross was made: with ancestors such as NLX (70%) and White Widow (30%) you can expect dynamite, and that's just what they got!

would certainly affect the taste, smell and THC-level to the negative. With form can be grown with a minimum of

organic fertilizer!

During the last Highlife Fair in Holland, the Cristal Garden growshop from the Dutch town of Geldermalsen walked away with no less than three Highlife Cups: two 2nd prizes for NLX and White Widow, and a 3rd prize for their Haze

Nederhash. An indirect fourth success for Cristal Garden was achieved by De Vrolijke Gaper coffeeshop from Gorkum, with its Cristal. With all this prize

Yields are heavy, which makes Cristal not only a good choice for the connoisseur; commercially too this variety offers a lot of opportunity. The average grower will get about 0.8 grams per Watt; for the better growers, ± 1 gram per Watt is certainly achievable. As an illustration: 16 Cristal plants under 1x600Watt lamp produces an average of 40 grams per plant, a total of 640 grams per 600Watter is therefore doable.

At the moment Cristal Garden is hard at work on its seed line, from which of course Cristal was also taken from. The introduction will be at the next Highlife fair, but those too curious to wait can apply directly to Geldermalsen.

For more info: Growshop Cristal Garden, De Chamotte 32, Geldermalsen, The Netherlands. Tel: +31 (0) 345 581336 E-mail: info@cgcompany.nl

A professional patch of Cristal: also commercially interesting!

I'll Take The High Road

The Drug War Is Over – Everybody Lost [from my recent address to the Prophets' Conference in the Oxford University Union]

Tonight, in this historic Debating Union where the Great Issues of the Day, Slavery, Wars and Women's' Emancipation have been argued and decided by the children of the ruling classes, I wish to make an announcement. Though politicians are too busy with their new war to realise it, THE DRUG WAR IS OVER. EVERYBODY LOST.

And now we must begin to NEGOTIATE the terms of the PEACE

To formally end any War, both sides must agree on a COMPROMISE that contains the best of both sides. The Anti-Drug side must accept that 50 years of repression has utterly failed in stopping people taking drugs. And the Legalise All Drugs camp must shelve the Human Right to Inner Privacy issue until a half-way Peace has been agreed, implemented, and bedded down.

My Peace Proposal, then, is that our Society begins to explore a new policy - a Better Drugs programme; one that guides people away from the Narcotic Downer/Upper Drugs and towards the Ancient Wisdom Allies which, as a species, we have valued for at least fifty thousand years. I mean the Psychedelics, Empatheogens, and Tryptamines.

This programme, of course, must also teach Intelligent Use, which means, essentially, instilling a respect, even a reverence, for powerful allies that are more capable of changing your life than the best car chase Hollywood ever produced.

The early difficulty in this campaign is that, soon as anyone voices any kind of pro-drugs position, deeply 'Christianised' type people (and I include all of us to varying degrees) imagine they're doing 'drugs' all the time, maybe even now!

The truth is quite different: generally, the more powerful and life-changing the ally, the fewer times most traditional societies have prescribed them. Indeed, they mostly went for one big psychedelic experience in a lifetime in some kind of Coming of Age Initiation. All the ancient philosophers whom we revere experienced such Initiations at least once, and most did it annually. The crucial point is to establish the Big Picture in your mind, not to keep on taking loadsa drugs.

In the minimum time we have available to heal the present planetary madness, these ancient bio-alchemical allies (together with Music and Sex/Love) are actually the best natural resources available to seriously influence the de-natured viewpoints of huge numbers of people towards rediscovering themselves as a part of Nature and the Earth.

I propose, then, that a Council Of Shamanic Teachers, drawn from various walks of life and cultures, and experienced in giving a positive and practical framework for use of these plants, to develop and test a national Better Drugs Programme.

by Fraser Clark OUR ACCESS ALL LEVELS reporter.

Discounting the Iraq Disaster, the most discussed social issue in western societies is anti-social behaviour. Be it increasing female drunkenness, intellectual alienation, or a kind of smouldering council estate rebellion, the very fabric of social cohesion sometimes seems to be dissolving in the face of consumerism and obsession with self. Modern Man has lost his Soul..

A single example? The government is now touting ASBOs - Anti Social Behaviour Orders which prescribe tagging and home-confinement. The Better Drugs era would offer PSBOs to such hardened cases - Psychedelic Social Behaviour Options – psilocybin therapy offering, instead of further harassment, a real chance to rediscover themselves.

It's time to actively help others to move their life visions beyond alcohol, tobacco, crack, smack and hopelessness to better drugs.

I'm not calling simply for the Wisdom drugs to be legalised. Ultimately I want them Re-Spiritualised, Re-Recognised, and Returned to their place of honour at the spiritual heart of our culture – as in all early societies. And I've personally concluded that the basic underlying problem our planet faces today is the contempt and lack of respect and awe for the Spiritual which these allies can trigger.

I don't expect any of this to come about before Christmas, by the way. But let the Debate begin!

Feeling at home with the clones

By Bart B.

So you've found a top plant from among the various seeds you germinated, and you want to keep this female super plant? Or you want to ensure yourself a fresh supply of high quality clones? Both are possible without any problems, but first you will have to master the art of making clones from cuttings. It is pretty easy to do, as long as you pay attention to a number of important factors.







The first and most important step in making clones is to learn how to spot a female plant with extra special qualities. There is little point in making clones of inferior quality plants, since then you will end up with an inferior quality garden ñ and who wants that? By keeping your standards high you will eventually be rewarded with a generously-yielding growing patch. It is also important in that since we can easily take cuttings, we can also very easily make clones of seed plants and by doing so determine whether these are male or female, because we can make these clones bloom.



A cutting is a side branch or a part of a branch of an existing plant. A good cutting is between 10 - 15 cm long and possesses several leaves. We cut the cutting off at an angle with a knife or razor blade between two leaf nodes.





After having cut our first clones, we have to remove the excess leaves. We make sure that we are left with leaves at the bottom on the lowest 2 cm of the cut clone. This is because the roots develop best at this point; on the wounds where leaves once were, roots most rapidly develop.



Especially when dealing with outdoor plants, it can be the case that the branches have developed a hardened stem. In order to accelerate the formation of roots we can scrape away a thin layer from the lower-most 2 cm with a knife. By doing so we can ensure that the root stimulator we are going to use can more easily penetrate the cutting and do its work.



There are many different sorts of root stimulator available that will help our clones take root. The most frequently used methods are those that involve dunking the ends of the cuttings into liquid root stimulator that has been diluted. After waiting ten seconds or so, the absorption by the clones should be







complete. Or on the other hand, you could use the old-fashioned technique of just dipping the end of the cutting in cutting powder. The lower-most centimetres are covered with cutting powder, making sure that only the sides of the cutting are covered with powder and not the whole cutting, since this risks suffocating the clone. A thin layer of powder is sufficient; too much can be damaging. These days rooting hormones in gel form are also popular and they are getting better all the time. I use a combined method whereby I first dip the clone in liquid root stimulator and after, dip it in cutting powder too.



As the last step we have to put the clones into a medium, and one of the very best for letting clones take root in are cutting blocks made of stone wool. These blocks or plugs let lots of air in, which is just what the cuttings need for making roots quickly. We simply make a small hole in the block and place the cutting into this, without losing too much powder off it while doing so.

We have now arrived at the final stage, in which we will finally get the cuttings to





try and develop roots. In order to speed up the process we can place the clones in a humidity dome. We can easily maintain a high humidity in this, and doing so is important to ensure the clones do not dry out in their first few days. The important factors during the making of clones are warmth and even more so, a warm undersoil. Root temperature is of enormous importance, since warmth stimulates the roots to develop much more rapidly. A warming mat will prove its usefulness. The second factor is air moisture content, and usually the problem of having too much moisture in the air. You have to try and see it from the point of view of a freshly cut clone, which from now on has to supply itself with its own moisture but in order to do so has to first develop its root system.

Only during the very first days do we have to support the clone with a high air moisture content, after which no more. Precisely by allowing the air moisture to fall, we force the plants to send out more roots. Should we not do this then the process will take longer. It so happens that a plant can extract moisture out of the air in order to survive and by doing so hang on for weeks without making any new roots. In the first few days we give the plant a chance to set the whole process in motion. Give it a good (spray) watering just once at the beginning, and after this give the plant no more spraying, as this will only serve to retard the whole process. When you spray it with moisture, make sure to add a root stimulator or some other product that will help the plant in its root production. The plants really will not dry out and they will be much stronger than you think. You then place the plants in to a growth regime of 18 hours light and 6 hours night, or continuous light, achieved by placing them under lights, in sunlight or under sodium lamps. Eventually after one or two weeks you will be able to see tiny white roots growing out of the stone wool blocks, if everything has proceeded

The best way of learning how to make clones is to allow a plant to grow up outdoors in the Spring or Summer months. Thanks to its strong growth you will be able to take many cuttings during the season and make lots of practice attempts. In such a way, one single plant can deliver up hundreds of ëtest clonesí. Do this, and it is guaranteed that by the end of the summer you will have the art of plant cloning firmly under your belt!

By Kristie Szalanski

Coffeeshop Chocolata, Amsterdam

Twenty Years of Toking and Tempting



Some of you may remember when *Soft Secrets* visited coffeeshop Chocolata last summer. For those of you who don't we'd like to introduce you to a friendly shop that is currently celebrating twenty years in the green industry. Chocolata, situated on the Spuistraat very near Dam Square, can easily accommodate your first stop out of Central Station. The space is small, but offers something for most

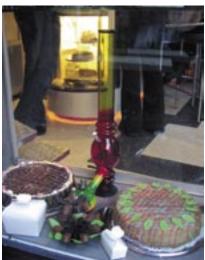
every smoker (except alcohol, which is refreshing.) This is one of the nicer, tidier, more welcoming shops in the area, especially if you consider the high tourist traffic in central Amsterdam. Many businesses skimp on quality or customer service as they won't ever see most of their patrons again, but after twenty years Chocolata remains in another class entirely. For at least the last ten, the shop has been the charge of a gentleman called Vincent, and it's obvious he cares about the shop's consistency. If you've visited before, you may remember (if only vaguely) the fantastic "Inspirational" cakes and chocolates on offer here. First timers definitely should sample some of these space goodies, which are lovingly prepared from scratch and beautifully decorated by local ladies. The tinged treats can be found all over town, but attention to detail and quality has kept Chocolata's reputation at the top regarding baked goods and bon bons. The staff informed me that locals have been hooked for at least seven years, and keep coming back for the exact same secret recipe. Each cake is sliced and packaged fresh per customer, and you can easily wander around Amsterdam toting a box of bon bons. Take it easy, though, as sugar water won't save you from a space cake "whiteout."

If a big fat spliff is more what you're after, the shop is now offering special deals on the smoke menu. Products like the Choco Mist and Choco Skuff are still quite popular, and each time you stop in you could be offered 20% off of Polm or a bulk deal on Purple. The specials change regularly, and are just one example of the newer face of Chocolata. Besides having added some new beverages to the menu, the shop also now displays and sells ceramic and glass bongs, some of which are absolutely huge, and even grinders along with the usual selection of skins and other smoking accessories. Hemp munchies like lollies and "9 Bar" granola bars are now sold, which have no psychoactive effect and make good stocking stuffers. Too bad you can't take a slice of cake home to your sweetheart! Even if you're not interested in any of these products, the glass display also holds magazines for sale such as HighLife, and free local papers that advertise shopping, eating, and nightlife. Either surf the 'net on the new computer, or wander

around the neighbourhood and peruse the inviting cafés, restaurants, and even kinky lingerie shops. The prices in the shop and surrounding area are a bit less expensive than nearby Leidseplein or the Red Light District, and the atmosphere is more universal.

If you travel in the springtime or summer, Chocolata has a modest terrace that seems to attract lots of locals, which is always a good sign, but if you're a cold weather visitor you can get cozy in the cushioned seating area upstairs. It's quiet enough to watch the telly up there or write out postcards, but you can also play darts, and the downstairs has a very social atmosphere when you need a break from stoned solitude. Break out into the fresh air and it's a short walk to the Anne Frank Huis, the Paradiso, and the "Nine Streets," which is a famous shopping area of the city. The Spuistraat itself has an interesting history to investigate, as it is one of the original red light areas in town. Some of the older locals remember these few blocks as the area "where black money goes white," as cash was entered into the mainstream through somewhat illicit activities. Further up the street is the oldest restaurant in Amsterdam, where a Jewish family of eleven was hidden in the basement of the café for three years during the occupation. Chocolata is obviously well on its way to becoming another part of the Spui's interesting history, so make sure you stop by, congratulate them on their twenty years of service, and make this great shop part of your own holiday memories.







Coffeeshop Chocolata

Spuistraat 51 • 1012 ST Amsterdam, NL

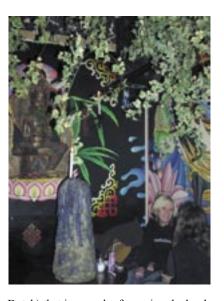
Tel: +31 (0)20 622 6241 • E-mail: chocolata@wanadoo.nl

Open: 11.00 - 24.00 hrs, weekend till 1.00 hrs

The Noon, Amsterdam

My First and One of My Favourites...

Well, there's a first time for everything (insert Red Light joke here) and whether you're a pro or have never smoked before, the Noon coffeeshop is a great place to start your cannabis adventure in Amsterdam. Yours truly actually had her first tolerated cannabis experience in the Noon and I fondly remember my Blueberry spliff, which is still one of their best selling strains. Cannabis Cup veterans may recall the Blueberry placing First in 2000 and Second in 2001. What sets the Noon apart is their unassuming attitude and total lack of arrogance in what is usually a very pretentious industry. Either at the Melkweg during the Cup awards night or at their near-Leidseplein location, you will be welcomed and served at a very high level of quality. The shop is small, but not as tiny as many in Amsterdam, and fits my mental depiction of what a "coffeeshop" should look like. Jewel-toned paintings splash across the walls, complemented by carved wooden dragons, goddesses, and intriguing candlewax stalagmites jutting from several of the tables. The Noon was recently gutted, redecorated, rebuilt, and expanded, and is probably one of the most comfortable coffeeshops in town. Thick cushions line the seats and plenty of soft pillows recline with you. The music volume is always reasonable, and sometimes you can even watch movies with the locals (make sure to order drinks during the adverts if *The Godfather* is on!) A MegaTouch game entertains those too stoned to be sociable, while enjoying a variety of non-alcoholic beverages. The loose tea is varied and tasty, and occasionally hard-to-find soft drinks please the local expats. Drinks and smoke are priced much lower than any of the shops in nearby Leidseplein, and the Noon manages to escape the "in and out" pressure of more commercial locations. Favourites like the Blueberry, White Melon, and Jack Herer are even offered as specials. If you prefer hash, you'll be very impressed with the selection as you can score Afghaan or Manala here, and stronger stuff like Super Afghaan, Super Polm, and Master Noon. For the really adventurous the Noon also sells something called Schaartjes ("scissors" in





Dutch) that is a result of scraping the hard-working trimming scissors in the Blueberry patch. Do your best to find the place, as the sign is painted on the front window and is hard to see with red squinty eyes, but well worth the effort. If you make this your first coffeeshop experience, I promise you won't forget it.

The Noon

Zieseniskade 22 • 1017 PT Amsterdam, NL

website: www.thenoon.net Open daily 9 AM-1 AM.

Rainstick Orchestra

'The Floating Glass Key In The Sky' (Ninja Tune)



This is the debut album of Baku Tsunoda and Naomichi Tanaka, together forming the experimental duo,

Rainstick Orchestra from Tokyo. A gentle, minimalist electronic composition using guitars, piano, bass and sequencers, the album reflects the influence of the likes of Yellow Magic Orchestra, John Cage and Steve Reich; in fact, track six 'Electric Counterpoint Fast', is written by Reich himself. Yet the album does not merely emulate these greats. Delicately textured and colourfully intriguing, whilst it embraces genres such as jazz and tekno, this is a borderless and seamless musical sculpture.

Clown Warfare

'Cocaine and False Promises'



Whilst the album title certainly contains more than a grain of truth, its actual musical content is somewhat more

substantial and reliable. Diverse, intelligent and warped, these are the kind of tunes that are good to hear when you've been up for three days at a free party in the woods, still not ready to go to sleep

Bad bass-lines, twisted breaks and psychedelia collude together creating these old-skool rooted, phuture reaching, festival flavoured sounds. In 'Gangsta Twat' a hardcore bass-line revels deliciously amidst this funky and catchy little number; 'You & Me' is almost reminiscent of the live feel of Hawkwind or Ozric Tentacles. 'Skankin' closes the album on an up-tempo, well danceable

This is definitely music to get absolutely mashed too

Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds

'Abattoir Blues/ The Lyre of Orpheus' (Mute Records)

HOT WAX STONED SELECTION



Given the maverickunfriendly realpolitik of the mainstream music industry over the last few years. Cave has proven

himself an exemplary and enduring figure in the staking out of his own personal odyssey-furrow. And the release of "Abattoir Blues/The Lyre of Orpheus' (a double album with two personalities) will do very little to curtail his 'long walk'.

Where "Abattoir" is an instinctual low-down whiskey-soiled mojo-bag of tarnished blues laments - "The Lyre" is more cerebral: a lit-myth glass-dark jaunt through the ill-winded recesses of Cave's pain-blunted psyche, (although the results are pretty similar). Both albums heave and sigh in cadences of decay and destitution. Recording in a dilapidated Parisian studio with suitably archaic equipment - "The place is worn out - just like us." - Cave has been afforded the perfect bleak sound palate with which to give an update on the true hue of his dim-wicked soul-flicker, which seems to moan: "When you wallow, go the full dollar"

Bad Seeds fans won't be disappointed.

The innocence mission now the day is over' (Agenda)



Inspired by the singing of standards turned into lullabies to her own children, this lush and beautiful album is the latest

offering from Karen Peris of 'the innocence mission'. First surfacing in the early nineties, it is Karen's seductive and distinctive vocal that provides the

outfit's focal point. The accompanying acoustics are light and spacious, mainly centred around the guitar playing of Don Peris(Karen's husband) and piano but also features pump organ and upright bass. This euphonic invocation of sweet dreams includes 'Over The Rainbow', 'Moon River', 'Somewhere A Star Shines For Everyone' and 'Edelweiss' Empathetic and emotional, sad vet not miserable, this unusual album creates your own little fluffy white cloud in which to float away from the big bad world.

Koru 'Trip Funk' (www.cometogetherrecords.com)



globally minded and uniting, uplifting

release comes from the heart of the underground dance scene and goes out to the hearts and minds of all party people.

Embracing a spectrum of styles, the album flows effortlessly from track to track, grooving its way through and merging together dub, electro, hip-hop, funk, tribal, house, trance, progressive and ambient. The result is an energetic and holistic hybrid meltdown. Whilst the albums birthplace is the Brixton party scene, its seeding and gestation is most definitely global, coming from creator Koru's gigs in Brazil, India, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand and Europe. This planetary vibe reflects in the extent of the contributors involved in its making, including musicians, singers and mc.'s with backgrounds from UK, Jamaica, Brazil, Africa, Europe, Arabia and Polynesia. A clarion call for positive ways of being,

the message is clear-many tribes, many vibes, ONE LOVE!

The Freestylers FABRICLIVE 19 (Fabric Records)



The most recent release in the Fabriclive series to hit the deck, a mix up from the Freestylers of some of the most

choice cuts currently around on the British urban breakbeat scene. It features some of the youngest and freshest talents, all regularly championed by the duo in their DJ sets; artists like Napt, The Breakfasters and Baobinga. Kicking off with the Deekline and Wizard remix of The Freestylers own 'Boomblast', the pace is set for a white-knuckle ride through their box, maintaining its energy and enthusiasm to the very last break. Highlights include 'Killer' and 'Put Your Hands Up' recorded under their SCAM guise, Merca's 'Holding On', Jammin's MC led 'Broken Point' and Phuture Assassins 'Forever'.

Hexstatic

'Masterview' (Ninja Tune)



Masters of mashed up funk, Hexstatic, here present an excellent audiovisual package consisting of a CD and a DVD

that comes complete with 3D visuals and a pair of 3D specs. Having gained somewhat of a widespread reputation for presenting live, crazy-cat-comic-caper 3D shows, the Hexstatic duo decided that their second release could only be an AV thang.

Sleazy and acidicly groovy, deep and tuneful, the music never leaves you cold. In the wickedly rhythmic 'Salvador', a phunky, biting percussion flushes and flashes with pure tribal energy. In the accompanying mesmerizing visuals, a percussion playing pineapple head dread and ecstatic carnival dancers leap out enticing your participation and then disappear into a flurry of fractal geometry.

These visuals really need to be seen to be believed- check out this impressive package!







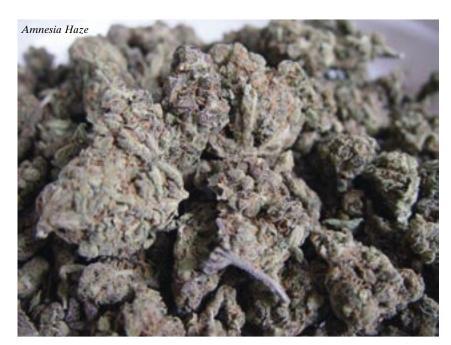








Getting Ready for the Cup





By Soma

Well it's that time of year again, the High Times Cannabis Cup of Amsterdam. This will be my 11th cup and I am definitely in the running.

I, as always have grown this crop 100% biologically using bat and seabird guano. There is a new organic product from America that I really enjoy: it's called Budswel from The Guano Company. It's made from worm castings, seabird guano and bat guano and it mixes in water in a flash. It can be used hydroponically and on soil. I start to apply it in the 3rd week of flowering when the buds are just starting to turn white. I mix 35 ml of Budswel to 10 liters of water with a PH of 6.0. I then give it to the plants every time I water. You can notice a difference in the buds within 3 or 4 days, they are more vibrant and stickier and as time goes by the aroma becomes intoxicating. Sometimes when I enter the room and move past some plants I feel high just from the smell.

It is of utmost importance not to pick your plants early. With this crop I have

waited a full 11 and a half weeks, and am harvesting it perfectly with the waning moon. I wait until about a week after the full moon, I find the trichomes to be more fully developed when this is planned out in my timeline.

I like to rub rolled joints on my live buds coating the outside of the paper with resin. When smoked there is a subtle hashiness in the taste along with an enhanced effect.

It is important not to water your plants too often, roots need to dry out a little too so they can access air. I stop giving the cannabis plants food at the end of the 7th week of flowering, and flush with plain water for the last 3 to 4 weeks. This takes any excess food taste away from the weed so the only thing you end up tasting is the marijuana. I give very little water in the last week, as the plants don't use much. Giving too much water in the last week can cause bud mold.

When I cut the plants down I use a strong pair of plant scissors, I then hang them upside down on a strong clothesline or wire using the crooks of the stalks. I leave them hanging with just the exhaust fan sucking air out through the charcoal filter. This lets them dry slowly with no heaters or dehydrators. Letting the plants dry slowly makes them taste much better and helps them to keep much longer. Drying it fast makes the taste disappear and makes it crumble into dust. It takes 10 to 14 days to dry enough so that the stem snaps. I then start to manicure all the excess leaf off of the buds. I save the fine leaf trim for making water hash. I then place the buds in glass jars or sealing bags and let them rehydrate for 8 hours or so. I crack open the jars and leave them open for a few

hours. I check out the buds and if they are feeling just right, I put them away for a rainy day or in this case for the Cannabis Cup in November.

This year my entries will be Lavender for my indica and Amnesia Haze for my sativa. Totally organically grown, no pesticides, no chemicals. After all I consider this plant to be the sacrament of my religion. I grow it with my heart not just my hands. I am also growing some Buddha's Sister and some New York City Diesel, they always bring a smile to my face.

Growing this Holy plant is great fun and very fulfilling, try it you'll like it.

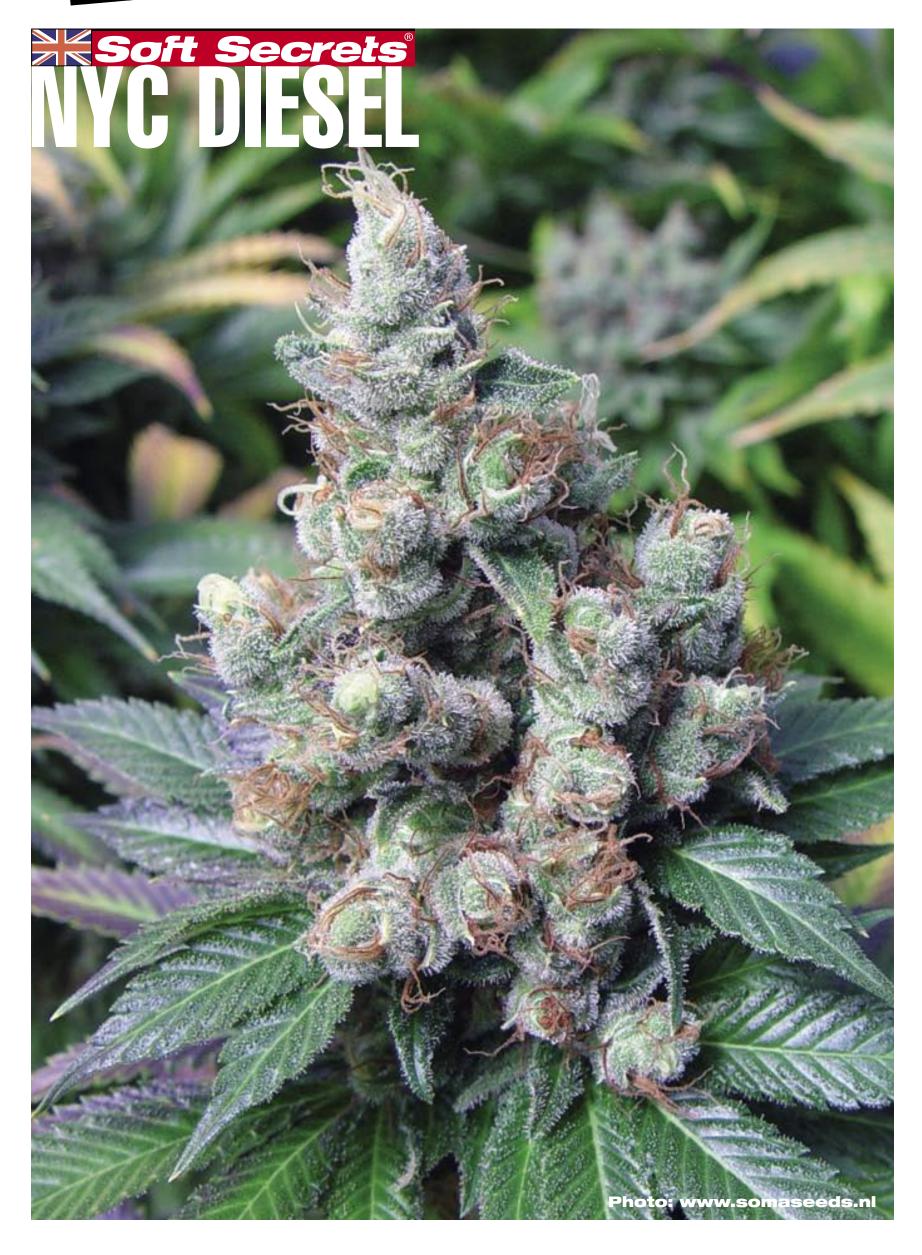
Wishing you a Green future, Love and Light...

Soma









MAN GRE Plymouth Evening Herald Monday 13, September 2004

by CAROL SAUNDERS

Herald Reporter

A CANNABIS user decided to grow the illegal drug as a 'hobby' when he became unemployed, Plymouth magistrates were told.

Neil Stelfox, 36, set up a growing area to cultivate the plant in the loft of his home after using the drug to ease the pain of joint problems, the court heard.

Stelfox, of Maine Gardens, Weston Mill, had just 'harvested' his latest home-grown cannabis plants when he arrived home on January 25 this year to find police searching the premises.

Armed with a drugs search warrant the police officers found evidence all over the house.

In the loft they found a 660 watt power pack connected to the lighting system, a portable air conditioner, insulating material and seed trays.

In a bedroom they found more seed

Downstairs in a hall cupboard they found a bag containing leaf material.

A book on a shelf contained a pressed

Police raid finds cannabis plants worth

cannabis leaf and nearby was a set of notes on how to cultivate cannabis.

Stelfox himself was searched by the police officers who found five cannabis seeds in his wallet.

They also found a total of £215 in cash in the house, and estimated the cannabis harvested on the premises would have been worth £1,900.

Stelfox pleaded guilty in court to a charge of producing the controlled drug between January 2003 and January this

Magistrates heard he had two previous convictions for possession of

cannabis, the last being in the year

In mitigation his solicitor, Richard Speare, said Stelfox had used cannabis for 12 years.

Stelfox suffered from pains in the lower back, knees and other joints and found that cannabis eased the pain and helped him get to sleep at night.

Mr Spear said: "He has had a lot to contend with in his life and cannabis assed his noth.

contend with in his life and cannabis eased his path.

"He had the means to cultivate the plant in his loft. He was unemployed and he looked on this productivity as an interest. It was also a safe way for him to obtain cannabis for his own personal use, and he denies he ever supplied it to others."

He said Stalfor elaimed he had her

He said Stelfox claimed he had harvested just 11 ounces of the plant shortly before police raided his home. He said: "By then he had already

made the decision not to continue with his 'hobby' and didn't plan to grow any more cannabis plants."

Magistrates gave Stelfox a 200-hour community punishment order and told him to pay £138 court costs. They also ordered the forfeiture and destruction of the cannabis found in his home and the items used in its production.

News Letter (Northern Ireland) Tuesday 7, September 2004

Pair appear in court on drugs charges

TWO people from Fermanagh charged earlier this year with a number of drugs offences appeared yesterday at Enniskillen Crown Court.

David Charles Lee, 40, unemployed from Gate Lodge, Greenhill House, Aghnagrane Road, Maguiresbridge, was charged with possession of, intent to supply and cultivating herbal cannabis on January 17.

Also before the court was housewife Sarah Margaret Robinson, 36, of Aghnagrane Road, Maguiresbridge, who also faced charges of possession, intent to supply, cultivation of a cannabis plant and with knowingly permitting the production of herbal cannabis to take place in her home. All charges relate to arrests made on January 17.

Both denied the charges related to intent to supply, but pleaded guilty to the other charges.

At the time of arrests, police officers estimated that the herbal cannabis had a street value of around £82,000.

Both defendants were released on bail, pending pre-sentencing reports and will appear again at the Crown Court on a date to be fixed.

Evening Herald (Dublin) Wednesday 1, September 2004

UP IN SMOKE: New report outlines a litany of risks with drug

CANNABIS is the most widely used illegal drug in Ireland and doubles the risk of some cancers, a new report claimed today.

The first major report on the effects of cannabis use in Ireland revealed:

▶ The potency of cannabis available in Ireland has increased in recent years

▶Cannabis smokers get up to four times the amount of tar deposited on their lungs as cigarette smokers if a cigarette of comparable weight is smoked

▶Cannabis smoke contains more cancer causing chemicals than tobacco smoke leading to bronchitis and a doubling of the risk of certain types of cancer

▶There is a strong association between regular canna-



WARNING: Cannabis doubles risk of cancer

BY MICHAEL LAVERY

bis use in adolescence and poor educational outcomes, especially early school leaving

▶Cannabis has been shown

to have beneficial outcomes for certain types of pain relief, treatment of nausea and vomiting and appetite stimulation

▶Evidence exists to support an association between cannabis use and schizophrenia among vulnerable individuals

► Evidence shows that drivers under the influence of cannabis are often aware of their impairment but are unable to compensate for the loss of capability in some psychomotor skills such as staying in lane

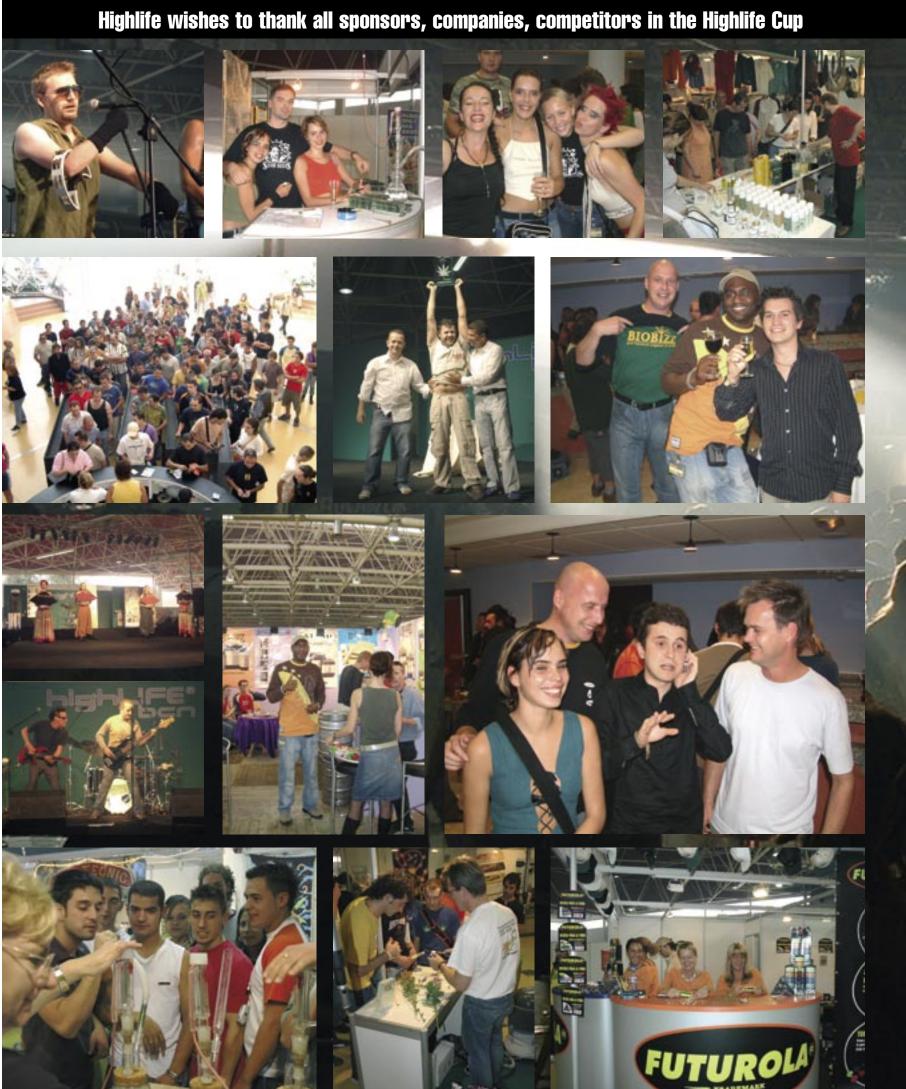
▶ Heavy cannabis use produces subtle cognitive impairments of memory, attention and the organisation of complex information ▶Regular cannabis use tends to be associated with some-

what poorer occupational and employment performance, specifically lower income, greater job instability and lower job satisfaction.

Dr Des Corrigan, Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee on Drugs, said that the report highlighted the need for more research on cannabis in Ireland.

"The NACD, as a result of its analysis of this report concluded that there is a need to monitor the potency of cannabis products on the Irish market; as well as establishing the extent of cannabis dependence, and whether there are links between cannabis use and mental ill-health and respiratory illnesses, particular," he said.

See you next year!



Hasta la vista!

and visitors for their presence at the Highlife Fair Barcelona 2004!



Edinburgh Evening News Thursday 2, September 2004

£500 fine over Leith 'drug club' fails to deter campaigners

Vow to open new city centre cannabis cafe

羅 By ALAN RODEN

A LEADING supporter of Scotland's first cannabis cafe today vowed a similar outlet would be opened in the city centre.

Cult publisher and author Kevin Williamson announced the move after Edinburgh Sheriff Court fined the owner of Leith's Purple Haze Cafe £500 for allowing the drug to be smoked on the premises

Paul Stewart, who operated the cafe, yesterday admitted permitting cannabis use on the premises. The 37-year-old was arrested on January 29 – the night he opened his Portland Place "private memers' club" and the same day cannabis

was downgraded to a Class C drug.

Slap

But Mr Williamson, the Scottish Socialist Party's drugs spokesman and founder of the Scottish Cannabis Coffeeshops Movement, today said the £500 fine was a "token slap on the wrist".
"I'm pleased Paul didn't receive a cus-

todial sentence. A small fine of £500 shows what a waste of police time and court time this was. This entire case has been a joke from start to finish but it is not going to put anyone off opening a new cannabis cafe. Our ultimate aim is to get cannabis out of the black market and what we are doing is morally right. I can say for certain that supporters will get together and discuss ways to open

another cafe and this time it will be right in the middle of Edinburgh city centre

The Purple Haze opened in a blaze of publicity earlier this year, and members who paid £5 to join the club were promised they would be able to use the drug on the premises - despite police warnings that it would be illegal. MSP Tommy Sheridan signed up to become a member of the cafe, which drew more than 100 people to its opening. But the cafe was raided just three hours after it opened and Stewart was arrested.

The Purple Haze was subsequently put on the market after just one month. Stewart blamed "harassment" by the authorities for his decision to sell. In April, Stewart pleaded not guilty to the charges but changed his plea before

yesterday's court appearance.

He said: "I'm quite upset about the severity of the fine, but I'm glad it wasn't a custodial sentence. I decided to plead guilty to the charges because I didn't want to waste any more taxpayers' money."

Procurator fiscal John Barclay told the court there was "a co-ordinated police response" on the cafe's opening day: The accused was seen at the counter of the premises and could not have failed to see the bong and pipe or also smell the distinctive aroma of cannabis."

Publicity

When fining Stewart, Sheriff Noel McPartlin told him: "You are entitled to your point of view whether it is a good law or a bad law, but you are not entitled to campaign against it by breaking the law itself."

Defence agent Matthew Berlow said, his client was now "a broken man" because of the adverse publicity.

Stewart claims to have invested £45.000 in the business and is con-

£45,000 in the business and is considering offers over £15,000 for the lease - which has about eight years to run. Because he is living on a minimum income, he was allowed to pay the fine at the rate of £10 a week.

News & Star (East Cumbria - Final) Saturday 11, September 2004

BY STAFF REPORTER

A MAN caught growing cannabis plants in a cupboard has escaped a jail sentence after a judge heard how he was desperately trying to give up drugs.

Andrew Mark Harrison, 35, could have gone to prison after police found one plant growing in a pot in his bed-room and three more - thriving under an elaborate heat and light system - in a cup-board at his home in of Pategill Park, Penrith.

But after hearing reports from a probation officer Judge Barbara Forrester, sitting at Carlisle Crown Court, imposed a 12-month drug treatment and testing order non-custodial sentence which gives drug users a chance to overcome their habit.

"These are serious offences and often courts will impose custodial sentences," she told him. "But you are someone who has had considerable problems with drugs in the past and if you can be weaned off drugs it is better for you and plainly better for society as well."

The court heard that after raiding his home police cal-culated Harrison had 10 ounces of herbal cannabis as well as 295 grams of cannabis resin, which he had bought. Harrison pleaded guilty to

possessing both forms of the drug, but was found not guilty by a jury of possessing the cannabis resin with intent to supply it - a charge he denied.



COURT: Cafe owner Paul Stewart was arrested 3 hours after the opening













Pot farmer is snookered by the smell

Thursday 9, September 2004

A MAN found himself snookered after trying a different kind of

Andrew Christopher Fielding's secret cannabis farm underneath the Hartlepool Snooker Centre was rumbled after staff and players repeatedly smelled wafts of the distinctive smelling drug.

Police were alerted and the 35-year-old ended up before Hartlepool magistrates where he pleaded guilty to producing cannabis.

where he pleaded guilty to producing cannabis.

The court heard from prosecutor Glenda Turnbull how, on April 30 this year, police found six plants, 367 cuttings, 39 rooted cuttings and some drying leaves in the unit rented by Fielding underneath Hartlepool Snooker Centre.

In interview, Fielding, of Crawford Street, Seaton Carew, admitted that the plants belonged to him and claimed they were for his own personal use.

by Liz Walker

โรงเอโลเด็กการกระหวดแล้

Miss Turnbull added that police estimated that if every cutting had gone on to give its maximum yield then the total value would have been at least £17,500.

However, scientific experts said there was no accurate way to assess the value as many of the cuttings may not have survived

vived.

Alan Townsend, mitigating in yesterday's court case, said: "My client was growing the plants for personal use.

"He has since got a job and is working for Hartlepool company CBL Cable Contracts Ltd, but is based in London. He is also getting married on Friday."

Chairman of the bench David Mills sentenced Fielding to a 180 hour community punishment order and ordered him to pay \$60 costs.

He also approved an application for the plants and equipment to be destroyed.

After the case, Fielding said: "I'm not happy about the sentence.

"I've gone out and got a job, but now I might lose that because I have to come back to Hartlepool each weekend [to carry out the community punishment order].

"I'm getting married on Friday and have a baby on the way, so I need all the money I can get.

"I thought they were supposed to encourage people to work, not make it harder."
The plants were found in a unit within 13 Green Street, in the Stranton area of Hartlepool, underneath the Hartlepool Snooker Club.

A spoker club.

A spokesman for the club said: "I had no idea about what was going on.

"The police just came round one day and told us Mr Fielding had been arrested on drugs charges and asked if I knew him."

Thursday 9, September 2004

JOBLESS Andrew Hill said yesterday he survived a fatal blaze because a fan blowing air from an open window over his

blaze because a fan blowing air from an open window over his cannabis plants kept smoke out the room.

Hill woke as the fire — which killed his neighbour, 54 — threatened to spread to his flat. He said: "I believe the way the fan was set up saved my life. Until I switched it off there was hardly any smoke ... when I did my bedroom instantly filled with smoke."

Hill, of Bexhill, East Sussex, was arrested outside the flats. He admitted yesterday cultivating the 20 plants for personal use. Hastings magistrates adjourned sentence.

Hill, 29, said he used the drug to ease the pain of Irritable Bowel Syndrome.

The Herald (Glasgow) Tuesday 7, September 2004

Quiet end for <u>cannabis</u> campaigner

MS sufferer who fought for legalisation dies, aged 56

BILLY BRIGGS

A PARALYSED multiple sclerosis sufferer who fought a court battle in an attempt to legally use cannabis to relieve her symptoms has died, it emerged yesterday.

Elizabeth Ivol, 56, known as Biz, took ill with a chest infection last week and died on Sunday night at her home in Herston, on the Orkney island of South Ronaldsay. She had refused any medical intervention other than morphine for pain relief. Ms Ivol campaigned to make cannabis available to sufferers of MS and other debilitating diseases.

Lucia Day, Ms Ivol's 55-yearold sister, said yesterday that

'There are 4000 in the UK who take her cannabis chocolate as the fight goes on'

her sibling had "slipped away quietly" at her home.

During a high-profile trial on Orkney, in June 2003, a wheelchair-bound Ms Ivol described to a court in Kirkwall the excruciating pain she suffered from her condition.

She was charged with handling the class B drug and could have been jailed for making cannabis chocolate for herself and fellow sufferers.

Ms Ivol denied the three charges against her, even though she admitted in court that she had possessed, pro-

duced and distributed the drug. She told of how she developed cannabis Belgian chocolates and patches to be applied directly to the skin, to help alleviate the symptoms of MS.

Ms Ivol told Kirkwall Sheriff Court that she began taking the drug to numb constant pain, which she described as feeling like "barbed wire going through my spine".

The court heard that her life had become almost unbearable due to her condition, which she was diagnosed with in the early nineties.

She said her former GP had recommended cannabis after she had tried a long list of legal medication, some of which had horrific side-effects. Ms Ivol came up with the idea, along with others, of making the chocolate after agreeing to help

a non-smoking MS sufferer.

Hours before the case was dropped on health grounds in July 2003, Ms Ivol was taken to Balfour Hospital, Kirkwall, after a paracetamol overdose.

She had told The Herald the previous evening that she was planning to take her own life.

"I have got it (suicide) all planned. In many ways, I wish my brain went first because of the MS and I wouldn't be so aware of what was going on," Ms Ivol said at the time.

"I am fed up with going on like this. I have looked into it and have decided to take paracetamol because, if you take enough, it just destroys your internal organs.

"I want to do it soon and I have to be very careful that noone is around, so they don't

face prosecution for helping me," she explained.

Fellow campaigners travelled to Orkney and camped in her garden to try to persuade Ms Ivol not to take her own life.

However, after her suicide attempt she told The Herald she would keep trying until she

died: "I took 25 paracetamol and that didn't work. I can't seem to get anything right these days. I was just going to walk into the sea and drown, but I can't walk. I'm just going to have to figure out another way of doing it – next time I'll have to make sure I do it properly."

Her sister said yesterday: "Biz developed a chest infection several days ago but did not want any medical intervention. She was put on a morphine drip for the pain though. She slipped away quietly last night.

The funeral will be on Thursday but Biz did not want

a proper funeral, no service and no minister, so it will just be at the graveside," said Ms Day.

A spokesman for the Legalise Cannabis Alliance said Ms Ivol was a "special woman whose death was a very sad loss".

He added: "I'm rather stuck forwords. Biz touched the lives

of and endeared herself to everyone who knew her, including those involved in prosecuting her.

"There are 4000 people in the UK who now take the special cannabis chocolate she made and the fight for legalisation will go on.'

Irish Independent (Dublin) Thursday 2, September 2004

No proposals to decriminalise use of cannabis

David QuinnSocial Affairs Correspondent

THE Government has said it has no plans to decriminalise <u>cannabis</u> use following the publication of a major new report which lists among the drug's harmful effects increased risk of cancer and mental ill-health.

The report by the National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) is the first comprehensive study of cannabis use to be produced in Ireland. It comes amid growing concerns over use of the drug by school-children.

It also warned that those who use cannabis are more likely to go on to use harder drugs.

Launching the report yesterday, Minister of State for the National Drug Strategy Noel Ahern announced that the Government is "not going in the direction of decriminalisation at present".

The Government's position is in line with public opinion. According to an NACD survey, full details of which are to be released later this month, more than two-thirds of Irish people are opposed to cannabis being decriminalised for 'recreational' purposes.

'recreational' purposes.

A similar number is in favour of it being made available where there are medical benefits. Explaining the reasons for the Government policy, Mr Ahern said:

"We're concerned not to signal that it [cannabis] is not a dangerous drug. It is a harmful drug. We have failed to get this across to school-children who often think it's harmless."

Mr Ahern said he did not think the Government would launch a nationwide anti-cannabis campaign on the same scale as its antismoking campaign "because of the low number of cannabis-users compared with cigarette smokers".

According to a survey issued by the NACD last year, 17pc of Irish people aged 15 to 64 have used the drug at some point in their lives. Three per cent of the population are 'current users'. The report, called 'An Overview of Scientific and Other Information on Cannabis', lists many of the harmful effects of the drug.

Among these are:

Cannabis smoke contains more cancer causing chemicals than tobacco smoke and doubles the risk of certain types of cancer.

• Evidence exists to support an association between cannabis use and schizophrenia among vulnerable individuals.

• Evidence exists that cannabis use can damage memory and attention.

However, the reports points out that cannabis use has "beneficial outcomes for certain types of pain relief and for treating nausea" when used therapeutically.

Evening Echo (Cork) Monday 6, September 2004

Cork man denies being a <u>cannabis</u> supplier

GARDAÍ conducted a search at the home of a man suspected of drug dealing but the accused claimed in court that all of the cannabis found was for his own use and that he smoked up to 40 joints a day.

Tony Murphy, aged 34, of Noonan's Road, Cork, said during his trial that he smoked a lot of cannabis

that he smoked a lot of cannabis but Judge David Riordan wanted to know how much exactly.

"I never counted but a lot, at least 30 or 40 a day," Murphy said at Cork District Court.

He had no problem pleading guilty to the charge of being in possession of the cannabis for his own use but he denied the charge of having the drugs for the purpose of selling or otherwise supplying to others with the drug.

Garda Kevin Long was involved in surveillance of the house said over four days a number of people called to the door and left after what appeared to be transactions of some sort.

Murphy said people called to his house but they would come in and not go away in the manner described.

Garda Kevin Long said that during a search on June 14 2003, enough cannabis was found at the house to make 330 hand-rolled cigarettes. Solicitor, Frank Buttimer, said Murphy had no difficulty accepting responsibility for the drugs but totally denied dealing. Judge David Riordan said there was sufficient evidence to convict the accused on the charge of having drugs for sale or supply to others. He fined him €500 for the offence and gave him a four-month suspended sentence. On the charge of having the drugs for his own use he fined him €30.

Guernsey Press & Star Thursday 9, September 2004

Grass grown at home

A RHEUMATOID-ARTHRITIS sufferer who grew <u>cannabis</u> to relieve the pain was put on probation for six months when she admitted the offence in the Magistrate's Court.

Susan Solway, 46, of 11, Le Petit Bouet, St Peter Port, told police about the four plants on her windowsill when she was making a statement about something else on 5 July.

The court heard that Mrs Solway's former partner was blackmailing her, saying he would tell police if she did not.

Mrs Solway, who is subject to a three-year probation order for two drink-driving offences, has no similar previous convictions.

Advocate Sarah Morgan said her client had suffered domestic violence.

She had made unsolicited comments about the cultivation of cannabis plants while she was at the police station to report an alleged assault.

The operation was not sophisticated – there were no lamps and the plants were little more than seedlings, said Advocate Morgan.

Solway's current probation order was due to end in December this year.

It will now finish at the end of February 2005.











THEY ARE THE NEHT STEP IN THE EVOLUTIONARY LADDER! CHILDREN OF A DOPE SMOHING GENERATION WITH A GENETIC MUTATION THAT SETS THEM APART FROM SOCIETY-BANDED TOGETHER BY PROFESSOR ZONHED TO TRRIN THEM INTO THE STONDEST STUPOR HEROES OF RUL!!! THEY RRE THE HRSHSTONISHING.

























































Irish Examiner Saturday 11, September 2004

Irishman's extradition can proceed



Tommy Savage: Failed to turn up in court.

by isabel Conway Amsterdam ·

A DUTCH court has ruled in favour of the extradition to Greece of an Irishman wanted in connection with a €50 million cannabis seizure.

Tommy Savage, 54, from Swords, Co Dublin, was arrested in Amsterdam last The former January. paramilitary walked free a

few days later after a Dutch examining magistrate decided he would not try to flee the country.

Yesterday, as the three judge court in Amsterdam delivered its verdict, there was no sign of the man, once described by gardaí as one of Ireland's notorious runaway drugs traffickers.

A fortnight ago, accompanied by his Irish ex-girlfriend and their five-year-

old son, the man known among Ireland's criminal fraternity as "the Zombie" pledged he would come to court to "prove" his "inno-医第二元氏管 经基本公司

He handed over hundreds of pages of a defence which, he claimed, would show he was the victim of a conspiracy involving internet fraud and attempts to cheat him out of the budget hotel he ran in Amsterdam. He claimed that those who planned the murder of journalist Veronica Guerin had tried to "set him up" and tried to "destroy" him.

Delivering the verdict,

Judge A Vermolen said: "Mr Savage submitted a very large file of documents which we examined but we cannot conclude from them that this person is innocent. Therefore we declare that the Greek extradition request is admissible.'

The court ruled that all the conditions for the Irish-

Bristol Evening Post (Final)

Tuesday 31, August 2004

Cannabis arrest

LAWRENCE WESTON: A 23-year-old North Bristol man has been arrested on suspicion of cultivating cannabis.

The man was arrested at 4.15pm vesterday at his home. He has been released on police bail pending further. investigations.

Jersey Evening Post Wednesday 1, September 2004

20-year-old jailed for cannabis importation

A YOUNG woman who came to the Island for the cannabis bars weighing half a kilo strapped to her. day with two cannabis bars strapped to her body has been sentenced by the Royal Court to a year in

Flame Thompson Bull (20), who admitted importing cannabis with a street value of £2,880, had a string of previous convictions but none for drugs offences.

Bull had given Advocate Sue Pearmain instructions that she did not want the court to impose a noncustodial sentence and the court heard that she had failed to respond to that type of penalty in the past.

Crown Advocate Robin Morris told the court that

Bull had been stopped at Elizabeth terminal by customs officers on her arrival in June on the Condor ferry from Weymouth.

On being searched, she was found to have two Tibbo.

He called for a sentence of a year in youth detention.

Advocate Pearmain described Bull's early circumstances in life as having been desperate in the ex-

Her sudden decision to bring the drugs to the Island on a day trip to sell them had been naive and doomed to fail, she said.

When sentencing Bull, the Bailiff, Sir Philip Bailhache, advised her to make the most of the opportunity to wean herself from her cannabis addiction, while in youth custody.

'Life is too valuable to spend in youth custody,' he told her.

The Bailiff was sitting with Jurats de Veulle and

Evening Echo (Basildon) Wednesday 1, September 2004

Couple's grass shock as they find cannabis blocks

A COUPLE were shocked when they found a holdall in their garden containing 27 blocks of cannabis resin.

They were even more surprised when 20-year-old James Sloan rang their doorbell and said he had left the bag by their garden hedge.

The couple told him their gardener must have taken the bag away from their home in Whitehall Road, Grays, then they called the police.

Sloan was later seen sitting on a nearby garden wall and

was arrested, Basildon Crown Court was told.

He pleaded guilty to possessing cannabis with intent to supply and a charge of having the class C drug for his own use. Together, the drugs were given a street value of £4.315.

Sloan, of St Georges Avenue, Grays, had dumped the bag after being chased by police, said Laureen Husain, prosecuting.

She added that Sloan had been with another dealer. named as Philip Harland, when they tried to prevent being caught.

Harland was convicted of supplying cannabis by another court and was told to work 100 hours' community service and given a two-year rehabilitation order.

In Basildon, Judge Roger Brooke, QC, gave Sloan the same sentence and said: "In view of what happened to Harland, my hands are tied."

However, he did order Sloan to pay £350 court costs.

man's extradition had been

Extracts from Greek extradition papers read in court allege that Savage organized the loading of four tonnes of cannabis onto a container in the Nether-lands which was transported to Athens in late 1996. Key witness statements claimed that he set up the shipment, but then a row over payment erupted.

If convicted he could face between 10 and 20 years in

jail in Greece.

Evening Echo (Basildon) Monday 13, September 2004

Herbal <u>cannabis</u> smuggler is jailed

A DRUG smuggler who imported £77,000 worth of herbal cannabis is starting a three-and-a-half year jail sentence.

Anthony Hayes was stopped by Customs and Excise officers when he arrived at Harwich International Port from the Hook of Holland.

His van was loaded with plants he was importing as part of his business, but a search found three boxes which contained the drugs.

Hayes, 29, of Wakering Avenue, Shoebury, claimed the boxes contained leaves he would sell to flower shops, but the drugs were discovered underneath.

There were 60 packages weighing in total 29.8kgs Tests showed it was herbal cannabis.

Hayes said he offered £1,000 to take three boxes to Britain. He said he asked if the boxes contained drugs and was told no. He assumed it must be boxes of money or some-thing dodgy, but not illegal. Hayes denied knowingly

importing drugs but a jury Chelmsford Crown Court found him guilty.

His barrister, Harry Bowler, said his client was of previous good character, and ran a business importing flowers to order.

The Times Saturday 11, September 2004

Cannabis really gives MS patients long-term relief

By Nigel Hawkes

CANNABIS-based medicines may have long-term benefits for multiple sclerosis patients, a trial has shown.

The finding, announced at the British Association Science Festival in Exeter yesterday, comes from a year-long follow-up of a 15-week trial that had produced inconclusive results.

John Zajicek of the Peninsula Medical School in Plymouth said that after the trial had finished patients were asked if they wanted to continue taking the capsules, and 80 per cent agreed. The aim had been simply to confirm the safety of the drug.

Analysis showed that over the longer term the results were positive. Evidence on the extent of muscle stiffness and the degree of disability of patients who took capsules tetrahydrocancontaining nabinol (THC), the active ingredient in cannabis, showed

improvements. Zajicek said that the results were "encouraging evidence of a long-term effect" that now needed to be confirmed in fresh trials.

The 637 patients who joined the trial were all seriously disabled by MS. Only half could walk and many were bedbound. A third were given capsules containing THC, a third similar capsules containing whole cannabis extract, and the other third dummy capsules.

The results of the 15-week trial, published last year in The Lancet were ambiguous. While patients were enthusiastic about the effect of the active pills, some of those on placebo also felt better. Some improvement was found in walking time in patients still able to walk, but overall there was no improvement in disability assessed by physiotherapists.

The problem, Dr Zajicek said, was that many patients on the cannabis pills correctly

guessed that they were taking active ingredients and not placebo. The benefits seen in the longer term have come in the group taking THC in the form of Marinol, a drug produced by Solvay Pharmaceuticals, an international company with headquarters in Brussels.

To test whether the beneficial effects that MS patients claim for cannabis are real, two parallel but independent sets of trials have been running: Dr Zajicek's trial and a series of trials by GW Pharmacueticals, a British company licensed to grow cannabis for clinical use.

In June GW Pharmaceuticals announced positive results in a trial of its cannabis-based medicine, Sativex, in 189 MS patients. A significant improvement was found in muscle stiffness. Geoffrey Guy, the executive chairman. "The effects shown in this trial are over and above those achieved by patients on their existing treatments alone.'

Daily Record Thursday 2, September 2004

Cannabis cafe boss is fined

THE man who opened Scotland's first cannabis cafe has been fined £500.

Paul Stewart, 37, admitted allowing dope to be smoked in The Purple Haze Cafe.

Edinburgh Sheriff Court heard the offence took place on January 29, the day cannabis was reclassified from a class B to a class C drug.

John Barclay, prosecuting, said that during the day, the cafe in the city's Portland Place had operated as a normal take-away.

However, Stewart, of Cadiz Street, Edinburgh, had advertised he wanted to run it as a cannabis cafe between 4pm and 8pm.

Awareness

He said he wanted to raise the public's awareness to the reclassification of the drug.

Stewart also wanted to encourage the opening in Scotland of licensed cafes similar to those operating in Holland.

On opening day, Stewart was arrested with a man and a woman, but charges against the other two were dropped

Matthew Berlow, defending, said Stewart has had to lay off staff and is trying to sell the cafe.

Fining Stewart, Sheriff Noel McPartlin told him: "I am told you were encouraged by others but you're old enough to make up your own mind."

Evening Telegraph & Post (Dundee) Monday 6, September 2004

■ John Cameron Burke (27), Jamaica Court, appeared at Dundee Sheriff Court today and admitted possessing around 162 grammes of cannabis resin, worth £200, on February 20. His not guilty pleas to charges of having the drug with intent to supply and being concerned in the supply of cannabis resin were accepted by the Crown. Sheriff Frank Crowe deferred sentence to October 29 for reports.

Herald Express (Torquay) Tuesday 7, September 2004

Man held in custody

O A MAN has been remanded in custody by Torbay magistrates charged with driving while disqualified and without insurance, assaulting a police officer and possessing

cannabis.

Kenneth Armour, 42, of no fixed address, is alleged to have committed the offences on June 19.

The case was adjourned until September

Guernsey Press & Star Wednesday 1, September 2004

Packet of <u>cannabis</u> found on tripper

A ONE-NIGHT trip to Guernsey was expensive for Graham Scott.

After he arrived on the boat from Portsmouth, Customs officers asked

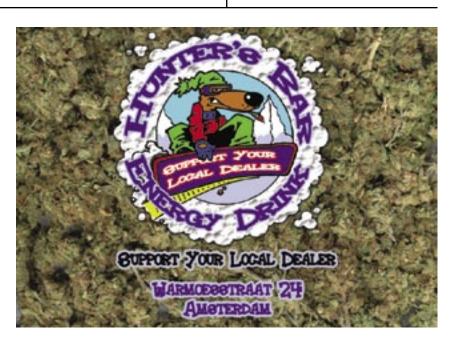
Scott if he had anything to declare. During a search, they noticed a small package on the floor next to his bag. He admitted it was his and that it must have dropped from his

trousers. Cannabis inside it weighed

Scott, of 3, Sunnyside Cottages, Gunvile West, Isle of Man, told officers he knew it was an offence to bring the drug into the island.

Magistrate Russell Finch fined

him £300 and ordered the drug to be destroyed.



Press & Journal Friday 10, September 2004

Mourners' tribute to cannabis campaigner

AROUND 30 mourners attended the funeral service of Orkney cannabis campaigner Biz Ivol yesterday.

She was buried at St Peter's Church on South Ronaldsay after a low-key ceremony. The service was not reli-

The service was not religious and had been devised by 56-year-old Ms Ivol before her death on Sunday.

Her coffin was carried to the grave and speeches were made by two friends before it was lowered into the ground.

It is understood that Ms Ivol's sister and ex-husband were among the mourners. Ms Ivol, who had multiple sclerosis, had been suffering from a chest infection but had refused medication for it as her health deteriorated.

Her use of cannabis to ease the symptoms of MS attracted national attention. She was admonished at Kirkwall Sheriff Court in 1997 after she admitted growing 27 cannabis plants to relieve her pain.

Further court proceedings had to be abandoned last year when Ms Ivol attempted suicide. She had denied possess-

ing, producing and supplying cannabis but admitted under cross-examination that she had made cannabis-laced chocolates for MS patients.

Ms Ivol compared the pain of MS to barbed wire being dragged through her spine. A sympathetic doctor suggested she try cannabis after all other methods had failed.

She has been described as a "herbal suffragette" and the Legalise Cannabis Alliance said candle-lit ceremonies were taking place around the country to pay tribute to Ms Ivol.

Evening Press (York) Saturday 28, August 2004

<u>Cannabis</u> factory man jailed

A DRUG gang member who was on the run for nearly four years has been jailed for his part in a massive commercial cannabis operation at an airfield ten miles away from York.

At Leeds Crown Court yesterday, Stephen Mark Gilpin, 49, formerly of Breighton, near Selby, admitted being concerned in the production of a controlled drug.

He was handed a four-year jail sentence for his part in running a cannabis factory at an airfield in Sands Lane, Breighton.

Three members of the gang were arrested in March 2000, after National Crime Squad officers raided the factory estimated to have cost £25.000 to set up.

The factory produced "skunk cannabis" – a highquality form of the drug.

quality form of the drug.
The court heard that Gilpin evaded capture because he was not at home when police arrived to arrest him. He finally gave himself up at York Police Station in January this year.

Two other members of the gang, John Kelly and Andrew Markham, were jailed in 2001 for their part in the operation. Their sentences were reduced to four-and-a-half years each on appeal.

The fourth alleged gang member, Michael Walsh, 62, is still on the run.

Richard Mansell, prosecuting, told the court that the National Crime Squad had conducted a covert surveillance on the cannabis factory. Derby Evening Telegraph Thursday 9, September 2004

<u>Cannabis</u> in school

A 19-YEAR-OLD man appeared before Derby magistrates yesterday charged with possession of cannabis.

Zak Yiallorou, of Blenheim Parade, Allestree, was found with one gramme of the class C drug on July 7 this year.

The court heard that police saw him in a school field and searched him.

The officer found a bag of cannabis under the bench where he was sitting.

Yiallorou originally denied the cannabis was his, but he later pleaded guilty to the charge.

The court fined him a total of £114.

Herald Express (Torquay) Tuesday 7, September 2004

REMSFILE

Accused of growing cannabis

O A FATHER and son have appeared in court charged with growing cannabis allegedly worth between £100,000 and £200.000.

£200,000.

Peter Williams, 57, of Fairlea
Close, Dawlish, and 37-year-old
Kevin Williams, of no fixed
address, deny cultivating
cannabis and possessing the drug
with intent to supply. They
appeared at Exeter Crown Court
and after pleas were taken the
case was adjourned for trial on a
date to be fixed

Colofon

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A word from the publisher:

The UK government has embarked on a process of relative liberalisation towards the use of cannabis, and cannabis activists are engaged in broadening this engagement. Several local councils and police chiefs now actively support a Dutch-style coffeeshop system as a way of separating soft and hard drugs, as it has proven to do in Holland. Whether they are finding their way to new coffeeshops or growing for their personal supply, cannabis users are a menace to no one, and are causing no discernable social problem. Some politicians and commentators are calling for the outright legalisation of marihuana. Let's wait and see how the debate develops during a period of relative peace between all sides of the argument. In the meantime, the publisher hopes Soft Secrets will show the public a positive side to the normalisation of cannabis use, and is anxious to offer a forum to both pro- and anti-legalisation advocates. This assumes that the publisher does not necessarily agree with everything that appears in articles and advertisements. The publisher therefore distances himself explicitly from published statements or images that might give the impression that an endorsement is being made for the use or production of cannabis.

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