

SMOKING ROOM

Issue 01, Friday 25th April 2008, £2.75

GET AWAY FROM IT ALL...

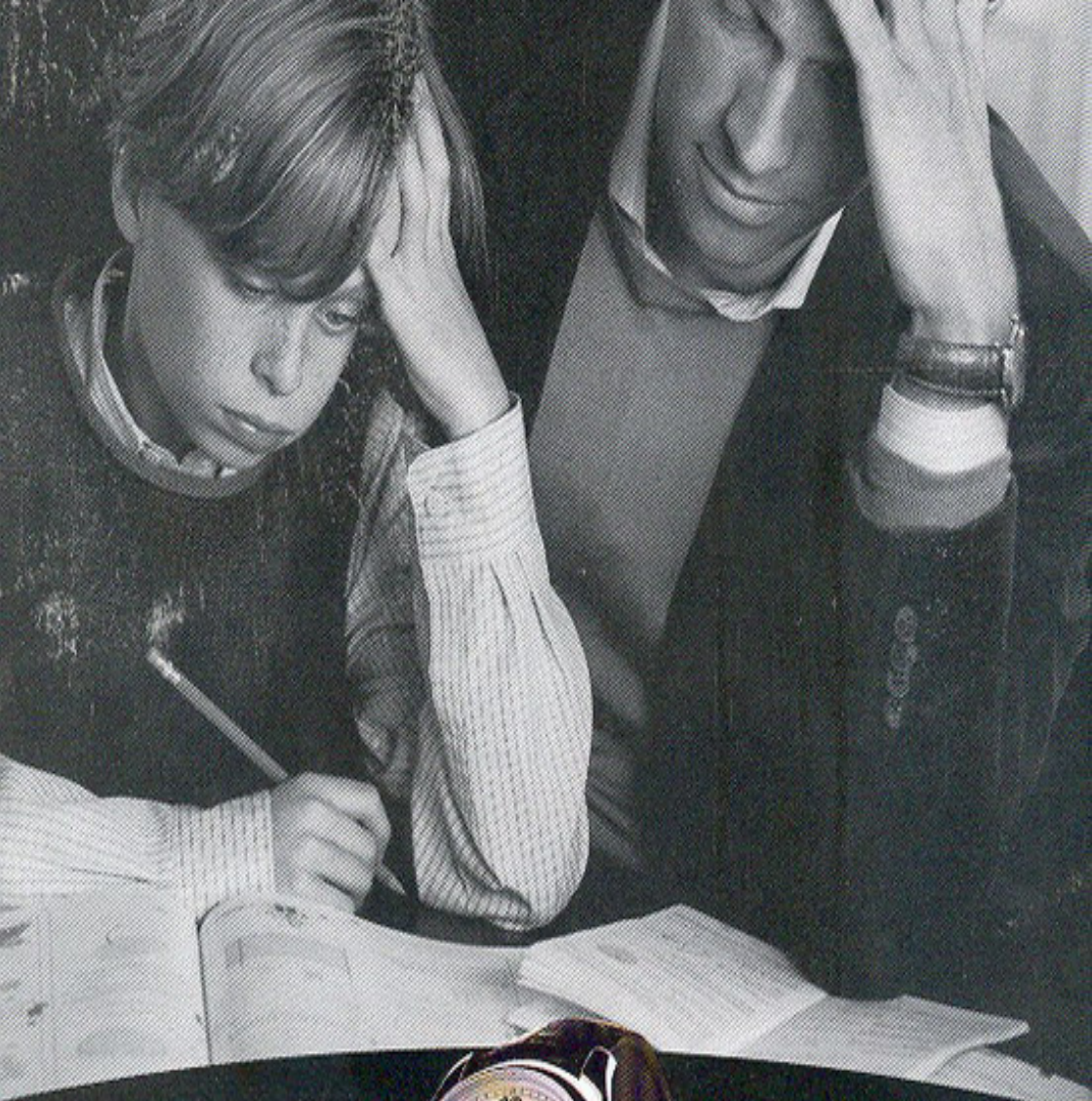
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Should cannabis be
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EDITOR'S LETTER

Hello and welcome to the first ever edition of the *Smoking Room* magazine. If you are a proud smoker, than we sincerely hope this will be your first of many.

We truly believe that we have produced, in an increasingly health conscious world, one of the only magazines made for existing smokers who are now consistently being pressurised to quit. Here, you will find no pressure to quit. We are here to serve the smoker who is quite happy to admit they enjoy smoking – and to provide them with a voice as more and more in society look down their nose at what is increasingly being perceived as just a filthy habit.

First of all, we appreciate this is not everybody's cup of tea. It is far from PC, and at no point will we deny the impact smoking has on one's health. But neither will we be using much column space to warn our readers about it. The effects of smoking are well publicised and it is fair to say that a vast majority of current smokers are well aware of the risks they are taking. It must be emphasised that this magazine is not encouraging those who do not smoke to take up the habit. This has been created for existing smokers only, and people must accept that there are people out there who smoke, enjoy smoking, and furthermore have no intention at all of giving up. As long as that person is not harming others, there is no reason why he or she is any less entitled to a voice.

That is not to say that we will not provide any help for those who do wish to give up. In this month's edition, for example, you can read about the effect of patches and whether they are the right choice for you. In the coming months, we will run similar features on other quitting methods from nicotine gum to going cold turkey.

Over the past ten to twenty years, Britain has seen an increase in anti-smoking legislation culminating in the nationwide public smoking ban of July last year. Rightly or wrongly, many smokers have felt persecuted, victimised, or mistreated by such law, and this edition will reflect upon that. Features include the effects of the smoking ban that you may not have considered, plus an investigation into the possibility of smoking licenses.

The magazine is not restricted to just cigarette smokers either. In this month's edition we have a feature on the debate of cannabis legalisation, plus a customer review of rolling tobacco. In the coming months, expect to find pages devoted to other sides of smoking such as cigars or pipes.

Also find attached your free lighter to replace the one you've inevitably lost in the past few days!

Enjoy reading and we look forward to producing many more,

Jaroslaw Zaba, Editor

ABOUT US....



Jaroslaw is a non-smoker who spends most of his time with smokers. Now comfortable around the smell of tobacco in his presence, Jaroslaw has a keen interest in the rights, interests, and habits of smokers. Currently believes he is suffering more than his friends from the smoking ban as he always gets left on his own.

My name is Ramanjit Dhindsa, I'm 20-years-old, a journalism student who works part time in Terminal 5. I enjoy playing football, driving my golf turbo and clubbing. But because of my busy schedule I have no time for smoking...unfortunately! What really gets me is when passengers ask where they can smoke in the building, ain't no one heard of a smoking ban? Obviously not.



My name is Vesna Nikaljevic, a non-smoking second year journalism student. I like watching movies, swimming and traveling. I found writing for this magazine very interesting.

My name is Olesya Gerasimova and I'm an international student, who enjoys writing, producing and designing the magazine, as well as smoking during the breaks.



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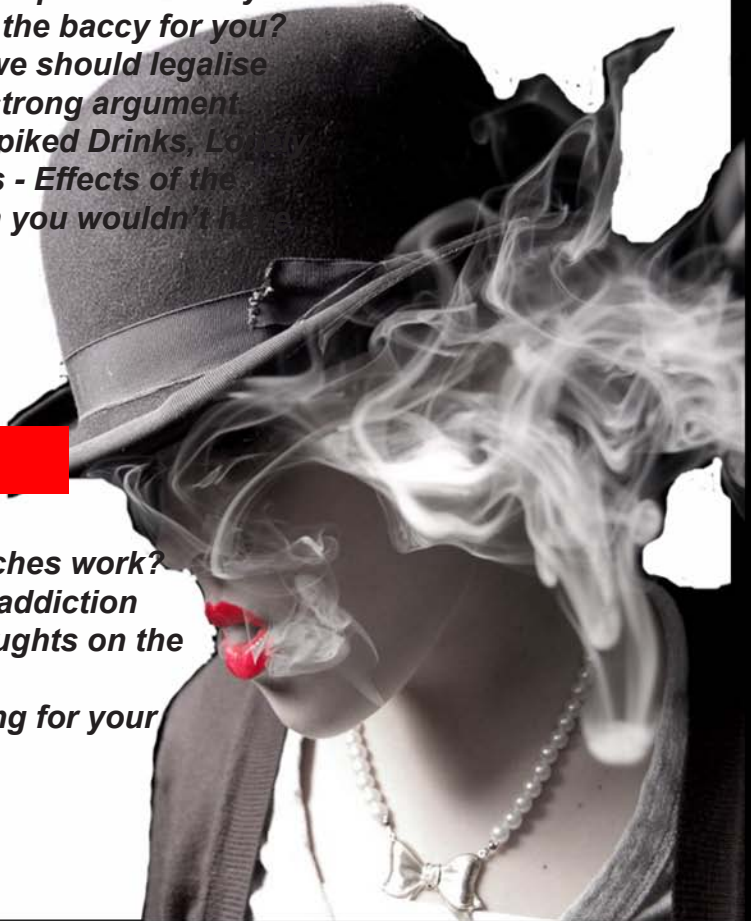
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READING
2008

LEEDS
2008

RICHFIELD AVENUE - READING BRAMHAM PARK - LEEDS
AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

READING: FRI 22 • LEEDS: SAT 23 READING: SAT 23 • LEEDS: SUN 24 READING: SUN 24 • LEEDS: FRI 22

**rage against
the machine.**

the KILLERS



**Queens
at the
Stone Age**

BLOC PARTY.

Tenacious D

THE FRATELLIS

THE RACONTEURS

SLIPKNOT

THE ENEMY

EDITORS

FEEDER

BIFFY CLYRO

WE ARE SCIENTISTS

**AVENGED
SEVENFOLD**

SERJ TANKIAN

**DIRTY PRETTY
THINGS**

**DROPKICK
MURPHYS**

DIZZEE RASCAL

THE SUBWAYS

TAKING BACK SUNDAY

GET CAPE. WEAR CAPE. FLY.

ANTI-FLAG

**PLUS MANY MANY MORE ACTS TO BE
ANNOUNCED APPEARING ACROSS 6 STAGES**

NME / STAGES

Babysambles

**MANIC STREET
PREACHERS**

THE CRIBS

**THE
WOMBATS**

BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE

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JUSTICE • FOALS

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* CAMPOUSE OPEN 6AM THURSDAY * SUBJECT TO LICENSE * BILL SUBJECT TO CHANGE * ARTISTS NOT IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE *

SEEK
LADIES



NME

FR

hmv

DO PATCHES WORK?



Helen Morris, 23, waitress



I had a scare last year when my doctor convinced me, following pains in my chest that I had Angi and if I didn't stop it would kill me. Following that, I managed to stop with patches, for a short time. However, as his diagnosis proved to be wrong, and the cravings grew, I slipped back into smoking again. I have some patches still and every so often try to give up again, but with no success. I tried again a few days ago, and after only a few hours I was feeling terrible. People around me even said how ill I looked. As you guessed, a cigarette made me feel better and now I'm back to 20 a day again.



Will Avis, 20, business student

Since I started using patches everyone was thinking I was ill, I looked and felt like total s***.

I've tried the gum, which gave me a really bad sore throat, and the patches didn't help me at all. I lasted 2 and a half days, and by then I was crawling the walls ! And I'm usually a strong minded person reduced to a quivering wreck.

9 MONTHS SINCE WE WENT SMOKE FREE...

Olesya Gerasimova investigates whether the smoking ban has helped or not.

One day in a soldier's barracks, a Colonel put a note on the wall: "Don't smoke-smoking kills". The next day, he comes back and he sees some changes on yesterday's note: "soldiers are never afraid to die"

As all of us know, from the 1st of July 2007 the smoking ban had started. Nobody is allowed to smoke in any public places - pubs, restaurants, clubs, schools, hospitals, prisons and in any office accommodations where people work. This law on an interdiction of smoking in public places was accepted by the British parliament in February 2006 and was met with Royal approval in July of the same year. Different parts of the United Kingdom independently made their own decision on terms of joining the smoking ban because local authorities are in charge of public health services.

The first one was Scotland – the smoking ban took place there in March 2006, followed by Northern Ireland and Wales who joined the smoking ban in April 2007. And in the end England, the biggest part of the United Kingdom with a population of 50 million, become a smoke free country.

Those who pushed for the law said that it would improve the atmosphere in places where people gather together; while critics claimed that the atmosphere in pubs, which had developed over many years, would be destroyed

just in one day. The findings of numerous different questionnaires and researches on consequences of the ban have been varied, depending on the source. Organizations studying cancer research speak of a positive effect, whereas associations of pub owners often state the opposite – citing falling of incomes and attendance of pubs.

Merve Emek, manager of Limon restaurant in Wimbledon, said: "Some people, even non-smokers consider that this is an infringement of freedom of the people. It means that people now do not have the right to smoke where they would like, but most of all people are upset because our government interferes too much in our lives. Because it already solves, defines, suggests, how people should look after their children, how to feed them and so on. From one hand, I agree with this ban, but on the other... It's just not right; it will change a lot."

Other countries elsewhere which have a smoking ban include Italy, Sweden, Malta and Ireland. Since February 2007, France has joined this club as well. According to sociological research, the majority of European Union citizens (86 %) approve a ban on smoking in public places.

The question is who is more affected by a smoking ban? The government and non-smokers?

Owners of pubs and restaur-

rants which don't have outdoor seating claim that now they have much less customers during the day, in comparison to when smoking areas were there.

Ana Bilen, waitress in Centre Court restaurant said: "For us the most important thing is that our customers are comfortable and they are enjoying their time at the restaurant. Now, we do not have the same number of customers as before," she said. "After a good meal, many people just want to sit, relax and enjoy their dose of nicotine. Now they must stand up and go outside even if it is raining or snowing. Some of our customers are now saying to us that they prefer to eat and drink at home, the reason being the ban on smoking."

The NHS and other officials are saying that since July, hundreds of people asked their doctors on advice on how to give up smoking, but if you are smoking outside clubs, pubs and restaurant you can not really see difference.

Victoria Silina, a Media student said: "When the smoking ban came into force, I didn't give up smoking. If our government decides to make a car ban, because cars are polluting the air so much and global warming is coming, I don't think that people would stop using their cars- people don't want to stop doing what they are enjoying."

TEST YOUR ADDICTION

- Your age:** a.) less than 21 b.) more than 21
- How many cigarettes do you smoke in a day?** a.) Less than 10 b.) 10 – 20 c.) more than 21
- Do you smoke your first cigarette within 30 minutes of waking?** a.) Yes b.) No
- Do you intend to stop smoking?** a.) Yes b.) No
- What are the good things about smoking?**
 - it helps me to relax
 - it helps to break up my working time
 - it is something to do when I am bored
 - it helps me to cope with stress
 - I enjoy it
- Circle any of these that you have:**
 Breathlessness Cough Wheeze Chest pain Frequent chest infections Asthma
 Circulation problems Bronchitis Stroke Emphysema Angina Heart problems
- Circle any of these health problems that you are worried about getting in the future:**
 Heart Disease Stroke Lung Cancer Bronchitis Circulation problems
- Does your smoking worry you?** a.) Yes b.) No
- Have you tried to stop smoking before?** a.) Yes b.) No
- Have you ever tried nicotine patches or nicotine chewing gum?** a.) Yes b.) No

Now add up your score

1.	a.) 5	b.) 1	
2.	a.) 1	b.) 3	c.) 5
3.	a.) 5	b.) 1	
4.	a.) 0	b.) 5	
5.	1-3 selected 3	More than 3 selected 5	
6.	1-4 selected 1	4-8 selected 3	8-12 selected 5
7.	1-2 selected 5	2-4 selected 3	5 selected 1
8.	a.) 3	b.) 5	
9.	a.) 3	b.) 5	
10.	a.) 3	b.) 5	

Results

17-29

You still do not have to worry about your health. But if you really want to stop smoking there are lot of alternatives which can help you to achieve your goal.

30-39

It is absolutely fine that you enjoy smoking but try not to increase the number of cigarettes you smoke each day. If you're felling wheezy and have a cough now is the time to see your doctor for further advice.

40-50

You smoke too much. You should be aware about how bad smoking is for your health. Try to smoke less otherwise your health can be seriously damaged within a short time.

GOT A LICENSE TO SMOKE?

Olesya Gerasimova explains why a £10 smoking license would be the last straw

English smokers may soon be in a situation where they have to buy a special license for the right to smoke. If the government accepts the conclusion made by advisers at the Department of Public Health services, nobody will be able to buy cigarettes without permission.

It is planned that the license will cost about £10. One of the people behind the idea, Professor Julian Le Grande, in an interview with the BBC said that the scheme would considerably raise the number of people who wished to stop smoking.

He suggests that the money made be directed towards the national system of public health services.

Among other things, Professor Le Grande believes that the new scheme will provide more than financial inconvenience to smokers. "You've got to get a form, a complex form - the government's good at complex forms; you have got to get a photograph," he said.

"Then it's a little bit of a problem for the smoker to actually do it, so you have got to make a conscious decision every year to opt in to being a smoker." Le Grande believes that as a result, the person should understand: to stop smoking is much easier than to continue to live with the habit. According to developers of the project, 70% of smokers wish to stop smoking.

Anna Teterina, a business student said: "I can understand that it is forbidden to smoke in the certain places. But the license to me seems absolutely humiliating and strange for a free and democratic country. Is it possible that the government will create a license for having a relationship, drinking coke, or maybe eating

more than two chocolate bars a day?"

Forest, an organization protecting the rights of smokers, called the idea 'shocking', referring to consumers of tobacco already paying excessive taxes. According to the Press Secretary of the organization, Simon Clark, the proposed project would seriously affect older people and smokers with low incomes. Members of Forest are particularly angry that the application for getting the license should be made as complex and confused as possible.

Anna added: "How will this license work when tourists are visiting the United Kingdom? I can just see many ways that a network of illegal business could be developed. And then you'll have a situation where neighbors will tell the police about 'illegal' smokers, various policemen will fulfill their bread, entering private apartments and checking the presence of the license and to arrange

a search to see if they have more than their authorized amount of cigarettes. People will smoke secretly - the quantity of fires will arise as well as the import of contraband. There will be additional money spent on a special department of the police who will fight against smoking, and then the normal taxpayers will have to pay for the maintenance in prison of 'malicious' infringers of the law- smokers who didn't purchase a license. Perfect! Is this what people deserve instead of money spent on educating children and youths not to smoke if they want to?"





intimately
BECKHAM
NIGHT

THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR MEN AND WOMEN

IF YOU'RE SMOKING - IT SHOULD BE ROLL-UPS

Vesna Nikaljevic explains why it is better to smoke rolling tobacco than cigarettes

Once upon a time, there was a 15 year old English school-boy who enjoyed smoking, but with his pocket money, he could not afford it; even back in the mid-1960s, when a packet of cigarettes cost about 15 pence, they were still expensive products.

As a result, this young boy decided that the only way he could continue his habit economically was to make his own cigarettes using hand rolling tobacco instead of buying expensive manufactured cigarettes in packets.

"I've been a smoker of manufactured cigarettes for about 10 years. However, since my friend gave me Golden Virginia, I've switched to smoke rolling tobacco. I don't think I'll ever swap over to straight cigarettes, due to their price compared to hand-rolled cigarettes. This is not about the taste, it is about the cost," said Chris Knox.

The price is the most important factor in swapping manufactured cigarettes over rolling tobacco. This is reasonable if we compare prices.

If you smoke 20 cigarettes per day, for one month you will be spending about £140 at an average price of £5 per a pack of cigarette. However, if you buy one 50g pouch of Golden Virginia, capable of rolling 160 cigarettes, you'll spend roughly £52, without filters or papers, but they are each just £1 for over 250.

This should make all smok-

ers think about how much they spend on cigarettes per a year. If you smoke rolling tobacco, you will spend £624 per year. However, if you smoke manufactured cigarettes, you will spend nearly 3 times more, about £1680. That is a saving of £1056 on cigarettes, enough to buy a holiday with.

"Smoking is not good for your health, but smoking rolling tobacco can be good for your purse," said Sue Ellis.

However, there is another small additional cost that you have to bear in mind when considering using rolling tobaccos. Cigarette papers, such as most popular brands Swan and Rizla, will cost you an extra £1 for over 250.

"If you smoke manufactured cigarettes, you will spend nearly 3 times more, about £1680. That is a saving of £1056 on cigarettes, enough to buy a holiday with."

You can also buy the papers in different styles and colours, extra thin, liquorice, straight or with cut corners or King Size papers, if you wish, but "expect to be branded as a pot smoker if you do so", said John Brown.

"I'm enjoying smoking rolling

tobacco, especially Golden Virginia. The fact that I can afford to buy enough tobacco to satisfy me on my low income is what has drawn me to smoking rolling tobacco. I wouldn't recommend smoking at all, but if you're smoker, and smoke rolling tobacco, Golden Virginia is the best out there," said Tom Davidson.

Another piece of advice which can help you save money on cigarettes is to buy them when you are abroad. This is an absolutely legal way of getting your tobacco cheaper. In countries like Germany and France the cheapest cigarettes are only €33 for 10 x 50 gram packs. Under current European Union legislation you can bring in as much tobacco as you want if is for your personal consumption and not for resale.

"It's amazing how much tobacco you can bring in the average bag," said Nancy Miller.

One more rolling tobacco advantage is the taste. Many smokers said that they enjoyed

smoking much more after they started using roll-ups.

"The reason I switched to roll-ups is that the taste is better than any other tobacco, it is smoother and less harsh on the throat than other tobaccos. It is a smooth, beautiful smoke with a lovely smell and no extra chemicals, and most importantly; gives you a great nicotine hit," said Petar Brokovic.

"I used to smoke manufac-

ured cigarettes until I found out about rolling tobaccos, and saw how much money I could save. I wouldn't go back, even if the price was the same, because manufactured cigarettes are chemical filled and tasteless. I can't understand why they are the top selling cigarettes in the UK. They are absolutely tasteless; the tobacco is very light for a pleasant smoke. They are very expensive and even the pack design is low quality," said Daniel Peter Web.

Making your roll-up cigarettes is not always easy, especially for somebody who is not used to do it. However, after a little bit of practice it becomes second nature. As a beginner, you could always buy a cigarette making machine, but smokers prefer just to use their hands.

"If you are going to smoke rollies then it is worth learning how to roll, its not hard and its a lot less hassle than carrying around a machine every time you want to smoke," said Emma Braz.

Surprisingly, many rolling tobacco smokers think that rolling tobacco is less harmful for their health than manufactured cigarettes.



"I asked the doctor whether or not there were any health advantages to smoking very light brands of cigarettes, where the amount of tar and

nicotine has been reduced to the absolute minimum. His told me that light cigarettes were actually worse for my health than any others, as they have the same amount of additives as any other type of cigarettes. He also said that with the stronger cigarettes which are high in nicotine content, smokers only tend to inhale them into the top half of their lungs, as they get the nicotine hit they crave much more quickly. He told me that if I started smoking light cigarettes I'd be inhaling them so deeply, to get my required nicotine hit, that the smoke would be coming out of the end of my toes," said Ken Jonson.

Maria Smalava, 24, said: "I also think that rolling tobacco is better for my health than manufactured cigarettes. Last month I found out that manufactured cigarettes contain a lot more chemicals than rolling tobacco, which made me not want to smoke them any more."

World's finest rolling paper



WHICH IS THE BACCY FOR YOU?

Rolling cigarettes is both healthier and cheaper than smoking manufactured straights, so we have asked four regular roll up smokers to make the case for their own preferred brand of tobacco so that you can make the right choice if you chose to make the switch.

Golden Virginia



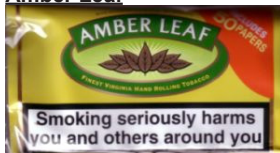
One of the most popular rolling tobaccos in the UK since it was first made in 1877 by The Imperial Tobacco Company, GV is a light mild tobacco sold in pouches from 12.5g to 75g.

Price: 12.5g - £2.84, 25g - £5.56, 50g - £10.99

James Hopkins, 23: "Firstly, the quality of Golden Virginia is always consistent. I find the flavour to be quite smooth but strong enough taste to satisfy the need to know you're actually smoking; a lot easier on your throat and lungs than many other brands. Also, as opposed to a majority of tobaccos which are roughly cut, GV is finely shredded which really makes it easier to roll."

Buy This If: You enjoy a mild, mellow taste to your cigarette.

Amber Leaf



Produced by Richard Lloyd

& Sons, Amber Leaf claims to be gathered from four different continents and matured to perfection.

Price: 12.5g - £2.65, 25g - £5.25, 50g - £10.39

Amy Sheridan, 19: "I find with most other rolling tobaccos that because of their strength, the smell and taste is unpleasant. Some brands smell like a stale bonfire whilst tasting like burned wood bark. I don't get this with Amber Leaf. It's similar to Golden Virginia but I find with less of a bite, which I prefer. Best of all though, the price makes it one of the cheapest tobaccos available and furthermore comes with rolling papers included."

Buy This If: You want to keep your smoking as cheap as possible and enjoy a not too overpowering taste or aroma.

Drum



Currently produced by Imperial Tobacco, Drum is sold in both America and Europe. The European version is barrel-cured in the Netherlands using a century old process.

Price: 12.5g - £2.55, 25g - £5.04, 50g - £10.03

Dave McLees, 21: "Drum is a nice strong smoke so you really don't have to put a load into a cigarette to get your moneys worth - and considering it's one of the cheapest tobaccos anyway, I would certainly recommend it if your low

By Jaroslaw Zaba

on funds. Though the strength may be too much for some, especially if you're not a regular smoker, I find it by far the most satisfying and in my opinion it tastes a lot less 'chemical' compared to the likes of Golden Virginia. The texture is consistent enough to make rolling fairly easy."

Buy This If: You're a regular smoker who enjoys a slightly stronger taste in your cigarette. Not for the faint hearted!

Cutters Choice



Produced by John Sinclair, Cutters Choice claims to be the finest of the hand rolling tobaccos available.

Price: 12.5g - £2.55, 25g - £5.05, 50g - £9.95

Zena Smyth, 20: "I'm constantly having to justify to people why smoking Cutters Choice is a better idea than Golden Virginia. For starters, for half an ounce of GV you can get an ounce of Cutters Choice. It is simply much better value, and I hardly think that the difference in taste merits that much difference in price. In any case, I prefer the taste of Cutters Choice - it doesn't taste of chemicals like GV or indeed Drum does. It's also not moist like Golden Virginia which makes it much better to roll."

Buy This If: You want to buy good value tobacco but dislike the harsh taste of Drum.

How are you coping with the smoking ban so far?

"I'm sick of having to sit outside in the freezing cold or the searing heat to have a smoke. If you don't like the smell of smoke don't go to the pub." Mitchell Smith, 23, Coventry

"I'm odd in the fact that I love the smell of smoke. I loved going down to a dirty and dingy pub where the rooms were so full of smoke. Now that the smoking ban has come into effect, I have to go outside with my friends in the cold. I might as well take up smoking myself" Emi Zonneveld, 19, Kingston

"I don't mind going outside. Personally, I say the owner should have a choice. If they want to allow smoking they should make the decision and not be told what to do." Alan Nott, 20, Birstol

"The fact I have to go outside means I smoke less and the room itself smells more pleasant." Joe Duffin-Jones, 29, Cardiff

"The worst part of the no smoking laws is that now you can smell everything else in the pub. Smelling nicotine is pleasant compared to now being able to smell the vile stench of BO, bodily gasses and stale carpet." Clara Mills, 21, Sheffield

"I find it rather annoying to have to think everyone deserves a choice whether to smoke or not, a choice whether to allow then non-smokers have a choice that allows smoking and vice versa. Currently, the only people not getting a choice are smokers." Gary O'Halloran, 30, Ipswich



to go outside for a fag, but I feel that is only fair. A person can choose whether to smoke or not, a choice whether to allow then non-smokers have a choice that allows smoking and vice versa. Currently, the only people not getting a choice are smokers."

"Quite a few of my friends whenever we have a conversation whilst out clubbing I have to go outside with them to chat. It's a waste of time. They should allow smoking back in pubs and clubs, full stop." Arvin Sud, 19, Portsmouth

"I'm finding it terrible, especially when I'm at a gig. It's particularly nice to have a smoke then." Francis Carroll, 35, Northampton

"I love going out and not coming home smelling of cigarettes, or waking up in the morning coughing my guts up. Now I can put on aftershave knowing that people can smell it, bonus!" Andrew Hainsworth, 22, Leeds

"I actually enjoy going into clean smoke-free pubs and clubs. I find that when I'm with non-smoking friends, I'll smoke less than I used to. They get a cleaner smelling environment and I save a few pence in the meantime. Long live the ban!" Robyn Walker, 29, London

"I reckon the smoking ban must be killing the pub trade. In my experience, people would rather buy cheap booze and stay at home than go to town and stand in the rain when they need a cigarette. Then again, that might only apply here in Wales as it's always raining here." Richard Clark, 19, Swansea

Cannabis should be just as legal as alcohol and cigarettes in the UK.

By Ramanjit Dhindsa

Spending hours on the sofa cuddling snacks and munchies and being engrossed in home entertainment such as games consoles, music and films, is a cannabis smokers fix. So is that really so bad? Especially when this fix could be the solution to our Olympics crisis?

This debate travels longer than the Nile and is far more animated than Zidane's head butt on some Italian. The marathon argument for legalising cannabis does not only favour the six million regular cannabis smokers in the UK. The drug should be legislated and controlled for several motives. Labour Pedigrees have been acting like Skunk's but their hibernating season could be over. They will surely struggle to cough up the £9bn cost of the Olympics in 2012, a staggering sum The Treasury and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) estimate. That's four times the figure set out. It's too late to hand it over to a then eager Paris or any other nation for that matter. This funding needs urgency and it's reassuring to know that solace could be found in the profitable trade of Mary Jane.

Hollywood celebrities such as Jennifer Aniston and Snoop Dog have openly admitted to smoking the recreational drug. Let's not overlook the eleven cabinet ministers that openly admitted to similar experiences a few months back. Despite the National Survey on Health claiming that regular marijuana users aged 12-17

are four times more likely to engage in violence, legalising a joint could put an end to cannabis associated gang crimes and also catching the taxman offside.

Cannabis divas of Amsterdam marvel in the aphrodisiac flower that so highly prizes the world over. The tourist industry in the Netherlands capital has seen the trade valued at more than £3 billion a year, according to the Telegraph. Therefore, like New Zealand's scenery, it's remarkable that the buzzing City prohibited tobacco in spliffs as a means of contributing to the smoking ban whilst preach cannabis of course.



Basically, there's no Dutch smoking with the exception of cannabis. With the 2012 Olympics at our beckon, it's needless to say that this industry can contribute a great amount, as opposed to the government's stinking idea of chipping our dustbins and its legendary suggestion of an annual ten-pound fee for a licence that permits smoking. Now that warrants a second

booking!

So how much more can legalising cannabis strike as a goal for our economy? Statistics provided by The Observer reveal that the UK cannabis economy has the talents to harvest a staggering £11 billion. Al Capone inspired criminals currently tackle this multi-billion industry alone. If the government controlled its commerce then they could inherit such useful profits that consequently could be spent on vital departments found in health and education. The black market for this class C drug can be conquered by taxing and freely regulating the plant in restricted locations and selling at specific times to adults. As well as benefiting medical relief and adding revenue, it will certainly enhance a society where entrepreneurs can embellish upon cannabis products such as Amsterdam's 'weed cakes.' Promoter and organizer of Amsterdam's annual Cannabis Cup, Mike Esterson, rates coffee shops selling the finest cannabis and said: "The Dutch government is doing so well with drug tourism. It's a cash cow for everyone involved."

Medicinal remedies exfoliated from cannabis, the herb in exile, are just as effective as the benefits of hindsight. Since 1996, Californian physicians have been recommending cannabis for medical use and now smoking cannabis has become more popular than surfing the Internet in the US. Overdose on cannabis is close to impossible and there is no

evidence that suggests cannabis smoke can contribute to lung damage or increase risk of lung cancer. The Legalize Cannabis Alliance argues that if the medical aspects of cannabis remain latent, than stories like Pat Tabram, the 68-year-old 'Cannabis Gran' who was convicted for cultivation and sentenced to community service after growing the recreational drug for medicinal purposes is inevitable.

The Keele University academic is said to have found nothing to support a theory that risking cannabis use has led to more cases of schizophrenia, a widespread analogy adopted by several intellects. The British Medical Association have conducted several inquiries in regards to therapeutic uses of cannabis and a spokesperson said: "Only certain cannabinoids (derivatives of cannabis) should be legalized for medicinal use. Cannabis becoming legal in the UK is merely a

long-range effort destined to hit the crossbar."

Nonetheless, the NHS and The American National Institute of Drug Abuse still do not want to see cannabis cultivated and supplied for research and pharmaceutical development, as taxpayers will have to pay for the treatment of inevitable abusers.

Fears of cannabis falling in the innocent hands of children when made legitimate can be dismissed as research carried out by the Trimbos Institute, the Netherlands Institute of Mental Health, illustrates that while 41% of 15-year-olds in the UK had tried cannabis, 24% had used the drug in the previous month. In Holland 29% had tried the drug, with 15% using it the previous month. This comparison signifies that cannabis regulated by law actually diminishes the accessibility children have with the drug as less children in Holland had tried it than

those in the UK where cannabis is prohibited. It sheds light that a legally controlled small market can bring success economically, medically and also in restricting the herb to young adults, something which these statistics reveal they are easily gifted to.

So with the stabbing Olympics nearing and capital yearning could Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, sprint towards skunk and open the gates for much needed capital? Until the bag-fulls of smuggled ganja roll to his attention and slap him in the face, this call for legalisation is a cork like debate drifting in its sleepless tides. Even then, who knows? We could be discussing this after 2012 in a period of economic strangle. It's important to remember that legalizing does not denote glamorizing.

Meanwhile us elf like taxpayers continue to serve relentlessly.



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B.O, SPIKED DRINKS AND LONELY NON-SMOKERS

Unpredicted effects of the smoking ban

Investigated by Jaroslaw Zaba

Predictably enough by the time the much debated smoking ban was enforced in July of last year, opinion was primarily, though not exclusively, divided between smokers and non-smokers. Nine months on, and most people you ask would probably believe this still to be the case. People, however, are fickle. As more and more begin to realise the impact of the ban on them personally, many have switched sides. This includes smokers and non-smokers alike, from one time smokers who have now finally been presented with a tangible reward for quitting, to non-smokers who resent having to look after everybody's coats whilst they indulge in their dirty habit. Amongst the furore of smoking ban debate - whether it be the recycled arguments of health implications of smoking, the somewhat typically hyperbolic claims from smokers' of civil liberties being eroded, or the forecasts of the pub economy crumbling - the impact of the ban continues to present itself to others in a much more subtle, indirect fashion.

Perhaps one of these indirect consequences you are more likely to hear about is the effect the ban has on the odour of a club or pub. Before July 1st, body odour was never a real issue for Ministry of Sound, Fabric, or any other nightclub across the country. But without the thick smell of smoke -

much maligned by those in favour of the ban - to mask the air, the lack of hygiene amongst Britain's clubbers has become highlighted to an unprecedented extent. After many a night out in the past nine months, many will have spoken favourably of their clothes no longer being tainted with the smell of cigarette smokers, but on the dance floor the 'dirty' scent suddenly becomes the lesser of two evils. Some clubs have responded by providing their own fragrance for the dancing masses, others go without and leave their customers, non smokers and smokers alike, craving the smell that they swore they would never miss. In any case, the ban will most likely have caused many DJs to think twice before demanding the audience to 'put their hands in the air'.

And it is not just BO infected nightclubs who are suffering. The Dunfermline Press reported in March 2007 that 35-year-old Stewart Laidlaw had become, most probably, the first ever Briton to be banned from a pub on account of bad flatulence. "No one could smell anything when the pub was full of cigarette smoke," he was quoted as saying, and was most possible the only Briton to add: "I certainly don't see it as funny." But it is fair to say that the problem of flatulence and body odour, amongst others, is increasingly becoming less funny for staff at pubs

and clubs. "It's just horrible," says Sarah Morris, a 21-year-old non-smoker barmaid from Bristol. "In our pub it's particularly bad, I'm not sure why. It's usually the stench from the toilets, though we're often treated to stale beer and body odour as well." The irony of smokers having unwittingly provided a public service for everyone else is glaring.

Though horrific odour can certainly be cited as one adverse effect of the smoking ban, it can all too easily be dismissed as trivial, even comical. But when the Scarborough-based charity The Roofie Foundation reported an increase in drink spiking cases since the smoking ban, it became less so. Generally most readers familiar with a smoking area outside any given club will probably be familiar with a table or bar where patrons leave their unfinished drinks before disappearing for a cigarette. The potential for spiking drinks is essentially laid on a plate for those opportunistic and indecent enough to take advantage. "One of the motivations behind this current phase is to incapacitate to enable robbery," said Graham Rhodes, spokesman for the charity, specialising in issues surrounding drink spiking. "When the victims wake up, mobiles phones, credit cards, cash, have all disappeared." It's a rarely reported consequence of the ban, but it

remains very real. Pre-ban the charity received no calls about spike related thefts, but within months of its introduction they had received over 200 calls.

It's a common misconception that the ban has been embraced by the significant majority of non-smokers - eager for cleaner air, nicer smelling clothes, and a smaller likelihood of suffering the effects of passive smoking. But one only needs to talk to a reasonably sized group of non-smokers to find out that opinion can be as divided as it is between smokers. In an attempt to try and quantify the debate, one user of hyper-popular social networking site Facebook has created two parallel groups - one for those in favour of the smoking ban and one for those against (at time of print, the Pro Smoking Ban group had 349,300 members to the 209,158 members of its counterpart). It only takes a quick glance at just some of the thousands of pages of comments made by those in favour of abolishing the ban to realise that non-smokers make a significant contribution. Some refer to the smoke's ability to mask the stench of their fellow customer - "I'd rather increase my cancer risk with the passive smoking then smell other peoples arm pits" - but many have other reasons too. One of the more commonly mentioned affect is the curious phenomenon of the lonely non-smoker. As if our non-smoking friends were not already insecure enough about

not looking cool, many are now being left in the lurch to look after the seats, valuables, and coats of those who chose to smoke. It can be an altogether demeaning, disheartening, or just an outright dull experience for those who suffer. "You certainly seem them quite regularly," says barmaid Sarah. "Most will generally skulk, and look as depressed or bored as possible." The lonely non-smoker makes his voice heard through Facebook. "You go to get your round in and when you turn round you see all your mates have gone. You realise you have become a smoking ban loner. You start downing shots because you're so depressed and lonely." cries

Russell Homer of London. "I hate being left inside to look after the coats when all my mates bugger off outside. It's sh*t." bemoans Alastair of Warwick.

So the next time you are debating the pros and cons of this particular piece of government legislation, remember that there are plenty suffering in ways you haven't even thought about. Though a reversal of the ban seems little more than a pipe dream now, establishments may well need to take action before Britain's pub scene has been reduced to non-smokers sitting alone in flatulence filled boozers guarding drinks from opportunist drink-spikers.



SOMETHING FOR YOUR SMOKE...

E S B K O A U J T N S E Y F R O N S Z O N R A L L
 B C K E E S J N P G L A P O B S L E E O N Z S F I
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| cannabis | pot | lighter | laws |
| ban | rizla | patches | smoke |
| puff | weed | breathe | enjoy |
| blaze | chill | skunk | deck |
| joint | freedom | sensual | public |

SMOKING BANS





Suburban

