

## The Haze story and more. Warning: very long read

Pentru cine e interesat si are rabdare , cu speranta ca va va ajuta in viitoarele cumparaturi :

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Quote:

### Haze's roots and Sam the Skunkman

Haze has a somewhat clouded history, to say the least. The accepted story is that it has its roots in the work of the Haze Bros in Corralitos, near Santa Cruz in central California between 1970 and 1975. The Haze Bros grew out many of the finest sativas from imported seeds from Colombia, Mexico, Thailand and South India and hybridised them. Robert Connell Clarke explains the origins of Haze in his 'Origins of the Species' article published in Issue 60 of Cannabis Culture magazine:

"The Original Haze is a late-maturing variety from Central California and was almost always grown in greenhouses, allowing it to finish in December or January. Original Haze was always connoisseur stash, and even in the 1970s it sold for as much as \$200 an ounce. Original Haze is a pure sativa stabilised *hybrid* arising from *crossing* all of the best females with a male of a different imported sativa variety each year. Starting with Colombian/Mexican hybrids grown from seeds from the first crop, a South Indian male plant was used as a pollen source the second year, and a Thai male plant was used the third year. Depending on which year Haze seeds were collected, they resembled either Colombian, South Indian or Thai plants. Original Haze varies in taste from citrus Thai notes through the gamut of sativa highlights to the deep spicy purple Colombian flavour most common in Dutch Haze cultivars."

The exact cultivars grown by the Haze Bros are unknown, but the Colombians are said to include Highland Gold and Wacky Weed, the South Indian originated in the Kerala region. The selection of the Colombian and Mexican plants being based on which of them would mature under glass at Santa Cruz's latitude (36.9N). The Haze Bros were sensimilla growers and sold the various phenotypes of Haze under names such as Purple Haze, Silver Blue Haze and Lime Green Haze, the purple batches fetching upto \$500 an ounce according to Sam the Skunkman.

The Bros were growers not breeders and never worked their hybrids into a consistent seedline, this happened later when one of their Santa Cruz neighbours and cannabis collaborators, Sam the Skunkman worked with their seed to produce the Haze seedline we know today. Sam explained a little about the process in a post at icmag.com in 2008:

"Original Haze was fairly consistent as F1's but by the time it was F5 and above it segregated out into many different related lines. I have not worked Original Haze as much as tried to save it, I collected as much seed as I could in the early 70's grew them and did free pollinations and did minimal selection to ensure I saved as many genes as I could. That was in the 70's & 80's now I have clones for the last 20 years. My Original Haze is not done being worked on that is why I tell people to use it as breeding materials."

Haze genetics were brought to a worldwide audience in 1984 when Sam the

Skunkman moved to Holland, taking the Haze genes with him and thus introducing them to the commercial cannabis seed business. In his handwritten Cultivator's Choice seed catalogue #4 from fall 1985, Sam lists Haze as #10 in his line-up of ten strains:

"Original Haze Sativa Pure, (Selfed)

All sativa but is an inconsistent *hybrid*. 10% are spectacular, 75% good, 10% poor. Truly superior sweet taste. High incredibly clear and up energy. Height 2-3m. Yield: 100-300gm. Harvest: December (flowers 3 months for quality). Will not mature outdoors in Holland or Northern California. Haze is Cultivator's Choice's personal favourite."

At this point Sam didn't offer any Haze hybrids, however Haze doesn't work very well indoors under lights so it was inevitable that hybrids would be made to allow indoor growers to experience a part of the Haze genetics.

### **Neville of Greenhouse seeds and the *hybridization* of Haze**

At the same time as Sam was bringing a handful of the best American genetics to Holland, a young Dutch/Australian man called Neville Schoenmakers was raking in huge piles of cash dollars through his company The Seed Bank. Neville had placed an ad in High Times in 1984 and immediately the envelopes stuffed with dollar bills began arriving by the sackload. According to Steven Hager's 'Inside Cannabis Castle' article published in High Times in March 1987:

"In the last year his company supplied \$500,000 worth of seeds to 15,000 American growers. If you smoked high-quality marijuana sometime in the last three years, chances are the buds were grown with Neville's stock."

Neville collected as many seeds as he could from a myriad of sources and grew them out in search of breeding plants. He purchased an old Victorian house located near the German border which he named 'The Cannabis Castle' and converted the lower two floors into sophisticated growing facilities, the gardens being filled with greenhouses. Neville obtained Haze seeds and from these he grew three plants which he called A, B and C; A and C were males, B was a female.

The Haze controversy begins at this point and revolves around the origin of the Haze seeds that Neville grew his three Haze plants from, Sam the Skunkman insists that Neville obtained his Haze seeds from him after he arrived in Holland; on the other hand, Neville told the story of obtaining the seeds from a guy in New York who had an old seed collection and the seeds were from Haze Bros stock circa 1969.

Sam posted on icmag on 25th February 2008:

"It is absurd that Neville said he got 1969 O Haze seeds from the Haze Bros. #1 Neville first traveled to USA in 86 or 87 at the earliest, the main Haze Brother, R was gone, retired in Mexico by 82 he did not come back for 10 years. He was the one that created O Haze. The second Haze Brother J quit growing O Haze about 1980 and only grew Skunk #1 after that, until he became a reborn christian, then he quit growing, and anyway recently he told me he never met Neville and he certainly did not sell any Haze seeds to him or anyone else ever. #2 The Haze Bros had a falling out in the late 70's and stopped talking to one another, for certain they did not sell seeds as the Haze Bros to anyone, it is ridiculous as well as impossible.

Lets be honest Neville got the seeds from me, but he had promised me that he would not make pure Haze and sell them as such, I told him it was fine to make Haze hybrids with other varieties that were not mine.

He broke his word and started selling Haze pure and hybrids with my varieties, and I stopped working with him.

Maybe he lied to avoid the problems that accompany breaking your word? I can not say, but I know Neville did not meet the Haze Bros and did not get any O Haze seeds from them. Both the Haze Bros were close friends of mine and both were close neighbors for years, J lived a few hundred meters from my house until he departed to Mexico."

So Sam says he was the source of Neville's Haze seeds, Neville says not; only Sam and Neville know the truth, so let's leave the controversy there and focus on the Haze genetics themselves!

Sam himself created a number of Haze hybrids with Haze x Skunk #1 and Haze x Keralan South Indian Sativa being the two that are most widely known and are sold by The Flying Dutchmen as Fuma Con Diablos and Haze Mist.

Neville had three Haze plants which he called A, B and C. A and C were males, B was a female. The Haze B female was not an impressive looking plant and didn't have a pleasant high when smoked, so it was discarded. The Haze A male had a spicy smell/taste whereas the Haze C male had a more dark earthy Chocolate Thai type smell and taste. It is thought that the A male is a Colombian *dominant* pheno, the C being a Thai *dominant* one.

In the 1988 The Seed Bank catalogue Neville writes:

"Haze is a late sativa from America, widely agreed by experts to be the best pot in the world. Very popular in the 70's, it nearly became extinct in recent years as growers switched to easier varieties. We managed to salvage a few viable seeds from the last crop grown in America and we have used them to produce some remarkable hybrids. Haze is known for an extreme, almost psychedelic spaciness. The fragrance is complex and deep with a dry flowery perfume over a base of dark leathery animal tones. When used in a *hybrid* it adds fascinating notes of depth and complexity to the taste, as well as a unique addition to the high. While not for everyone, the most jaded connoisseur will often find haze irresistible."

The first Haze *hybrid* to appear was Haze x NL #1 f-1 *hybrid*, listed in the 1988 The Seed Bank Catalogue, it is unknown what parent plants made up this strain which was only sold for one year. NL #1 is/was a true-breeding Afghani so both males and females were available for breeding, perhaps Neville crossed a NL#1 male to his only Haze female (B).

Neville made a number of crosses using his two Haze males; He crossed the the Haze A male to his Northern Lights #5 and Hashplant female clones and a Skunk #1 female (#17 from seed). He also crossed the Haze C male to his G13 female clone, a Hawaiian Sativa female and a Durban Sativa female. The Hawaiian and Durban hybrids both won Cannabis Cups in the pure sativa category which gives a very strong endorsement of the breeding pedigree of the Haze C male. The G13 x Haze C male *hybrid* appeared in The Seed Bank catalogue in 1989 but the genetics apparently didn't combine well and the seeds were only sold for one year. The Hashplant and Skunk hybrids were never offered for sale, but the NL5 x Haze A male cross turned out to be something special, and Neville's original description in the 1989 The Seed Bank catalogue has always made me chuckle:

"HAZE X NL#5

1989 - Due to tremendous customer demand, we have spent years searching for a superb Sativa/Indica *hybrid* that is suited for indoor growing but still retains the unique sativa qualities in the high. The Haze X NL#5 *hybrid* is the result of this search. A note of warning: Adverse effects have been known to occur among inexperienced smokers, particularly when combined with alcohol. Side effects may include nausea, dizziness, fainting and loss of bowel and bladder control. Extreme introspective behavior is considered normal."

the 1995 Sensi Seed Bank Catalogue states:

"This *hybrid* is the pinnacle of achievement in Cannabis breeding today. The result: an extremely potent plant with a great Sativa high. At the Harvest festivals in the early nineties this strain was already miles ahead of its competitors. Even today it has not yet been surpassed. The high yields compensate for the slightly longer flowering period. *Hybrid* vigour provides for lush growth, heavy bud formation and abundant resin. A true champion!"

The NL5 x Haze A seedline was to become the source of breeding plants that form the foundations of the later Haze hybrids created by Neville and Shantibaba – Super Silver Haze, Neville's Haze and Mango Haze. As it plays such an important role as a building block in the Haze story, let us familiarise ourselves with Northern Lights #5 (NL5). Steven Hager's description from his 'Inside Cannabis Castle' article published in High Times in March 1987 gives you a good idea why Neville chose it as a breeding plant:

State of the art indoor indica. Originating out of the Pacific Northwest, it is the result of many years of indoor breeding – three to four crops per year for a total of perhaps thirty to forty generations in the last ten years. The picture in Neville's catalogue is a cutting of my personal favourite, C1 #5 f1. Unfortunately, no seeds are available of the strain, only cuttings. If anyone can come up with anything more resinous than this, I'd like to see it. Does not have much taste. The breeder bred a very specific goal in mind: high resin content. He certainly succeeded. The grass is a mellow indica that gets you pleasantly stoned – almost the opposite of Afghani #1. Although there are tastier varieties, I could smoke this one all day.

Shantibaba described the NL5 cutting in an internet post at mrnice.nl in 2008:

"The origins of the NL we have been using to breed with are Afghan, worked on in America in the 80s and Holland...one of the plants that has lead to a multitude of hybrids. There is no Thai in our version it is pretty much a 100% indica plant finishes 45-55 days and is exceptionally resinous."

An exceptionally resinous clone that represented the state of the art in indoor indica genetics is the obvious choice to hybridise a pure sativa like Haze. The great success subsequently enjoyed by the Haze x NL5 hybrids and their derivatives shows that Neville made a wise choice when he crossed Haze to the Northern Lights #5 cutting.

The Cannabis Cup

While in Holland to meet Neville and write the 'Inside Cannabis Castle' article, High Times editor Steven Hager also met up with Sam the Skunkman and came up with the idea for the Cannabis Cup after hearing Sam's tales of the harvest festivals held in California in the 1970s. Held in November 1988, the first High Times Cannabis Cup was an informal affair with only four companies – Neville's The Seed Bank, Ben Dronker's Sensi Seed Club, Super Sativa Seed Club (SSSC)

and Cultivator's Choice (Sam the Skunkman). Sam won with Skunk #1 but decided he was disenchanted with the idea of competitions and retired from them. Sam sold his genetics to Neville, Ben Dronkers and Eddy Rekedder (who later founded The Flying Dutchmen Seed Company and The Cannabis College) so ensuring the genes he brought with him from the US became some of the building blocks of modern hybrids.

The same four companies contested the second Cannabis Cup the following year and Neville's The Seed Bank won a clean sweep of all the awards using the genetics purchased from Sam. Haze x South African Sativa winning the Pure Sativa Cup and Early Pearl x Skunk No.1 x Northern Lights No.5 x Haze taking the Mostly Sativa Cup. The following year saw Neville repeat the clean sweep, Haze x Hawaiian winning the pure Sativa Cup and Northern Lights #5 x Haze the Mostly Sativa Cup. Northern Lights #5 won the Pure Indica Cup.



#3

Quote:

### Surviving clones from Neville's original Haze hybrids

A number of clones still survive from the original work of Neville and are fairly widely held in Holland. The best known among these are A5 and C5. A5 is a mango tasting plant and is the mother of Mexican Haze and Ocean's Twelve Haze. C5 is a pheno selected from the thousand plus plant grow of NL5 x Haze A male that Neville did in the early nineties and from which he and Shantibaba selected the mothers of the SSH and Neville's Haze seedlines.

A5 Haze is a staple of coffeeshops in southern Holland such as the Toermalijn coffeeshop in Tilburg, Checkpoint in Terneuzen, Pax in Breda and at Willie Wortels in Haarlem.

Mexican Haze is A5 x Mexican sativa male, there are two phenotypes held as clones; the Mexican male no longer exists. The Dampkring coffeeshop in Amsterdam has had Mexican Haze on it's menu. No Mercy Supply used Mexican Haze in a number of their hybrids, the greatest proportion being in the Mexican Haze x Victorie F1.

Another of Neville's Haze hybrids also resurfaced recently. Hashplant x Haze was first grown in Spain and is also known in some circles as HP13 or Hollywood Haze. Shantibaba distributed a large quantity of old Hashplant x Haze seeds in 2005 and this cutting was grown from those seeds by growers near Valencia. The clone travelled to Amsterdam and was popularized by THSeeds under the name HP13. THSeeds also offer a *hybrid* of this clone called PG-13 which is probably HP13 x G13Haze male. A of DNA Genetics explained the story in a post at [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*.com](http://*****.com) in December 2008:

"We got a cutting in Spain 4 years ago of supposedly HP13 and when we grew this

cutting out it took 12 weeks stretched like a sativa and smelled of haze. when it finally finished we knew it was Hash Plant Haze and after speaking with Shantibaba we got it right, but we also know for fact that he gave out the hp13 seeds also in Spain... 11-12 flowering and very nice yields. makes some of the best bubble hash around that i have seen."

### **Haze once again dominates the Cannabis Cup**

If we look at the top three strains from the last three Cannabis Cups we see the name Haze is very prominent. In 2006 Greenhouse took the top prize with Arjan's Ultra Haze #1, Barney's were 2nd with G13 Haze and Grey Area took 3rd with DNA's Martian Mean Green. Arjan's Ultra Haze #1 is a cross of Neville's Haze to a sativa from Laos and widely regarded as utter garbage, Martian Mean Green is Sharksbreath x G13Haze so the winner was 50% Neville's Haze, second place was 50% Haze C male and third place was 25% Haze C male.

At the 2007 Cannabis Cup Barney's claimed the overall 1st place with G13Haze and the Greenhouse took 3rd with Super Silver Haze, the Haze genes in each being from the Haze C male. DNA's Choclope was 2nd and that is made up of OG Choc Thai x Cannalope Haze so probably contains a small amount of genes from either the Haze A or C males

The 2008 cup was again claimed by a Haze *hybrid*, this time Super Lemon Haze from the Greenhouse; Barney's placed second with Utopia Haze. The Utopia Haze is simply the old C5 Haze cut renamed so has a genetic makeup of NL5 x Haze A male. Everyone I talked to thought the Super Lemon Haze was actually Super Silver Haze, Greenhouse claim it is SSH x Lemon Skunk, but I'm not convinced of this. Choclope was again third so for the third year in a row, all of the top 3 strains were based to some degree on two Haze males first grown from seed by Neville twenty years earlier.

If we list the nine strains that filled the top three places in the last three cannabis cups along with their lineage, it gives us a breakdown of what genetics are at the heart of the most successful strains today.

From this table we can see that only a tiny number of plants were originally used to create these genetics, the Haze A and C males making up the largest part; the Northern Lights #5 and G13 clones making up most of the remainder and there is a small amount of Skunk #1 in Super Silver/Lemon Haze. The minor contributions in terms of new genetics are from the Laos sativa in Arjan's Ultra Haze #1, the small amount of Jamaican Lambsbread and Great White Shark in Martian Mean Green and the supposedly Thai part of Choclope.

So why are the same genetics that won the first Cannabis Cups 20 years ago still winning? Why are the Netherlands-based seed companies entering genetics from on a handful of plants Neville introduced twenty years ago? Well, there are two prime reasons:

1. Finding quality breeding plants is hard work, you need to grow a lot of seeds out and this is going to cost a lot of money, not to mention a good deal of skill and knowledge when it comes to selection time. Large profits can be made selling seeds that are comprised purely of old genetics as the majority of customers are largely ignorant of the true nature of the product they are buying.
2. The Dutch ban on seed production in 1998 drove cannabis seed production underground, no-one is able to grow the large crops of thousands of plants needed to find quality breeding plants. Instead, the breeders are still using the same production

clones and selected breeding males they had before the ban.

An internet post made by Shantibaba on the Mr Nice forum in September 2007 gives a good insight into the difficulties of finding new breeding plants from seed:

"If I select to work with a land race from a particular country, like Laos for example...there maybe nothing worth keeping initially, which is actually what happened to me. So as time permits and space, you put out another batch hoping things will change, and they sometimes do. In the 90s I did work and spend a lot of time on a Laotian seed...but I never found anything special or worthwhile so I kept the work up till then, in seed form and eliminated the plants from my grow room and library.

The general rule in breeding is to test the progeny and see how it comes up...most people are happy to have made a batch of seed, but the hardest work is in the selection process..."

Sam the Skunkman gave an insight into the volume of work required to create the later inbred generations of his Skunk #1 line in a series of posts at icmag in 2008:

"I grew 20,000+ Skunk #1 at one location in the ground. They were all from seed. I sexed them, or helped my crew. I rejected many males for many reasons, I cloned the remaining few hundred and tested progeny (with my best female Skunk #1 clones) to determine the best male for specific end progeny results, like most consistent, most potent, most diverse (for selections), I focused on Branching, Smells, Potency, Type of High, Yield, Flower to leaf Ratio, as well as a few other things..."

Actually obtaining new landrace genetics is not easy either, Shantibaba posted the story of how he tracked down the South Indian strain he used to create White Widow:

"The south indian *hybrid* originated from Kovalum Beach, but actually was grown in the mountains of Kerala. It was one of the most knock out effects of all time for me, so I went on safari and into the mountains to find it. After a few days of biking up to the area on my old Enfield I was lucky enough to be sitting in a cafe drinking a chai and smoking a joint. A middle aged looking glassy eyed fellow came over to me and shared my joint. We got pretty wasted and drank tea then he took me back to his village and onto his farm. It turned out this fella was the grower of this strain, and he recognized the smell...sometimes you get lucky! Anyhow I stayed there for several days and went through a lot of testing with him. He did not really know a lot but selected for the resin production. Considering it is high up and tropical it grew like a sativa but finished a lot earlier. He told me the seed had always been in his village but was slightly different depending upon the village you went to to get your things. It was not a big yielder but it was uniquely scented and incredibly pretty frosting as the plant completed its cycle."

So here we are in 2008, and the cannabis strains available from the top companies are pretty much the same ones that were available 20 years ago, the *gene pool* has become extremely bottlenecked and based on a mere handful of plants. This is an extremely bad situation for a number of reasons, genetic diversity is being lost and this will lead to a generic quality with most seed lines being broadly similar in their genetic make-up. Sadly, it is the name given to a seed line rather than the genetics it contains that most customers base their purchasing decisions on, and most seed companies have exploited this. Shantibaba explained the situation in an internet post in 2007 (emphasis is mine):

"In the end it is a popular name that sells the dream to potential growers and not the true genetics, let's face it! Look at White Widow for example, which I introduced as

seed in 1995...since then every man and his dog have something they call WW...I changed the popular name when I sold the old company and retained the original genetics ...a little bit of a reversal for a commercialist but considering it is no longer my main aim, it was not really too difficult to rename it Black Widow. I see that everyone still uses my description of the parent plants when it is obvious they never have had either of them...most just create an F2 or feminise an F1 selected female. So as you may well appreciate there is or hardly is any etiquette in this world of Cannabis Seed nor probably ever will be. I mean why would someone who begins tomorrow making seed try to sell some name that noone knows when all they have to do is have a cheap price with a common name that works?"

Sam the Skunkman made some very salient points on this issue in a February 2008 post on icmag.com and I think it is appropriate to let the man who introduced Haze genes to the cannabis seed industry have the final word on the subject (emphasis is again mine):

"If I had a dollar for every Skunk #1, or *hybrid* that has been copied and sold I could buy the USA elections and have plenty of change to do something good for the world. I did not receive anything from any breeders for them copying my work or using it to make their own hybrids. They even steal my varieties names. That's the way it is. Maybe it is my own fault for making *true breeding* varieties instead of hybrids? I thought it was the right thing to do..."

I am glad they are filling the world with seeds, I wish some "breeders" would spend more time and resources collecting genetics from traditional Cannabis areas to add to the Drug Cannabis *Gene Pool*, and using these to make IBL's or hybrids that were not just a reshuffle of varieties & genes around for 25 years. I wish the price of seeds was not so high."

Sam has stated many times over the years that Haze made great hybrids, that it improved everything it touched. Perhaps he said this to Neville when they first met in 1985, thus inspiring him to make a series of Haze hybrids. Between them, Sam and Neville started the ball rolling and since then many others have carried on breeding with Haze genetics, and if Sam did have a dollar for every Haze *hybrid* seed sold, he would be a very rich man indeed. The most important reason behind the continuing success of Haze genetics is that they were created in one of the very few occasions when pure sativas were being grown outdoors in greenhouses in great quantity and that in the intervening four decades, no-one apart from Sam, and Neville have been able to work on a large scale outdoors. Perhaps there will be no further occasions when such large crops of cannabis are grown for the purpose of breeding until the advent of legalization, until then, no-one is in a position to repeat the processes by which Haze genetics came about.