THE SCORE
FACTS ABOUT Drugs
plus info on gases, glues and aerosols
DRUGS? WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL...?

EVERYONE has something to say about drugs. Even so, it's still an issue wrapped in Myths, and often fiction gets in the way of the FACTS.

Knowing the SCORE isn't just about knowing the buzz different drugs can give. It's also about being aware of the effects they can have on your mind, your body and even the way you live your life. There are SERIOUS risks linked to drug taking, so it's VITAL to get your hands on information you can TRUST...

The SCORE puts you squarely in the picture about drugs. It answers QUESTIONS, sorts PROBLEMS, explains the RISKS and drops in on dilemmas and DEBATES. Whatever your viewpoint — there's something inside for everyone.

PLEASE NOTE — proposed rescheduling of cannabis

At the time of going to press, there is a Government proposal to reschedule cannabis from a Class B drug to Class C. If there is a change in the law it is likely to be during 2002. Until that happens cannabis remains a Class B drug. The penalties for Class C drugs are less than those for Class B but possession of both remains a criminal offence.
the morning after
LAST NIGHT THESE THREE FRIENDS WENT PARTYING...

PETE: 15, smokes CANNABIS regularly and occasionally takes SPEED

CLIVE: Brilliant party Did you rate it?

RACHEL: Yeah, better than I expected. Pete REALLY went for it though.

PETE: You're telling me. I haven't been home yet. Gave my mum some story about staying with a mate.

CLIVE: Did you stay up all night?

PETE: Uh huh. Took some speed and couldn't wind down.

RACHEL: That explains why you were ranting rubbish the whole time!

PETE: Oh, leave it out!

CLIVE: (smiling) Feeling a bit delicate then, Pete?

(Pete rubs his temples)

PETE: I take my LOWS with my highs.

RACHEL: If you went any lower you'd be on the FLOOR! Don't you feel tired?

PETE: Yeah, but the effects can pack a nasty surprise. I used to hate coming up on an E. Sometimes it was fine. Other times my jaw would go all tight. Then I'd feel SICK and wobbly, and I'd worry something was wrong. I was always OK, but I quit 'cos it used to freak me OUT so much.

(Pete nods in sympathy)

PETE: Yeah, but SPEED's no big deal.

CLIVE: Don't be so sure. Take too much and you can strain your heart. You've got to know what you're dealing with. You're getting a buzz from chemicals all right. There's RISKS involved.

PETE: Stop going on about it. All I can think about is sleep.

CLIVE: Come down the park with us. Everyone's meeting up later on.

RACHEL: Yeah, you'll feel better in a while.

PETE: Don't fancy it - too tired. I'm going to hit my bedroom and lock the door 'til I feel HUMAN again. I've written the weekend off. See you Monday.
“WHAT DOES THE PICTURE ON A TAB OF ACID SAY ABOUT THE TRIP?”

- NOTHING!
- There is NO connection between the picture and the effects of the acid tab.
- Users can experience trips differently every time. The effects depend on the user’s mood, where they are and who they’re with at the time.
- There is no way of predicting what a trip will be like.

“WHAT ARE THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF TAKING ECSTASY?”

- Basically, no one really knows. The chemical name for ecstasy is MDMA and what we do know is that MDMA dramatically affects the brain chemistry of animals;
- it has also been linked to liver and kidney problems;
- heavy long-term use may increase the chance of severe depression and other mental illnesses in later life.

In many ways, ecstasy users are human guinea pigs.

“IS CANNABIS SAFE?”

You may have heard people say cannabis is risk free. This isn’t true.

- Heavy use of cannabis over a long period of time can lead to users relying on the drug as a way of relaxing and being sociable.
- Heavy, long-term cannabis use can make you feel less energetic than normal. This can have a negative effect on the way you live your life.
- Smoking cannabis with tobacco causes lung damage. In fact it’s reckoned that smoke from an unfiltered spliff carries more risks than a cigarette. However, people tend to smoke many more cigarettes than spliffs.

“ALL DRUGS CARRY RISKS”

- The effects may be unexpected.
- Many drugs sold on the “street” have been mixed with other substances, so users can never be sure what they’re getting.
- Users may become tolerant to some drugs (e.g. alcohol, heroin and speed). This means their bodies have become so used to the drug they need to take more to get the effect they want.
- Users may overdose (take too much for their bodies to handle). With alcohol, heroin, gases, glues and aerosols, an overdose can prove fatal.

“SMOKING & DRINKING AREN’T ILLEGAL, SO WHAT’S THE PROBLEM?”

OK, so you can buy cigarettes at 16, and if you’re 18 the pubs can sell you alcoholic drinks, but tobacco and alcohol can be abused like any drug.

- Smoke and you risk cancer, heart disease and serious lung problems.
- In the UK, about 13 people die every hour because of smoking-related diseases.
- Drink too much alcohol and you risk damage to the heart, liver, stomach and brain.
- One thousand young people under 15 are admitted to hospital each year with acute alcohol intoxication. All need emergency treatment, many in intensive care.

“WHEN PEOPLE TALK ABOUT FLASHBACKS, WHAT DO THEY MEAN?”

LSD and magic mushrooms are hallucinogenic drugs – they change the way a user sees and hears things. This is called a trip. A flashback is something that:

- can happen later – days, months, even years after taking the drug;
- is a sudden memory of something from a previous trip;
- may not last long, but can seem very real. If you’re doing something like crossing a road at the time it could leave you exposed to serious danger.

CRUCIAL
Drugs affect everyone differently. Sometimes people suffer a bad reaction. If it all goes horribly wrong, don’t be the one who stands back helpless.

Know what you can do if someone:

GETS REALLY DROWSY
- Calm them and be reassuring.
- NEVER give coffee to rouse them.
- If symptoms persist, place them in the recovery position (see picture).
- Call an ambulance if necessary.

A risk with HEROIN, TRANQUILLISERS and misuse of GASES, GLUES AND AEROSOLS.

GETS TENSE AND PANICS
- Calm them and be reassuring.
- Explain that the feelings will pass.
- Steer them clear of crowds, noisy music and bright lights.
- If they start breathing very quickly, calm them down and encourage them to take long, slow breaths.

Can occur with ECSTASY, LSD, MAGIC MUSHROOMS and SPEED.

GETS TOO HOT AND DEHYDRATES
- Move them to a cooler, quiet area (outside is often best).
- Remove excess clothing and try to cool them down.
- Encourage them to sip non-alcoholic fluids such as fruit juice and isotonic sports drinks (about a pint every hour).
- If symptoms persist call an ambulance, but make sure someone stays with them.

ECSTASY and SPEED affect the body’s temperature control. If users dance energetically without taking regular breaks or keeping up fluids, there’s a real danger that their bodies could overheat and dehydrate (lose too much body fluid). Warning signs include: cramps, fainting, headache or sudden tiredness.

THE RECOVERY POSITION

BECOMES UNCONSCIOUS
- Call an ambulance.
- Place them in the recovery position (see picture).
- Check breathing. Be prepared to do mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- Keep them warm, but not too hot.

A danger for:
- someone on ALCOHOL, GASES, GLUES AND AEROSOLS, HEROIN, POPPERS, TRANQUILLISERS.
- People who suffer a bad reaction to ECSTASY.
- Ecstasy users who dance and do not keep up their fluid intake (see page 25).

NOTE:
If you’ve called an ambulance and you know what drugs have been taken, always tell the crew. IT MIGHT SAVE A LIFE and you won’t get into trouble.

DRUGS DEALT WITH ON THESE PAGES:
- ALCOHOL page 25
- ECSTASY page 25
- GASES, GLUES AND AEROSOLS page 26
- HEROIN page 28
- LSD page 29
- MAGIC MUSHROOMS page 29
- POPPERS page 32
- SPEED page 33
- TRANQUILLISERS page 35