

Student Transported Over €60,000 Worth of Drugs

A Polish born third level student was arrested by undercover drug squad detectives as he transported illicit drugs valued €61,500 from New Ross to Waterford, the Circuit Criminal Court heard in Waterford last week.

David Coric (23) single with an address at Number 7, Grange Road, New Ross, was given an eight-year suspended prison sentence when he pleaded guilty to possession of cannabis and amphetamine for sale or supply with a street value in excess of €13,000 on November 13rd, 2013.

The Court was told by Sergeant Stephen Murphy, Waterford, that investigations in New Ross led to a student accommodation complex at River Walk in Waterford.

A parked car was kept under surveillance and certain activity was observed. The detectives swooped and the defendant was arrested as he walked away from the car.

In a search of the vehicle cannabis with a street value of €18,958 and amphetamine valued €42,585 were seized. The combined haul was worth €61,500.

The defendant was detained at Tramore Garda Station and he co-operated with the investigation and answered all questions put to him in a full and frank manner and gave a description how he came into possession of the drugs.

It transpired that the names he provided were already known to the Gardaí.

Over a period of six months he stored drugs for a couple of days and then transported them and he expected to get €100 a month in return.

He lived with his mother in the New Ross area and worked part-time and was a second year student at Waterford Institute of Technology.

Noel Whelan, BL, for the DPP, said the defendant had no previous convictions and did not have a drug addiction. The Gardaí searched his mother's house but no drugs were found.

Barrister Aiden Kelly, SC, defending, said his client immediately admitted having "speed" and cannabis in the car when stopped by the Gardaí. He was involved in recording and sound engineering and music and acting.

Originally from Poland, he had a difficult relationship with his step father and had not seen his biological father since the age of five years.

There was a very positive probation before the court which displayed an insight into his offending. He had been referred to the Corn Market Project in Wexford and undergoing an awareness of drugs programme.

Urine samples he provided were free of drugs and the court was urged to adjourn sentence to allow drug analysis to continue. A Probation Officer was willing to work with him.

Mr Kelly said the defendant was motivated and was deemed to be at low risk of re-offending. He worked as a kitchen porter in Wexford. But he had a drug issue at the time of the offence and he was coming to terms with it and had not come to the adverse attention of the Gardaí since he was arrested and charged in connection with this incident. He made confessions in the course of his detention and made an effort to provide material assistance.

Judge Pauline Codd said this was a serious offence and the total value of the drugs amounted to over €61,000.

An aggravating factor was the fact that the accused man was involved in a drug distribution operation.

It was accepted that he received very little financially. He did not consider the risks and dangers attached to the sale or supply to drugs to another and he needed appropriate counselling.

He was a young man who was a drug user at the time of the offence. If the matter had gone to full trial the appropriate sentence would have been 10 years in prison.

Credit must be given to him for his guilty plea and his co-operation and significant weight must also be attached to the fact that the accused man came to court with no previous convictions. At the time of the offence he was 22 years of age and the court had to have regard for his youth.

The Judge said the defendant expressed remorse and she took into consideration that he was a person with drug issues. He had been motivated to mend his ways and he had good prospects or rehabilitation.

The sentence of eight years in prison was suspended on the defendant entering into a bond for a similar length of time and remain under the auspices of the probation services and attend counselling and drug screening. An Order was made for the destruction of the seized drugs.