

# Kickboxing Ex-Cop Suspected of Leading Russian Hashish Ring

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The 29-year-old suspected smuggler, a St. Petersburg resident, provided information that led police to a building where the group was storing its drugs.

A former narcotics officer and two-time European kickboxing champion has been detained on suspicion of running a drug ring that peddled an average of more than 30 kilograms of hashish each month, the regional branch of the Federal Drug Control Service said in a statement Tuesday.

Though members of the anti-narcotics agency had caught wind of their former colleague's alleged bad behavior around New Year's, they were not able to pin him down until an alleged accomplice attempted to smuggle 12 kilograms of cocaine into Russia from Uruguay in early June, the statement said.

The 29-year-old suspected smuggler, a St. Petersburg resident, provided information that led police to a building where the group was storing its drugs, and in turn, to the alleged ringleader, who was arrested along with two suspects believed to have been preparing the premises "as a laboratory for the cultivation of marijuana."

During the raid, 555 bricks of hashish were confiscated, along with 16 liters of gamma-butyrolactone, a synthetic intoxicant with effects similar to alcohol.

While the statement refrained from mentioning the suspected ringleader's name, it did not shy away from noting his impressive kickboxing accolades.

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