

A Long Wait and a Short Reward - The Stanhopea



This orchid has flowered for me before but not last season so I gave it a special treatment and waited and waited. I had read in an article from one of the magazines I borrowed from the society's library. The writer had been disappointed with the way her Stanhopeas were growing with small single flowers and shrivelled backbulbs, so she decided to try them in sphagnum moss. The results came quickly with larger multiple flowers and stronger growth all round. It was worth a try so I did the same with one of my Stanhopeas. And then finally it happened. It shot out of the bottom of the basket or rather I didn't notice it until

last week. How could I miss something the size of a small fist? Slowly the huge bud ripened and then **voila!**

Sadly the flower is dead already! It was spectacular for a couple of days and then, it was gone. A good reminder of the danger of clinging too tightly to things that are really only passing. "*All is vanity. says the teacher*". (Ever the philosopher!)

Last Monday at the Orchid Society meeting there were some baskets with 4 or 5 of these blooms hanging underneath. They have an intense, almost overpowering chocolate/vanilla scent, in fact sometimes you are aware of the odour before spotting the bloom. I will extend the treatment to my other 2 small baskets in the sure hope of doing even better next year.

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