

HEADLINERS & LEGENDS

MEET UK HEADLINER & VERITABLE



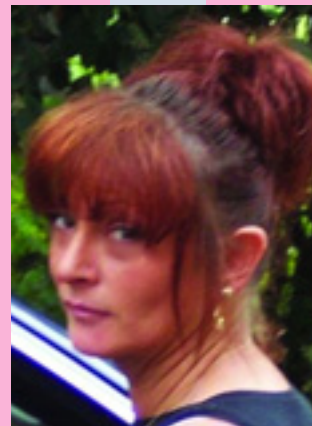
BY GINA WALLACE

Gina Wallace is the principle international educator for Essential Nails. She is a ground-breaking tutor who passionately believes in high standards in nail education. She presents and teaches on the Home Learn videos, is a three-time UK nail art champion, a former salon owner and is webmaster of www.ginawallace.com where she promotes the Home Learn range of courses and the Nail Trainer.



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Proactive. This word perfectly defines this month's headliner, Ruth Fordham from central London.

Ruth's industry presence is particularly apparent on the internet where she is an avid advice giver on several nail-related message boards. With 13 years of experience under her belt, she's adequately prepared to dish out just about any kind of advice.

A native German and now 47, married with two grown children, Ruth's widespread experiences in life have enhanced her good-natured spirit. Although she takes her work very seriously, she doesn't allow temporary inconveniences to get in the way of her daily routines.

BUSY HANDS

For almost 10 years she has been the only nail tech at a busy local salon called 'The Tanning Shop', where she's the ringmaster of her own show, servicing 35-40 clients per week, usually with fiberglass/silk wraps – her specialty. Ruth admits, "The two best things I ever did for my career were to start competing in nail competitions and to get my CND Masters qualifications. Both of these have made me take a good look at my standard of work and my short-comings (what I knew vs what I thought I knew). Competing has raised my work standard immensely. Having my nails inspected by some of our industry greats has given me expert opinions on how to improve my techniques and practices, which in turn have motivated me to strive for

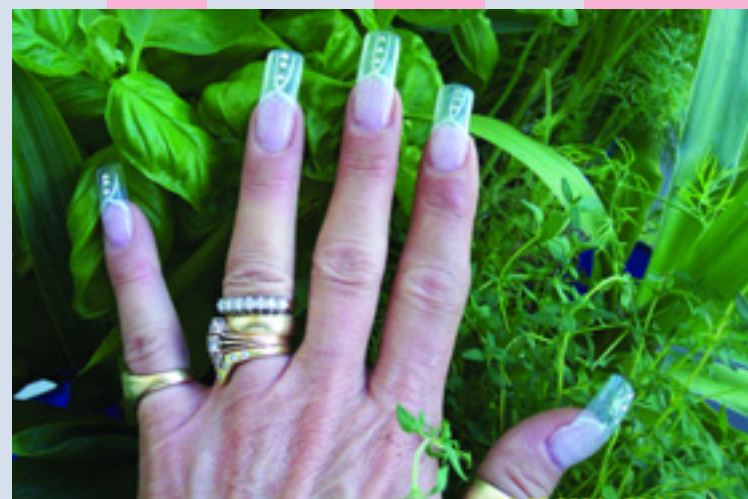
even better results. And attaining my Masters qualification has provided me added skills in all areas of my work. It has made me a competent, well-educated technician that knows a lot more now, but still not all... and this has given me the urge to go further and learn more."



MANY MENTORS

Liza Smith, a UK CND ambassador, is credited with giving Ruth the inspiration to compete in the competition arena. Ruth confides, "Her way of pushing me into wanting to succeed was subtle, yet so effective. Antony Buckley, Samuel Sweet, Samantha Sweet, Amanda Reevel and Gina Wallace have also heavily contributed to my successes, but it is Gigi Rouse who is the main person I look up to. She's my mentor."

In addition, Ruth proudly attributes her daughter, Faye, (also a winning nail technician via Ruth's coaching) and her husband, Richard, to having cultivated her with the abilities of patience and motivational drive.



NATIONAL NAIL COMPETITION 2004

JUST REWARDS

This year Ruth achieved one of her many career milestones when she won the top spot at the Professional Nails Competition at Olympia in March 2004 with a first place trophy in the fibreglass tip/overlay category. She also placed in the October 2003 competition in Manchester, as well as the September 2003 competition at Excel, London. Upon winning her first place trophy, she reflects, "I cried, then thought, 'I DID IT... yaaaaawhoo!' I cried some more and then had a grin from ear to ear, which I still get when I think about that fantastic day. I am so proud to be a winner."

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Due to Ruth's well-rounded education in L&P, gel and fibreglass/silks, her nails and opinions regarding the nail industry have been featured in

GEEKETTE, RUTH FORDHAM

several different mediums. Starting in December 1995 she contributed to a video feature for *EBN News*. In July, 2003 the *Daily Mirror* ran a centre-fold feature in which Ruth's knowledge was the foundation. It covered nail salons using MMA and the causes of drill damage. Then in August 2004 *Health and Beauty Salon* magazine featured her work in its nail art section. And most recently, she's completed a photo shoot for the November issue of *Jalouse* (a French, high-fashion magazine).

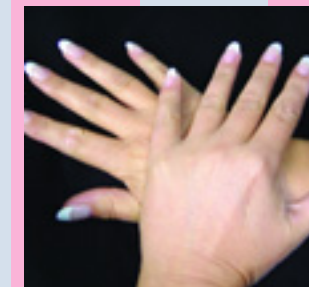
HELPING HAND

Teaching someone else is a great way to define shortcomings in your own work as Ruth found when two fellow nail techs, Dawnie Rathmill and Caroline Lunn, sought Ruth's guidance in the competition arena and approached her for help. After hours of endless tutoring (and pots of tea and mutilated files), Ruth's work was complete. And the result; both girls placed in their categories! Ruth says, "I may have taught them a trick or two but they have taught me so much more."



SOUND ADVICE

In the many years she's dedicated to her skills as a nail technician, Ruth offers the following advice to others who seek to perfect their skills. "Remember this: You are only as good as the effort you put into your work and your education. And never put speed before quality." Through her intense dedication, her appointment book has never looked better. Her clients (both old and new) are proud to say that their technician is a competition winner. "But my mum must have given me the best advice ever... that there is no such word as CAN'T," reveals Ruth. "You either don't want to or you don't know how to. If you don't want to, then fine; if you don't know how to, then get educated and find out!"



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Footnote: Thank you, Ruth! Over the years, I've enjoyed our comical chats on the UK Nail Tech chat room and sharing info and opinions via emails. Your ever-present positive attitude is contagious and always welcomed. May you continue to spring forward as an outstanding nail technician and internet nail guru! – Gina

If you or someone you know should be honoured in a Headliners and Legends feature please email Gina Wallace at infogwc@ginawallace.com State the following contact details of your nominee: full name, daytime telephone number(s) and why you think they should be featured. It's fun to get free recognition!

