

by Ron Hall, associate editor

Are Brits better?

An English pub is a friendlier place than an American bar. People smile more. The beer is better.

A good pub, like an old friend, gathers you in and embraces you. That's the magic being weaved in a small gathering of English blokes just before the last pint is emptied, the wrap-up to the opening day of Britain's third annual National Turf Conference.



Our drinking mates? Bill Mills, editor of "The Groundsman" magazine, Ray Davies and Peter George, both park managers (administrator/groundsman) in southern England boroughs. We talk shop.

Is England ahead of us in the care of the public sports fields? Does the English grounds superintendent do a better job than his American counterpart?

Yes and no.

An illustration from sports.

Ian Botham, a strapping 29-year-old, is tearing up the island cricket scene. He's a hero on the playing field and a scratch golfer who drives a 401-yard hole on a Spanish golf course, signs a million-dollar contract with Wilson, then, as legend has it, jumps into his togs to dispatch another opponent on the cricket pitch.

"An English Rambo," grins Ray. "He's hit more 'sixes' than any man in history."

"Well, is that like a grand slam?"

"Yea, that's it," Ray agrees with a perplexed wrinkle of his brows. He's as unfamiliar with American baseball as we are of cricket, but too diplomatic to show it.

Comparing the English park grounds manager to an American counterpart is like comparing Botham to K.C. Royals third baseman George Brett who flicks wicked line drives in seeming effortless disdain. Similarities and differences.

Take baseball diamonds, for instance. The numbers in Any Town, U.S.A., would astound and perhaps dismay an Englishman. Just a few, however, get the attention the Brit— as a matter of routine—devotes to his *fine turf*.

The knowledge needed to maintain the commonplace cricket pitch or lawn bowling square hones the average English groundkeeper as keenly as a topflight golf super in the States. And that's in addition to their soccer and rugby pitches which compare favorably to our football fields.

That's not the only difference.

"Certainly the financial rewards aren't there," says Mills, the magazine editor.

An annual salary of \$20,000 is virtually unheard of for a British grounds manager, even the best.

These are the things you learn over pints of warm lager on a balmy fall evening in Nottingham.

GOLF

GCSAA Mid-Year 'wasn't horrible'

Jim Prusa, associate executive director of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, sums up the first Mid-Year Convention and Trade Show quite succinctly:

"It wasn't a horrible showing. I'm optimistic about how it went."

More than 1,100 people showed up for the event, Sept. 20-23 in the Indianapolis, Ind. Hoosier Dome. That included more than 200 exhibitors and more than 900 actual attendees, though there were 180 no-shows Sunday.

"People kind of expected it to be a biggie," Prusa observes. "But the horrible heat that weekend hurt our Sunday attendance. Who would've thought that it'd be over 90 degrees in Indianapolis in late September?"

Attendance at the seminars was 145, just about the same as the 1981 International Turfgrass Conference the GCSAA sponsors every year.

An excellent session on the water crisis was held Monday, the same day researchers being funded by the GCSAA and the United States Golf Association made their reports.

"It was the first time in the history of the industry that we were able to bring together a group under common funding of the GCSAA and the USGA, and allow them to tell us what they are doing," Prusa says.

LPGA professional Julie Inkster was celebrity hostess of the annual benefit golf tournament, held at the Golf Club of Indiana.

The future of the Mid-Year Convention has not been determined.

TURFGRASS

Ohio researcher says fertilize in autumn

Ohio State University researcher Anthony J. Koski says don't wait for spring to feed your lawn. You'll get healthier turf by putting down nitrogen in fall too.

Says Koski, summarizing three years of study, a strong fall program provides:

- **Better winter color.** Fall fertilization may keep the grass green into mid-December.

- **Quicker spring green-up.** The excess energy produced and stored in late autumn stimulates growth in early spring.

- **Enhanced root growth.** The nitrogen fertilizer applied in autumn gives the lawn's root system a head start in spring development.

SHORTCUTS

NONAGENARIAN...Dave Lewis, known by his friends and others in the green industry as "Mr. Sprayer and Duster," turned 90 on Aug. 17. A former senior vice-president and director of H.D. Hudson Manufacturing Co., Chicago, Lewis was one of the pioneers in the lawn and garden compression sprayer business. He retired from the company in 1971 after 55 years of continuous service. He remains an active on Hudson's board of directors.

VIDEO VIBES...Spraying Systems Co., Wheaton, Ill., released a new video program called "Tune-Up for Profits." It explains sprayer calibration with an easy-to-follow personal approach. The viewer "walks" through the steps of calibration, and is provided with helpful suggestions regarding tip selection. Running time is 18 minutes. The program is non-commercial. For additional information, contact Spraying Systems, North Ave., Wheaton, IL 60188.

TURF ACCOUNTANT?...American visitors to London might be puzzled by shop fronts with a shingle out front announcing "Turf Accountant." Bring money. A turf accountant is a bookie.

SPEAKERS GALORE...The New York Botanical Garden, located in the Bronx, has a Speakers Bureau. Sponsored by the garden's education department, the bureau offers speakers in a wide range of topics, including horticulture, botany, and landscape design. For a brochure or information, write the New York Botanical Garden, Speakers Bureau, Bronx, NY 10458; or phone (212) 220-8747.

SOLD?...Mallinckrodt chemical division is on the trading block, according to a report in the *New York Times*. Avon Products Inc.—"the company that built the world's biggest beauty business by ringing doorbells"—said money from the sale would be used to buy back 25 percent of its stock, according to the article. Avon bought Mallinckrodt for \$711 million three years ago, and estimates are that Avon will not make much, if anything, on the sale.

FREEBIE..."What Every Plant Grower Should Know About pH for Soil Nutrient Analysis," a four-page brochure, is available free of charge from Kernco Instruments Co., 420 Kenazo Ave., El Paso, TX, 79927. The leaflet explains the relationship between pH and the nutrients in soil and the importance of alkalinity or acidity balance in soil when fertilizing. It also explains why certain soil conditions cause plant diseases and minimal plant growth.

WRITTEN SEMINAR...A popular landscape contracting seminar series is now in book form thanks to consultant Charles Vander Kooi. The book, "Estimating and Management Principles for Landscape Contractors," is \$49 plus \$2 shipping. Chapter titles include: "Setting up the bid process," "Attitudes that cost money," and "Establishing your overhead recovery." To order, send your name and address, plus a check or money order for \$51, to: Charles Vander Kooi, 6478 S. Kline Court, Littleton, CO 80127.

● **More stress resistant turf.** The increased carbohydrate production and stronger root system help create a healthier plant.

The critical factor in fall fertilization, Koski says, is timing. "For best results nitrogen should be applied after shoot (aboveground) growth stops. And that's tricky to determine."

Be advised, however, that fall fertilization will result in a faster thatch buildup, Koski says.

PEOPLE

Names in the news

David Casnoff fills the void left by the retirement of **Howard Kaerwer** from **Northrup King**. Kaerwer had been director of turf research for the Minneapolis seed supplier for more than 30 years, and a pioneer of winter overseeding in the South.

Casnoff comes to Northrup King via Texas A&M where he was doing post-graduate work. He holds degrees from Penn State University and earned a doctorate in plant breeding at the University of Nebraska.

Casnoff will be working at NK's new turf research facility at Mt. Joy, Pa. "He will be doing some breeding for us and introducing some new proprietary varieties in the not too distant future," an NK spokesman tells WT&T.

Dow Chemical moves **Vince Geiger** up to district sales manager at the Los Angeles office. **Rob Peterson** is taking Geiger's place as product marketing manager and will be working out of Midland, Mich.

Greg Bushman is the new business manager of specialty chemicals for **Stauffer Chemical**.

Art Wick, past president of the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council and a 15-year employee of **Lesco**, becomes Lesco's vice president of research, development, and technical training.

W. A. Cleary Chemical expands its sales organization with these additions: **Fred Bosch** for Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky, and Western Pennsylvania; **Don Cherry** for Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; **John Griffiths** for Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, and Minnesota; **Brian Winke** for Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana; and **Jim Lipari** for California.

Peter S. Hays joins **Seed Research of Oregon** as an agronomist. He is a graduate of Oregon State University.

Peter Gerstenberger joins the staff of the **National Arborist Association**. He will be doing some speaking and writing for that group.

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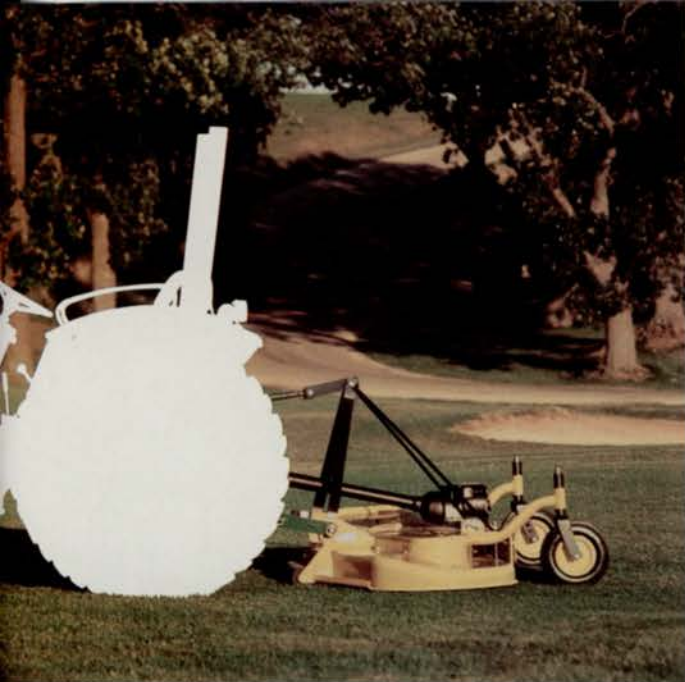
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Pacifica, Calif., provides a beautiful setting for Monterey cypress recently thinned and shaped.

Controversial Californian

Tree artist Ted Kipping combines an Oriental love for trees with European pruning techniques.

by Sandra Ladendorf

A young San Francisco tree surgeon says pruning is both art and science.

Unusual, maybe even controversial, describes Ted Kipping's approach to tree trimming.

For instance, he believes the best trimmers are also interested in art or music.

From a more practical standpoint, he says all deciduous trees and shrubs

should be pruned in full leaf.

"It's healthy for a tree to be pruned in a Japanese style, showing the skeleton and the bark of the tree," Kipping says. "The rhythms inherent in plant growth are as intricate and beautiful or as simple and stately as the most inspiring or primitively stimulating music."

Editor's note:

Ted Kipping, profiled in the article appearing on this and subsequent pages, has some unusual ideas about pruning trees. He has been successful using his own techniques, but readers should not get the impression that Kipping's techniques are applicable in other parts of the country.

California's climate is unlike that in other parts of this country, thus what is possible there is almost totally contrary to what is possible across the northern and central portions of the United States.

Also, Kipping's reasons for why his techniques are successful "are not technically correct," according to a horticulturist who reviewed the article. For instance, the Europeans are used as examples of people who use good pruning technique, but the climate there is nothing like the climate across most of this country. Dr. Alex Shigo of the USDA also has documented proof that early pruning can cause some problems in most parts of the U.S. Kipping's techniques have been very successful for him. They may be successful for you. But proof of their success across most of the country has not been documented.

Summer pruning

Experience shaped Kipping's theories. Each winter he found he was pruning suckers out of the same trees. He was trying to open the trees for good air circulation, to provide light for photosynthesis. But each summer suckers choked the same trees.

"People think that they can best tell what is going on (in their trees) during the winter," he says. "Not true!"

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Niwaki trained Golden Arbor Vitae frame a San Francisco doorway.

Just as gardeners always overplant, we always underestimate foliar density when the trees are leafless."

Dense foliage on a tree may be attractive at first glance, but isn't healthy for the tree for several reasons:

- Opening the tree by selective pruning allows beneficial air circulation. Storm winds pass through the tree rather than being caught in the foliage like a sail, breaking limbs, perhaps even snapping off the tree top.

- Careful pruning allows more light to reach each leaf of the tree, which is vital to photosynthesis. "Seventy to 80 percent of the foliage on unpruned trees is redundant," Kipping says. "Any leaf not receiving light is not functioning."

- Physiological studies show that only the outer 25 percent of the leaves make sugars and that wood production doesn't fall off until 80 percent of the crown is removed.

While Kipping doesn't suggest removing 80 percent of a tree's crown, he encourages vigorous, thoughtful pruning to produce an attractive, healthy tree.

Kipping says there is nothing new about summer pruning of deciduous materials: Europeans have been doing it for years.

"I was blinded by what I'd been taught," he says. "There is a tremendous body of literature promoting dormant pruning. But if that is overlooked, considerable data supporting summer pruning pops up in French and English writings. That information has been poorly disseminated in

our country.

"In the United States a lot of pruning style has to do with climate and the social response to climate," he continues. "Much of the country has a winter lull. The ground is hard to plow. We get cabin fever. We pick a nice day and go out and prune. The irony is that we wind up generating unwanted wood."

Ecological corners

Unlike winter-pruned plants, summer-pruned trees and shrubs stay pruned unless they receive a heavy dose of nitrogen, he says.

"Lots of times, we forget that for centuries things were running along without us. We get into ecological corners," he says. "We assume that things are waiting for us to rectify them and the next thing we know, we create imbalances."

Kipping says there are checks already worked out in nature for all life. For trees, that means outgrowing damage from storms, insects, and competition.

Kipping equates man's winter pruning of deciduous plants with nature's natural winter pruning—storm damage.

With the top knocked out of a tree, a tremendous stimulation of dormant buds occurs, each wanting to become the new top.

"It looks like the tree had its toes in a socket," Kipping notes. "If we choose to winter prune we stimulate exactly the same rush of sucker growth."

"Without the influence of man, summer pruning is simply the milder threat of animal browsing—animals nibbling tender new growth as high as they can reach on the tree.

"It's the best start for a plant, someone munching on the foliage," Kipping says. "If the tips are pinched, floral growth is stimulated."

The four Ds

When working on a tree, Kipping applies his rule of "four Ds"—remove all damaged, diseased, dead, and deranged branches. By deranged, he means branches that criss-cross or shoot straight up, creating a framework that departs from the normal open pattern of healthy growth.

"I like to reduce the cantilever. It puts too much strain on the limb. It's foolish to have \$100 of wood holding up \$20 of fruit," Kipping says.

Thoughtful selection and planting of trees minimize pruning also. For example, don't plant standard apple trees—choose dwarf or semi-dwarf varieties, he stresses.

After removing the four Ds and

thinning for additional light and air circulation, Kipping suggests tipping of branches to encourage floral/fruit production for the coming year.

Kipping emphasizes the pruning of evergreens is a different matter. Summer pruning of evergreens favors pathogens. He prunes during the winter when no pitch oozes from the cuts.

"Summer pruning of evergreens is like blood in the water tempting a shark. Normally a tree releasing pitch would be badly wounded, exhaling solvents briefly. If enough insects are attracted to that wounded tree it be-

"There are lots of horticultural deaf mutes out there and lots of them have chain saws."

—Kipping

comes infested—doubly damaged while its defenses are down," he says.

Trainee traits

Over the years Kipping has trained other people to work with trees. He believes sensitivity to the rhythms of plant growth can be refined but not instilled.

"For example, a person who knows three languages picks up a fourth easily; a deaf mute has a tough time. There are lots of horticultural deaf mutes out there and lots of them have chain saws," he says.

Kipping's own poetry in action shows in the pruning of some large, Monterey cypress trees in San Francisco. He opened these trees. Homeowners now enjoy both the beauty of the trees and the cityscape beyond.

For the young tree trimmer, Kipping offers these tips:

- See the individual tree without looking at it only as an element of a crowd.

- Notice high mountain trees sculpted by the wind.

- Look at trees at sunset, in relief. See their skeletons.

In the Midwest Kipping might perhaps be labeled a flake. In California he's right at home.

His card reads: "Ted Kipping, Tree Shaper."

WT&T

Sandra Ladendorf is a freelance writer based in Chapel Hill, N.C.