If you want to reach 200 feet in a single span for example you are definitely looking at a steel bridge; 10 to 20 feet you are looking at timber and for 30 feet a lot of people like to use a glue laminated beam timber,” explained Richard, whose company, launched by Richard’s brother Brian Nuttall, in 2000, is hoping to offer its services to UK customers in the near future.

One of the other main elements to consider is weight as the larger the bridge the more that can be done with it – buggies, greenkeeping machinery etc.

“For our point of view a two ton bridge is a pedestrian bridge, a five ton bridge the more that can be done with it – buggies, greenkeeping machinery etc.

Sometimes bridges can give a new lease of life to a golf club. At Aldwark Manor, home of BIGGA HOUSE a bridge over the River Ure enable the course to be extended from a short nine hole to a full length 18 hole course with the additional holes being laid out on the land on the other side of the river. The 70 yard long single span steel bridge may not be a thing of beauty but it can take buggies and is of vital importance to Aldwark Manor Hotel and its owners Q Hotels.

So next time you are traversing one of the bridges at your club just have a think about how life would differ if it didn’t exist.

Thanks to Richard Earice, of Creative Bridge Designs, for his assistance with this article. See: www.creativebridge-bridges.com

Scott MacCallum chats with John Philp, about preparations for this year’s Open and looks back at the most controversial Championship of recent times.

Let’s rewind to the end of April and a function room within the excellent Carnoustie Hotel, which overlooks the 18th green of this year’s Open venue. The annual R&A press conference has just finished and one man is surrounded by the nation’s golf writers, with a battery of dictaphones and tape recorders stuck inches from his nose.

Three months ahead of this year’s Championship the press were taking their chance to quiz the man himself.

John coped with all the attention admirably, answering the questions as fully as he could and certainly giving as good as he got in a relaxed, honest, and upfront manner.

What those golf writers missed out on, however, was the opportunity to sit down with John at length and listen to his philosophies on golf course management and on his beloved Carnoustie Links.

Sitting in his office, close to the 10th green on the Championship course and 5th green of the excellent Burnside course, John first of all paid tribute to his team and outlined some of the work they have been doing since the Open’s last visit.

“I’ve got a wonderful team and, although they are split over our three courses, they combined over the winter to re-do over 90 bunkers on the Championship course. We have 26 greens staff in total, as well as four in the workshop, some of whom were here in ’99, but also a lot of lads working on an Open for the first time. My staff produce the highest standards of workmanship and I’m very proud of their achievements.

“I am very fortunate to have very talented people in key positions. Sandy Reid is the skilful and committed head man on the championship course and Eric Watson with his wealth of experience leads the workshop team. I have worked with my Deputy, Paul O’Connor since 1990. He has an impeccable knowledge of links turf management and has been instrumental in the development at Carnoustie Links over the years.”

The team has spent a lot of time trying to get a balance on the fairways between low areas, which obviously can be a little lush and higher parts so that they will perform similarly.

“Let the ball be not going to sit on a crown, it’s going to roll into the hollows but we feel that the crowned area is the type of turf, providing a nice tight lie, that enables a player, with the skill to do it, to squeeze the ball out and get spin.”

For a good number of years the team has been verticutting and hollow coring to get as much sand into the low areas to give them the same playability quality as those higher areas.
“We’ll cut these areas a bit lower, 6.7 mm is not uncommon in good growth, to control the mixed grass sward. We also oversowed the higher areas with fescue, adding wetting agent and liquid seaweed where necessary to hold moisture and retain sward density. The Hydroject has been a great tool for us.”

John is well aware that this sort of high intensity work is not something many clubs could tackle.

“We’re fortunate that we have a big enough staff and the equipment to do this compared with the more limited staff single course clubs would have,” said John, who when asked whose turf he envies most, offered up Muirfield, Guiliane and, in particular, Luffness.

“I got a lift when I go to these places and look around. Basic greenkeeping principles have been followed over the decades and they haven’t had to fight back from misguided agricultural policies.”

Back at Carnoustie – where John has had a constant battle with rye grass contamination in many playing areas brought in as a new “super grass” many decades ago – and having catered for the skilled golfer, who has found the fairway from the tee, John and his team were intent on ensuring that the player could then be rewarded when it comes to the shot in to the green.

“When the ball lands on the approach or the green itself you want a reaction on the ball that is consistent and to know that if it lands on the green itself. A shotter. They then couldn’t reach the regular second shot landing area. So there you have it. Just a snapshot of the thought and skill which has gone into some of the preparation for this year’s Open venue.

“What then happened eight years ago to cause such controversy and produce such negative headlines?”

“In the lead up we were aware of the severity of the rough and that some of the fairways were a bit narrow in places, narrower than they will be this year, but following on from a wet year in ’98, the rough was very severe on many courses on the east coast of Scotland in the lead up to ’99,” recalled John.

“What couldn’t have been foreseen however was the situation which arose on the 4th hole – Hogan’s Alley. With a strong prevailing headwind the players were frightened of the out of bounds left so were laying up short making it a genuine three shotter. They then couldn’t reach the regular second shot landing area of about 60-70 yards short of the green. The second shots were landing in a very narrow area bordered by thick rough about 50 yards in length which was never intended to be a landing area,” explained John.

That area was widened just after The Open and has remained so ever since while the landing area off the tee has been made more inviting, encouraging players to hit driver, with the fairway bunkering amended by Martin Hawtree.

Rough is a hazard area. If players go into the Barry Burn, as is very common, there is never anything said – players fish out the ball, take a penalty drop and play on. But go into the rough and there is a totally different outlook. I’m 150 yards away, 40 yards off line, I should be able to get to the green from here, but this rough is ridiculous.”

“To me the other way is far worse. When a player, 30 yards off line – in the rough, a supposed area of punishment - can hit a 3-iron 220 yards onto the green. No-one says that’s nonsense, he shouldn’t be able to do that, but the media will say, ‘What a fantastic shot. What a player!’ But he was 30 yards off line and had the perfect lie!” said John.

“Ok, we obviously accept that we want to progress in golf turf management, presentation and quality, ball reaction, etc but when it comes to hazards on the links, nature prevails.”

So what is the definitive answer to that fertilising the rough rumour and how did it get started?

“That came from Greg Norman who had just taken a 7 on the 17th. It was quoted that he was just a couple of feet off the fairway but, in fact, he was through the three metre wide semi rough and in the really thick stuff! What he said in his interview afterwards was that he’d never seen links rough so green.”

“Like other courses in this area the rough can colour quite well and it can take quite a bit of dry weather to discolour it. That year it never did turn to semi dormancy and certainly was nothing like Hoylake last year.”

Having talked about the rough it is perhaps ironic that the lasting memory of the ’99 Open is of Joan Van De Velden, shoes and socks off, standing in the Barry Burn as he nightmarishly threw away a certain win.

“What I imagine was that the attention was firmly on the penal rough and not on the wonderful condition that the “in play” areas were in.

“The rough is a hazard area. If players go into the Barry Burn, as is very common, there is never anything said – players fish out the ball, take a penalty drop and play on. But go into the rough and there is a totally different outlook. ‘I’m 150 yards away, 40 yards off line. I should be able to get to the green from here, but this rough is ridiculous.’

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Jean’s thoughts of playing from the Burn seemed ambitious at best but John revealed that Sam Snead successful extracted himself from a sand bank in the burn during the 1937 Open. This year, though, the wall around the burn is one block higher where Van De Velden droppped in. It is to be hoped that 2007 brings no more rough justice for Carnoustie but that all the memories it creates revolve around wonderful golf and a fine tuned and well received golf course. They should be.
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“And you need rooting for that, which you get from fescue and, indeed, grass” many decades ago - and having catered for the skilled golfer, who has found the fairway from the tee, John and his team were intent on ensuring that the player could then be rewarded when it comes to the shot in to the green.

“When the ball lands on the approach or the green itself you want a reaction on the ball that is consistent and to know that if it lands on the green itself.

“The guy who is sitting in the perfect lie in the fairway and with the skill which has gone into some of the preparation for this year’s Open venue.

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“With a strong prevailing headwind the players were frightened of the out of bounds left so were laying up short making it a genuine three shotter. They then couldn’t reach the regular second shot landing area about 60-70 yards short of the green. The second shots were landing in a very narrow area bordered by thick rough about 50 yards in length which was never intended to be a landing area,” explained John.

“There are many clubs who have taken the shot in to the green and been rewarded but that all the memories it creates revolve around wonderful golf and nature prevails.”

So what is the definitive answer to that fertilising the rough rumour and how did it get started?

“That came from Greg Norman who had just taken a 7 on the 17th. It was quoted that he was just a couple of feet off the fairway but, in fact, he was 30 yards off line and had the perfect lie!” said John.

“The lads were very disappointed because they knew what they’d put into the course and they knew what the playing surfaces were like - the areas the players were meant to be on. This wasn’t emphasised, because it wasn’t controversial to say that the fairways were firm and the greens were consistently pacey and true,” said John, who did say that some players, including Ernie Els, praised them for the course condition, while others, among them Tiger Woods, didn’t make any negative comments.

John’s opinion on golf course set up and the nature of player power and press coverage, is also equally well argued.

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MAKING THE MOST OF THE PRACTICE GROUND

Colin Jenkins, takes a look at some of the issues in relation to adding a commercial golf range to a golf club's facilities

In the British Isles there are nearly 1500 golf ranges, with a little over 800 of those ranges located on their own as ‘stand alone’ facilities. Nearly 700 golf clubs have fully functional practice grounds, that is to say a range type system where balls are sold or provided and then collected centrally, cleaned and distributed to other golfers.

Golf clubs have charged substantially over the last 100 years. First, it would be most unlikely for any more ‘members clubs’ to be built. Originally these clubs or associations were the normal way that clubs came into being. These days golf clubs are built for commercial reasons and, due to changes in society and the law, it would be most unlikely that a group of individuals could create a new club from scratch, although some existing proprietary clubs are still being bought by groups of members.

The original golf club had little need for those wishing to learn the game, as golfers seemed to just materialise, and the lack of practice facilities definitely led to some interesting swings – in fact the quality of golf swings has changed significantly in the last 20 years. There are many reasons for this: improved coaching techniques, video analysis, television, a massive increase in tournament prize funds for professionals and, of course, much improved practice facilities.

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Many clubs are struggling to retain their membership numbers as changing social trends in society have made many unwilling to commit to a single club with a large annual fee. Rising house prices and a more inclusive nature for families have caused a major drop-off in the number of full club members in their 20s and early 30s. Golf clubs have always been a useful and rewarding pastime for the retired, but this ageing customer base is an increasing problem for many clubs. The highly prestigious venues, such as Wentworth, Chart Hills and Sunningdale, will rarely struggle to fill their allocation, but even these clubs have invested heavily in the best practice facilities, which their members have come to expect.

Many traditional clubs with a less prestigious tradition are now facing real dilemmas, with the easy option of increasing the subscription rates to counter falling numbers, proving less viable as members decide that golf is just too expensive to support just one club.

The traditional style of membership holds less appeal to young couples and families than the vast array of leisure pursuits open to us all today. Two for One green fee vouchers are readily accepted by too many facilities, fearing that by not swallowing this poison pill they will lose...
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Almost all ranges should be run by or in conjunction with the PGA professionals engaged at the club. This is not part of the old pals act (the writer is a PGA professional!) but PGA pros are without question best placed to ensure that the new range is used to maximum effect. Lessons for all types of player can be given and once a new golfer is comfortable coming to the club to practice, then he or she can be gently introduced to the other facilities and may well be attracted enough to wish to join the club.

The normally agreed truth about beginners is that they do not mix well with existing golfers. In fact the reverse is true – new golfers mix well with everyone. They are charming, polite, humble, keen to learn and excellent customers – it is a shame the same cannot be said of all existing golfers! The reality is that beginners have to be carefully integrated with experienced golfers. Once their initial set of lessons is complete, some venture out onto the course with no care for others around them – this is where the trouble can begin. Careful introductions and beginner oriented days are vital. Many ladies sections have a great record of ‘mentoring’ new golfers. Experienced players give up their time to guide new golfers through the minefields of etiquette, rules, the history of the game and even a little socialising to make the new player comfortable and easy in this new environment.

With regard to the physical issues relating to building a new range, there is much to consider. The first decision is vital – is there enough room to safely create a golf range? If the practice area being considered is even fractionally tight for space, then real problems will ensue. Practising golfers are far less accurate than those playing and the number of times an unusually bad or off-line shots occurs will be alarming to some.

Secondly, is there enough demand to justify the expense of building a range? This is to some extent less important, as a practice ground converted to a quality golf range will attract custom that had previously not been considered. Demographic surveys will give some indication of population and lifestyles, but a rule of thumb that is worth considering is that a range can normally expect to take £1 per annum for each of the people that live within 10 minutes of the range. This is assuming that it is floodlit and also that it is offering a good quality facility and is open to all, with reasonable marketing. Do not assume that range users are the same as golfers – many clubs have been surprised at how few of their members actually use the new range, despite voting for its introduction at AGM’s and EGM’s.

Once the range site has been established, it is best to work backwards from muddy balls to the customers’ first approach to the range. The clearing, collection and distribution of range balls is so often overlooked by those designing the range. If this is not given sufficient thought, then the range will be blighted by extra labour costs and inefficiency forever. Golfers should never see a muddy ball and preferably never see mud, however, the number of ranges where they actually get muddy trying to practice their favourite game is a testament to the lack of forethought or expertise employed in the original design. Many ranges leave this ball management issue so late that they ‘plonk’ the ball management room at the end of the range and trail wet balls daily across an otherwise elegant carpeted range.

For a range to succeed at a golf club it is vital to have the co-operation of the greenkeeping staff, as it is almost always the case that they will be responsible for ball collection and maintaining the outfield and surrounding area. Targets are vital for any range to succeed, but are

the decreasing income to other clubs in the area, willing to take a cut price rate. Clubs must also look at different ways of marketing their core product – membership and green fees.

So for those clubs that are less willing to change their rules, relax their dress codes (and embrace breast feeding in the clubhouse!), the answer may well lie in teaching new golfers that are socially acceptable to the rest of the club’s membership. Put simply, if you can’t find enough suitable members in the market, then ‘grow your own’. Clubs may also find that such a policy is lucrative in its own right.

In order to improve the practice facilities of a club to a point where new golfers can be taught there are several points to consider –

The area must be large enough and not just long enough. A good range area would be 300m long by 200m wide. Such a size may seem excessive, but it is the wayward shots that threaten the boundaries, particularly to the right of the course, which can lead to ball escape issues and health and safety problems.

Planning restrictions will often allow a structure to protect golfers from the elements, but if your club wishes to illuminate the range, then such planning consent is far less likely to be achieved. Golf courses tend to be in rural areas, so floodlights will normally be alien to the local residents and the borough’s plan.

Although floodlit golf ranges take far more than those without illumination, careful thought must be given to the decision to operate during the winter evenings. Ranges need to be attended and this may require the full clubhouse to be open to provide toilet facilities and possibly food and beverages. Clubs will also have to invest in additional lighting and be prepared to have several additional staff on hand, even if the returns from the range may prove lower than expected.

Access to the site is vital. Too many clubs have introduced a wonderful practice range 500 yards from the clubhouse, so few use it before or after the round.

Dress rules for the range should be less stringent than for formal play, as many will want to use such a facility on the way home from shopping or other normal domestic chores. To enforce a strict code is damaging to the income of the new range.

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a nuisance to avoid with ball collection and cutting equipment. Often clubs expect the additional work and responsibility to be provided for no extra remuneration – this is ridiculous and few people in business expect more work for the same money, it may well be necessary to collect balls at night, if possible becomes a problem on the range. This can easily disrupt the workings of the greenkeeping team and so it is sometimes better to have a separate ball picking contract or team of collectors – much depends on the area and the number of balls involved.

In the UK most ranges will need to be cut once a week in the growing season. To clear the range of 95% of the balls on it can take the same time as the remaining 5% of balls, which must all be collected prior to a cut. Cutting the range should be carefully scheduled so that both course and range are not inconvenienced.

There are many other points to consider in establishing a golf range as a paying contribution to a golf club. The best route is to take advice from other clubs that have gone down a similar path, much can be learnt from mistakes!

Colin Jenkins is the editor of Golf Range News and operates four golf centres in the UK. For further advice on any aspect golf ranges, contact him at: colin@golfrangenews.com or by phone on: 01580 715248, 0776 8870331.
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**Heritage is absorbed readily into the leaf and moves both systemically and trans-stomatically.**

**Heritage moves into emerging leaves that were not present during the initial application.**

**Turf roots absorb Heritage and move it throughout the plant.**

Heritage is absorbed readily into the leaf and moves both systemically and trans-stomatically.

Heritage prevents against fungi invasion by inhibiting spore germination, disease penetration and sporulation.

Heritage moves outwards and upwards within the leaf blade.

Heritage stops the spread of disease that exists prior to spraying.

Lasting residual activity keeps Heritage working longer.

**Only Heritage protects from the inside, so your turf looks good on the outside.**

The turf fungicide that will control Take-All patch and Fusarium and other major turf diseases.

- Proven and unparalleled preventative and early curative action
- Protects each and every blade of grass including the roots and new growth
- Controls Take-All patch, Fusarium, Anthracnose, Brown Patch, Leaf Spot/Melting Out, Rust diseases and Type 2 Fairy Rings
- Enters turfgrass through the leaf, stem and root system
- Low risk environmental and toxicological profile
- For use on all grass species

**MAKING WATER A FEATURE**

By Jackson House

The obvious success of a golf course is shown by the repeated visits of members and, although we cannot take away the importance of a good round of golf, water features can play an important part as well as providing attractive, environmentally enhancing areas, giving pleasure to all.

As with any large country house, a lake, constructed in full view from the residence is important and, an attractive water feature by the clubhouse can provide a tranquil area in which to enjoy a drink or lunch. A water feature can provide a very good ‘first impression’ and should be seen from the entrance.

Working closely with golf course architects, The House Brothers designed the three lakes and waterfalls for The Manor House Golf Course at Castle Combe. It took a model of the proposed water areas to convince the architect and the client that it was worthwhile. The architect has since been heard to say that The Manor House Golf Course has the ‘finest 18 hole’ in the country.

Winter storage reservoirs for irrigation are, with global warming, even more important. In many situations it is possible to construct a reservoir at the lowest part of the golf course and, with a small submersible pump, pump up to a larger reservoir on another part of the course. With a more sophisticated submersible pump it could pump directly into the high pressure irrigation system.

Lakes and adjoining canals can be incorporated into the golf course to form attractive hazards and these can be either a ‘love or hate’ for some golfers, and a great deal of thought needs to be given to the design including the siting of the tees and greens.

An attractive ‘canal type’ linear take along the contours may be possible on a golf course with a clay subsoil. This opens up the possibility of a canal which resembles a large river with weirs and bridges which, with imaginative design, can also be a feature of the golf course.

An island green is an outstanding water feature. It has been a long ambition of ours to design a ‘floating green’ which can be easily moved. It could also remain green in dry weather without irrigation.

The golf course at Pyrford (Near Wisley) has one of the largest areas of water features (25 acres). The design involved lakes constructed down into the water table with a submersible pump to lift the water to a large waterfall into high lakes running around the course in an attractive stream. This attracted the sand martins.
M A K I N G W A T E R  A  F E A T U R E

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BIGGA MEMBERSHIP

FULL MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

FREE LEGAL HELPLINE
Access 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with you and your family
member to the phone and help keep contact with contemporaries.

PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE
Cover for time of work due to an accident at home, work or even
on holiday as all are one off payments dependant on the type
of injury. Call 01277 251000 and ask for Ira Mullah.

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES
All members are invited to sign on to a Continuing Professional
Development (CPD) scheme, which records education and training
opportunities.

BIGGA REGIONAL TRAINING
BIGGA provide quality education and training courses at a minimum
cost thanks to the support of Golden and Silver Key Members
who contribute to the Education and Development Fund. Call
01347 833800.

CONTINUE TO LEARN
Run during Harrogate Week. Continue to Learn provides members
with a week of seminars, workshops and debates ensuring there
is something for everyone.

HARROGATE WEEK
Members are invited to attend Europe’s largest indoor turf
exhibition which runs alongside the ClubHouse Exhibition every
January at Harrogate.

BIGGA REFUND OF FEES SCHEME
Members may apply for an 80% refund of education and training
fees up to a maximum of £350. Conditions apply. Call 01347
833800 for an application form.

BIGGA HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS
Scholarships are available thanks to the support of Ransomes
Jacobsen to help members move to higher education. The scholarships
are awarded for courses such as N/SVQ Level 4, HNC, HND and
a Bachelors or Masters degree.

Car Rental
BIGGA have enrolled in National’s Affinity Leisure Programme
that offers members exclusive rates on car and van hire in the
UK and on international car hire in over 80 countries. Ring 0870
191 6950 and quote A090084 for UK Car Hire, A095685 for UK
Van Hire and 8573290 for International Car Hire.

FREE FIELD GUIDES
A set of field guides is available to every member on request. This
handy guide is produced in an easy to use format and is an aid
to course identification. Call 01347 833800.

INSURANCE QUOTATION SERVICE
A quotation service is available to members on a wide range of
insurance products. Call 02003 829255 and quote UNI00306.

BIGGA PROVIDED FREE LEGAL HELPLINE
Access 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with you and your family
member to the phone and help keep contact with contemporaries.

MEMBERS HANDBOOK
A free yearly copy of this indispensable tool, enabling members to track
down professional help and keep contact with contemporaries.

DISCOUNTED WORKWEAR
BIGGA have teamed up with ARCO, the leading supplier of
workwear, safety clothing and maintenance products to offer
members 20% discount on a choice of goods. Call 01482 611773
*Discount not available on selected products.

CAR LEASING
Driving a brand new car couldn’t be easier. BIGGA has teamed up
with Lex FreeChoice to offer an exclusive scheme, which allows
you and your family members to choose the car you’ve always wanted
at a price you can afford. Call 0800 419 930 and quote BIGGA.

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BIGGA WEBSITE - WWW.BIGGA.ORG.UK
Exclusive access to the Members area of the website. Interact
with other Greenkeepers on the bulletin board or check out the
latest recruitment vacancies in the industry.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES
When you join you are automatically given membership of one of
the 27 sections around the country. As an active member you
can attend golf days and other social events on a regular basis
enabling you to network amongst others in the industry. Look at
the ‘Around the Green’ section for contact details.

BIGGA LIBRARY
The BIGGA Library boasts over 650 books available to borrow for up
to six weeks. The only cost is that of returning the book to HQ.

Water proofing, water features can be costly if a complete liner is
required. However, if there is clay in the subsoil this can be used to
help waterproof to above the top water level. Bentonite, which is an
inert ‘fullers earth’ can be used to waterproof the base of the lake,
depending on the type of soil.

One of our most successful methods of waterproofing lakes is by using a
‘bentonite slurry cut off trench’ which are installed in existing, leaking
dams or around the lower sides of lakes. They rely on an impervious
layer of soil under the lake which the bentonite slurry cut off trench is
excavated into. This method of waterproofing is relatively low cost and
successful. It is interesting that a trench filled with bentonite slurry
does not cave in. A bentonite slurry cut off trench can also be used to
bring underground streams, or water courses to the surface.

Golf Courses can be a wonderful habitat for birds and wildlife to such
an extent that some golf courses have been granted an SSSI status.
An environmental lake can attract all kinds of birds and to see the
swallows diving over the water is an attractive sight.

Although common waterfowl are the most common birds to be attracted
to a new lake, occasionally a tufted duck or even swans will take up
residence, which is wonderful. Dragonflies, water voles and moorhens
with their fluffy black chicks are also interesting inhabitants.

Although a golfer is concentrating on his game, to be in the natural
countryside with views of a magnificent lake, surrounded by wonderful
fauna and flora can only add to their pleasure. With the need for a
‘greener world’ and golf courses becoming more ‘family orientated’, the
enhancement of the environment is even more important. Waterplants
can also add beauty to a water feature. The depth of water is important
with shallow water for the waterplants and deeper water, at least three
meters, if stocking trout. The waterplants, especially phragmites can
help a great deal in the balance of a pond by restricting the blanket
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