



THOMAS BASTIS, CGCS
California Golf Club

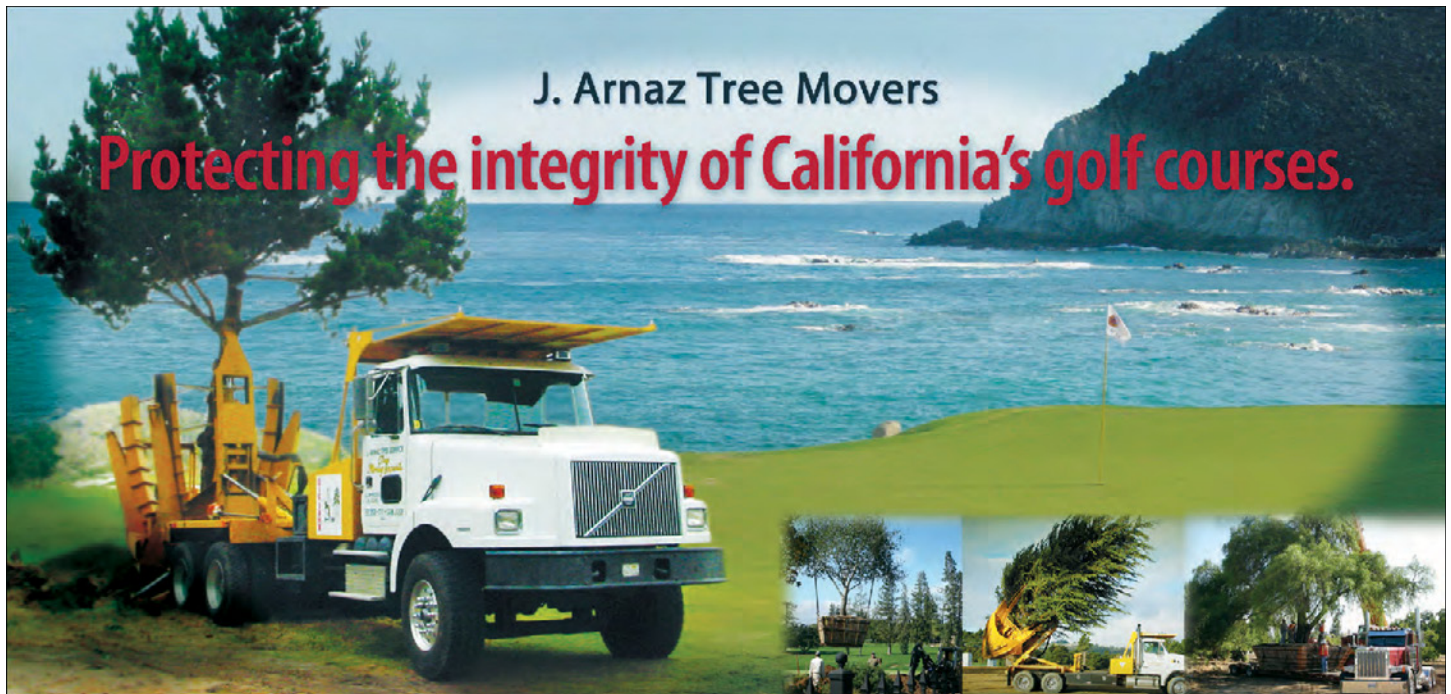
Is the excitement back in the game of golf? With the awesomeness of the Masters, Tiger's return, and the U.S. Open at Pebble Beach (free entrance with your GCSAA gold card); golf is definitely in the air. But, are we back? I recently attended a "pulse check" at the NCGA headquarters asking just that question...are we back? The question seemed answerable, but only to a point. Everyone is doing their best staying afloat but it seems each organization is going in different directions. We are fractured and not united in our message towards getting new golfers, environmental advocacy and political lobbying. When you think about the USGA, PGA, CMAA, NCGOA, NCGA each spreading their own individual gospel, it makes sense to combine our efforts. Should we rely upon our own California GCSA and the \$3600 we annually give to continue marching to the beat of our own drum or does some sort of alliance seem like a better option? I can say that there is a potential alliance out there in the California Alliance for Golf (CAG). CAG first made its mark by organizing the fight against the "Tax on Golf" bill and its ultimate defeat. Currently, the Alliance is reorganizing and seeking our help in the future for potentially bigger and greater causes. We will have a better idea where they are heading in the upcoming months. I would be interested in your thoughts on the matter.

As far as our group goes, we have some great events and programs coming down the pipeline. The Superintendent Field Day at Pasatiempo May 6 will definitely give course superintendents a few tools to sharpen their water management skills. The program highlights turf reduction and construction techniques, design considerations, grass selection for naturalized areas, and tree impacts from drought and reclaimed water use. Then next month, the Superintendent/Pro Tournament is scheduled at Silver Creek on June 21. Check your calendars and get your Pro on the list for some spirited competition.

In research news, we just engaged Dr. Jim Baird from UC Riverside to conduct a 2-3 year study on Experimental and Commercially Available Herbicides and Plant Growth Regulators for Selective Control of Annual Bluegrass in Creeping Bentgrass Putting Greens in Northern California. He will also study Optimizing Weed Management in Naturalized Areas on Northern California Golf Courses. Look for updates on this research in the future.

Here's to the start of a great season and continued rain.

Thomas



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