

TeeOff News

First Quarter 2025



Monarch Dunes Golf Course



President's Message *Jose Alvarez*



In my life there have been many changes that have shaped me into the person I am today, professionally and as a human being. It is my great honor to be writing my first article as the President of the Central California GCSA. Reflecting on my work in the golf industry for the last 33 years, I realize that through the years my thought process has changed the way I approach duties and responsibilities, from; head mechanic, to assistant super, Superintendent and now adding the role of President of the Central chapter. Coping with responsibilities at every stage of my life required pacing myself to be physically and mentally ready to accomplish what my different roles were, and what in life was expected of me.

As a golf course superintendent, the daily work agenda requires planning jobs with a lot of variables to consider. Work force, weather and deadlines to achieve. Every morning on the way to work after the first sip of coffee, I reflect on today's tasks. Then, it is show time! The pieces of the puzzle start to fall into place. While I contend with the challenges of, what day of the week is it, what weather changes are occurring, and will I have a full crew. Did anyone call in sick or are there any other issues happening that will affect my ability to comply with expectations on cultural practices, aesthetics and playability preparations of the golf course grounds.

Aside from what's on the schedule for the upcoming month of work, as a professional in my industry, I would have to always cope with the pace of work based on time of the year. What does the forecast look like? Mid-summer for example; How is the crew handling the hot weather? Considering these factors will help me have a reasonable judgement of time to comply with a given task. Workloads on the crew members require close attention in an individual performance based on, working skills, physical abilities and straight-out working attitude. Over a period of time, people change, how many times have you heard this phrase "I'm not what I used to be", well, we know its not humanly possible to work at the same pace for your whole life. I see these changes within myself and my staff, all of the time. This has a direct impact on goal achievements. These changes can be triggered by various things, for example; age, family matters at home and sometimes, health related problems. Coping with how a crew ages, changes are expected to come along the way that influences the output of performance on the job, as well as interest, or working attitude on given tasks for the day. Of equal importance but, totally the opposite side of the spectrum is the role of over achievers within the work force, whom to continue to be motivated by the need to be recognized, as well as for setting a productive pace of work and be rewarded for their valuable input. Sometimes this reward is the possibility of promotion or monetary compensation at the time of a performance evaluation.

The golf course facility will always be there. Work challenges change year by year, day by day, coping with changes in the work force, club demands, and mother natures uncontrollable situations will make the evergreen of a superintendent a more enjoyable one.

"Adios Amigos"

Jose Alvarez

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California Alliance for Golf Monthly Newsletter

Please check out the attached link to the monthly CAG Newsletters.

CAG Newsletter– January

CAG Newsletter– February

CAG Newsletter– March

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From the Field Jeff Jensen, GCSAA Field Staff, Southwest Region



The 2025 Rounds 4 Research auction is scheduled for April 21-27. Rounds 4 Research allows GCSAA chapters to participate as fundraising partners with eighty percent of the auction proceeds going back to those chapters who secured the donations. Chapter boards can then determine how to use those funds for turfgrass research, government advocacy or chapter education. The program was started in 2012 to address shortages in the above areas and has raised more than \$4 million since its inception. The premise of the program is simple: Golf facilities can support the effort by donating rounds of golf for two or four or “stay and play” packages and other

items that will be auctioned online through a nationwide auction from April 21-27, 2025. The auction is conducted through the bidding platform <https://www.biddingforgood.com/auction/auctionhome.action?auctionId=341731688>.

Golfers from all across the country can bid on the rounds and the auction is promoted through numerous media outlets including spots on The Golf Channel. The participating facility has the ability to restrict rounds to certain days and times as well as the option of setting your opening bid. You can send in your own certificate for the donation or the GCSAA Foundation will create a certificate for you. For private facilities who may be unable to donate a round due to outside play restrictions, the program also accepts monetary donations.

The Southwest Region had a record year in 2024 led by top ten chapter finishes from the Hawaii GCSA and the Cactus and Pine GCSA. The GCSA of Northern California, Southern Nevada GCSA, and San Diego GCSA also had notable contributions in 2024. Facilities can donate online at www.rounds4research.com. The entire process takes less than 10 minutes. Whether you are an organization looking to solicit rounds or a golfer looking for the opportunity to support research while enjoying the sport you love, Rounds 4 Research provides a way for all aspects of the game to come together to ensure its future. We appreciate your support and look forward to a successful auction in April!

Thank you again for your support and if I can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me at jjensen@gcsaa.org and follow my regional page at <https://www.gcsaa.org/resources/regional-resources/southwest> for updated stories and a schedule of events throughout the Southwest Region. Look forward to seeing all of you in the near future!

Jeff Jensen

2025 Scholarship Applications

Please use the links below to open the scholarship applications for 2025 and get those applications submitted.

[Legacy Application](#)

[Turf Grass Application](#)



Advocacy



Turfgrass Research



National Golf Day



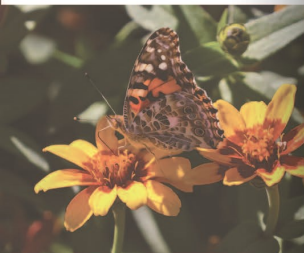
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Donate a Round Today:

- **Fund Research & Education:** Contribute to vital turfgrass research and educational programs.
- **Enhance Course Quality:** Ensure courses have access to resources and knowledge to properly care for the golf course contributing to the golf industry's long term sustainability.
- **Strengthen our community and its future:** Fund First Green STEAM education and other community focused programs.

New Members

Dylan Aldrich
Copper River CC
Class B

Harry Dawson
The Links at Riverlakes
Class B

Bob Tillema, Jr.
Riverside CC
Class B

Jeffrey Gorham
Sherwood Forest Golf Club
Class B

Ryan Nichols
Sierra Pacific Turf Supply
Class E



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Superintendent Profile

Bryan Rios– Bakersfield GCC

By Glenn Matthews



Meet Bryan Rios, the Central Valley's newest golf course superintendent. His new gig has him tending turf and landscapes at Bakersfield Country Club.

Bryan grew up in Lindsay, CA attending Lindsay High School and Porterville College. His work history and path to becoming a golf course superintendent is diverse and began in 2007 when he went to work for his father at the 9-hole Lindsay Golf Course. Not being the type of person who does well working indoors, Bryan thrived while working on the 9-hole course. It was a perfect opportunity for him to develop basic golf course maintenance skills and to bond with his father who was his boss. Bryan worked at Lindsay Golf Course through 2013 and then held a series of positions as a farm assistant and then as a landscape supervisor for the City of Lindsay and Brightview Landscapes.

In 2021 he got back into the golf industry when he took a position at Visalia Country Club, as an assistant superintendent. At Visalia Country Club he gained valuable experience, which ultimately led to a move to San Joaquin Country Club as an assistant superintendent, and then a promotion to superintendent at Bakersfield Country Club.

His most recent move to Bakersfield Country Club is supported by his wife of 15 years Karissa and their daughters Kaitlyn (14) and Molly (13). Bryan and Karissa both grew up in Lindsay and became acquainted because of Karissa's friendship with Bryan's sister. Initially, the two did not hit it off, but you know how love works. Eventually, they began to date. Today, Karissa enjoys a career as a math teacher at Exeter High School where she has worked for the past 8 years. The family is tight and they love to spend time together. Family dinners are an important part of daily life as are the busy athletic schedules of their two daughters.

I asked Bryan what he loves most about his job and his explanation was simple, "I love what I do, it doesn't feel like work. I love the camaraderie of the crew and working together to make the course better." Bryan has a passion for what he does and his commitment to excellence will serve him well in his new position. Look for him at an upcoming meeting or event and introduce yourself.

Safety Moment:

Importance of Golf Course Safety Written Programs

A comprehensive safety program includes written plans – the formal writing of your existing safety policies to formalize them and to show your commitment to them. There are four types of policies that you should be formally writing down:

1. Safety Policy Statement

A Safety Policy Statement basically underlines your commitment to following all the safety regulations, training your employees to recognize and minimize workplace hazards, and providing a safe work environment for everyone involved. For a more comprehensive policy, you can include points about record keeping for transparency, employee conduct, discipline, and expectations, along with investigating accidents and correcting hazards.

2. Fire Plan

A Fire Plan is very straightforward and mentions points about potential fire hazards, fire protection guidelines, the buildings' physical characteristics, and directions for what to do in the case of a fire.

3. Hazard Communication Plan

A Hazard Communication Plan has five parts to it:

All hazardous products should be properly labeled.

Maintaining a written list of all hazardous materials.

Safety Data Sheet (SDS) documents should be accessible for all hazardous items.

Your staff should receive training in handling dangerous materials that they might come into contact with while working.

And lastly, a written Hazard Communication Plan that ties all of the above four points together.

4. PPE Assessment

A Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Assessment is a list that is needed to perform specific tasks or operate all the equipment. This list should be included in the operator manuals for all the equipment. Including pictures or making charts and spreadsheets detailing the task and the required PPE for it is also very helpful.

Guidelines for Maintenance Operators

All staff members must be trained in the proper use of all golf course equipment and understand the user manuals for the equipment as well. To safeguard your company against future liabilities, your employees should review the content and pass the training for topics such as:

Golf course safety is of critical importance to the industry. In addition to meeting and exceeding all federal and state standards, golf course operators need to ensure that their courses are maintained in a safe condition at all times for every person on the course including employees and guests.

Annual Meeting Hunter Ranch Golf Course

January was our Annual meeting. This year, Superintendent Jason Pautsch hosted a great group. We had a changing of the Board of Directors. Andy Cordova passed his torch onto Jose Alvarez, Elliot Weber of Alisal, stepped into the Vice President role, Herminio Plata of Monarch Dunes was elected to the Secretary/ Treasurer position, and Dean Kinney completed his 2 year term, and was replaced with Affiliate Rep John Allan, of SQM. David Avila of Harrells has 1 year still left on his term with the Board. It was a beautiful day of golf, and a great turn out.

2025 Board of Directors
Cordova, Alvarez, Al-
lan, Plata, Avila, Weber



Andy, passing off the Presidents Role after 2 terms in the position.



Our annual "Health of the Association" as well as some housekeeping items that were voted on to make slight changes to our current Bylaw's were presented by Elliot Weber.



Lonnie Stevens of Wilbur Ellis with his team.



Dominic Peluso of Visalia CC with his team.



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Copper River Country Club Mechanic Seminar

March brought us our 2nd Annual Mechanic Seminar hosted by Copper River CC. We had a great group of individuals in attendance. We were treated to a very informative discussion on hydraulics and electrification, as well as some hands on demo work. Turf Star brought in service tech Billy Foley. Belkorp brought in Brian Nash, from Smith Co. Together the 2 were able to tag team the presentation and provide a lot of in depth information. We appreciate our sponsors and everyone who attended the event.



Brian Nash and Billy Foley



Julian Banda, Elliot Weber, and David Avila during the break.



Speakers, working together during the presentation.



Vice President Elliot Weber, going over some basic housekeeping before the speakers began.



Above and Below– Hands on training performed in the maintenance facility at Copper River.



GIS & The California Room San Diego, Ca.

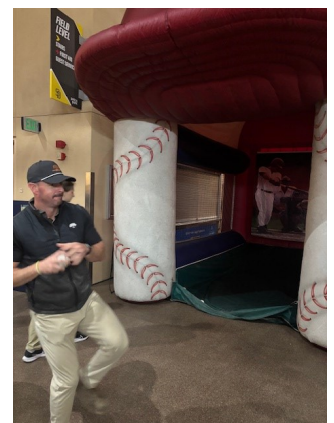
2025 Golf Industry Show in San Diego Ca. was a huge hit for everyone involved. The National GCSA saw record turnouts and sponsorships. The California Room was hosted at Petco Park and had over 450 people in attendance. This event would not be possible without the generosity of our sponsors and members in attendance. Brown Sands, CJ Boone came through with the Premier Sponsorship again this year and we ‘Thank’ them for their support. We hope everyone who attended enjoyed themselves and took advantage of the opportunity to get some top level education while the show was in our own backyard.



Above, left to right: Scott Furtak with STS Turf was working the booth at the trade show. Phil Brown with Anderson was working his booth while sitting down with Sierra Nevada Board member Dave Bermudez. Belcorp sales reps Brandon Russell, and Jim Sherman were working the tradeshow. West Coast Turfs, Will Barragan kept busy with meetings. Retired members Mike and Irene Cline enjoyed walking the floor and catching up with old friends.



Above., left to right: Matt Graves and Jim Sherman of Belcorp at the California Room. CJ Boone of Brown Sand outside of Petco Park. GCSA Past President Jeff White and newly elected President T.A. Barker, with Central Cal President Jose Alvarez. Will Barragan with Sierra Nevada members Mick and Debbie Evans. **Below::** Jose Alvarez with Sierra Nevada GCSA President Juan Gonzalez. Matt Graves, Jose Alvarez, and Del Rio CC staff members. Members enjoyed the speed pitch machine.



Save The Dates

2025

May 19
Al Glaze Scholarship Tournament
Monarch Dunes CC

June 23
Montecito CC
Educational Event

August 11
Tri-Chapter Event
Hosted by Nor-Cal
Berkley CC

September
TBD

November
Charity Tournament
Bakersfield GCC

December 6
Windows on the Water

2026

January
Annual Meeting
TBD

February
GIS
Orlando, FL.



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VENDOR PROFILE

Ryan Nichols– Sierra Pacific Turf Supply

This Quarter we caught up with our newest Affiliate member Ryan Nichols. He provided us with a little background about himself in order to get to know him better.

Ryan: For the past 10 years, my passion for helping other people solve problems—especially in turf and soils—has only grown stronger. I have always been drawn to the science of plant health, but it’s the people I work with that make this industry truly rewarding. Golf course superintendents, in particular, have an infectious enthusiasm for growing more resilient turf and advancing the game of golf, and I deeply appreciate being part of their journey.

My background spans ornamentals—both annuals and woody perennials—as well as turfgrass, but I find turfgrass to be the most dynamic, resilient, and complex plant system. This complexity fuels my drive to continuously learn, innovate, and provide solutions that help turf professionals overcome challenges and achieve better outcomes.

Currently, I serve as the Director of Sales & Marketing at Sierra Pacific Turf Supply, where I focus on product and portfolio development, agronomic solutions, and strategic planning. Before this, I held roles in distribution sales, agronomic consulting, and regional sales management, always striving to bridge the gap between science and practical application.

My academic foundation includes a Master of Science in Plant Biology from UC Riverside and a Bachelor of Science in Plant Science from Cal Poly Pomona. I’m also a licensed Agricultural Pest Control Advisor (PCA), ensuring that my recommendations are backed by scientific knowledge and regulatory expertise.

At the core, I’m driven by a desire to understand the ever-evolving challenges of turf management and to provide insightful, effective solutions that help turfgrass professionals achieve long-term success.

We thank Ryan for taking the time to let us get to know him a little better, and if you happen to see him at an event, give him a warm Central Cal “Welcome” to the association.

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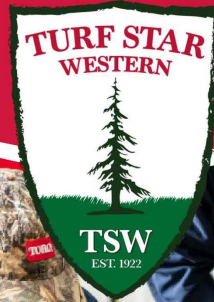
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