

## SPORTS

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## Brown named golf 'Merchandiser of the Year'

Caps winning week after golf pro wins Gearhart mayor

By **GARY HENLEY**  
*The Daily Astorian*

In his own words, "it will be a crazy week" for Matt Brown, golf professional at the Highlands Golf Club in Gearhart.

Because Brown, who was elected mayor of Gearhart on Tuesday, is spending his week in New York City, where he received the 2016 PGA National Merchandiser of the Year award for public golf courses.

"I'm totally looking forward to it, and I think it's going to be a ton of fun," Brown said over the weekend, just before leaving for the East Coast.

He is spending the entire week in New York, where he was for Election Day, and the awards ceremony Wednesday night.

The PGA of America announced the recipients of their 2016 National

Awards in August. And for the third year in a row, Brown's name was on the list of winners.

His latest national award comes on the heels of Brown receiving the 2014 and 2015 Pacific Northwest PGA Section Merchandiser of the Year Award for public facilities.

The Highlands Golf Club is a nine-hole public, executive-style golf course in Gearhart, where Brown has served as the golf pro since 2007.

"We took over in 2007, and we take care of not only the pro shop, we take care of the greens crew and the course," he said. "It's been a lot of fun. We have a great group of people who work there."

Meanwhile, his time in New York will be spent with his girlfriend, Julie Visser, and his sister Molly Brown, who works for CBS Sports and lives in New York City.

Wednesday's awards ceremony took place at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Midtown Manhattan.

The Wednesday night awards are in conjunction with the PGA's 100th annual meeting, which takes place

at the Grand Hyatt, and features golf legend Jack Nicklaus.

"We're going to get to meet a lot of the other PGA professionals," Brown said before the event. "It's a great opportunity for people in the industry to get together, talk about the state of the game and things we can do to improve the game."

The Highlands course has a year-round, 1,500-square-foot golf shop. With a philosophy of keeping things simple, Brown and his staff manage the pro shop and an active online store, which has led to an overall 40 percent increase in sales since 2008.

Brown has served previously at the Astoria Golf & Country Club, Bandon Dunes Golf Resort and Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club.

"I'd like to thank all of our customers at the Highlands who come and play every day, and shop at the shop," he said.

"Special thanks to our staff, especially Todd Payne and Adam Wood, who are both in the pro shop full time. They've done some great work this year."



Montana Pritchard/PGA of America

**Matt Brown speaks with Dave Marr III during the 2016 PGA of America National Awards for the 100th annual meeting held at the Grand Hyatt New York on Wednesday in New York City.**

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### Voters reject Chargers' new stadium

*Associated Press*

SAN DIEGO — Voters have called the San Diego Chargers' bluff, leaving the NFL team to decide whether to try one more time to get a new stadium built here or pack the moving vans for the trip up Interstate 5 to Los Angeles.

Measure C, which would have raised \$1.15 billion from increased hotel occupancy taxes to help pay for a \$1.8 billion stadium and convention center annex downtown, was defeated 57 percent to 43 percent. It needed 66.7 percent to pass.

The 110-page plan was written by the Chargers without input from City Hall, the powerful tourism industry, their would-be neighbors the Padres or other stakeholders.

Team chairman Dean Spanos, who angered fans last year with a failed attempt to join with the rival Oakland Raiders to build a stadium in the Los Angeles suburb of Carson, conceded defeat early Wednesday morning with half of the votes still to be counted. He released a statement Wednesday afternoon saying he wanted "to give the stadium debate a rest and enjoy some Chargers football."

"So I'm going to put aside any discussion of our possible next steps until after the season, to allow everyone to focus on football and to give my family and me time to think carefully about what is best for the future of our franchise," Spanos said. "Over the coming weeks you may hear news about steps that we must take to preserve all of our options. But please know that I don't intend to make any decisions until after the regular season ends."

That means fans could be put in the same position as they were last year, when they thought that the last game of the season might be the Chargers' final game in San Diego. The Chargers (4-5) have four home games left, including the finale on Jan. 1 against Kansas City.

Spanos has until mid-January to exercise his option to move to L.A. and join the Rams in a stadium in Inglewood set to open in 2019. If the Chargers moved, they'd have to find a temporary home.

Or Spanos could negotiate with Mayor Kevin Faulconer and other stakeholders on a new plan in San Diego. The Chargers have been trying since 2000 to replace aging Qualcomm Stadium in Mission Valley.

## SCOREBOARD

## PREP SCHEDULE

## FRIDAY

**Football** — Class 4A Quarterfinal: Cottage Grove at Astoria, 7 p.m.; Washington 1B Playoff: Naselle at Rainier Christian, 7 p.m.

## SATURDAY

**Football** — Washington 2B Playoff: Toledo vs. Ilwaco, 5 p.m., at Centralia HS



Seaside High School

**Seaside senior Maddi Utti made it official Wednesday morning in the school library — she signed a letter-of-intent to play basketball at Fresno State beginning with the 2017-18 season. The Bulldogs were second in the Mountain West Conference last season.**

## Utti takes game to Fresno State

By **GARY HENLEY**  
*The Daily Astorian*

**S**EASIDE — The multi-talented Maddi Utti will be a "Bulldog" next year, as the senior athlete at Seaside High School will take her game to Fresno State University.

Utti signed a letter-of-intent Wednesday morning to play basketball at Fresno State, with a fairly good-sized gathering on hand to witness the officially signing ceremony in the Seaside High School library.

"It was good. There was a lot of people that showed up, and I wasn't expecting that," Utti said. "It was nice to see all the support

of the community and my family."

After visits to several schools, Utti had narrowed her choice of schools down to Fresno State and the University of Idaho.

"I just really liked the campus and the coaches," at Fresno State, she said. "That was pretty much the deciding factor. And I really love California."

Utti also made visits to Idaho and Cal-Poly.

The Bulldogs are coached by Jaime White, and graduated three of their starting five from the 2015-16 season. White is in her 11th year.

Fresno State was 22-12 overall last season, and went 15-3 in the Mountain West

Conference for second place. The Bulldogs advanced to the second round of the NIT.

Meanwhile, Utti averaged 17.4 points per game last season for the Gulls, to go with 6.7 rebounds, 4.7 steals and 4.2 assists in 24 games.

As a sophomore in 2014-15, she was the Cowapa League Player of the Year as well as the Defender of the Year. Utti has played a key role in leading the Lady Gulls to the state tournament in each of the last three years, and is healthy and ready to go for her senior season.

Mike Hawes replaces Wally Hamer as the coach at Seaside. The Gulls open the season Dec. 2 at Gladstone.

## Clippers roll past Blazers for fourth straight win

By **BETH HARRIS**  
*AP Sports Writer*



AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill

**Clippers center DeAndre Jordan, bottom, dunks on Trail Blazers forward Noah Vonleh during the first half Wednesday in Los Angeles. Clippers won, 111-80.**

LOS ANGELES — The Clippers are playing stingy defense and having fun doing it.

Blake Griffin had 22 points and 13 rebounds, Chris Paul added 19 points and Los Angeles rolled past the Portland Trail Blazers 111-80 on Wednesday night to improve to an NBA-best 7-1 with its fourth straight victory.

"When you play defense the way we have been, it's a lot of fun," Griffin said. "We enjoy getting stops and look forward to getting stops. Guys are just flying around, and even if someone makes a mistake, there's another guy to cover up for them. When you are playing basketball like that, it's a blast."

It was the second time the Clippers beat the Trail Blazers this season. This one was never close.

## UP NEXT: BLAZERS

• Sacramento Kings (4-5)  
 at Portland Trail Blazers (5-4)  
 • Friday, 7 p.m. TV: CSNW

**Note:** The Kings have lost to the Blazers in six straight games and 10 of the last 12 matchups.

The Clippers stunned Portland from the opening quarter, shooting 59 percent in the first quarter. They built a 32-point lead in the first half, when Griffin had 17 points.

Los Angeles' bench opened the second quarter on a 14-2 run to go up 50-18 before extending the lead to 61-32 at halftime.

"We got our (rear ends) whupped," Blazers guard Damian Lillard said. "They had a lot of energy and they wanted it more than we did. They hurt us on the glass and we didn't take

anything away from them."

Lillard, the NBA's second-leading scorer at 32.8 points per game, was held to eight. CJ McCollum, who was averaging 22.9 points, also scored eight for the Blazers.

They didn't have anyone in double figures until Shabazz Napier hit a 3-pointer with under 2 minutes left. He led the team with 11 points.

DeAndre Jordan had 16 points and nine rebounds and J.J. Redick added 10 points for the Clippers, who sat their starters for good at 3:54 of the third quarter while owning a 44-point lead.

It was the fourth straight game that the Clippers had at least an 18-point lead in the first half.

"We kept telling each other to not play the score and respect the game," Jordan said of keeping up the defensive pressure. "We wanted to make shots they took tough."