

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Ready to tee off

Hermiston's McClannahan to hit the links at SWOCC

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Bandon Dunes Golf Resort lures golfers from all over the Northwest with its lush greens and sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean.

The course is one of three that Hermiston's Madi McClannahan will play as a member of the Southwestern Oregon Community College golf team.

McClannahan recently signed to play with the Lakers, and the iconic course may have played a part.

"I follow the Bandon Dunes Instagram page," McClannahan said. "I haven't played there, but I am looking forward to it."



McClannahan

SWOCC drew McClannahan from the start.

"I kind of committed in my heart before I committed on paper," said McClannahan, who will major in business. "I met the coach (Ray Fabian), toured the campus and signed right in front of him. He was very accommodating with my questions and concerns."

While SWOCC is not right on the coast, Coos Bay is, making it a desirable college town.

In addition to playing at Bandon Dunes, the Lakers also play at Coos Golf Club.

"I played there," McClannahan said. "It was really nice."

After missing her junior year of golf because of the COVID-19 pandemic, McClannahan turned in a solid senior season, averaging a 90 during the Mid-Columbia Conference regular season.

McClannahan shot her best round of 84 during Week 4 at Horn Rapids Golf Course. She also shot an 85 at the season-opening event at Canyon Lakes Golf Course.

McClannahan finished tied for ninth at the MCC Championships with a 90 at Horn Rapids. She also earned second-team all-MCC honors.

"After my junior year, the exciting thing was getting back out there and seeing people," McClannahan said. "I finished the season with my best scores and I got to play with my friends. I had never had any connections with the Tri-City players, but everyone was ready to get out there and that brought out friend-

ships that were never there before. The courses up there are beautiful. I love Canyon Lakes, and Sun Willows is very challenging."

A little bit of everything

McClannahan has been playing golf since she was in the sixth grade.

"Big River (Golf Course) has been my home course growing up," she said. "This year, my dad got a membership at Wildhorse and I have been branching out."

Her dad, Mitchell, is a golfer, but didn't get to play in high school.

"When he was in high school, he went to Umatilla and they didn't have a team," McClannahan said. "When I was young, he took me to camps and stuff. Since I have been in high school, he has been my playing partner."

She also gets great support from her older brother Garrett, who also played for the Bulldogs.

"Garrett has been one of my biggest supporters through this journey," McClannahan said. "He is living in Corvallis and is only about 3 hours from me."

While golf has her heart, she has played many other sports.

"I played basketball my sixth grade year in Umatilla, and played at Sandstone and at Armand Larive my seventh and eighth grade years," McClannahan said. "I played football my seventh grade year at Sandstone. That was fun. I played softball forever, before I even started golfing. I played volleyball my freshman year, I did cheer my sophomore year, and I bowled my junior year."

But she always goes back to golf.

"Golf is more of an independent sport," she said. "It's more of a mental game and that makes it an independent sport, but I still have my teammates."

McClannahan will team up with her dad for the Kings and Queens Couples Golf Tournament on July 17-18 at Big River.

McClannahan, along with Pendleton's Isaac Urbina, Chelsea Kendrick and Morgan Schumacher, received a \$750 scholarship from the Kings and Queens Scholarship Committee. It also comes with an opportunity to play in the tournament.

"I am finally 18 and old enough to play," McClannahan said. "My dad will be my playing partner. I am thankful for the scholarship they are giving me."

Barrel racers run the 'Green Mile'



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Claire Bennett rounds a barrel atop her horse Dezirea on Sunday, June 27, 2021, during the Pendleton Round-Up Green Mile Barrel Race. The pair clocked a time 33.564 seconds, according to race results, about 4 seconds shy of placing in the money.



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Madison Gray rides Cowboys Golden Dream on Sunday, June 27, 2021, during the Pendleton Round-Up Green Mile Barrel Race at the Pendleton Round-Up Grounds. The open race category that day had more than 200 entrants, though several no-shows narrowed the pool.

ON THE SLATE

Tuesday, June 29
No events scheduled

Wednesday, June 30
No events scheduled

Thursday, July 1
Youth baseball
Spokane Tournament: Pepsi Diamondjaxx vs. Claremont Cardinals, 1 p.m.; Pepsi Diamondjaxx vs. West Valley,

6 p.m.
Friday, July 2
Youth baseball
Spokane Tournament: Pepsi Diamondjaxx vs. Yakima Valley Peppers, 8 a.m.; Pepsi Dia-

mondjaxx vs. Gonzaga Prep, 1 p.m.
Saturday, July 3
Youth baseball
Spokane Tournament: Pepsi Diamondjaxx vs. TBD

SPORTS SHORT

Billups gets first chance as head coach with Trail Blazers

By ANNE M. PETERSON
The Associated Press

PORTLAND — The Portland Trail Blazers have hired Chauncey Billups as their new coach.

Billups, a five-time NBA All-Star over a 17-year playing career, has never been a head coach. He has served as an assistant with the Los Angeles Clippers for the past season.

"Portland is a special place and a unique franchise," Billups said in a statement Sunday, June 27. "As a player I always loved playing here because the passion and knowledge of the fans brought out the very best in me as a competitor. Now I'm looking forward to being on the other side of that energy and engaging with the Portland community on a whole other level."

The Blazers have scheduled a press conference Tuesday, June 29, to introduce Billups, 44. He becomes the 15th head coach of the franchise.

"Chauncey is a proven leader with an elite basketball IQ that has won everywhere he has been," said Neil Olshey, Portland's president of basketball operations. "He is prepared for the challenge of developing the championship habits and strategic approach we need to achieve the expectations and goals for our franchise."

The Blazers were also interested in Brooklyn Nets assistant Mike D'Antoni, as well as San Antonio Spurs assistant Becky Hammon.

Los Angeles Lakers assistant Jason Kidd withdrew his name from consideration after it was reported that Blazers guard

Damian Lillard had endorsed him for the job.

Over the course of his career, Billups played for Boston, Toronto, Denver, Minnesota, Detroit, New York and the Clippers. Known as Mr. Big Shot, he was voted the 2004 NBA Finals MVP while with the championship-winning Pistons.

Clippers coach Tyrone Lue named Billups to his staff last November.

Word that the Blazers had settled on Billups was first reported June 25. The decision was met with backlash in Portland because of allegations he was involved in a sexual assault in 1997. No criminal charges were ever filed.

The Blazers fired Terry Stotts shortly after the team was eliminated by the Denver Nuggets in the opening round of the playoffs.



Carlos Osorio/The Associated Press, Bill

Operations Joe Dumars address the media during a news conference at The Palace of Auburn Hills, Michigan, on July 16, 2013. The Portland Trail Blazers named Billups as the franchise's next coach late Sunday, June 27, 2021.