



2009-10 big west men's basketball

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Media Predict Long Beach State To Capture 2009-10 Men's Basketball Title

IRVINE, Calif. – A media panel tabbed Long Beach State as the favorite to win the 2009-10 Big West men's basketball championship and selected six players to the preseason all-conference team.

Long Beach State received 17 first-place votes from the 24-member voting panel for a total of 209 points. The 49ers return four starters and eight letterwinners from the 2008-09 squad that finished 15-15 overall and 10-6 in Big West games, tying for second in the final conference standings. Head coach Dan Monson welcomes back three members of last season's Big West All-Freshman Team – Larry Anderson, Casper Ware and T.J. Robinson. The trio combined for 44 percent of LBSU's offense. Anderson, who averaged 10.8 points and 4.0 rebounds per game, became only the second freshman in Big West history to be named first team all-conference. Robinson and senior guard Stephan Gilling also received all-conference accolades in the form of honorable mention selections.

UC Santa Barbara claimed six first-place votes and 178 points to nab second in the poll. The Gauchos welcome back junior Justin Joyner, a two-year starter at point guard who redshirted last season with a wrist injury, to combine with three other returning starters and nine letterwinners. In addition, heralded transfer Orlando Johnson is set to make his Gaucho debut after sitting out last season per NCAA transfer rules. Johnson starred at Loyola Marymount in 2007-08, setting the Loyola Marymount freshman record for points (383) and points per game (12.4), while also leading the team in rebounding. UCSB also returns its top returning scorer in James Powell (9.0 ppg), who enters his senior season as the Big West active career scoring leader with 910 points.

Earning 130 points for third place was Cal State Northridge. The Matadors have either won outright or earned a share of the league title the last two seasons, and represented the Big West in the 2009 NCAA Tournament. CSUN lost five of its top six scorers from a year ago, but brings back three starters led by top returning scorer Willie Galick (9.3 ppg).

UC Riverside set a school Division I record with 17 wins in 2008-09 and made an eight-win improvement from the previous season. The Highlanders were picked to finish fourth in this year's league race with 127 points. UCR features junior Kyle Austin, an All-Big West First Team choice who averaged 16.2 points and 6.1 rebounds per game.

The recipient of the remaining first-place vote was Pacific. The Tigers came in fifth place with 126 points. Pacific, which has won at least 20 games in five of the last six seasons, brings back 2008-09 Big West Defensive Player of the Year Joe Ford.

Rounding out the media poll was UC Davis in sixth place with 114 points, followed by Cal State Fullerton (90), UC Irvine (76) and Cal Poly (30).

The media selected a six-player preseason all-conference team comprised of three sophomores and three juniors. The six honorees included Larry Anderson (Long Beach State), Kyle Austin (UC Riverside), Orlando Johnson (UC Santa Barbara), Eric Wise (UC Irvine) and Joe Harden and Mark Payne of UC Davis. Anderson and Austin are 2008-09 first team all-conference performers. Harden, Payne and Wise all earned All-Big West Second Team selections last year.

Other notes on the preseason all-conference team:

- Austin became the first UC Riverside player to earn All-Big West first team accolades.
- Wise's scoring average of 14.0 points per game was the highest by a UC Irvine in 14 years.
- Harden, the Big West's No. 6 scorer (14.8 ppg) from a year ago, set the UC Davis single-season record for free throws made (162).
- Payne led the Big West in assists (5.1 apg) and shot 67.5% (106 of 157) from the floor.

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Media Poll Results

1.	Long Beach State (17)	209
2.	UC Santa Barbara (6)	178
3.	Cal State Northridge	130
4.	UC Riverside	127
5.	Pacific (1)	126
6.	UC Davis	114
7.	Cal State Fullerton	90
8.	UC Irvine	76
9.	Cal Poly	30

() First-place votes

Preseason Media All-Conference Team

Name	School	Position	Year	Hometown
Larry Anderson	Long Beach State	Guard	Sophomore	Long Beach, Calif.
Kyle Austin	UC Riverside	Forward	Junior	Pasadena, Calif.
Joe Harden	UC Davis	Guard	Junior	Acampo, Calif.
Orlando Johnson	UC Santa Barbara	Guard	Sophomore	Seaside, Calif.
Mark Payne	UC Davis	Guard	Junior	Stockton, Calif.
Eric Wise	UC Irvine	Forward	Sophomore	Riverside, Calif.