



@BigWestMSOC

BIG WEST MEN'S SOCCER

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UC Santa Barbara, CSUN Tabbed Men's Soccer Division Favorites

IRVINE, CA – UC Santa Barbara and CSUN were named respective division favorites according to the eight head men's soccer coaches in their annual preseason poll Thursday.

In addition, the coaches selected a 12-player preseason all-conference team.

The coaches pegged UC Santa Barbara as the North Division favorite for the fifth straight year. The Gauchos garnered six first-place votes and 28 points. UC Davis claimed one first-place vote and 25 points for second place. Cal Poly also received a first-place vote and was third with 17 points, while Sacramento State was fourth with 10.

CSUN claimed the South Division favorite's role for the first time since 2014. The Matadors received first-place nods on six ballots and collected 30 points. Cal State Fullerton finished second with 24 points and the two remaining first-place votes. Rounding out the South Division total was UC Riverside with 14 points and UC Irvine with 12.

UCSB won its fourth straight division title – and 10th Big West championship overall – posting an overall record of 10-7-3 and 7-2-1 in conference play in 2016. The Gauchos were eliminated in the semifinals of the Big West Tournament. The Gauchos return all-conference performers **Randy Mendoza** and **Titouan Le Roux** to anchor the defense. Le Roux joined Gaucho teammate and fellow returnee **Noah Billingsley** on the All-Big West Freshman team last year. UCSB must try to overcome the absence of 2016 Big West Midfielder of the Year Kevin Feucht, who has been sidelined for the season with an injury.

Seeking its first North Division title, UC Davis returns nine starters and 19 letterwiners from last year's 8-9-3 club. The Aggies return their top three goal scorers in all-conference second team picks **Noah Wilson**, **Kyle Higgins** and **Kristian Heptner**.

CSUN captured both the Big West South Division and Big West Tournament titles in 2016, and advanced to the NCAA Tournament as a first round host. The Matadors welcome back five starters from that 9-7-5 squad, including All-Big West Honorable Mention selection **Emmanuel Usen Jr.**

Cal State Fullerton has won 10 or more games and has reached the Big West Tournament final in three straight seasons. The Titans look to continue that success with a veteran squad consisting eight starters led by all-conference second team holdover **Ross McPhie**.

The preseason all-conference team is highlighted by three UC Davis representatives in Higgins, Wilson and **Evan Barrett**. Two Titans are on the squad in McPhie and **Robert Coronado**, while the Gauchos also have two in Feucht and Billingsley. The remaining five teams each have one selection – UC Irvine junior midfielder **Ivan Canales**, CSUN senior forward **Papi Diouf**, Cal Poly sophomore midfielder **Christian Enriquez**, Sacramento State senior midfielder **Paul Geyer** and UC Riverside senior midfielder **Ricardo Ruiz**.

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2017 Preseason Coaches Poll

NORTH DIVISION

No.	School	Pts.
1.	UC Santa Barbara (6)	28
2.	UC Davis (1)	25
3.	Cal Poly (1)	17
4.	Sacramento State	10

SOUTH DIVISION

No.	School	Pts.
1.	CSUN (6)	30
2.	Cal State Fullerton (2)	24
3.	UC Riverside	14
4.	UC Irvine	12

() First-place votes

2017 Preseason All-Conference Team

Name	School	Pos.	Year
Evan Barrett	UC Davis	W	Senior
Noah Billingsley	UC Santa Barbara	F	Sophomore
Ivan Canales	UC Irvine	MF	Junior
Robert Coronado	Cal State Fullerton	MF	Senior
Papi Diouf	CSUN	F	Senior
Christian Enriquez	Cal Poly	MF	Sophomore
Kevin Feucht	UC Santa Barbara	MF	Senior
Paul Geyer	Sacramento State	MF	Senior
Kyle Higgins	UC Davis	F	Senior
Ross McPhie	Cal State Fullerton	MF	Junior
Ricardo Ruiz	UC Riverside	MF	Senior
Noah Wilson	UC Davis	MF	Senior