



2019 Big West Softball

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Cal State Fullerton Picked For 2019 Softball Crown

IRVINE, Calif. – Cal State Fullerton earned the nod of softball favorite for the 2019 Big West title in voting among the league’s head coaches.

The three-time defending Big West champions claimed six first place votes on the way to 62 points for the top spot in the preseason poll. The Titans return 15 letterwinners while adding 10 newcomers after a stellar 35-25 campaign with an 18-3 mark in league. The squad returns two players who received first-team All-Big West recognition last season in junior first baseman Zoe Richard (.309 BA, 3 HR, 32 RBI) and senior outfielder Ari Williams (.297 BA, HR, 21 RBI, 22 SB). They lead an offensive unit that led the league a year ago in runs (108), hits (175), RBI (96), BA (.313) OBP (.379) and slugging percentage (.426) in conference action. On the defensive end, Richard recorded a .982 fielding percentage for 469 putouts and 22 assists to contribute to Fullerton’s league-best .978 fielding percentage in conference. Reigning Co-Coach of the Year Kelly Ford and the Titans look to claim their fourth-straight conference title, something the program last accomplished from 2000-2003.

Long Beach State was second in preseason polling, garnering one first-place vote while gathering 55 points in total. LBSU finished in second place in Big West play last year with a 16-5 mark but finished a league-best 43-14 overall. The Beach is led by the return of sophomore Naomi Hernandez, last season’s Big West Freshman of the Year, and a First Team All-Big West honoree in senior infielder Nichole Fry. Hernandez posted league-highs in batting average (.388), hits (71) and doubles (18) while also posting four home runs, 36 RBI a .552 slugging percentage and the third-best on-base percentage in the league at .462. Over the course of the season, Hernandez recorded 21 multi-hit games to contribute to LBSU’s league-leading .305 average. Fry led the Big West with 19 runs in conference play while recording 41 RBI, seven home runs and the fourth-best overall batting average in league (.372). Coming off an NCAA Tournament appearance, the Beach returns five starters and welcomes nine newcomers as it looks for its first Big West title since 2014.

UC Davis wrapped up the top three with 34 points and one first place vote. The Aggies return six starters and 16 letterwinners including two All-Big West First team honorees in sophomores Alyse Rojas in the outfield and Brooke Yanez in the circle. In her inaugural campaign with the Aggies Rojas batted .372, good for the third-best mark in league. The sophomore also added nine doubles, two triples and 21 RBI. In the circle, Yanez recorded the second-best ERA in the Big West at 1.75 while holding batters to a .184 average, the third-best in league. They power an Aggie squad seeking their first conference crown since 2010 when it shared the title with CSUN.

Fourth place belonged to Hawai’i with 33 votes. Fifth place went to CSUN with 32 points, followed by UC Riverside in sixth place. Cal Poly (26 points) and UC Santa Barbara (16 points) wrapped up the 2019 edition of the preseason coaches poll.

Coaches Poll Results		
1.	Cal State Fullerton (6)	62
2.	Long Beach State (1)	55
3.	UC Davis (1)	34
4.	Hawai’i	33
5.	CSUN	32
6.	UC Riverside	30
7.	Cal Poly	26
8.	UC Santa Barbara	16
() First-place votes		