

2018 BIG WEST CROSS COUNTRY



Big West Conference - 2 Corporate Park, Suite 206, Irvine, Calif. 92606

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Cal Poly Nabs Four Major Cross Country Awards

IRVINE, CALIF. – After sweeping the Big West Cross Country Championships, the Mustangs of Cal Poly earned some more history as the program earned four of the six major awards.

Cal Poly had Mark Conover win the Men's Coach of the Year honor, while Priscilla Bayley came away with the Women's Coach of the Year award. Their top runners came away with hardware as Jake Ritter claimed Men's Athlete of the Year and Miranda Daschian the Women's Athlete of the Year. It marks the sixth time in conference history that a school swept the Coach of the Year and Athlete of the Year awards in the same season (1985, '86, '87, 2013, '16). The Freshman of the Year awards were distributed among three schools as Tyler Spencer of Long Beach State claimed the Men's Freshman of the Year and the Women's Freshman of the Year was split among Cal State Fullerton's Lucina Vincent and UC Davis' Eva Goodisson.

Ritter, a sophomore from Citrus Heights, was a consistent finisher for the Mustangs all season long. He finished first for the club at the Mark Covert Classic, UCSB Lagoon Open and the Big West Championships. He also put in solid performances on the national stage with a time of 24:40.2 at the Stanford Invitational and 24:57.3 at the Wisconsin Pre-Nationals. Ritter is the 11th Men's Athlete of the Year recipient in Mustangs' history and eighth since 2006.

Daschian, a junior from Atascadero, led the Mustangs back to the mountain top of the Big West. Daschian won the individual title at the Big West Championships with a course record time of 21:23.1, the second time in the last three seasons that a Cal Poly runner took the top spot. Along the way, Daschian won the individual race at the Mark Covert Classic and led the squad at the Stanford Invitational with an 11th place showing. Daschian, a two-time Athlete of the Week, is the fourth Women's Athlete of the Year recipient for the program in the last seven seasons. Prior to that, the Mustangs had not won a Women's Athlete of the Year award.

Spencer, a native of Corona, put together a solid first season of competition for the Beach. Spencer started his freshman campaign with a time of 25:14 at the Mark Covert Classic, then improved his subsequent times to 25:07.2 at the UC Riverside Invitational and 24:54.0 at the Highlander Invitational. That all led to an outstanding showing at the Big West Championships, a sixth place finish in 24:50.5 that led the way for LBSU. He was the top freshman finisher at the league meet and posted the best finish at the Conference championship by an LBSU men's runner since 2013.

Vincent, who hails from Brea, was an integral part of a team that nearly won the league title. Vincent started her season with a 12th place finish at the Mark Covert Classic, then followed that up a third place finish at the UCSB Lagoon Invite. Her finish at the UCSB Lagoon Invite was tops on the team and helped the Titans best league powerhouses Cal Poly and UC Santa Barbara. After finishing eighth at the Highlander Invitational in a 5K personal best 17:21.38, Vincent was the top true freshman finisher at the Big West Championships, crossing the line in eighth at 21:59.4.

Goodisson, coming to Davis by way of Havelock North, New Zealand, came off a redshirt 2017 season to post an outstanding debut season. Goodisson was the top finisher for the Aggies in three of their five races this season. She posted two top 10 finishes this season, crossing the line in seventh at both the Capital Cross Challenge and the Big West Championship. Goodisson also posted a 6K personal best of 20:48.1, posting that effort at the Dellinger Invite among some of the best programs in the West Region. She also was the first UCD freshman to win Athlete of the Week honors since Sarah Sumpter in 2009.

Conover led the Cal Poly men's program to its third consecutive Big West title and 16th crown since 1998. The Mustangs posted another solid season that culminated in the Big West title, finishing 15th at Wisconsin Pre-Nationals, fourth at the Stanford Invitational and first at the Mark Covert Classic and UCSB Lagoon Invitational. Along the way three different athletes finished as the top runner in a race this season, showcasing the club's depth. Conover has now won 14 Coach of the Year honors on the men's side, the only coach in league history to post double-digit coaching awards.

In just her second season at the helm of the Mustang women's program, Bayley earned her first Coach of the Year honor. The team posted four top five finishes in five races this season, winning the overall title at the Mark Covert Classic and the Big West Championships. Three different Mustangs finished as the top runner in a race this season, led by Daschian's three turns as the top finisher. Bayley's award also marks the fifth time in the last seven years that Cal Poly has earned the Women's Coach of the Year honor and makes her the third coach in program history to claim the honor.

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2018 Men's Athlete of the Year - Jake Ritter, Cal Poly

2018 Men's Freshman of the Year - Tyler Spencer, Long Beach State

2018 Men's Coach of the Year - Mark Conover, Cal Poly

2018 Women's Athlete of the Year - Miranda Daschian, Cal Poly

2018 Women's Co-Freshman of the Year - Lucina Vincent, Cal State Fullerton

2018 Women's Co-Freshman of the Year - Eva Goodisson, UC Davis

2018 Women's Coach of the Year - Priscilla Bayley, Cal Poly