



2018 Big West Baseball



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Big West All-Conference - May 30, 2018

Big West Announces Baseball Honors

Irvine, Calif. — The Big West Conference has spread the wealth with this year's top baseball honors. Cal Poly's Alex McKenna was named Big West Conference Field Player of the Year and teammate Nick Meyer earned Big West Conference Defensive Player of the Year. Cal State Fullerton's Colton Eastman nabbed Big West Conference Pitcher of the Year accolades. Big West Conference Freshman Pitcher of the Year was awarded to UC Riverside's Cole Percival while UC Davis' Tanner Murray collected Big West Conference Freshman Player of the Year. Cal State Fullerton's Rick Vanderhook claimed this year's Big West Conference Coach of the Year title.

McKenna, who concluded the regular season with a conference-best 81 hits, becomes the first Mustang since 2014, and fifth overall, to earn Big West Field Player of the Year. He joins the ranks of Kyle Blumenthal (2005), Grant Desme (2007), Mitch Haniger (2012) and Mark Mathias (2014). Hailing from Canyon Country, Calif., he hit .339 on the season while slugging .506. McKenna scored a league-high 51 runs while driving in an additional 31. Defensively, he notched 150 putouts from the outfield and committed just one error to register a .993 fielding percentage.

Eastman opened conference play with a bang, as he tossed the fifth no-hitter in school history to garner his third career Big West Baseball Pitcher of the Week award as well as national accolades. The right-hander allowed just one walk and struck out seven as he went the full nine innings in a 3-0 win over UC Santa Barbara on March 29. Eastman joined Longo Garcia (1987), Ted Silva (1995), Kirk Saarloos (2001) and Justin Garza (2014) in the Titan no-hitter club, but was the first among that five to throw the no-hitter on the road. Starting 15 games, Eastman (9-3) threw 103.2 innings and struck out 108 en route to a 2.26 earned run average, placing him third in the league. He's part of a Titans pitching staff that ranks seventh in the country in strikeout-to-walk ratio (3.04) and fifth in walks allowed per nine innings (2.69). He becomes the 14th Titan to earn pitcher of the year honors.

Meyer, collecting Cal Poly's third Big West Defensive Player of the Year honor in five years, was also named All-Big West First Team at the catcher position. In 446 chances, he recorded 395 putouts and 44 assists while committing just seven errors for a .984 fielding percentage. Meyer halted nine stolen base attempts in 32 chances. The Mission Viejo, Calif., native was also a force to be reckoned with on offense, finishing the regular season third in the conference with a .344 batting average. In 55 starts, he scored 43 runs and drove in 29 more. On May 21, Meyer snagged Cal Poly's lone Big West Player of the Week accolade following an explosive week where he hit .529 (9-for-17) with five runs scored and three RBI, while slugging .706 over the four games. This is the second yearly award Meyer has earned after collecting Big West Freshman Player of the Year honors his first year donning green and gold in 2016.

For the first time in school history a UC Davis player was named Big West Conference Freshman Player of the Year award with the selection of Murray. Hitting .333 to rank second on the Aggies squad and sixth in the conference, Murray made an immediate impact. The shortstop from Ben Lomond, Calif., started in 50 of UC Davis' 53 contests, scoring 27 runs while driving in an additional 22. Defensively he tallied 68 putouts and turned 26 double plays to help UC Davis tie for first in the league with 52 double plays, tying for 24th in the nation. Murray also earned Big West Player of the Week for April 9 after leading the Aggies offense with a .529 average over four games.

In his first season at UC Riverside, Percival paced the Highlanders and ranked seventh in the Big West Conference with a 3.19 ERA. The Loma Linda, Calif. native started 14 contests and recorded a 5-4 mark in 87.1 innings tossed. A member of the 2018 All-Big West Second Team, Percival registered 63 strikeouts over the course of the season. Percival becomes the third Highlander to earn freshman pitcher of the year distinction and the first since Dylan Stuart claimed the honor in 2011.

Vanderhook earned his fifth Big West Conference Coach of the Year honor after guiding Cal State Fullerton to its 22nd league title with an 18-6 mark. After dropping its conference-opening series to UC Santa Barbara, Cal State Fullerton ran the table and won the final seven league series to capture the crown. In earning the Big West's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament, CSF qualified for postseason for the 40th time in program history – and will be making its 27th straight NCAA appearance as it slated to compete in the NCAA Stanford Regional. The Titans' dominance continued with the 2018 trophy in possession as the Titans have captured 14 of the 20 championships (12 outright, 2 shared), dating back to 1999. This marks the 15th coach of the year accolade in school history for Cal State Fullerton. The five honors by Vanderhook ties George Horton for the most in school history.

All nine schools were represented on the All-Big West First Team, with Big West Conference champion Cal State Fullerton, UC Irvine and Hawai'i pacing the league with three selections apiece. Cal Poly and UC Santa Barbara each nabbed two first team honors, while CSUN, Long Beach State, UC Davis and UC Riverside each garnered one award.

The complete 2018 All-Big West selections are on the following page.

2018 Big West All-Conference Team

2018 BIG WEST FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Alex McKenna, Cal Poly

2018 BIG WEST FRESHMAN FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Tanner Murray, UC Davis

2018 BIG WEST PITCHER OF THE YEAR

Colton Eastman, Cal State Fullerton

2018 BIG WEST FRESHMAN PITCHER OF THE YEAR

Cole Percival, UC Riverside

2018 BIG WEST DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Nick Meyer, Cal Poly

2018 BIG WEST COACH OF THE YEAR

Rick Vanderhook, Cal State Fullerton

FIRST TEAM

Player	School	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Nick Meyer	Cal Poly	6-0	195	Jr.	C	Mission Viejo, Calif.
Ryan Fitzpatrick	UC Irvine	6-3	225	Sr.	1B	San Clemente, Calif.
Hank LoForte	Cal State Fullerton	5-6	175	Jr.	2B	Elk Grove, Calif.
Parker Coss	UC Irvine	5-11	180	Sr.	3B	Mission Viejo, Calif.
Maaki Yamazaki	Hawai'i	6-0	185	Jr.	SS	Tokyo, Japan
Connor Cannon	UC Riverside	6-5	240	So.	DH	Riverside, Calif.
Clay Fisher	UC Santa Barbara	6-1	185	Jr.	UTL	La Quinta, Calif.
Kekai Rios	Hawai'i	5-11	200	Jr.	UTL	Kahalu'u, Oahu
Ryan Anderson	UC Davis	6-2	210	Jr.	OF	Pleasanton, Calif.
Tommy Jew	UC Santa Barbara	6-1	180	So.	OF	San Ramon, Calif.
Alex McKenna	Cal Poly	6-2	200	Jr.	OF	Canyon Country, Calif.
Albee Weiss	CSUN	6-1	225	Sr.	OF	Oak Park, Calif.
Clayton Andrews	Long Beach State	5-6	160	Jr.	SP	Rohnert Park, Calif.
Colton Eastman	Cal State Fullerton	6-3	200	Jr.	SP	Fresno, Calif.
Andre Pallante	UC Irvine	6-0	203	So.	SP	San Clemente, Calif.
Blake Workman	Cal State Fullerton	6-3	195	Jr.	RP	Ramona, Calif.
Dylan Thomas	Hawai'i	6-4	195	So.	CP	Castaic, Calif.

SECOND TEAM

Player	School	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Trevor Casanova	CSUN	6-0	205	Jr.	C	Redondo Beach, Calif.
Kevin Riley	CSUN	6-1	195	Sr.	1B	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.
Jarren Duran	Long Beach State	6-2	200	Jr.	2B	Buena Park, Calif.
Cole Kreuter	UC Irvine	6-0	189	Sr.	2B	Rancho Mirage, Calif.
Ethan Lopez	Hawai'i	6-0	200	Jr.	3B	Whittier, Calif.
Nathan Webb	UC Riverside	5-10	200	Fr.	3B	Riverside, Calif.
Kyle Marinconz	Cal Poly	5-10	180	Jr.	SS	San Jose, Calif.
Tanner Murray	UC Davis	6-2	170	Fr.	SS	Ben Lomond, Calif.
Joseph Myers	UC Davis	6-0	190	Fr.	DH	Mission Viejo, Calif.
Jacob Pavletich	Cal State Fullerton	6-2	205	Jr.	UTL	Bakersfield, Calif.
Ruben Cardenas	Cal State Fullerton	6-2	190	Jr.	OF	Saugus, Calif.
Justin Toerner	CSUN	5-10	185	Sr.	OF	Temecula, Calif.
Konnor Zickefoose	UC Irvine	6-2	211	So.	OF	Chino Hills, Calif.
Zak Baayoun	Long Beach State	6-0	165	So.	SP	Irvine, Calif.
Stevie Ledesma	UC Santa Barbara	6-5	190	Sr.	SP	Ventura, Calif.
Cole Percival	UC Riverside	6-5	205	Fr.	SP	Loma Linda, Calif.
Trent Shelton	Cal Poly	6-4	205	Sr.	SP	Lafayette, Calif.
Tommy Wilson	Cal State Fullerton	6-4	220	Jr.	SP	Los Angeles, Calif.
Hayden Shenefield	CSUN	6-1	170	Sr.	RP	Woodland Hills, Calif.
Chris Rivera	Long Beach State	5-10	175	Jr.	CP	Watsonville, Calif.

HONORABLE MENTION

Player	School	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Daniel Cope	Cal State Fullerton	6-0	195	So.	C	San Diego, Calif.
Matt Reitano	UC Irvine	6-1	220	Jr.	C	San Diego, Calif.
Thomas Rowan	UC Santa Barbara	6-1	200	Jr.	C	Santa Ynez, Calif.
Tate Samuelson	Cal Poly	6-2	195	Fr.	1B	San Diego, Calif.
Brad Pluschke	UC Davis	5-11	180	Sr.	3B	Pleasanton, Calif.
Christian Koss	UC Irvine	6-1	182	So.	SS	Riverside, Calif.
Colby Schultz	UC Riverside	6-0	180	Sr.	SS	San Juan Capistrano, Calif.
Mitchell Berryhill	Cal State Fullerton	6-0	170	Jr.	OF	Smithfield, Utah
Brendan Brooks	UC Irvine	6-1	162	Fr.	OF	Corona, Calif.
Adam Fogel	Hawai'i	6-5	205	So.	OF	Palos Verdes, Calif.
Trenton Toplikar	UC Riverside	6-3	210	So.	SP	San Diego, Calif.
Max Compton	UC Riverside	6-4	210	Sr.	RP	Palm Desert, Calif.
Taylor Dollard	Cal Poly	6-2	175	Fr.	RP	Encino, Calif.
Austin Dondanville	Cal Poly	6-0	190	Jr.	RP	Walnut Creek, Calif.
Brett Erwin	UC Davis	6-0	155	Fr.	RP	Fairfield, Calif.
Jordan Bocko	UC Irvine	5-11	190	Jr.	CP	Laguna Niguel, Calif.
Connor Loar	UC Davis	6-2	200	Sr.	CP	Danville, Calif.