



2016-17 Big West Men's Basketball

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Luke Nelson First Anteater Player of the Year In 15 Years

Big West Unveils Men's Basketball All-Conference Team

IRVINE, CA - The top three squads in the final men's basketball regular season standings were represented in the announcement of the 2016-17 Big West all-conference team, as voted on by the nine head coaches. UC Irvine received two major awards with senior **Luke Nelson's** selection as Player of the Year and **Russell Turner** as Coach of the Year. **Chima Moneke** of UC Davis collected Newcomer of the Year accolades while Cal State Fullerton forward **Jackson Rowe** notched Freshman of the Year honors.

Luke Nelson is the first Anteater to be named the conference's top player in 15 years. He is the program's first Player of the Year representative since Jerry Green won back-to-back awards in 2001 and 2002. Nelson is UCI's fourth honoree overall, joining Kevin Magee (1981 & 1982), Raimonds Miglinieks (1996) and Green. Nelson, a 6-3 guard, averaged 17.3 points in 13 conference games, ranking No. 3 in scoring. The native of Worthing, England posted four straight 20-point games to end the regular season, including a season-high tying 29 points against UC Davis in a victory that clinched the outright championship. He had six 20-point games overall during conference play. Nelson missed the first 15 games of the season nursing a hamstring ailment, and sat out three more Big West contests after reaggravating the injury. The 'Eaters were 7-11 without Nelson in the lineup. Conversely, they owned a 12-2 record when he played. Nelson's seven three-pointers against the Aggies gave him a team-high 39 in Big West play, and upped his career total to 247, which ranks him No. 10 all-time in Big West history.

Turner was the architect of UCI's third regular season title in four years as he claimed his second Coach of the Year accolade. He also earned the award in 2013-14 when UCI won its first outright title under his tutelage. Turner managed a 19-13 overall record, and 12-4 Big West mark despite playing six freshmen and three sophomores around a veteran core of seniors Nelson, Jaron Martin and Ioannis Dimakopoulos. The sixth-year mentor is one victory shy of posting a fifth consecutive 20-win season. Turner piloted the Anteaters to the 19 wins despite missing Player of the Year Nelson for 18 games. Turner has led the UCI program to either a Big West regular season or tournament title in four consecutive seasons.

Moneke, a transfer from Northeast Community College, is the second Newcomer of the Year representative from UC Davis following Corey Hawkins in 2012-13. The 6-6 forward led the Big West with 11 double-doubles and 14 double-digit rebound games. In conference action, Moneke led the circuit in rebounds (9.8 rpg) and blocked shots (1.4 bpg) while also ranking No. 10 in scoring (14.1 ppg) and No. 3 in field goal percentage (.516). A native of Canberra, Australia, Moneke had monster games with 26 points and 13 rebounds at Hawai'i, and 25 points with 13 boards versus Cal Poly. Moneke corralled a career-high 17 rebounds in a win over Long Beach State.

Rowe gave Cal State Fullerton the Freshman of the Year hardware for the second straight season after Khalil Ahmad notched the honor in 2015-16. Rowe led all Big West freshmen in scoring (10.4 ppg) and rebounding (7.2 rpg), and served as a primary reason the Titans finished 10-6 in the Big West. In conference games, Rowe ranked No. 5 in rebounding at 8.0 per game and was No. 5 in field goal percentage (.514). The native of Canada grabbed a career-best 16 rebounds in a win against UC Riverside. A 6-7 forward, Rowe joins Tony Neal (1981-82), Bobby Brown (2003-04) and Ahmad on the list of top Titan freshmen.

The All-Big West First Team features one multiple selection - Nelson of UC Irvine - who made his second appearance in a row. The remaining five members make their initial appearances - UCI senior teammate **Jaron Martin**, Hawai'i senior **Noah Allen**, Cal State Fullerton senior **Tre' Coggins**, and the UC Davis duo of Moneke and senior **Brynton Lemar**.

The complete 2016-17 Big West men's basketball all-conference team is on the following page.

2016-17 BIG WEST MEN'S BASKETBALL ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

FIRST TEAM

Player	School	Ht.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Noah Allen	Hawai'i	6-7	Sr.	G/F	Pacific Grove, Calif.
Tre' Coggins	Cal State Fullerton	6-3	Sr.	G	San Juan Capistrano, Calif.
Brynton Lemar	UC Davis	6-4	Sr.	G	San Diego, Calif.
Chima Moneke	UC Davis	6-6	Jr.	F	Canberra, Australia
Jaron Martin	UC Irvine	5-10	Sr.	G	Sunland, Calif.
^Luke Nelson	UC Irvine	6-3	Sr.	G	Worthing, England

SECOND TEAM

Player	School	Ht.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Justin Bibbins	Long Beach State	5-8	Jr.	G	Carson, Calif.
Ioannis Dimakopoulos	UC Irvine	7-2	Sr.	C	Patra, Greece
Ridge Shipley	Cal Poly	6-0	Sr.	G	Carrollton, Texas
Kendall Smith	CSUN	6-3	Jr.	G	Antioch, Calif.
Temidayo Yussuf	Long Beach State	6-7	So.	F	Oakland, Calif.

HONORABLE MENTION

Player	School	Ht.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Tavrion Dawson	CSUN	6-8	Jr.	F	Long Beach, Calif.
Lionheart Leslie	Cal State Fullerton	5-10	Sr.	G	Houma, La.
Eric Childress	UC Santa Barbara	6-0	Sr.	G	Hawthorne, Calif.
Gibson Johnson	Hawai'i	6-8	Jr.	F	Centerville, Utah
Secean Johnson	UC Riverside	6-5	Sr.	F	Philadelphia, Pa.
Dikymbe Martin	UC Riverside	6-1	Fr.	G	Riverside, Calif.
Evan Payne	Long Beach State	6-1	Jr.	G	Akron, Ohio
Roschon Prince	Long Beach State	6-6	Jr.	F	Long Beach, Calif.
Jack Purchase	Hawai'i	6-8	So.	F	Melbourne, Australia
Siler Schneider	UC Davis	6-3	So.	G	Lansing, Kan.

^ Two-time All-Big West First Team selection

2016-17 BIG WEST PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Luke Nelson, UC Irvine

2016-17 BIG WEST NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Chima Moneke, UC Davis

2016-17 BIG WEST FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR

Jackson Rowe, Cal State Fullerton

2016-17 BIG WEST COACH OF THE YEAR

Russell Turner, UC Irvine