



@BigWestMSOC

# 2018 BIG WEST MEN'S SOCCER

Big West Conference - 2 Corporate Park, Suite 206, Irvine, CA 92606  
Men's Soccer Contact: Mike Villamor (Assistant Commissioner/Communications)  
Phone: (949) 261-2525 • Fax: (949) 261-2528 • email: mvillamor@bigwest.org

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## CAL STATE FULLERTON FAVORED TO WIN MEN'S SOCCER TITLE

IRVINE, CA – Cal State Fullerton is the choice to capture the 2018 Big West men's soccer championship according to a vote of the eight head coaches in their annual preseason poll Thursday.

In addition, the coaches selected a 11-player preseason all-conference team.

After playing in separate North and South divisions the previous six years, conference teams will compete in a single, eight-team division this season.

The coaches assigned the defending Big West Tournament champion Titans the favorite's role. CSF earned four first-place votes and 57 points. UC Santa Barbara finished second in the poll with 55 points and three first-place nods. CSUN followed in third place with 47 points, while UC Davis was fourth with the lone remaining first-place vote and a total of 40 points. Rounding out the poll was UC Irvine in fifth place with 30 points, Sacramento State sixth (23), UC Riverside seventh (21) and Cal Poly eighth (15).

Cal State Fullerton welcomes back nine starters from last year's squad that captured a share of the Big West South Division title and the program's third conference tournament title in four years under head coach George Kuntz. The Titans are led by a pair of first team all-conference returnees in seniors **Ross McPhie** and **Samuel Goni**. McPhie, the 2017 Big West Co-Midfielder of the Year, notched seven goals – tied for sixth-most in the conference – en route to United Soccer Coaches All-Far West Region Third Team honors. Goni led the club with nine goals and ranked fifth in the Big West with 19 points overall. CSF also boasts the return of junior goalkeeper **Paul-Andre Guerin**, the reigning Big West Tournament MVP and owner of a 1.18 goals against average to go along with six shutouts in 2017.

UC Santa Barbara gears up for another run at Big West supremacy after having a four-year run of North Division titles snapped in 2017. The Gauchos return several key pieces, including 2017 Big West Freshman of the Year and All-Big West First Team selection **Rodney Michael**. He joined fellow forwards **Ignacio Tellechea** and **Noah Billingsley** to combine for 14 of the team's 18 goals last season. Along with bringing back Big West All-Freshman Team member **Alan Carrillo** at goalkeeper, the Gauchos strengthened their backline with the additions of transfers **Fauzi Taieb** (St. Francis Brooklyn) and **Carson Vom Steeg** (Stanford). Taieb is one of 32 members on the 2018 MAC Hermann Trophy Watch List, a prestigious award bestowed upon the nation's most outstanding player. Vom Steeg, the son of UCSB head coach Tim Vom Steeg, played on last year's NCAA championship squad at Stanford.

CSUN claimed a share of the South Division crown last year. The Matadors return senior **Henrik Regitnig**, the 2017 Big West Goalkeeper of the Year, as well as second team all-league midfielder **Andrew Rizeq**. All-Freshman Team standout **Daniel Trejo** is the top returning Matador goal scorer with seven last season.

The 2017 Big West North Division champion, UC Davis features two returning All-Big West First Team performers in senior **Roy Boateng** and sophomore **Nabi Kibunguchy**. Boateng is the reigning Big West Defensive Player of the Year, while both he and Kibunguchy were named United Soccer Coaches All-Far West Region. Junior **Adam Mickelson** led the Aggies with 15 points last season.

The preseason all-conference team is headlined by three UC Davis representatives in Boateng, Kibunguchy and Mickelson. Two CSF players are on the squad in McPhie and Goni. UCSB also boasts two with Michael and Billingsley, as does UC Irvine with seniors **Ivan Canales** and **Daniel Crisostomo**. CSUN's Rizeq and Sacramento State senior **Dominic Scotti** round out the list.

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### 2018 Preseason Coaches Poll

No.	School	Pts.
1.	Cal State Fullerton (4)	57
2.	UC Santa Barbara (3)	55
3.	CSUN	47
4.	UC Davis (1)	40
5.	UC Irvine	30
6.	Sacramento State	23
7.	UC Riverside	21
8.	Cal Poly	15

( ) First-place votes

### 2018 Preseason All-Conference Team

Name	School	Pos.	Year
Noah Billingsley	UC Santa Barbara	F	Junior
Roy Boateng	UC Davis	D	Senior
Ivan Canales	UC Irvine	MF	Senior
Daniel Crisostomo	UC Irvine	MF	Senior
Samuel Goni	Cal State Fullerton	F	Senior
Nabi Kibunguchy	UC Davis	D	Sophomore
Ross McPhie	Cal State Fullerton	MF	Senior
Rodney Michael	UC Santa Barbara	F	Sophomore
Adam Mickelson	UC Davis	F	Junior
Andrew Rizeq	CSUN	MF	Senior
Dominic Scotti	Sacramento State	MF	Senior