



2012 BIG WEST SOFTBALL

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

Information Staff: Brie Campbell (Communications Intern)

For more information - Phone: (949) 261-2525 Fax: (949) 261-2528 email: bcampbell@bigwest.org

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Preseason Softball Poll Leaves Room For Top-Two Battle

IRVINE, CALIF. – The Big West Softball Preseason Coaches Poll proved that the race for the 2012 championship is bound to be a tight one as Pacific and Long Beach State tied for the top spot. Both schools received four first-place votes for a total of 59 points each.

Pacific looks to clinch its second-straight championship after claiming the title for the first time in program history in 2011. The Tigers have nine of their 10 starters returning, including All-Big West First Team selections Amy Moore, Nicole Matson, Megan Hom, Nikki Armagost and Kelsey Rodriguez. Rodriguez, the 2011 Big West Freshman of the Year and Second Team All-Region selection, led the Tigers at the plate in batting average (.381), starting 47 of 49 games. Armagost earned Big West Offensive Player of the Year and Second Team All-Region honors after recording the second-best batting average (.367). She also made 34 appearances in the circle for the Tigers with a 19-11 record and 2.66 ERA. Pacific is led by 2011 Big West Coach of the Year Brian Kolze, who is celebrating his 20th season with the Tigers. Kolze currently ranks third in Big West history for all-time wins in conference play, posting over 200 wins with a record of 235-244-1 (.512). He led the Tigers to an overall record of 37-19 and 16-5 in conference in 2011.

Long Beach State, which finished as a runner-up in 2011, hopes to complete unfinished business in 2012. The 49ers return eight starters, including 2011 Big West Pitcher of the Year and Freshman Pitcher of the Year Erin Jones-Wesley. She dominated from the circle, starting 29 of her 40 appearances with a 23-8 record and 1.80 ERA. The 49ers are led at the plate by a solid complement of young talent, including 2011 all-conference standouts Hannah De Gaetano, Nalani St. Germain and Sarah Carrasco. Head coach Kim Sowder enters her sixth season with the 49ers. She ranks sixth in all-time career victories (167-107-0) and seventh in conference wins (66-36-0).

Cal State Fullerton took third place with 42 points to complete the top three for preseason predictions. Fullerton finished third last season in the conference standings going 12-9 in conference and 23-24 overall. The Titans will return eight starters including two pitchers, while losing three starters and welcoming seven newcomers to the field.

Following closely behind was fourth place UC Santa Barbara with 37 points. The Gauchos return starting shortstop Keilani Jennings, a First Team All-Big West award winner who led the conference with a season-high 15 doubles. Close behind taking the fifth position is Cal State Northridge with 34 points, followed by Cal Poly with 26 points for sixth place.

UC Davis and UC Riverside rounded out the poll with 20 and 12 points, respectively.

2012 BIG WEST PRESEASON SOFTBALL COACHES POLL		
No.	Team	Pts.
T1.	Pacific (4)	59
T1.	Long Beach State (4)	59
3.	Cal State Fullerton	42
4.	UC Santa Barbara	37
5.	Cal State Northridge	34
6.	Cal Poly	26
7.	UC Davis	20
8.	UC Riverside	12

First-place votes are in parentheses

