



2011 BIG WEST SOFTBALL

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

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Preseason Poll Release - Tuesday, February 1, 2011

Cal Poly Predicted To Take Home 2011 Softball Title

IRVINE, CALIF. – Cal Poly was named the favorite in the 2011 Big West softball race, outdistancing one of the 2010 co-champions in a tight vote among the league's eight head coaches.

The Mustangs collected three first place votes on their way to 54 points in the top position. 2010 Big West co-champion UC Davis was just three points behind Cal Poly with 51 points and matched the Mustangs with three first place votes. Cal State Northridge, which claimed a share of the 2010 Big West crown, was third with 41 points, while Long Beach State wrapped up the top half of the vote with 39 points. Pacific landed in fifth place with 34 points, followed by Cal State Fullerton's 31 points and one first place vote. Completing the tally was UC Santa Barbara in seventh with 22 points and UC Riverside in eighth with 16 points and the final first place vote.

Cal Poly is seeking its third title in the last five years, while also looking to bounce back from the first sub-.500 season under head coach Jenny Condon. The Mustangs return five starting position players, three starting pitchers and eight letterwinners from a squad that went 23-24 overall and 12-9 in Big West play. The club's top returner is 2010 Big West Field Player of the Year Anna Cahn. She batted .393 with five home runs, 24 RBI, 10 doubles and 45 walks a year ago, while also doubling as Cal Poly's top pitcher with a record of 13-13, an ERA of 2.28, 100 strikeouts and 15 complete games. Rebecca Patton was also a stellar two-way threat as she batted .283 with a pair of homers and 10 RBI, while claiming second team All-Big West honors in the circle after 8-7 with a 3.48 ERA, 76 strikeouts, eight complete games and two shutouts. With just two seniors and a class of eight newcomers, Cal Poly is building for success not only in 2011 but for the future.

UC Davis is looking to defend its Big West title and make a return trip to the NCAA Tournament in 2011. Last season, the Aggies won their first conference title after going 15-6 in league play and finished up 26-29 overall. UCD returns a wealth of talent from that championship squad as seven position players, its top starting pitcher and 12 letterwinners return to the diamond. The club is led by 2010 Big West Pitcher of the Year Alex Holmes, who went 16-11 with a 3.01 ERA, 12 complete games and 143 strikeouts. Against conference foes, Holmes was even better as she went 9-1 with a 2.10 ERA, four complete games, one shutout and 43 strikeouts in 73.1 innings. She also allowed opposing batters to hit just .228 and recorded a couple of saves. The Aggie talent is also at the plate as Holmes (.345 BA), 2010 Big West Freshman of the Year Elizabeth Santana (.341 BA, 56 H, 31 R, 13 2B) and Kylie Fan (.330 BA, 34 H, 12 R) headline a potent UC Davis offense. Head coach Karen Yoder will rely on these and other veterans as the Aggies look to become the first back-to-back Big West champion since Long Beach State from 2004-05.

Cal State Northridge claimed a piece of the 2010 Big West championship and will be looking for more under a new leader. Former Long Beach State assistant coach, UCLA All-American player and Olympian Tairia Flowers takes the reins for the 2011 season, looking to build on a season in which the Matadors went 31-22 overall and 15-6 in Big West play. The top returnee for CSUN is pitcher Hannah Fraijo, who had a bustout season by going 18-8 with an ERA of 2.69, 102 strikeouts, 14 complete games and three shutouts in 182.0 innings. At the plate, the Matadors' return a fine power hitter in Jaci Carlsen who hit .324 with eight homers, 44 RBI, 11 doubles and 27 runs scored, as well as Tracy Allen who hit at a .307 clip with seven home runs, 36 RBI and 50 hits. Flowers also brought in a talented recruiting class to supplement the returnees as CSUN looks to return to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2007.

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2011 BIG WEST PRESEASON SOFTBALL COACHES POLL		
No.	Team	Pts.
1.	Cal Poly (3)	54
2.	UC Davis (3)	51
3.	Cal State Northridge	41
4.	Long Beach State	39
5.	Pacific	34
6.	Cal State Fullerton (1)	31
7.	UC Santa Barbara	22
8.	UC Riverside (1)	16

First-place votes are in parentheses