



# 2018-19 Big West Women's Basketball

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

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## UCD, CSUN Share Status As Women's Hoops Favorite

**IRVINE, Calif.** – The coaches and media split their favorites for the upcoming women's basketball season as CSUN and UC Davis each earned top billing in preseason voting.

The Aggies, the defending Big West regular season champion, earned the top spot in the media poll, gathering 171 points and 12 first place votes in the 20-member panel. The Matadors, who are the defending Big West Tournament champion, claimed top billing from the coaches with six first place votes and 77 points.

UCD is coming off one of the most successful seasons in school history, a campaign that saw the club go 28-7, win its second straight Big West regular season title, set or tie 10 different school records and advance to the quarterfinals of the Women's National Invitational Tournament. The club has dominated conference play over the last two seasons, racking up a 28-4 mark which is the most in a two-year span since UC Santa Barbara went 30-2 over the 2007-09 seasons. The Aggies return two starters and eight letterwinners to the fold for 2018-19, led by three-time first team All-Big West selection senior Morgan Bertsch (20.1 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 1.6 bpg). The other Aggie returning starter is senior Kourtney Eaton (4.2 ppg, 4.5 apg, 95.7 FT%) who enters the season just 39 assists short of head coach Jennifer Gross' career program record. The crop of returnees and a talented bunch of newcomers will look to breakthrough and win the Tournament crown after consecutive losses in the final.

CSUN completed the most Cinderella of tales in the Big West Tournament last season, becoming the first team in the current tournament format to win four games in five days to win the crown. The Matadors then gave top-seeded Notre Dame all it could handle, putting up 81 points in a loss to the Irish in the NCAA Tournament. The 81 points were the most scored in a first round game by a 16-seed since the field expanded to 64 teams in 1994. CSUN returns plenty of experience off last season's 19-win team, led by two-time Big West Player of the Year and three-time Big West first team selection in senior Channon Fluker (18.9 ppg, 12.1 rpg, 2.6 bpg). Fluker is joined by sophomores Meghann Henderson (4.8 ppg, 3.4 apg) and Hayley Tanabe (7.5 ppg, 4.0 apg, 3.1 rpg) and graduate Serafina Maulupe (11.7 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 3.1 apg). Maulupe returns after missing most of the season, including all of conference and Tournament play) due to injury. The Matadors will lean on their experience against a schedule that includes the likes of Boise State, California, USC and Stanford but that also features 14 home games.

UC Irvine is a highly regarded club by both the coaches and the media, coming in third in the former and tied for third in the latter. The Anteaters ended last season as one of the most improved squads in the NCAA, posting 18 wins which was a 13-win improvement from the previous season. UCI's win total was the most since the 1994-95 season and it recorded double digit conference wins (10) for the first time since 1997-98. 10 returning letterwinners and five starters will look to add Big West champions to the list of accomplishments, something that has never been done in the regular season and only once in the Tournament. Headlining the balanced cast of returnees is last season's Big West Freshman of the Year and honorable mention All-Big West selection Jordan Sanders (10.5 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 1.3 spg). Senior sharpshooter Andee Ritter (8.3 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 1.8 spg, 46 3PTM) also returns to the mix as does talented sophomore Tahlia Garza (6.7 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 1.3 bpg).

Long Beach State tied for third in the media poll and recorded a fourth place slot in the coaches poll. The Beach is coming off a transition year but it finished strong to build momentum for the future. Second year head coach Jeff Cammon will rely heavily on the talents of sophomores Shanaijah Davison (13.8 ppg, 2.5 apg, 1.4 spg), Naomi Hunt (8.0 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 44.0 3PT%) and Ma'Qhi Berry (7.1 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 3.1 apg). LBSU has only two returning upperclassmen but it will have plenty of experience in the form of junior transfers Sydney Bordonaro, Cydnee Kinslow and Miranda Martinez as well as returning redshirts sophomore Bria Rice and freshman Chloe Gaynor.

The media and coaches also chose a six-woman All-Conference team, with the same players appearing on both lists. Fluker, Bertsch, Maulupe, Sanders and Davison are joined by Cal State Fullerton junior Daeja Smith on the preseason recognition lists.

The full coaches and media poll results are available on the following page.

### Coaches Poll Results

1.	CSUN (6)	77
2.	UC Davis (3)	75
3.	UC Irvine	56
4.	Long Beach State	54
5.	Hawai'i	45
6.	Cal Poly	35
7.	UC Santa Barbara	24
8.	UC Riverside	23
9.	Cal State Fullerton	

( ) First-place votes

### Media Poll Results

1.	UC Davis (12)	171
2.	CSUN (8)	166
3.	UC Irvine	108
	Long Beach State	108
5.	Cal Poly	101
6.	Hawai'i	88
7.	UC Santa Barbara	66
8.	UC Riverside	55
9.	Cal State Fullerton	41

( ) First-place votes

### Preseason Coaches All-Conference Team

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
Morgan Bertsch	UC Davis	F	Sr.	Santa Rosa, Calif.
Shanaijah Davison	Long Beach State	G	So.	Woodland, Calif.
Channon Fluker	CSUN	C	Sr.	Pasadena, Calif.
Serafina Maulupe	CSUN	G	Gr.	Vista Murrieta, Calif.
Jordan Sanders	UC Irvine	F	So.	Springfield, Mo.
Daeja Smith	Cal State Fullerton	C	Sr.	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.

### Preseason Media All-Conference Team

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
Morgan Bertsch	UC Davis	F	Sr.	Santa Rosa, Calif.
Shanaijah Davison	Long Beach State	G	So.	Woodland, Calif.
Channon Fluker	CSUN	C	Sr.	Pasadena, Calif.
Serafina Maulupe	CSUN	G	Gr.	Vista Murrieta, Calif.
Jordan Sanders	UC Irvine	F	So.	Springfield, Mo.
Daeja Smith	Cal State Fullerton	C	Sr.	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.