

2018 BIG WEST WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL



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All-Conference Honors - Tuesday, November 20, 2018

Big West Announces Women's Volleyball All-Conference

Irvine, Calif. - Back-to-back Big West Conference champions Cal Poly secured at least a share of all three top awards. Junior Torrey Van Winden was named Big West Player of the Year and Sam Crosson secured his second straight Big West Coach of the Year accolade. Cal Poly's Avalon DeNecochea, along with UC Irvine's Abby Marjama, received Big West Co-Freshman of the Year honors.

Van Winden is the second consecutive Mustang to earn Big West Conference Player of the Year as former teammate Taylor Nelson became just the second setter in 18 years to earn the distinction. The junior from Napa, Calif., ranks second in the conference and third in the country in kills per set with a 5.07 average. She also paces the league with a .365 hitting percentage. Van Winden, who helped Cal Poly capture its second straight conference title, ranks third in the nation with a 5.74 points per set average and 18th with a total of 528.5 total points. She captured four Big West Conference Player of the Week accolades during the 2018 season. With this year's honor, Van Winden becomes Cal Poly's fifth Big West Player of the Year recipient.

DeNecochea had the tough task of filling the void of Cal Poly setter Taylor Nelson, who was named 2017 Big West Player of the Year, but she seemed to pick up where Nelson left off as she averaged 10.32 assists per contest, earning her Big West Co-Freshman of the Year honors. Thanks to her efforts, Cal Poly paced the league and ranked 33rd in the nation with a 12.95 assists average and captured its second straight conference title. The San Diego, Calif., native collected three Big West Freshman of the Week awards during the season. DeNecochea becomes the fifth Mustang to earn freshman of the year distinction and the first since Adlee Van Winden nabbed the honor in 2015.

In her first season at UC Irvine, Marjama paced the league in service aces and ranked 28th nationally with a .43 aces per set average, helping her secure Big West Co-Freshman of the Year honors. In conference-only contests, the six-foot outside hitter was a catalyst for the Anteater offense as she averaged 3.08 kills per set to rank eighth in the conference. Marjama registered four Big West Freshman of the Week awards over the course of the season, the most of any newcomer. The Granite Bay, Calif., native becomes just the second Anteater to receive freshman of the year accolades, joining Kari Pestolesi, who nabbed the award in 2007.

Crosson, in his seventh season at the helm of the Mustangs' women's volleyball program, claimed his second straight Big West Coach of the Year award after guiding Cal Poly to back-to-back conference championships for the second time in school history. Cal Poly concluded the 2018 regular season with a 15-1 overall mark and an overall record of 25-2. Cal Poly's two losses were against then-ranked No. 20 Pittsburgh and Hawai'i. The Mustangs closed out the regular season riding a 21-match home win streak. The No. 14 Mustangs, who were ranked in the AVCA Top 25 poll all season, dominated their opponents as they swept the opposition in 18 of their 27 victories. Crosson is the second coach in Cal Poly history to earn back-to-back coach of the year distinction as Jon Stevenson did so back in 2006 and 2007. The Mustangs, making their 16th NCAA appearance, now await the NCAA DI women's volleyball selection show scheduled for Sunday, November 25, to learn their postseason future.

Seven teams were represented on the first team with UC Irvine and Hawai'i leading the way with four selections apiece. Cal Poly nabbed three spots, UC Santa Barbara secured two and CSUN, Long Beach State and UC Davis each earned one honor.

Collecting their third All-Big West First Team selection are Cal Poly's Adlee Van Winden, CSUN's Aeryn Owens, Hawai'i's Norene Iosia and UC Santa Barbara's Lindsey Ruddins. Also repeating as first teamers for a second year are UC Irvine's Idara Akpakpa and Haley DeSales, Cal Poly's Torrey Van Winden and Hawai'i's McKenna Granato.

The complete 2018 Big West All-Conference Team is on the following page.

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2018 Big West Women's Volleyball All-Conference Team

2018 BIG WEST PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Torrey Van Winden, Cal Poly

2018 BIG WEST CO-FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR

Avalon DeNecochea, Cal Poly

Abby Marjama, UC Irvine

2018 BIG WEST COACH OF THE YEAR

Sam Crosson, Cal Poly

FIRST TEAM

Player	School	Ht.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Emily Allen	UC Davis	5-8	Sr.	Outside Hitter	Santa Barbara, Calif.
Reyn Akiu	Hawai'i	5-3	Sr.	Libero	Honolulu, O'ahu
^Idara Akpakpa	UC Irvine	6-0	Sr.	Middle Blocker	Brentwood, Calif.
Natasha Burns	Hawai'i	6-5	Jr.	Middle Hitter	Ontario, Canada
Loryn Carter	UC Irvine	6-3	So.	Outside Hitter	Pomona, Calif.
^Haley DeSales	UC Irvine	6-0	Sr.	Outside Hitter	Burbank, Calif.
^McKenna Granato	Hawai'i	6-0	Sr.	Outside Hitter	Kailua, O'ahu
Ali Koumelis	UC Irvine	5-9	Sr.	Setter	Roseville, Calif.
Madilyn Mercer	Cal Poly	6-4	So.	Middle Blocker	Capistrano Beach, Calif.
%Norene Iosia	Hawai'i	5-11	Jr.	Setter	Torrance, Calif.
%Aeryn Owens	CSUN	6-0	Sr.	Outside Hitter	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.
Emilia Petrachi	UC Santa Barbara	5-6	Sr.	Defensive Specialist	Modena, Italy
%Lindsey Ruddins	UC Santa Barbara	6-2	Jr.	Outside Hitter	Laguna Niguel, Calif.
Tyler Spriggs	Long Beach State	6-1	Sr.	Outside Hitter	Los Angeles, Calif.
%Adlee Van Winden	Cal Poly	6-1	Sr.	Outside Hitter	Napa, Calif.
^Torrey Van Winden	Cal Poly	6-3	Jr.	Opposite	Napa, Calif.

HONORABLE MENTION

Player	School	Ht.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Malia Bolko	UC Davis	5-8	Sr.	Libero	Benicia, Calif.
Katherine Brouker	Cal Poly	5-9	Sr.	Libero	San Diego, Calif.
Avalon DeNecochea	Cal Poly	6-2	Fr.	Setter	San Diego, Calif.
Chelsea Doyle	UC Riverside	5-8	Sr.	Setter	San Diego, Calif.
Hailey Harward	Long Beach State	5-9	Jr.	Defensive Specialist	Phoenix, Ariz.
Emma Kirst	Long Beach State	6-4	Sr.	Outside Hitter	Las Vegas, Nev.
Abby Marjama	UC Irvine	6-0	Fr.	Outside Hitter	Granite Bay, Calif.
Meredith Phillips	Cal Poly	6-3	Fr.	Middle Blocker	Houston, Texas
Yizhi Xue	Long Beach State	6-4	Jr.	Middle Blocker	Nanjing, China

ALL-FRESHMAN TEAM

Player	School	Ht.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Avalon DeNecochea	Cal Poly	6-2	Fr.	Setter	San Diego, Calif.
Abby Marjama	UC Irvine	6-0	Fr.	Outside Hitter	Granite Bay, Calif.
Meredith Phillips	Cal Poly	6-3	Fr.	Middle Blocker	Houston, Texas
Kashauna Williams	Long Beach State	N/A	Fr.	Outside Hitter	Northridge, Calif.
Olivia Lovenberg	UC Santa Barbara	5-8	Fr.	Setter	San Diego, Calif.
Gigi Ruddins	UC Santa Barbara	6-1	Fr.	Outside Hitter	Laguna Niguel, Calif.
Josie Ough	UC Davis	6-6	Fr.	Defensive Specialist	El Cerrito, Calif.

^Two-time All-Big West First Team selection

%Three-time All-Big West First Team selection

\$ Four-time All-Big West First Team selection