

2017 BIG WEST WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL



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All-Conference Honors - Monday, November 27, 2017

Familiar Faces Aplenty On All-Conference List

Irvine, Calif. - The 2017 Big West Conference Champion, Cal Poly, nabbed two of the top three awards, while UC Davis earned the final honor. From Cal Poly, Taylor Nelson was named Big West Player of the Year and Big West Coach of the Year was awarded to Sam Crosson. Grabbing the final award was UC Davis' Mahalia White, who was named Big West Freshman of the Year.

Nelson becomes just the second setter in 18 years, and the first Cal Poly player since 2011, to earn Big West Player of the Year distinction. Under her leadership, the Mustangs are hitting a league best .314 to rank sixth in the country and have three players ranked in the league's top 10 in hitting percentage, including Savannah Niemen who owns the top spot with a .398 clip to sit 18th in the country.

The Granite Bay, Calif., native ranks fifth in the nation in assists per set with an average of 11.90. Nelson recorded seven double-doubles on the year, including a 51-assist, 24-dig performance against UC Santa Barbara on November 3, a career-high mark in digs. For her efforts this season she was named Big West Player of the Week twice. With this year's honor, Nelson becomes Cal Poly's fourth Big West Player of the Year recipient.

In her first season at UC Davis, White registered 398 kills this season, which surpasses Allison Whitson's mark of 370 (2009) for the most kills by an Aggie freshman. The Canoga Park, Calif., native paces UC Davis and ranks fifth in the Big West with a 3.55 kills per set average. White's 46 blocks this season places her third on the Aggie squad. For her accomplishments throughout the season, the six-foot outside hitter earned five Big West Freshman Player of the Week nods. White becomes the first Aggie to earn freshman of the year accolades.

In his sixth season at the helm of the Mustangs' program, Crosson guided Cal Poly (26-2) to its first conference title in 10 years with a perfect 16-0 record. It's the first time the Mustangs were undefeated in conference play and the 11th time in Big West history a school has posted a perfect mark in league action. With the conference crown, the Mustangs earned a spot in the NCAA DI Women's Volleyball Championship for the first time since 2007, 15th overall, and they enter the postseason riding a 21-match winning streak. The Mustangs dominated their opponents while building its historic season as they swept the opposition in 19 of their 26 victories. The Mustangs' two losses this year were against Top 25 opponents - No. 8 Washington and No. 14 Oregon. Crosson, collecting his first Big West Coach of the Year honor, becomes the third coach in Cal Poly history to earn the coach of the year distinction as Jon Stevenson (2006, 2007) and Mike Wilton (1985, 1989) were also honored for their accomplishments.

Seven teams were represented on the first team with Cal Poly leading the way with five selections apiece. Hawai'i snagged four spots on the first team and UC Irvine secured three honors. CSUN, Long Beach State, UC Davis and UC Santa Barbara each picked up one selection.

Familiar faces comprise this year's first team list as Cal Poly's Raeann Greisen and Taylor Nelson, UC Irvine's Harlee Kekauoha and Hawai'i's Emily Maglio are all receiving their third honor of their careers. Collecting their second first team accolade are Cal Poly's Adlee Van Winden, CSUN's Aeryn Owens, UC Santa Barbara's Lindsey Ruddins and Hawai'i's Norene Iosia and Savannah Kahakai.

The complete 2017 Big West All-Conference Team is on the following page.

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2017 Big West Women's Volleyball All-Conference Team

2017 BIG WEST PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Taylor Nelson, Cal Poly

2017 BIG WEST FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR

Mahalia White, UC Davis

2017 BIG WEST COACH OF THE YEAR

Sam Crosson, Cal Poly

FIRST TEAM

<u>Player</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Ht.</u>	<u>Yr.</u>	<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
Idara Akpakpa	UC Irvine	6-0	Jr.	Middle Blocker	Brentwood, Calif.
Haley DeSales	UC Irvine	6-0	Jr.	Outside Hitter	Burbank, Calif.
McKenna Granato	Hawai'i	6-0	Jr.	Outside Hitter	Kailua, O'ahu
%Raeann Greisen	Cal Poly	6-2	Sr.	Outside Hitter	San Diego, Calif.
Hailey Harward	Long Beach State	5-9	So.	Defensive Specialist	Phoenix, Ariz.
^Norene Iosia	Hawai'i	5-11	So.	Setter	Torrance, Calif.
^Savanah Kahakai	Hawai'i	5-8	Sr.	Libero	Honolulu, O'ahu
%Harlee Kekauoha	UC Irvine	6-0	Jr.	Opposite	Long Beach, Calif.
%Emily Maglio	Hawai'i	6-3	Sr.	Middle Hitter	Coquitlam, Canada
Savannah Niemen	Cal Poly	6-1	Sr.	Middle Blocker	Lake Forest, Calif.
%Taylor Nelson	Cal Poly	6-0	Sr.	Setter	Granite Bay, Calif.
^Aeryn Owens	CSUN	6-0	Jr.	Outside Hitter	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.
^Lindsey Ruddins	UC Santa Barbara	6-2	So.	Outside Hitter	Laguna Niguel, Calif.
^Adlee Van Winden	Cal Poly	6-1	Jr.	Outside Hitter	Napa, Calif.
Torrey Van Winden	Cal Poly	6-3	So.	Outside Hitter	Napa, Calif.
Mahalia White	UC Davis	6-0	Fr.	Outside Hitter	Canoga Park, Calif.

HONORABLE MENTION

<u>Player</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Ht.</u>	<u>Yr.</u>	<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
Malia Bolko	UC Davis	5-8	Jr.	Libero	Benicia, Calif.
Katherine Brouker	Cal Poly	5-9	Jr.	Libero	San Diego, Calif.
Rachel Diaz	CSUN	6-2	Sr.	Middle Blocker	King City, Calif.
Ali Koumelis	UC Irvine	5-9	Sr.	Setter	Roseville, Calif.
Megan Kruidhof	Long Beach State	5-11	Jr.	Outside Hitter	Long Beach, Calif.
Kelechi Ohiri	UC Davis	6-1	Jr.	Middle Blocker	Elk Grove, Calif.
Emilia Petrachi	UC Santa Barbara	5-6	Jr.	Defensive Specialist	Modena, Italy
Madeline Schneider	Cal State Fullerton	5-11	Jr.	Outside Hitter	Olathe, Kan.
Luna Tsujimoto	UC Irvine	5-8	Sr.	Libero	Irvine, Calif.
YiZhi Xue	Long Beach State	6-4	So.	Middle Blocker	Nanjing, China

ALL-FRESHMAN TEAM

<u>Player</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Ht.</u>	<u>Yr.</u>	<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
Paloma Bowman	UC Davis	5-10	Fr.	Setter	Vacaville, Calif.
Radi Marinova	Long Beach State	6-1	Fr.	Middle Blocker	Sofia, Bulgaria
Madilyn Mercer	Cal Poly	6-4	Fr.	Middle Blocker	Capistrano Beach, Calif.
Nicole Omwanghe	UC Santa Barbara	6-2	Fr.	Middle Blocker	Claremont, Calif.
Nicole Rodriguez	UC Riverside	5-5	Fr.	Defensive Specialist	Montebello, Calif.
Yuliya Ushakova	UC Riverside	6-1	Fr.	Middle Blocker	San Diego, Calif.
Mahalia White	UC Davis	6-0	Fr.	Outside Hitter	Canoga Park, 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