



2013-14 Big West Men's Basketball

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

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UC Irvine Tops Men's Basketball Preseason Media Poll

IRVINE, Calif. – Russell Turner's UC Irvine Anteaters have been tabbed the favorite to win the 2013-14 Big West men's basketball title as the conference's preseason media poll came out today.

The Anteaters received nine of 24 first-place votes and 183 points for the top slot in a tightly contested poll. The next three schools were separated by a mere three points. UC Santa Barbara claimed six first-place votes and 167 points for second place, while Cal Poly garnered 165 points and three first-place nods for third. Three-time defending regular season champion Long Beach State held down the fourth spot with five first-place tallies and 164 points. UC Davis collected 114 points for fifth place, followed by Hawaii in sixth (110 points) and Cal State Northridge (89 points) in seventh. The Matadors also received the lone remaining first-place vote. Rounding out the poll were Cal State Fullerton (57 points) in eighth place and UC Riverside (31 points) in ninth. This is the first time since the 2001-02 season that UCI has been picked to finish first in a preseason media poll.

UC Irvine posted a 21-16 overall record in 2012-13 to tie for the third-most wins in a season in program history. The Anteaters finished 11-7 in Big West play, including a 9-0 mark at home, and advanced to the championship game of the Big West Tournament. UCI earned its first postseason berth in 11 years as a participant in the CollegeInsider.com Tournament. A win over High Point in the CIT first round represented UCI's first postseason victory since toppling UCLA in the first round of the 1986 NIT.

The Anteaters return a pair of starters in junior **Will Davis II** and sophomore **Alex Young**. Davis II, the 2012-13 Big West Defensive Player of the Year, had 88 blocked shots to shatter the school's single-season record that he set as a freshman, and came within one swat of tying Big West all-time leader Michael Olowokandi of Pacific. Young earned Big West Co-Freshman of the Year honors, with the point guard establishing a UCI single-season record for assists (144) and posting the nation's 16th-best assist-to-turnover ratio (2.62). Arguably the nation's tallest team, UCI boasts three 7-footers in 7-0 sophomore **Conor Clifford**, 7-6 freshman **Mamadou Ndiaye** and 7-2 freshman **Ioannis Dimakopoulos**, with seven players who stand 6-8 or above.

UC Santa Barbara is anchored by three returning starters and the reigning Big West Sixth Man of the Year. Junior center **Alan Williams**, an All-Big West First Team choice last season, became the first Gaucha in 23 years to average a double-double as he finished at 17.1 points and a league-best 10.7 rebounds per game. Preseason accolades for Williams include his selection to CollegeInsider.com's Lou Henson Mid-Major All-American Team. **Kyle Boswell**, last year's top sixth man in the conference, averaged 13.0 points per game and knocked down 78 three-pointers. Sophomores **Taran Brown** (11.1 ppg) and **Michael Bryson** (8.4 ppg) also bolster the Gauchos from the wing positions.

Cal Poly set program records for Big West victories (12) and Big West winning percentage (.667) in 2012-13, building upon an 18-14 overall mark and a trip to the CIT for the program's first postseason appearance. Senior **Chris Eversley** was named to the all-conference first team after ranking in the Big West top 10 in points (15.4 ppg) and rebounds (7.0 rpg). The Mustangs have led the Big West in scoring defense for three straight seasons.

The first program to win three straight outright Big West regular season championships since UNLV in the 1980s, Long Beach State welcomes in a host of new faces to join forces with returning starters junior **Mike Caffey** and senior **Dan Jennings**. A first team all-conference selection, Caffey helped the 49ers finish 19-14 overall and 14-4 in the Big West while averaging 12.0 points and 3.8 assists per game. Entering this season, Long Beach State owns a 26-game home court winning streak against Big West opponents. The 49ers have not lost to a Big West foe inside the Walter Pyramid since Feb. 17, 2010.

The media panel also selected a six-player preseason all-conference team comprised of two seniors and four juniors from six different institutions. Mike Caffey, Will Davis II, Chris Eversley and Alan Williams join UC Davis junior **Corey Hawkins** and Hawai'i senior **Christian Standhardinger** among the honorees. Each of those players with the exception of Davis II were 2012-13 All-Big West First Team recipients.

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Media Poll Results

1.	UC Irvine (9)	183
2.	UC Santa Barbara (6)	167
3.	Cal Poly (3)	165
4.	Long Beach State (5)	164
5.	UC Davis	114
6.	Hawai'i	110
7.	Cal State Northridge (1)	89
8.	Cal State Fullerton	57
9.	UC Riverside	31

() First-place votes

Preseason Media All-Conference Team

Name	School	Pos.	Year	Hometown
Mike Caffey	Long Beach State	G	Junior	Riverside, Calif.
Will Davis II	UC Irvine	F	Junior	Sacramento, Calif.
Chris Eversley	Cal Poly	F	Senior	Chicago, Ill.
Corey Hawkins	UC Davis	G	Junior	Goodyear, Ariz.
Christian Standhardinger	Hawai'i	F	Senior	Munich, Germany
Alan Williams	UC Santa Barbara	C	Junior	Phoenix, Ariz.