

2014-15 BIG WEST WOMEN'S BASKETBALL



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UCR's Crain Honored As Player of the Year

Irvine, Calif. - After leading UC Riverside back to the Big West Tournament for the first time since 2011, junior Brittany Crain was named Big West Player of the Year it was announced Monday.

Crain was not the only Highlander to claim a major award as Michelle Curry was named the Freshman of the Year. Hawai'i's Laura Beeman was also honored as the Coach of the Year after leading the Rainbow Wahine to the league's regular season crown.

Crain, a native of Moreno Valley, Calif., has been one of the most prolific scorers in the country this season. Crain averages a league-best 22.1 points per game, a figure that ranks eighth in the NCAA. Crain was just as consistent in conference play, leading the league with a 21.8 points per game figure. She also showed off her all-around game, pulling down 6.0 rebounds, 2.0 steals and 1.7 assists while playing a league-high 38.5 minutes per game. Crain scored in double figures in all but two games this season, was a three-time Big West Player of the Week and was named to the watch list for the Nancy Lieberman Award which honors the top point guard in NCAA Division I.

Curry has continued UCR's tradition of outstanding first year players, becoming the third Highlander in a row to claim the honor. The Los Angeles native averaged 9.0 points, 5.6 rebounds, 2.9 assists and 1.4 steals in 23.2 minutes per game. During conference play, head coach John Margaritis saw Curry's production increase as she averaged 10.1 points, 5.9 rebounds, 3.5 assists and 1.4 steals in 26.1 minutes. She also started 20 times over UCR's 30 games this season, 14 of those starts coming in conference play. Curry had some of her best games against the top half of the league, including a 14-point 10-rebound performance at home against Cal Poly and a 20-point, 10-rebound performance against Long Beach State at home.

In the third season since its return to the Big West, Beeman has led Hawai'i to a 22-7 record, the Big West regular season championship and the top seed at the Big West Tournament. The 'Bows have won 20 games for the first time since the 2001-02 season and are in the midst of their longest winning streak (12) since the 1997-98 edition won 19 in a row. UH also started 3-0 on the road for the first time since the 2005-06 campaign and won its first conference title since sharing the 1997-98 WAC Pacific Division title.

The first team All-Big West selections have a familiar ring as four of the six players have been previously honored. UC Davis senior Sydnee Fipps leads the way with her third consecutive first team award, joining former Aggie Paige Mintun as the only three-time first honorees in program history. Cal Poly's Ariana Elegado, CSUN's Ashlee Guay and Crain each earned their second straight first team accolades, while Cal State Fullerton's Chante Miles and Hawai'i's Shawna-Lei Kuehu rounded out the top club. The rest of the All-Conference teams can be found on the following page.

2014-15 ALL-BIG WEST WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAMS

2014-15 Big West Player of the Year

Brittany Crain, UC Riverside

2014-15 Big West Freshman of the Year

Michelle Curry, UC Riverside

2014-15 Big West Coach of the Year

Laura Beeman, Hawai'i

FIRST TEAM

<i>Player</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Hometown</i>
+Ariana Elegado	Cal Poly	Senior	Guard	San Diego, Calif.
Chante Miles	Cal State Fullerton	Senior	Guard	Compton, Calif.
+Ashlee Guay	Cal State Northridge	Senior	Guard	San Diego, Calif.
^Sydnee Fipps	UC Davis	Senior	Forward	Mariposa, Calif.
+Brittany Crain	UC Riverside	Junior	Guard	Moreno Valley, Calif.
Shawna-Lei Kuehu	Hawai'i	Senior	Guard/Forward	'Aiea, O'ahu

SECOND TEAM

<i>Player</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Hometown</i>
Raven Benton	Long Beach State	Sophomore	Guard	Federal Way, Wash.
Alyson Doherty	UC Davis	Junior	Forward	Lake Forest, Calif.
Mokun Fajemisin	UC Irvine	Sophomore	Forward	Lynwood, Wash.
Annelise Ito	UC Riverside	Junior	Forward	Moraga, Calif.
Ashleigh Karaitiana	Hawai'i	Senior	Guard	Hamilton, New Zealand

HONORABLE MENTION

<i>Player</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Hometown</i>
Kristen Ale	Cal Poly	Senior	Guard	Carson, Calif.
Taryn Garza	Cal Poly	Senior	Forward	Modesto, Calif.
Kathleen Iwuoha	Cal State Fullerton	Senior	Forward	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.
Cinnamon Lister	Cal State Northridge	Senior	Guard	Corona, Calif.
Janae Sharpe	Cal State Northridge	Senior	Guard	Rialto, Calif.
Hallie Meneses	Long Beach State	Senior	Guard	San Francisco, Calif.
Simone DeCoud	UC Riverside	Sophomore	Guard	Riverside, Calif.
Onome Jemerigbe	UC Santa Barbara	Sophomore	Guard	Stockton, Calif.
Destiny King	Hawai'i	Sophomore	Guard/Forward	Long Beach, Calif.

+ - Two-time All-Big West First Team selection

^ - Three-time All Big West First Team selection

ALL-FRESHMAN TEAM

<i>Player</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Hometown</i>
Dynn Leaupepe	Cal Poly	Guard	Camarillo, Calif.
Tessa Boagni	CSUN	Forward	Christchurch, New Zealand
Dani Nafekh	UC Davis	Guard/Forward	Oakville, Ontario, Canada
Michelle Curry	UC Riverside	Guard	Los Angeles, Calif.
Megan Huff	Hawai'i	Center	Federal Way, Wash.