



2016 BIG WEST SOFTBALL

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

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All-Conference Release - Wednesday, May 18, 2016

Cal State Fullerton Claims Lion's Share of Yearly Honors

IRVINE, CALIF. -- The culmination of a fine regular season not only netted Cal State Fullerton the Big West title, but also most of the league's major softball awards.

The Titans pitching staff was the main beneficiary as Desiree Ybarra and Sydney Golden were named the Pitcher of the Year and Freshman Pitcher of the Year, respectively. Missy Taukeiaho's efforts at the plate led to the Player of the Year award, while skipper Kelly Ford earned the Coach of the Year nod. CSUN claimed one of the major honors as Karlie Habitz was named Defensive Player of the Year, while Hawai'i took home the last award as Nicole Lopez was named Freshman Field Player of the Year.

Ybarra saved her best for last as the senior propelled CSF to the league title thanks to great numbers in the circle. The native of Riverside went 15-6 with a 1.80 ERA across 35 games, 24 of them in a starting role. In her 151.1 innings of work, Ybarra struck out 133, walked just 55, allowed 49 runs, 39 earned runs and racked up 13 complete games. Against Big West foes, Ybarra was even better going 8-1 with a 1.58 ERA in 62.0 innings. She struck out 57 against only 14 walks, picked up six complete games, one save and allowed teams to hit just .241 against her.

Golden was just as impressive in her rookie debut, ranking fourth in the Big West in wins (17) and second in ERA (1.79). Also hailing from Riverside, the first year player has also collected 71 strikeouts, walked just 21, picked up two shutouts and nine complete games over 125.1 innings. The bright lights of conference play did nothing to affect her as Golden posted a 1.07 ERA in 59.0 innings. Golden also showed impeccable control in Big West games, walking only eight batters, throwing one wild pitch and hitting only two opponents.

Taukeiaho, a native of Rancho Cucamonga, is the ringleader of the league's best offense as she has posted 12 multi-hit and multi-RBI games. . The senior ranks seventh in batting average (.358), second in on-base percentage (.488), second in slugging (.673), third in homers (9), fourth in RBI (37), first in runs scored (49), first in doubles (22), first in walks (38) and second in total bases (109). In league play, Taukeiaho batted .333 with 5 home runs, 20 RBI, 22 runs scored, 16 walks and slugged an exceptional .719. Her expertise extended to the field as Taukeiaho has committed just three errors in 64 chances while having a hand in four double plays.

In just her fourth season at the helm of the Titans, Ford has re-established the program as one of the best in the league and region. The 43 wins by the club are the most since 2003 (41), the 17 conference wins are the most since 2009 (17), the Big West regular season crown is its first since 2006 and the NCAA Tournament berth is the first since 2009. Ford has also led Cal State Fullerton to an increased win total in each of the last four seasons, going from 28 to 33 to 34 to 43 this season. CSF also fared well against a difficult non-conference slate, going 26-10 which included wins over then #13 Oklahoma, #17 Arizona State and #23 Fresno State. For their efforts, the Titans have been in the receiving votes categories of at least one major poll eight times this season and was ranked #25 for one week.

A junior from Newhall, Habitz has emerged as the league's top catcher in her first season in a Matador uniform. The Penn State transfer played in 53 of the Matadors' 56 games this season, handling a new-look pitching staff to a 3.22 ERA. Her work behind the plate raised eyebrows as she committed just five errors in 208 chances, a .976 fielding percentage. Opposing baserunners also thought twice about steals as she threw out 15 of 27 would-be basestealers, the most in the Big West. Habitz was even better in league play as she threw out 10 of the 18 runners attempting to swipe a bag, an astounding 55.6% rate. Her work behind the plate didn't lead to less production at the dish as she batted .286 with seven homers and 30 RBI.

Lopez said aloha to the rest of the league with a fine freshman campaign for coach Bob Coolen's Rainbow Wahine. Hailing from 'Aiea, O'ahu, she batted .287 with five home runs, 24 RBI, 50 hits, nine doubles, two triples and 18 runs scored. Her conference season saw an uptick in production as she hit .292 with a pair of homers and collected 21 hits. In all Lopez recorded 13 multi-hit games, three multi-RBI contests had an 11-game hit streak and reached base in 18 consecutive games over her rookie campaign.

The league's first team features six players who are repeat honorees, two of which have been featured on the top list three times. Taukeiaho and CSUN junior Taylor Glover are the three-time first team All-Big West recipients, while Cal Poly junior Sierra Hyland, CSUN sophomore Savannah Horvath, Long Beach State senior Darian Tautalafua and junior Christina Clermont and UC Santa Barbara junior Kristen Clark are all making their second appearance. The full All-Conference teams are available on the following page.

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2016 BIG WEST SOFTBALL ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

FIRST TEAM

Player	School	Pos	B-T	Ht.	Year	Hometown
Stephanie Heyward	Cal Poly	UT	R-R	5-4	Sophomore	Sacramento, Calif.
^Sierra Hyland	Cal Poly	P/UT	R-R	5-5	Junior	Visalia, Calif.
Alexis Gonzalez	Cal State Fullerton	UT	R-R	5-7	Junior	Covina, Calif.
Sydney Golden	Cal State Fullerton	P	R-R	5-10	Freshman	Riverside, Calif.
Delynn Rippy	Cal State Fullerton	OF	L-R	5-5	Junior	Oceanside, Calif.
*Missy Taukeiaho	Cal State Fullerton	3B	R-R	5-3	Senior	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.
Desiree Ybarra	Cal State Fullerton	P	L-L	5-7	Senior	Riverside, Calif.
*Taylor Glover	CSUN	OF	L-L	5-6	Junior	Los Angeles, Calif.
^Savannah Horvath	CSUN	SS/2B	R-R	5-6	Sophomore	Las Vegas, Nev.
Daphne Pofek	CSUN	P/UT	R-R	5-9	Junior	Riverside, Calif.
^Christina Clermont	Long Beach State	P	R-R	5-8	Junior	Carlsbad, Calif.
^Darian Tautalafua	Long Beach State	3B	R-R	5-8	Senior	Carson, Calif.
Jenna Curtan	UC Riverside	OF	L-L	5-5	Sophomore	Roseville, Calif.
Madeline Richard	UC Riverside	OF	L-R	5-6	Sophomore	Vista, Calif.
^Kristen Clark	UC Santa Barbara	OF	L-R	5-5	Junior	Danville, Calif.

SECOND TEAM

Player	School	Pos	B-T	Ht.	Year	Hometown
Kylie Padilla	Cal State Fullerton	C	R-R	5-4	Junior	Chino, Calif.
Courtney Rodriguez	Cal State Fullerton	OF	L-R	5-6	Senior	Scottsdale, Ariz.
Melissa Sechrest	Cal State Fullerton	1B	L-L	5-8	Senior	Peoria, Ariz.
Karlie Habitz	CSUN	C	R-R	5-9	Junior	Newhall, Calif.
Julia Lombardi	Long Beach State	1B	R-R	5-9	Sophomore	Stevenson Ranch, Calif.
Alley Perkins	Long Beach State	OF	S-R	5-4	Senior	Huntington Beach, Calif.
Taylor Misfeldt	UC Riverside	P	R-R	5-6	Sophomore	Tracy, Calif.
Stephanie Tickemyer	UC Riverside	OF/DP	R-R	5-2	Junior	Cherry Valley, Calif.
Sierra Altmeyer	UC Santa Barbara	1B	R-R	5-6	Freshman	San Diego, Calif.
Arianna Palomares	UC Santa Barbara	2B	L-R	5-4	Senior	Downey, Calif.
Samantha Stark	UC Santa Barbara	C	R-R	5-9	Senior	Agoura Hills, Calif.
Keiki Carlos	Hawai'i	OF	R-R	5-3	Senior	Mililani, O'ahu
Brittany Hitchcock	Hawai'i	P	R-R	5-11	Sophomore	Huntington Beach, Calif.

HONORABLE MENTION

Player	School	Pos	B-T	Ht.	Year	Hometown
Lindsey Chalmers	Cal Poly	P	R-R	5-9	Sophomore	San Ramon, Calif.
Breana West	Cal Poly	1B	R-R	5-7	Senior	Downey, Calif.
Samantha Vandiver	Cal State Fullerton	OF	L-R	5-3	Sophomore	Huntington Beach, Calif.
Katie Hooper	CSUN	C	R-R	5-7	Junior	Sun Valley, Calif.
Kelli Finan	Long Beach State	OF	R-R	5-7	Freshman	La Quinta, Calif.
Brianna Warner	UC Davis	OF	L-R	5-2	Junior	Tracy, Calif.
Ashley Ludlow	UC Santa Barbara	P	R-R	5-6	Senior	Petaluma, Calif.
Nicole Lopez	Hawai'i	3B	R-R	5-7	Freshman	'Aiea, O'ahu

ALL-FRESHMAN TEAM

Player	School	Pos	B-T	Ht.	Hometown
Sydney Golden	Cal State Fullerton	P	R-R	5-10	Riverside, Calif.
Mackenzie Babbitt	CSUN	OF	L-L	5-6	Hughson, Calif.
Taylor Troost	CSUN	P	R-R	5-7	San Bernadino, Calif.
Kelli Finan	Long Beach State	OF	R-R	5-7	La Quinta, Calif.
Hannah Rodriguez	UC Riverside	SS	R-R	5-4	Brawley, Calif.
Sierra Altmeyer	UC Santa Barbara	1B	R-R	5-6	San Diego, Calif.
Veronika Gulvin	UC Santa Barbara	P	R-R	5-11	Goleta, Calif.
Melanie Menor	UC Santa Barbara	SS	L-R	5-2	Modesto, Calif.
Nicole Lopez	Hawai'i	3B	R-R	5-7	'Aiea, O'ahu
Sarah Muzik	Hawai'i	UT	L-R	5-4	Salinas, Calif.

^ - Two-time first team All-Conference selection
 * - Three-time first team All-Conference selection

2016 PLAYER OF THE YEAR
 Missy Taukeiaho, Cal State Fullerton

2016 PITCHER OF THE YEAR
 Desiree Ybarra, Cal State Fullerton

2016 COACH OF THE YEAR
 Kelly Ford, Cal State Fullerton

2016 DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR
 Karlie Habitz, CSUN

2016 FRESHMAN PITCHER OF THE YEAR
 Sydney Golden, Cal State Fullerton

2016 FRESHMAN FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR
 Nicole Lopez, Hawai'i