



2015 Big West Baseball



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Big West All-Conference - May 26, 2015

Big West Announces Baseball Honors

Irvine, Calif. — A trio of Cal State Fullerton Titans, 2015 Big West Conference Champions, collected top honors while a quartet of other schools each collected an award as the Big West Conference announced player and pitcher of the year and all-conference honors voted on by the nine Big West coaches. Representing Cal State Fullerton, David Olmedo-Barrera earned Big West Co-Field Player of the Year, Thomas Eshelman picked up Big West Pitcher of the Year and Head Coach Rick Vanderhook collected his third Big West Coach of the Year. UC Santa Barbara's Cameron Newell shares the Big West Co-Field Player of the Year with Olmedo-Barrera and Peter Van Gansen is the second straight Cal Poly Mustang to garner Big West Defensive Player of the Year. Walking away with top freshman honors are UC Irvine's Keston Hiura, named Big West Freshman Field Player of the Year, and Long Beach State's Chris Mathewson, the 2015 Big West Freshman Pitcher of the Year.

Eshelman becomes the 13th Titan overall and third in the last four years to earn Big West Pitcher of the Year honors. The junior from Carlsbad, Calif., paces the Big West and sits 16th in the nation with a 1.57 ERA, while leading the nation with an astonishing 18.50 strikeout-to-walk ratio. The next closest pitcher, UCLA's Griffin Canning, owns an 11.00 mark. In a league-best 114.1 innings pitched, he has given up just six base on balls for a nation-leading .47 average. The three-time Big West Player of the Week sports a league-leading 111 strikeouts, placing him 14th in the country. Back on March 6, during one of his five complete games of the 2015 season, Eshelman set a new career-high in strikeouts with 14 in a 4-0 victory over Texas Tech. Eshelman's efforts this year fueled the Titans to a 16-5 Big West mark en route to their 20th conference title and a hosting gig for NCAA Regionals this week. The 6-foot-3 right-hander learned last week that he is a 2015 USA Baseball Golden Spikes Award semifinalist.

Newell not only headlines the Big West's number one offense, he enters the postseason hitting a league-best .380 to rank 23rd in the nation. He sports a .460 on-base percentage to sit second in the conference and sits fourth with 73 hits and is tied for fifth in runs scored with 40. In the second week of the 2015 season, the senior outfielder from Roseburg, Ore., earned Big West Player of the Week honors after batting .647 and recording four straight multiple hit games. Newell was a catalyst to a Gauchos offense that outscored their opponents, 302-178, during the regular season. After a twenty-three year drought, Newell becomes the first Gaucho to earn Big West Field Player of the Year honors. Jerrold Rountree earned the distinction for UC Santa Barbara in 1991, the award's inaugural year.

Claiming Big West Co-Field Player of the Year bumps Cal State Fullerton's total to 13, fifth as a co-recipient, as Olmedo-Barrera walks away with a share of this year's honor. He follows the likes of Mark Kotsay (1995-96) and Kurt Suzuki (2004). The Titans' designated hitter carries a .310 batting average into the postseason and owns the conference's third-best slugging percentage of .540. He is also tied for third in RBI with 39 and second in home runs with eight. The La Canada also finds himself in the league's top 10 in on-base percentage (.414), total bases (94) and stolen bases (12). Olmedo-Barrera, along with Eshelman, are two of six Titans to make the 2015 All-Big West First Team.

Van Gansen nabbed Cal Poly's second consecutive Big West Defensive Player of the Year with this year's selection as catcher Chris Hoo earned the distinction last year. In 240 chances, the shortstop from San Fernando, Calif., recorded 83 putouts and 153 assists while committing just four errors for a .983 fielding percentage. He also paces the Mustangs with 22 double plays. His efforts have contributed to the team's .970 fielding percentage, which is tied for third in the Big West Conference. Van Gansen also has proven to be an asset offensively as he is currently tied for first in the league with 43 runs scored and sits seventh in hits.

In his first season on the mound for the Dirtbags, Mathewson proved he was a force to be reckoned with as he paced the team and concluded the regular season ranked fourth in the league with an ERA of 1.94. in 93.0 innings of work. During his freshman campaign, the Fontana, Calif., native tossed two complete games and picked up three Big West Pitcher of the Week awards. He struck out a career-best 10 batters in LBSU's 10-1 win over UC Riverside on April 19 and tied for ninth in the conference with a total of 80 strikeouts. The 6-foot-1 righthander held his opposition to a conference-best .187 batting average. Mathewson becomes the first Long Beach State player to earn the Big West Freshman of the Year distinction.

UC Irvine went from seventh in the Big West in batting average last season to third this year and freshman Keston Hiura played a large part in the 'Eaters' improvement. Hiura ranks second on the team and seventh in the conference with a .330 batting average. The outfielder from Valencia, Calif., paces the Big West with 52 RBI and is tied for second in hits with 75. His 40 runs scored has him log-jammed in fifth place with four other players. Hiura, the first 'Eater' to be named Big West Freshman Player of the Year, was the only freshman to earn Big West Player of the Week honors and he did so on two occasions - April 6 and May 4.

Currently in his fourth season as head coach of the Cal State Fullerton Titans, Vanderhook guided the Titans to their 20th Big West title with a 16-5 record and they are preparing for their 24th consecutive NCAA appearance this weekend. The Titans dominated conference play, winning all eight series, three of which were sweeps. Cal State Fullerton is one of 16 teams which received the honor of hosting the NCAA Regionals and the Titans have found much success when playing on their home turn in the postseason as they sport a 34-9 mark during regional play at Goodwin Field. Cal State Fullerton also owns the third-longest active streak in the nation behind Miami (43 years) and Florida State (38 years). With this year's selection, Vanderhook garners his third Big West Coach of the Year honor and the school's 13th selection.

Big West Champion Cal State Fullerton led the league with six All-Big West First Team selections. The Gauchos of UC Santa Barbara were second with four nods and were followed by Cal Poly, UC Davis and UC Irvine who each earned two first teamers. The University of Hawai'i and Long Beach State nabbed one spot apiece.

The complete 2015 All-Big West selections are on the following page.

2015 Big West All-Conference Team

2015 BIG WEST CO-FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Cameron Newell, UC Santa Barbara
David Olmedo-Barrera, Cal State Fullerton

2015 BIG WEST FRESHMAN FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Keston Hiura, UC Irvine

2015 BIG WEST PITCHER OF THE YEAR

Thomas Eshelman, Cal State Fullerton

2015 BIG WEST FRESHMAN PITCHER OF THE YEAR

Chris Mathewson, Long Beach State

2015 BIG WEST DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Peter Van Gansen, Cal Poly

2015 BIG WEST COACH OF THE YEAR

Rick Vanderhook, Cal State Fullerton

FIRST TEAM

Player	School	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Izaak Silva	UC Davis	5-10	185	Sr.	C	Soquel, Calif.
Nick Lynch	UC Davis	6-1	205	Jr.	1B	Burlingame, Calif.
Mark Mathias [^]	Cal Poly	6-0	200	Jr.	2B	Fremont, Calif.
Jerrold Bravo	Cal State Fullerton	5-10	195	Jr.	3B	Cameron Park, Calif.
Mikey Duarte	UC Irvine	5-11	165	Jr.	SS	Redondo Beach, Calif.
Peter Van Gansen	Cal Poly	5-9	170	Jr.	SS	San Fernando, Calif.
David Olmedo-Barrera	Cal State Fullerton	6-1	205	Jr.	DH	La Canada, Calif.
Robby Nesovic	UC Santa Barbara	6-4	210	Jr.	UTL	La Mesa, Calif.
Josh Vargas	Cal State Fullerton	5-10	175	Jr.	UTL	Santa Ana, Calif.
Zack Zehner	Cal Poly	6-4	210	Sr.	OF	San Diego, Calif.
Keston Hiura	UC Irvine	5-11	185	Fr.	OF	Valencia, Calif.
Cameron Newell	UC Santa Barbara	6-1	190	Sr.	OF	Roseburg, Ore.
Tyler Brashears	Hawai'i	6-2	170	Jr.	SP	Lake Forest, Calif.
Thomas Eshelman [^]	Cal State Fullerton	6-3	210	Jr.	SP	Carlsbad, Calif.
Chris Mathewson	Long Beach State	6-1	190	Fr.	SP	Fontana, Calif.
Dillon Tate	UC Santa Barbara	6-2	200	Jr.	SP	Claremont, Calif.
Miles Chambers	Cal State Fullerton	6-2	200	So.	RP	Elverta, Calif.
Domenic Mazza	UC Santa Barbara	6-1	195	Jr.	RP	Concord, Calif.
Tyler Peitzmeier	Cal State Fullerton	6-2	210	Sr.	CP	Yutan, Neb.

SECOND TEAM

Player	School	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Jerry McClanahan	UC Irvine	6-2	205	Sr.	C	Temple City, Calif.
Mitchell Holland	UC Irvine	6-0	215	Jr.	1B	Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif.
Tino Lipson	UC Davis	5-10	170	Sr.	2B	El Cerrito, Calif.
Peter Maris	UC Santa Barbara	5-10	170	Sr.	3B	Laguna Niguel, Calif.
Garrett Hampson	Long Beach State	5-11	175	So.	SS	Reno, Nev.
Brock Lundquist	Long Beach State	5-11	195	Fr.	DH	Fountain Valley, Calif.
Jordan Ellis	Cal Poly	6-0	195	Sr.	OF	Garden Grove, Calif.
Tyler Stieb	Cal State Fullerton	5-9	165	Jr.	OF	Clements, Calif.
Vince Fernandez	UC Riverside	6-4	205	So.	OF	Livermore, Calif.
Shane Bieber	UC Santa Barbara	6-3	195	So.	SP	Laguna Hills, Calif.
Casey Bloomquist	Cal Poly	6-3	185	Jr.	SP	Bakersfield, Calif.
Kyle Friedrichs	Long Beach State	6-1	190	Sr.	SP	San Clemente, Calif.
Justin Jacome	UC Santa Barbara	6-6	230	So.	SP	Redlands, Calif.
Spencer Henderson	UC Davis	6-4	220	Jr.	RP	Walnut Creek, Calif.
Zach Stone	UC Davis	6-1	200	Jr.	CP	Eureka, Calif.
Quintin Torres-Costa	Hawai'i	6-0	190	So.	CP	Hilo, Hawai'i

HONORABLE MENTION

Player	School	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Pos.	Hometown
Campbell Wear	UC Santa Barbara	6-3	205	Sr.	C	San Diego, Calif.
Luke Rasmussen	Long Beach State	6-2	210	Fr.	1B	Los Gatos, Calif.
Taylor Bryant	Cal State Fullerton	6-0	185	So.	2B	La Quinta, Calif.
Tommy Pluschke	Cal Poly	6-3	220	Sr.	3B	Pleasanton, Calif.
Jacob Sheldon-Collins	Hawai'i	5-11	170	Jr.	SS	Melbourne, Victoria
Alex Sawelson	Hawai'i	6-3	215	Jr.	DH	Studio City, Calif.
Joe Chavez	UC Riverside	5-11	175	Sr.	UTL	Ontario, Calif.
Will Colantano	CSUN	6-3	180	Jr.	UTL	Escondido, Calif.
Austin March	UC Davis	6-1	200	Sr.	OF	Redwood City, Calif.
John Williams	UC Davis	6-1	190	Sr.	OF	Los Gatos, Calif.
Kris Paulino	UC Irvine	5-11	185	Sr.	OF	Ladera Ranch, Calif.
Andrew Calica	UC Santa Barbara	6-1	190	So.	OF	Chula Vista, Calif.
Luke Swenson	UC Santa Barbara	5-9	170	Sr.	OF	Moorpark, Calif.
John Gavin	Cal State Fullerton	6-6	245	Fr.	SP	San Jose, Calif.
Angel Rodriguez	CSUN	6-2	180	Jr.	RP	Winnetka, Calif.
Andrew Jones	Hawai'i	5-11	185	Sr.	RP	Melbourne, Australia
Conner O'Neill	CSUN	6-2	190	So.	CP	Kennewick, Wash.

[^]Two-time All-Big West First Team selection