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# Mountain West Conference NEWS

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## **ALL-MOUNTAIN WEST CONFERENCE VOLLEYBALL TEAM NAMED Colorado State's Angela Knopf Named Player of the Year**

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.** – Senior middle blocker Angela Knopf headlined the 2001 All-Mountain West Conference Volleyball Team, earning Player of the Year honors for the second straight year after leading the Rams to the MWC regular season championship.

A three-time All-MWC team member, Knopf currently leads the nation in hitting percentage at .491 and holds the MWC season record in that category. A native of Troutdale, Ore., Knopf averaged 4.29 kills per game while helping the Rams to their second straight outright regular season conference championship with a 13-1 record. Knopf is currently the CSU school record holder for blocks (586) and hitting percentage (.394), and ranks fifth in kills with 1,480. Colorado State, ranked eighth in the latest *USAToday*/AVCA Top 25 poll, enters this week's Championship as the No. 1 seed.

MWC Coach of the Year honors went to Colorado State head coach Tom Hilbert for the third straight year. Hilbert recently won his 300<sup>th</sup> career match and currently has an overall record of 310-95, including a 136-23 mark at Colorado State. Hilbert has won eight conference coach of the year honors in 13 seasons as a head coach, including four in his five years at CSU.

The only conference with four teams ranked in the NCAA top 20 for blocks, the Mountain West awards were dominated by middle blockers as eight of the 15 members earning conference honors play middle, including MWC Freshman of the Year Sheila Ocasio-Clemente of UNLV.

A native of Carolina, Puerto Rico, Ocasio-Clemente led the nation in blocks all season and became the first MWC freshman to lead the league in any statistical category, totaling 91 blocks for the year (1.86 per game) in league matches.

Colorado State and BYU each had four members named to the All-MWC team. CSU's Courtney Cox (OH), Angela Knopf (MB), Allison Peckham (S) and Soraya Santos (OH) were all repeat selections from last year, while BYU sisters Nina (MB) and Karina Puikkonen (S), and AVCA/Sports Imports National Player of the Week Sunny Mahe (OH) earned all-conference honors for the second straight year. The Cougars' Uila Crabbe (DS) was a first-time honoree.

Utah, which posted its highest conference finish since 1986 at second place, landed three members on the all-conference team. Kim Turner (MB), last year's Freshman of the Year, was a repeat selection, while McKelle Stilson (MB) and Sylva Strzinkova (OH) were first-time award recipients. UNLV's Blair Wilkes and Wyoming's Rachel Lau rounded out the middle blockers on this year's all-conference team, while San Diego State senior Katie Magnuson (OH) also earned all-conference honors. Six of the eight MWC members landed a middle blocker on this year's all-conference team.

Colorado State senior Allison Peckham repeated as the All-MWC Setter, while San Diego State sophomore Robyn Gregg and BYU sophomore Uila Crabbe were named MWC Co-Defensive Specialist award winners.

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A three-time all-conference performer, Peckham led the conference in assists for the second straight season (14.27 per game) and earned AVCA Sports Imports National Volleyball Player of the Week Oct. 8. A native of London, Ontario, Canada, Peckham ranks third in the CSU record book with 4,413 career assists and helped the Rams to a school- and conference record .335 team hitting percentage this season.

Crabbe, hailing from Mililani, Hawai'i, totaled 118 digs in league play as a defensive specialist. She started 23 of 24 matches for the Cougars this season, helping the team to a third-place conference finish at 10-4. Gregg, of Santee, Calif., set MWC match and season records for service aces with eight and 75, respectively.

**2001 All-Mountain West Conference Volleyball Team (\*notes repeat selection)**

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
*Nina Puikkonen	BYU	Sr.	MB	Murray, Utah
*Karina Puikkonen	BYU	So.	S	Murray, Utah
*Sunny Mahe	BYU	Jr.	OH	Allen, Texas
*Courtney Cox	CSU	Sr.	OH	Longmont, Colo.
*Angela Knopf	CSU	Jr.	MB	Troutdale, Ore.
*Soraya Santos	CSU	Sr.	MB	Vitoria, Brazil
Katie Magnuson	SDSU	Sr.	OH	San Diego, Calif.
McKelle Stilson	Utah	Sr.	MB	Orangeville, Utah
Sylva Strzinkova	Utah	Jr.	OH	Brno, Czech Republic
*Kim Turner	Utah	So.	MB	Chandler, Ariz.
Blair Wilkes	UNLV	Jr.	MB	Las Vegas, Nev.
Rachel Lau	WYO	Sr.	MB	Redwood City, Calif.
*Setter – Allison Peckham, CSU			Jr.	London, Ontario, Canada
Defensive Specialists – Robyn Gregg, SDSU			So.	Santee, Calif.
– Uila Crabbe, BYU			So.	Mililani, Hawai'i

**Player of the Year:**

\*Angela Knopf, CSU, Sr., MB, Troutdale, Ore.

**Freshman of the Year:**

Sheila Ocasio-Clemente, UNLV, Fr., MB, Carolina, Puerto Rico

**Coach of the Year:**

Tom Hilbert, CSU