



MPSF NEWS

MOUNTAIN PACIFIC SPORTS FEDERATION

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UC IRVINE TOPS 2007 MPSF PRESEASON VOLLEYBALL COACH POLL

In this second annual MPSF Men's Volleyball Preseason Coaches' Poll, UC IRVINE topped the coaches' ballots with seven first-place votes to earn the top ranking. UCI finished the 2006 season as the MPSF regular season champion and the fourth-place team at the NCAA Men's Volleyball Championship Tournament after losing to Penn State in a semifinal. The Anteaters return MPSF Player of the Year, **Jayson Jablonsky**, to lead Coach **John Speraw's** veteran crew. No. 2 BRIGHAM YOUNG garnered three first-place votes in a bid to return to last year's form where they started out the preseason as the No. 1 ranked team in this same Preseason Poll. In a three-way tie for third-place perennial MPSF powers HAWAII, PEPPERDINE and UCLA checked in at 41 points apiece with the Warriors and Waves each generating one first-place tally. In 2006, the Bruins surprised everyone except coaching icon **Al Scates** and his team by winning out their final 14 matches to take both the MPSF and the NCAA Men's Volleyball Championship Tournaments. Scates guided the 2006 Bruins to a record 19th NCAA title. UC SANTA BARBARA followed in No. 6 before a tie for No. 7 between CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE and LONG BEACH STATE. USC, PACIFIC, STANFORD and UC SAN DIEGO have been projected to finish out 2007 in the same positions where they ended 2006.

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Rank	Team	Points	2006 Records:	2006 MPSF finish:
No. 1	UC Irvine	17 points (7 first-place votes)	27-5 (20-2 MSPF) MPSF/NCAA Semifinalist	#1
No. 2	Brigham Young	29 points (3 first-place votes)	18-9 (14-8 MPSF)	#5
No. 3T	Hawaii	41 points (1 first-place vote)	23-5 (19-3 MPSF)	#2
No. 3T	Pepperdine	41 points (1 first-place vote)	17-8 (15-7 MPSF) MPSF Semifinalist	#3
No. 3T	UCLA	41 points	25-12 (12-10 MPSF) MPSF & NCAA Champion	#7
No. 6	UC Santa Barbara	62 points	13-16 (9-13 MPSF)	#8
No. 7T	Cal State Northridge	70 points	18-11 (13-9 MPSF)	#6
No. 7T	Long Beach State	70 points	23-10 (14-8 MPSF) MPSF Finalist	#4
No. 9	USC	92 points	11-18 (7-15 MPSF)	#9
No. 10	Pacific	100 points	8-20 (6-16 MPSF)	#10
No. 11	Stanford	108 points	4-24 (2-20 MPSF)	#11
No. 12	UC San Diego	121 points	2-27 (1-21 MPSF)	#12

1. UC IRVINE (27-5 overall; 20-2 MPSF 2006) – UC Irvine returns four All-Americans and six All-MPSF honorees in 2007, including the 2006 National Player of the Year outside hitter **Jayson Jablonsky**. UCI comes off a 27-5 overall record and the program's first MPSF regular season (20-2) title.

2. BRIGHAM YOUNG (18-9 overall; 14-8 MPSF 2006) – In 2007, BYU will have new leadership in co-interim head coaches and former Cougar standouts **Shawn Patchell** and **Ryan Millar**, a former MPSF Player of the Year who led the Cougars to their first National Championship in 1999. BYU returns substantial offensive talent in outside hitters sophomore **Yosleyder Cala** and junior **Ivan Perez**, as well as second-team All-American middle blocker **Russell Holmes**. Top newcomers include freshman setter **Reed Chilton**, freshman OH **Andrew Stewart** and opposite **Robby Stowell**.

3T. HAWAII (23-5 overall 19-3 MPSF 2006) – The 2007 Warriors have a solid nucleus in returning All-Americans **Brian Beckwith** and **Lauri Hakala**, along with middle blockers **Dio Dante** and **Kyle Klinger**. Newcomers that will make an early impact are talented redshirt freshmen middle blockers **Matt Rawson** and **Steven Grgas**. **Ric Cervantes** is a talented Libero. UH will rely on a big block up front and the outside hitting of Hakala for more of a quick strike attack.

3T. PEPPERDINE (17-8 overall; 15-7 MPSF 2006) – Pepperdine returns four starters from last year's team including senior outside hitter **John Parfitt**, junior setter **Jonathan Winder** and sophomore outside hitter **Paul Carroll**. The Waves finished third in the MPSF a year ago. **Jon Grobe**, **Tanner Sutherland** and **Matt McKee** will look to secure a starting position on the outside.

3T. UCLA (25-12 overall; 12-10; MPSF 2006) – In 2007, the defending NCAA Champion UCLA Bruins return three starters, nine lettermen and three significant reserves from a team that won its final 14 matches to capture the program's 24th national championship. A total of seven incoming players, including five Volleyball Magazine All-Americans, highlight the list of new players for 2007.

6. UC SANTA BARBARA (13-16 overall; 9-13 MPSF 2006) – Coach **Ken Preston** heads into his 29th season with a veteran team which lost only two players. UCSB returns their top offensive leaders in senior opposite **Evan Patak** (423 kills, 5.88 kpg), senior outside **Bryan Berman** (264, 2.74), junior middle **Theo Brunner** (264, 2.56) and senior outside **Aaron Richman** (234, 2.85). Berman led UCSB with 153 digs and Brunner led the Gauchos with 90 blocks. Patak led the MPSF in kills (327, 6.06 KPG), aces (40), and points (7.13 PPG). The Gauchos also return setters sophomore **Max Klineman** and senior **Bart Kowalski**.

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7T. CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE (18-11 overall; 13-9 MPSF 2006) – In 2007, CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE will be led by senior opposite **Dan Rhodes**, a 2006 All-MPSF Third Team selection. Rhodes led the Matadors in kills (452) and kills per game (4.53) and pounded a career-high 41 kills in a five-game loss to Pepperdine. Fellow senior **James Lischer** also returns after averaging 2.61 and 0.82 blocks per game last year.

7T. LONG BEACH STATE (23-10 overall; 14-8 MPSF 2006) – Long Beach State loses a bulk of its offense with the departure of two-time All-Americans, Robert Tarr and Tyler Hildebrand. The 49ers also lose depth at middle blocker, **Duncan Budinger**, a third-team All-American last season. LBSU returns junior outside hitters **Norm Hutton** at OH and **Paul Lotman**. Both averaged 2.96 and 2.00 kills per game last season.

9. USC (11-18 overall; 7-15 MPSF 2006) – USC, under new head coach **Bill Ferguson**, returns 5 starters from last season: junior setter **Jimmy Killian**, sophomore outside hitter **Juan Figueroa**, sophomore opposite hitter **C.J. Schellenberg**, junior middle blocker **Andrew Vernon** and senior middle blocker **Matt Mosko**, plus sophomore libero **Luke Morris**. USC finished the 2006 season with an 11-18 record.

10. PACIFIC (8-20 overall; 6-16 MPSF 2006) – The Tigers return 11 veterans including five starters and their libero from last season. Outside hitters **Pekka Seppanen** (Kuopio, Finland) and **Andrea Baboulidis** (Ruesselsheim, Germany) return for the 2007 campaign after finishing second and third on the team in kills with 296 and 240 and averaging 3.05 and 3.08 kills per game respectively. Returning middle blocker **Simon Chen-Byerley** (Northfield, Ill.), led the team with 13 solo blocks and 90 block assists in 2006. **Maor Nutkevitch** (Ra'anana, Israel), a 6-6 outside hitter with international experience, is a key newcomer for UOP.

11. STANFORD (4-24 overall; 2-20 MPSF 2006) – New Stanford Coach John Kosty looks to the 2007 season with a young, athletic squad. The Cardinal have added 5 freshmen this year, including standout setter/outside hitter **Kawika Shoji**, middle blocker **Garrett Werner**, opposites **Ed Howell** and **Evan Romero**, and outside hitter **Jason Palacios**. Sophomore **Brandon Williams** will look to make an impact at middle blocker, with junior **Matt Ceran** playing both outside and middle blocker. Libero **Brian Lindberg** is The Cardinal's lone returning senior.

12. UC SAN DIEGO (2-27 overall; 1-21 MPSF 2006) – UCSD returns senior setter **Brooks Dierdorff**, junior middle blocker **Stephen Shaw** and sophomore libero **Eric Leserman**. A trio of freshman will be key newcomers for the Tritons including outside hitter **Jason Spangler** and middle blockers **Adrian Guthals** and **Frank Fritsch**. Last year Dierdorff collected 1,139 assists (11.74 per game) with 63 kills to direct UC San Diego's offense.

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