



MPSF NEWS

MOUNTAIN PACIFIC SPORTS FEDERATION
PO Box 850 • Woodland, CA 95776-0850
530.669.7600 • Fax 530.669.7627 • abeaird@mpsports.org

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Contact: Al Beaird

NEW MEXICO TOPS 2007 MPSF PRESEASON SOCCER COACHES' POLL

The Lobos of NEW MEXICO top the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (MPSF) preseason poll for the fifth-consecutive year after garnering five of the six top votes and 25 points. For 2007, DENVER is projected to finish second, earning one first-place vote and 21 points. SAN JOSE STATE gained the third slot with 15 points. SACRAMENTO STATE claims the No. 4 position, with 12 points after a third-place finish in '07. UNLV is slated in fifth-place with 10 points with the AIR FORCE ACADEMY taking up sixth with seven points. Note that coaches cannot vote for their own teams. Both Denver and Air Force have new coaches, with long-time assistant **Doug Hill** taking over the mantle for the Falcons since **Lou Sagastume** retired after 28 seasons. AFA neighbor and cross-town rival Denver brings in **Bobby Muuss** to replace **Chad Ashton** who is now with D.C. United of MLS. The MPSF determines the Federation champion and NCAA automatic qualifier after a 10-match double-round robin league schedule.

Rank	Team	Points	2006 team record:	2006 MPSF finish:
No. 1	New Mexico	25 points (5 first-place votes)	14-4-3 (8-1-1 MPSF)	#1
No. 2	Denver	21 points (one first-place vote)	11-5-2 (7-2-1 MPSF)	#2
No. 3	San Jose State	15 points	7-10-1 (4-6-0 MPSF)	#4T
No. 4	Sacramento State	12 points	7-10-2 (4-4-2 MPSF)	#3
No. 5	UNLV	10 points	1-15-2 (1-9-0 MPSF)	#6
No. 6	Air Force	7 points	5-12-1 (4-6-0 MPSF)	#4T

No. 1: NEW MEXICO 14-4-3 overall (8-1-1 MPSF 2006) - The Lobo men's soccer team is looking for its fourth straight MPSF crown, and sixth in the last seven years, when the 2007 season kicks off. New Mexico boasts nine returning starters, led by senior keeper **Mike Graczyk**, a 2006 1st Team All-MPSF selection. UNM also returns senior **David Gualdarama** and sophomore **Simon Ejdemyr**, who were also 1st team selections last season, and leading scorer junior forward **Chris Wright**, a second-team All-MPSF honoree in 2006. New Mexico has the highest winning percentage of any team in the country since the 2004 (.828) and will look to continue that trend in again 2007. The Lobos are currently ranked No. 10 in CollegeSoccerNews.com's Preseason Top-30 poll.

No. 2: DENVER 11-5-2 overall (7-2-1 MPSF 2006) - Head coach **Bobby Muuss** begins his first season at the reins at Denver, taking over the Pioneers after two-time MPSF Coach of the Year **Chad Ashton** resigned to join the staff of Major League Soccer's D.C. United. The Pioneers return eight starters from last year's team that went 11-5-2 overall and 7-2-1 in the MPSF, their best finish since moving to Division I. Leading the way are 2006 First Team All-MPSF honorees **Joe Mathot** (Port Moody, B.C.) and **Kellan Christensen** (Layton, Utah), who was also the MPSF Newcomer of the Year, as well as **Josh Fallin** (Midland, Texas) and **Matt Bredehoff** (Fort Collins, Colo.), who made Second Team and Third Team All-MPSF, respectively. Senior Bredehoff and sophomore **Joe Willis** (St. Louis, Mo.) form a solid goalkeeping combination, as they combined for 10 shutouts in 2006 and did not allow a single goal as the Pioneers went undefeated during the 2007 spring season. DU lost leading scorer and First-Team All-MPSF member **Ben Mendoza**, as well as **Mike Seager** (Second Team) and **James Merriman** (Third Team).

No. 3: SAN JOSE STATE 7-10-1 overall (4-6-0 MPSF 2006) - In head coach **Gary St. Clair's** 18th season in charge of his alma mater, San Jose State will rely on 13 returning lettermen, eight of them starters, and a stellar recruiting class, to bounce back from a 2006 campaign in which the Spartans went 7-10-1 overall and 4-6 in conference play. Returning standouts include 2006 first-team All-MPSF selection **Ed Brand**, the Spartans' anchor in central defense, second-team All-MPSF pick **Hiroki Akiyama** in midfield, and third-team All-MPSF honoree **Richard Mann**, who begins his third campaign as the starter in goal. The Spartans will begin their quest for a first NCAA Tournament berth since 2003, with their first out-of-region venture since 1995, opening the season at the Davidson adidas Classic in Davidson, N.C.

No. 4: SACRAMENTO STATE 7-10-2 overall (4-4-2 MPSF 2006) - The Hornets return two All-MPSF performers from a season ago in junior **Adam Owens** (Carmichael, Calif.), who was a first team selection in 2006 and senior **Eli Millan** (North Highlands, Calif.), who was a second team honoree. Also returning into the fold is 2005 MPSF Co-Newcomer of the Year **Jeff Buddenbohn** (Sierra Madre, Calif.) who redshirted during the 2006 campaign. Millan is the teams' top returning scorer, having tallied 12 points in 2006, while junior **Josh Zimbrich** (Loomis, Calif.) recorded 10. In goal, the Hornets return three 'keepers, including sophomore **Ryan Kenny** (Fresno, Calif.) who amassed a 4-5-2 record a season ago while posting a goals against average of 1.0.

No. 5: UNLV 1-15-2 overall (1-9-0 MPSF 2006) - UNLV begins its second season under head coach **Mario Sanchez**, and he's brought in a stellar recruiting class to go along with several talented returnees. Key among the incoming freshman is forward **Daniel Cruz**, who thus far this season has played for the West Region Under-17 Team, the USA Pan American Team, and was recently selected as a member of the U17 World Cup Team as well for the U.S. Key among the returnees are junior midfielders **Nicholas Paterson** and **Lamar Neagle**. Neagle led the Rebels last year with four goals and three assists for 11 points, while Paterson had a team-high five assists to go along with two goals for nine points.

No. 6: AIR FORCE 5-12-1 overall (4-6-0 MPSF 2006) - For the first time in 29 years, someone other than **Lou Sagastume** will coach the Air Force Falcons. Doug Hill, a 13-year assistant with the Falcons, takes over for the '07 campaign. The Falcons, who went 5-12-1 last season, return nine starters, including all-MPSF first-team selections **Andy Nigro** and **Ian Hauck**. Senior goalie **Brian Guyette** is back after earning a second-team all-conference selection and finishing second in the league in saves per game last season.

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