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PEPPERDINE TOPS 2008 MPSF PRESEASON VOLLEYBALL POLL

In a close third annual MPSF Men's Volleyball Preseason Coaches' Poll, PEPPERDINE topped the ballots with 108 points and five first-place votes to earn the No. 1 ranking. The Waves won the conference regular season last year and received an at-large bid to the NCAA Final Four after a runner-up finish at the MPSF Tournament. Pepperdine returns 2007 MPSF and National Player of the Year, setter Jonathan Winder, in addition to junior first-team all-conference opposite Paul Carroll. Closely behind was No. 2 BRIGHAM YOUNG, also with five first-place votes and a total of 105 points, three shy of Pepperdine. The Cougars reached the MPSF Tournament semi-finals last year. UCLA placed third, one point behind BYU, and picked up one first-place vote. Defending MPSF and National Champion UC IRVINE was picked fourth, followed by CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE in fifth with one first-place vote. USC came in sixth, followed by LONG BEACH STATE in seventh, meaning the 49ers are projected to make the largest jump in this year's standings from a year ago when they finished 10th. HAWAII and STANFORD finished eight and nine respectively, while UC SANTA BARBARA, PACIFIC, and UC SAN DIEGO completed the votes....

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Rank	Team	Points (First-Place Votes)	2007 Records:	2007 MPSF Finish:
No. 1	Pepperdine	108 points (5)	26-3 (21-1 MPSF)	MPSF Finalist #1
No. 2	Brigham Young	105 points (5)	23-6 (18-4 MPSF)	MPSF Semi-Finalist #2
No. 3	UCLA	104 points (1)	19-11 (13-9 MPSF)	#5
No. 4	UC Irvine	88 points	29-5 (17-5 MPSF)	MPSF/NCAA Champion #3
No. 5	Cal State Northridge	85 points (1)	18-15 (11-11 MPSF)	#6T
No. 6	USC	68 points	12-16 (9-13 MPSF)	#8
No. 7	Long Beach State	57 points	11-17 (6-16 MPSF)	#10
No. 8	Hawaii	51 points	13-14 (11-11 MPSF)	#6T
No. 9	Stanford	50 points	3-25 (2-20 MPSF)	#11T
No. 10	UC Santa Barbara	40 points	20-12 (14-8 MPSF)	MPSF Semi-Finalist #4
No. 11	Pacific	23 points	14-17 (8-14 MPSF)	#9
No. 12	UC San Diego	13 points	5-23 (2-20 MPSF)	#11T

PEPPERDINE (26-3 overall; 21-1 MPSF 2007) – Pepperdine returns senior MPSF and AVCA National Player of the Year **Jonathan Winder** (13.06 APG/2.10 DPG) at setter and junior first-team all-conference opposite **Paul Carroll** (5.69KPG). The Waves also return some hitting experience in **Matt McKee** and **JD Schleppembach**, while freshman **Tyler Jaynes** has the ability to make an impact in the middle. The Waves lost Greg Gaudino and Tom Hulse.

BRIGHAM YOUNG (23-6 overall; 18-4 MPSF 2007) – The Cougars return a pair of All-Americans in outside hitter **Ivan Perez** and middle blocker **Russell Holmes**, in addition to the '07 National Newcomer of the Year setter **Yamil Perez**. Another All-American from last year, Yosleyder Cala, has turned pro. Sophomore libero **Joel Silva** also returns (2.08 DPG) as well as senior middle **Trent Sorensen**.

UCLA (19-11 overall; 13-9 MPSF 2007) – Senior libero **Tony Ker** (2.43 DPG in '07) returns as a first-team conference selection, in addition to sophomore outside hitter **Garrett Muagututia** and junior middle blocker **Jamie Diefenbach** (1.29 BPG). Sophomore **Brett Perrine** was impressive in fall matches. Steve Klosterman does not return.

UC IRVINE (29-5 overall; 17-5 MPSF 2007) – UC Irvine is coming off a first-ever MPSF and National Championship in a 29-5 overall season. Amongst the top returnees are All-MPSF Third-Team picks in senior middle blocker **Aaron Harrell** and junior libero **Brent Asuka**, along with junior hitter **Taylor Wilson**. Freshmen hitters **Jordan DuFault** and **Alex DuPron** were impressive in fall matches. The Anteaters lost Jayson Jablonsky, Matt Webber, Brian Thornton, and David Smith, all of whom were all-conference.

CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE (18-15 overall; 11-11 MPSF 2007) – Gone are All-MPSF selections in middle blocker James Lischer and opposite Dan Rhodes, though the Matadors return All-MPSF Honorable Mention outside hitter **Eric Vance**, one of the top servers in the conference in 2007 (0.42 APG). Senior setter **Travis Bleumling** also returns, while outside hitters **Isaac Kneubuhl** and **Mike Gaudino** were effective in fall matches.

USC (12-16 overall; 9-13 MPSF 2007) – USC returns nearly all of its key players from a year ago, including senior setter **Jimmy Killian** (12.74 APG) and third-team All-MPSF senior outside hitter **Juan Figueroa** (5.11 KPG), both of whom ranked third in the league in their respective categories. Junior opposite **C.J. Schellenberg** along with senior middle blocker **Andrew Vernon** (1.26 BPG) and junior libero **Luke Morris** (2.17 DPG) are also back.

LONG BEACH STATE (11-17 overall; 6-16 MPSF 2007) – Back is senior outside hitter **Paul Lotman**, an MPSF Honorable Mention pick from last year, coming off a 4.39 kills per game season. Sophomore **Connor Eaton** (12.62 APG) will set the ball up. Strong middles also come back in sophomores **Dan Alexander** and **Dean Bittner**.

HAWAII (13-14 overall; 11-11 MPSF 2007) – Former All-Americans Brian Beckwith, Lauri Hakala, and Dio Dante do not return. The Warriors do return a strong group of hitters, including **Matt Vanzant**, **Jim Clar**, and **Jacob Schkud**, while middle blocker **Matt Rawson** had an outstanding freshman year in '07 with 1.40 blocks per game (5th in MPSF). Sophomore libero **Ric Cervantes** also returns (2.05 DPG).

STANFORD (3-25 overall; 2-20 MPSF 2007) – MPSF Honorable Mention setter/outside hitter **Kawika Shoji** returns as does sophomore **Evan Romero**, who ranked 10th last year in the conference in kills per game (3.93). Key newcomers include outside hitters **Ian Connolly** and **Spencer McLachlin**.

UC SANTA BARBARA (20-12 overall; 14-8 MPSF 2007) – The Gauchos have an excellent group of seniors coming back, including libero **Ben Brockman** (1.98 DPG), setter **Max Klineman**, and outside hitter **Michael Fisher**. Middle blocker **Theo Brunner** ranked second in the MPSF last year with a .531 hitting clip and was named to the all-conference first-team. Freshman **Jeff Menzel** is one of the top freshmen and can make an early impact as a hitter. Gone are Evan Patak and David Kennedy.

PACIFIC (14-17 overall; 8-14 MPSF 2007) – The Tigers return senior starters **Pekka Seppanen** at outside hitter and **Simon Chen-Byerley** at middle blocker. Seppanen was named '07 All-MPSF Honorable Mention, finishing ninth in the conference with 3.98 kills per game. Junior **Clay Ostrander**, who redshirted last year, expects to be a factor as a hitter and blocker.

UC SAN DIEGO (5-23 overall; 2-20 MPSF 2007) – The UCSD roster is highlighted by an outstanding sophomore class in outside hitters **Jason Spangler** and **Will Ehrman**, opposite **Frank Fritsch**, and middle blocker **Adrian Guthals**. Junior libero **Eric Leserman** led the MPSF last year with 2.91 digs per game and earned all-conference second team honors. The Tritons lost Brooks Dierdorff at setter.

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