Mountain Pacific Sports Federation
MPSF Men's Water Polo
Conference News
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CAL, AUSTIN FAVORED IN MPSF MEN'S WATER POLO COACHES' POLL

Back-to-back defending NCAA Champion California recorded 48 points and six first-place votes in the MPSF Men's Water Polo Coaches' poll, and was picked to win the 2023 MPSF's Western Division title. Four-time All-American and three-time MPSF Player of the Year Nikolaos Papanikolaou (62 goals, MPSF-high 80 earned exclusions) is back for a fifth season. He scored seven goals in the NCAA title game last year, and led the Bears to their highest win percentage (.920) in 30 years. Last year's championship-winning lineup remains mostly intact, which also includes first team All-Americans Max Casabella (61 goals) and goalkeeper Adrian Weinberg.

UCLA and USC picked up the remaining first-place votes and tied for second in the west with 39 points. The Bruins return three of their top-six scorers, including Gianpiero Di Martire (43 goals) and Makoto Kenney, in addition to first team all-conference goalkeeper Bernardo Maurizi. The Trojans are led by 2022 top scorer, All-American and MPSF Newcomer of the Year Massimo Di Martire (63 goals), along with Delfina All-MPSF honorees Carson Kranz and Luka Brnetic. USC has reached the NCAA Championship game all but once since 2005.

Jackson Painter (MPSF-high 67 goals) joins Nolan Krutonog (MPSF-high 240 saves in all 27 games) and Riley Pittman (33 goals) as returning all-conference players for Stanford, which collected 34 points in the poll.

Dylan McArthur leads a group of Austin College returnees, which topped the poll's eastern division with 22 points. McArthur was named a 2022 All-American and Delfina All-MPSF East after finishing among the team's scoring leaders. Mark Lawrence will also be looking at a pair of sophomores for scoring, Aidan Wade and Jack Stack.

Defending MPSF East Champion Augustana welcomes back 16 of its 18 players from its first year in the MPSF in 2022, including nine who had double-digit goals. The Vikings totaled 20 points for second-place in the poll, with Declan Hutton, Colin McDowell, Joseph Addison, and Oskar Bannister as returning All-Americans.

Washington & Jefferson picked up 13 points and may be led by Chris Edwards (second team Delfina All-MPSF East) in its second year as an MPSF member. Top returnees for Penn State Behrend are Jack Holl (52 goals), Ethan Friedman, and Ryan Kenney.

The MPSF's 32nd men's water polo season is underway September 2. For the second year, the eight-team conference is split into two divisions, featuring the D-I programs in the west and D-III programs in the east. California hosts the MPSF Championship Tournament, November 17-19, which yields both a western and eastern conference champion. USC is the host of the NCAA Tournament two weeks later. Since its initial season in 1992, the MPSF has won all 31 NCAA Championships in men's water polo.

Rank	Team	Points (First-Place)	2022 Team Record	2022 MPSF Finish/Postseason
MPSF WEST				
1	California	48 (6)	23-2 Overall; 3-0 MPSF	#1-W/NCAA Champion
2T	UCLA	39 (1)	22-5 Overall; 2-1 MPSF	#2-W
2T	USC	39 (1)	20-7 Overall; 1-2 MPSF	#3-W/NCAA Final/MPSF Champion
4	Stanford	34	22-5 Overall; 0-3 MPSF	#4-W
MPSF EAST				
1	Austin College	22	6-15 Overall; 2-1 MPSF	#2-E
2	Augustana	20	14-6 Overall; 5-0 MPSF	#1-E/MPSF Champion
3	Washington & Jefferson	13	10-8 Overall; 2-3 MPSF	$3-E
4	Penn State Behrend	9	0-24 Overall; 0-5 MPSF	#4-E