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UCI AND USC TOP MPSF MEN'S VOLLEYBALL COACHES' POLL; SIX TEAMS PICK UP FIRST-PLACE VOTE

UC Irvine and USC each picked up 100 points and three first-place votes in topping the 2011 MPSF Men's Volleyball Preseason Coaches' Poll. The 2009 national champion Anteaters are coming off an eighth-place MPSF finish from last year, returning All-American hitters Carson Clark and Jordan DuFault, as well as middle blocker Austin D'Amore. The Trojans placed sixth in the regular season last year, and bring back most of their team who also played in the NCAA Tournament two seasons ago. Back are All-American hitters Murphy Troy and Tony Ciarelli, setter Riley McKibbin, and middle blocker Austin Zahn. Both UCI and USC were MPSF quarterfinalists in 2010. Stanford came in third in the poll for the second straight year, collecting 96 points and a pair of first-place votes. The defending conference and national champions return MPSF Player of the Year and All-American Brad Lawson, All-American Libero Erik Shoji, as well as four-year starting hitter Spencer McLachlin. Pepperdine placed fourth with 90 points and one top vote, guided by All-American Setter Kasey Crider and hitters Cory Riecks and Maurice Torres. 2010 MPSF Semifinalist BYU checked in at No. 5 with 85 points and two first-place picks, as all-conference blockers return in Futi Tavana and Russell Lavaja. 2010 MPSF Freshman of the Year Jonas Umlauf returns for Hawaii, along with hitter Josh Walker and setter Nejc Zemljak, as the Warriors rounded out the top half of the coaches' poll with 83 points. UCLA placed seventh with a first-place vote, 10 points ahead of eighth-place finisher UC Santa Barbara, each projected to reach the postseason. Long Beach State, 2010 NCAA Semifinalist Cal State Northridge, Pacific, and UC San Diego completed this year's coaches' poll. The 2011 season gets underway on Wednesday, January 5, while the first night of MPSF competition is one week later on January 12.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Points (First-Place Votes)</u>	<u>2010 Record</u>	<u>2010 MPSF Finish</u>
1T	UC Irvine	100 (3)	15-15 overall; 10-12 MPSF	#8 (MPSF Quarterfinal)
1T	USC	100 (3)	16-11 overall; 13-9 MPSF	#6 (MPSF Quarterfinal)
3	Stanford	96 (2)	24-6 overall; 16-6 MPSF	#1 (MPSF/NCAA Champion)
4	Pepperdine	90 (1)	16-10 overall; 14-8 MPSF	#4 (MPSF Quarterfinal)
5	BYU	85 (2)	22-9 overall; 15-7 MPSF	#2 (MPSF Semifinal)
6	Hawaii	83	19-10 overall; 14-8 MPSF	#4 (MPSF Semifinal)
7	UCLA	68 (1)	16-14 overall; 11-11 MPSF	#7 (MPSF Quarterfinal)
8	UC Santa Barbara	58	13-16 overall; 9-13 MPSF	#9
9	Long Beach State	43	12-17 overall; 8-14 MPSF	#10
10	CS Northridge	35	23-10 overall; 15-7 MPSF	#2 (MPSF Final/NCAA Semi)
11	Pacific	18	9-21 overall; 1-21 MPSF	#12
12	UC San Diego	16	11-19 overall; 6-16 MPSF	#11