

2018-19 All-Mountain West Team - Media selections

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Utah State guard Sam Merrill has been voted the Mountain West men's basketball Player of the Year as voted on by members of media covering the conference's 20th season.

Merrill, the 6-foot-5 junior from Bountiful, Utah, averaged 22.0 points and 4.4 assists per conference game this season, leading the resurgence for a Utah State team that was picked 9th in the preseason to finish tied with Nevada as co-Mountain West champion. Merrill received 10 of a possible 11 first place votes for the award with Nevada senior Caleb Martin receiving the other.

Merrill joined Martin, Nevada's Jordan Caroline, Colorado State's Nico Carvacho and Wyoming's Justin James as All-Mountain West First Team selections.

Utah State's Craig Smith was voted the league's Coach of the Year in his first year in Logan, Utah, receiving 10 of a possible 11 votes. The other vote for top coach went to fellow first-year coach Justin Hutson of Fresno State.

Utah State center Neemias Queta, of Barreiro, Portugal, was a unanimous choice for Freshman of the Year and edged out a pair of Nevada players (Cody Martin and Tre'Shawn Thurman) for Defensive Player of the year. Queta averaged 13.0 points, 9.7 rebounds and 2.4 blocks per game while leading the defensive effort for a Utah State team that ranks fourth in the country in 2-point field goal defense (41.7 percent) after ranking 208th a season ago.

Other individual honors include Nevada's Jazz Johnson being voted the league's 6th Man of the Year and Fresno State's Braxton Huggins, a transfer from New Mexico State, winning the Newcomer of the Year.

Voting was conducted independent of Mountain West oversight by media directly covering teams in 10 of the 11 league markets as well as one at-large media member. Invitations to media in all 11 markets were extended.

In markets where more than one outlet covers a team closely, beat reporters from competing publications submitted a joint ballot, giving each market one vote.

Voters ranked players 1 through 15 for first-, second- and third-team All-Mountain West with the top player getting 15 points and on down to the 15th player receiving one point.

Vote totals are included for all awards and all all-conference selections.

(Awards next page)

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• ALL-MW FIRST TEAM •

Sam Merrill, Utah State (162 points)
Caleb Martin, Nevada (148)
Jordan Caroline, Nevada (147)
Nico Carvacho, Colorado State (112)
Justin James, Wyoming (110)

• ALL-MW SECOND TEAM •

Braxton Huggins, Fresno State (96)
Deshon Taylor, Fresno State (94)
Jalen McDaniels, SDSU (93)
Neemias Queta, Utah State (89)
Cody Martin, Nevada (80)

• ALL-MW THIRD TEAM •

Lavelle Scottie, Air Force (56)
Nate Grimes, Fresno State (24)
Devin Watson, SDSU (24)
Kris Clyburn, UNLV (18)
(t) Justinian Jessup, Boise State (14)
(t) Noah Robotham, UNLV (14)

• ALL-MW HONORABLE MENTION •

Derrick Alston, Boise State (10); Anthony Mathis, New Mexico (9); Vance Jackson, New Mexico (7); Alex Hobbs, Boise State (4); Carlton Bragg, New Mexico (3); Jazz Johnson, Nevada (3); Ryan Swan, Air Force (3).

PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Sam Merrill, Utah State (10)
Others receiving votes: Caleb Martin, Nevada (1)

COACH OF THE YEAR: Craig Smith, Utah State (10)
Others receiving votes: Justin Hutson, Fresno State (1)

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Neemias Queta, Utah State (6)
Others receiving votes: Cody Martin, Nevada (3); Tre'Shawn Thurman, Nevada (2)

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR: G Braxton Huggins, Fresno State (10)
Others receiving votes: Vance Jackson, New Mexico (1)

FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR: Neemias Queta, Utah State (11)

6TH MAN OF THE YEAR: Jazz Johnson, Nevada (8)
Others receiving votes: Diogo Brito, Utah State (3)