

Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013

## Utah State's Matt Wells Named Mountain West Coach of the Year

Utah State's [Matt Wells](#) was named the Mountain West Coach of the Year, while 14 Aggies earned various all-conference accolades as the league office announced its postseason football honors Tuesday. In all, USU had four offensive players, eight defensive players and two specialists recognized to rank as the second-most in the league behind Fresno State's 15 honorees.

Utah State players to earn first-team all-Mountain West honors include linebacker [Jake Doughty](#), offensive center [Tyler Larsen](#) and cornerback [Nevin Lawson](#), while linebacker [Kyler Fackrell](#), defensive tackle [B.J. Larsen](#), nose guard [AJ Pataiali'i](#) and linebacker [Zach Vigil](#) were all named to the second-team. Aggies who earned honorable mention all-league honors include safety [Maurice Alexander](#), running back [Joey DeMartino](#), placekicker [Nick Diaz](#), offensive lineman [Jamie Markosian](#), punt returner [Bruce Natson](#), offensive lineman [Eric Schultz](#) and safety [Brian Suite](#).

Fresno State quarterback Derek Carr was named the Mountain West Offensive Player of the Year, while Colorado State linebacker Shaquil Barrett was named the Mountain West Defensive Player of the Year. New Mexico's Carlos Wiggins was named the Mountain West Special Teams Player of the Year and San José State's Tyler Winston earned Mountain West Freshman of the Year honors.

Overall, Utah State's 14 total honorees rank fifth all-time in school history behind the 18 all-Big West Conference picks in 1997, the 17 all-Western Athletic Conference picks in 2012, the 16 all-Big West selections in 1996, and the 15 all-Pacific Coast Athletic Association picks in 1978.

As for Wells, he becomes just the fifth coach in school history and second in as many years to earn conference coach of the year honors as [Gary Andersen](#) earned WAC Coach of the Year accolades in 2012. Other Aggie coaches to earn coach of the year honors include Bruce Snyder (1978), Chuck Shelton (1991) and John L. Smith (1997), as they were all recognized by the Big West Conference.

Wells is also just the fourth individual to earn Mountain West Coach of the Year honors in his first season joining BYU's Gary Crowton (2001), Utah's Urban Meyer (2003) and Air Force's Troy Calhoun (2007).

Individually, [Tyler Larsen](#) becomes just the ninth Aggie in school history to be a three-time first-team all-conference selection joining Kent Ryan (1934-35-36), Murray Maughan (1938-39-40), Ralph Maughan (1942, 46-47), Guy McClure (1979-80-81), Dave Kuresa (1982-83-84), [Brent Passey](#) (1998-99-2000), [Emmett White](#) (1999-2000-01) and [Bobby Wagner](#) (2009-10-11).

Aggies who earned all-conference honors for the second time include Doughty, Fackrell, Lawson, Markosian, Schultz and Vigil, as Doughty, Fackrell and Schultz earned first-team all-WAC honors in 2012, while Lawson, Markosian and Vigil were all named to the WAC's second-team a year ago.

Utah State players earning all-conference honors for the first time include [B.J. Larsen](#), Pataiali'i, Alexander, DeMartino, Diaz, Natson and Suite.

Doughty, a 6-0, 234-pound senior linebacker from Draper, Utah (Juan Diego HS) ranks third in the Mountain West and tied for ninth in the nation in tackles (10.8 pg). On the season, Doughty leads the team with 140 tackles and four quarterback hurries and is third on the team with his 10.5 tackles for loss. He also had three pass breakups, two sacks, one interception, one forced fumble and one fumble recovery this year that he returned 86 yards for a touchdown, not to mention nine double-digit tackle outings.

[Tyler Larsen](#), a 6-4, 312-pound senior center from Salt Lake City, Utah (Jordan HS) graded out above 86 percent in every game this year and above 90 percent five times, while recording 46 knockdowns.

Lawson, a 5-10, 186-pound senior cornerback from Lauderdale, Fla. (Piper HS) ranks third in the Mountain West and tied for 19th in the nation in passes defended (1.31 pg), and tied for seventh in the MW and tied for 70th in the nation in interceptions (0.31 pg). Overall, he ranks sixth on the team in tackles (53) and leads the team with four interceptions and 13 pass breakups, to go along with 5.0 tackles for loss and one forced fumble.

Fackrell, a 6-5, 245-pound sophomore linebacker from Mesa, Ariz. (Mesa HS), ranks 33rd in the Mountain West in tackles (6.0 pg). On the season, Fackrell ranks first on the team with 5.0 sacks, tied for first with two

forced fumbles and second with his 12.0 tackles for loss, while ranking fourth on the team with his 78 tackles. He has also recorded three quarterback hurries, recovered one fumble, intercepted one pass and registered one pass breakup this year, not to mention two double-digit tackle outings.

[B.J. Larsen](#), a 6-5, 275-pound junior defensive end from Logan, Utah (Logan HS) ranks fourth on the team and first among defensive linemen with his 7.5 tackles for loss. He also ranks tied for third on the team with his 3.5 sacks to go along with three quarterback hurries.

Pataiali'i, a 6-3, 307-pound senior nose guard from West Valley City, Utah (Hunter HS/Snow College) ranks second among USU's defensive linemen with 39 tackles, to go along with 3.5 tackles for loss and one sack.

Vigil, a 6-2, 232-pound junior linebacker from Clearfield, Utah (Clearfield HS) ranks seventh in the Mountain West and tied for 46th in the nation in tackles (8.8 pg). On the season, Vigil ranks first on the team in tackles for loss (12.5), second in tackles (115), and tied for first with two forced fumbles and two fumble recoveries, to go along with 2.0 sacks, one interception and one quarterback hurry.

Alexander, a 6-2, 212-pound senior safety from St. Louis, Mo. (Eureka HS/Arizona Western College) is the top tackling safety in the Mountain West and ranks 31st overall in the conference in tackles (6.2 pg). Overall, Alexander ranks fourth on the team in tackles with 80, is tied for third on the team with 3.5 sacks, and fourth with 9.0 tackles for loss. He also ranks tied for first on the team with two forced fumbles and third with six pass breakups, to go along with one interception, one fumble recovery and one quarterback hurry.

DeMartino, a 5-11, 200-pound senior running back from San Diego, Calif. (Mt. Carmel HS/Grossmont College) ranks fourth in the Mountain West and 28th in the nation with his 12 rushing touchdowns, and sixth in the MW and 51st in the nation in rushing (82.8 ypg). On the season, DeMartino has rushed for 1,078 yards on 198 carries (5.4 ypc) and became just the 17th player in school history to rush for 1,000 yards in a single-season. He also had 12 receptions for 117 yards on the year with one touchdown.

Diaz, a 5-8, 182-pound junior placekicker from Redondo Beach, Calif. (Redondo Union HS) ranks fifth in the Mountain West and tied for 51st in the nation in field goals (1.15 pg), third in the MW in extra point percentage (.980), seventh in the MW and 73rd in the nation in field goal percentage (.714) and 10th in the MW and tied for 73rd in the nation in scoring (7.3 ppg). On the season, Diaz is 15-of-21 on field goals and both categories rank tied for seventh all-time at USU for a single-season. Diaz is also

50-of-51 on extra points this season, which ranks second all-time at USU in both categories, while his extra point percentage ranks ninth.

Markosian, a 6-2, 292-pound senior tackle from Salt Lake City, Utah (Juan Diego HS) graded out above 83 percent in every game but one this year, including four games of at least 90 percent. He also has a team-leading 71 knockdowns on the season.

Natson, a 5-7, 151-pound sophomore punt returner from Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (Boyd Anderson HS) ranks fourth in the Mountain West and 22nd in the nation in punt returns (11.3 ypr), which also ranks second all-time in school history for a career. On the season, Natson has returned 31 punts for 351 yards with two touchdowns on returns of 65 and 64 yards against New Mexico and Wyoming, respectively, which ranks tied for second nationally.

Schultz, a 6-4, 300-pound senior tackle from Connell, Wash. (Connell HS) graded out above 84 percent in every game but two and has been above 90 percent three times, while recording 43 knockdowns.

This season, Larsen, Schultz and Markosian anchored an offensive line that has helped Utah State rank fifth in the Mountain West and tied for 44th in the nation with an average of 32.6 points per game, seventh in the MW and 43rd in the nation in passing efficiency (138.1), eighth in the MW and 43rd in the nation in completion percentage (.619), eighth in the MW and 55th in the nation in rushing offense (178.8 ypg), 10th in the MW and 60th in the nation in total offense (420.9 ypg), and 10th in the MW and 53rd in the nation in passing offense (242.1 ypg).

Suite, a 6-3, 205-pound junior safety from Honolulu, Hawaii (Punahou HS) ranks tied for seventh in the Mountain West and tied for 70th in the nation in interceptions (0.31 pg), and fourth in the MW in tackles among safeties (5.1 pg). On the season, Suite ranks tied for first on the team with four interceptions, is fifth on the team with 66 tackles and fourth on the team with five pass breakups, to go along with one forced fumble, one fumble recovery and 1.0 tackles for loss.

Utah State (8-5, 7-1 MW) will conclude its 2013 season in the San Diego County Credit Union Poinsettia Bowl against No. 24 Northern Illinois (12-1, 8-0) on Thursday, Dec. 26 at 7:30 p.m. (MT). The game will be televised nationally on ESPN. USU is 1-0 all-time against the Huskies.

For Aggie football ticket information, fans can contact the USU Athletics Ticket Office over the phone by calling 1-888-USTATE-1 or 435-797-0305 during regular hours of operation. Fans can also buy their tickets in person at the USU Ticket Office inside the Dee Glen Smith Spectrum or online by clicking on the "Buy Tickets" tab at [www.UtahStateAggies.com](http://www.UtahStateAggies.com).

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