

Les Courtemanche

Assistant Coach, Throws

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Biography

Les Courtemanche joined the Cal Poly track & field coaching staff as a throws specialist in September 2016. From 2018-23, he also instructed Cal Poly's decathletes and heptathletes.

In his seventh year with the program in 2023, Courtemanche oversaw an incredible freshman campaign by San Luis Obispo native Rory Devaney, who shattered a 62-year-old school record in the men's hammer throw and placed third in the event at The Big West Championships. Devaney qualified for the NCAA West Preliminaries in the hammer and recorded the fifth-best discus mark in school history at the Mustang Invitational. He went on to medal in a pair of events at the 2023 USATF U20 Championships, placing second in the hammer and third in the discus.

In 2022, Courtemanche helped three athletes qualify for the NCAA West Preliminaries (Emily Hallett, Melissa Navarro and Elliott Payne), guided six to All-Big West honors (Isabella Rigby, Adela Fredeen, Nick Betchart, Dylan Bouzigues, Hallett and Navarro) and helped Navarro claim the conference title in the women's javelin in her first season at Cal Poly.

Courtemanche has overseen three conference champions and 15 All-Big West honorees during his time with the Mustangs.

Hallett added to her school records in the women's weight throw and the women's hammer throw in 2022 under the guidance of Courtemanche. Hallett tossed 200 feet, 11 inches in the hammer at the Pacific Invitational on April 14. Outside of Hallett, Courtemanche mentored seven more Mustangs to top 10 marks in school history in their respective events during the 2022 indoor and outdoor seasons — Anna Grexton, Noah Bultman, Devon Cetti, Payne, Bouzigues, Rigby and Navarro.

According to the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association, Cal Poly ranked inside the top 35 nationally in the men's shot put, hammer and discus, and women's discus in 2022 under the stewardship of Courtemanche.

Currently, 21 marks on the Mustangs all-time lists for the indoor and outdoor seasons are owned by athletes Courtemanche coached.

During his first four seasons with the Mustangs, Courtemanche mentored 12 student-athletes to 14 performances that at the time ranked inside the top 10 in school history in their respective events.

A memorable trophy-winning 2021 season — as Cal Poly won the Big West Conference team championship on the women's side (along with a close second-place men's finish) — saw Will Smith extend his career best to 179' 10" in the men's discus, the third-best mark in program history.

Following the BWC title, both Hallett and Smith advanced to the NCAA Championship prelims at Texas A&M, as did teammate Dane Clemensen in the javelin with his PR of 216 feet, 4 inches. In addition, helping to key the Mustangs to the team trophy, Julianna Ruotolo won the 2021 conference heptathlon championship by compiling 4,832 points.

Between 2018-22, Courtemanche coached four multi-event athletes during the outdoor season that achieved marks that cracked Cal Poly's top 10 all-time list, including Caice Lanovaz, who currently ranks No. 5 on the Mustangs' heptathlon chart with 5,123 points. During the 2019 indoor season, Courtemanche also helped Lanovaz grabbed the second most points in the pentathlon in school history (3,585).

Across indoor competition, Courtemanche has coached four Mustangs to top-five rankings in program history in their respective events.

In June 2019, Courtemanche helped Betchart, a true freshman, earn fourth place in the shot put at the USATF Junior Championships in Florida, taking an alternate spot for Team USA's U-20 roster at the Pan Am Games.

Courtemanche also worked with Cal Poly alumna Sharon Day-Monroe, helping the Team USA heptathlete record a lifetime-best javelin mark at the 2018 Jim Bush Championships — 173 feet, 2 inches — en route to finishing 11th at the 2018 U.S. javelin Championships.

Prior to coming to San Luis Obispo, Courtemanche spent the previous nine years at College of the Siskiyous, including the last three as Head Coach after being honored as the California Community College Athletics Association Assistant of the Year. While at COS, the Eagles produced 16 All-Americans, along with five state champions — including CCCAA javelin record-holders in Alex Henderson (with a mark of 226 feet, 5 inches) and Kelsey Shaw (170' 7"). From 2012-16, he helped seven student-athletes transfer into D-I programs, including Garrett Snow (who went on to win the Big 12 javelin title and earn All-American status at Oklahoma in 2015, with a PR of 241' 6") and Elijah Marta (a 2018 javelin All-American for Kentucky at 232' 4").

Beginning in 2007, Courtemanche concurrently served as the college's Assistant Director for Student Life, supervising student government and ambassadors, providing counseling, assisting in housing operations and managing outreach duties such as campus tours, high school visits and college fairs. He received the college's Adjunct Faculty of the Year Award in 2010.

Courtemanche graduated from Humboldt State with a Kinesiology degree (while minoring in Health Education) in 2003. He was a two-time All-Golden Valley Conference quarterback for the Siskiyou football team, earning a scholarship to continue his career at Western New Mexico University and going on to play professionally for the Graz Giants of Austria in the European Football League from 2004-06 (a stint including an All-EFL honorable mention at quarterback in 2005).

Courtemanche is also a member of the Human Performance Institute and belongs to the American Council on Exercise.
