

Larry Lee

Head Coach

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Biography

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Head Coach • 25th Season

Pepperdine '83 (Master's: Cal Poly '85)

A new \$10 million clubhouse. Record crowds. Ten 35-victory campaigns. Big West record holder for career wins, both overall and in conference games. Five NCAA regional bids. Twenty top-four finishes in 23 Big West seasons. A total of 44 Mustangs drafted in the first 10 rounds. Sixteen Major Leaguers.

Those are the top accomplishments so far as Larry Lee heads into his 25th season as head coach of the Cal Poly baseball program in the spring of 2027.

Said former Cal Poly Senior Associate Athletic Director for Development and Capital Projects Ashley Offermann, "Larry definitely helped with the fundraising and it was his vision that helped with the programming of the clubhouse," which opened in 2020.

"Larry also assisted with the other improvements throughout Baggett Stadium to ensure the improvements maximize impact and make it one of the finest facilities in the West," Offermann added, noting the videoboard, backstop netting, expanded seating and press box and a new ticket booth.

Lee has elevated the Mustang baseball program to a level of play that has reached the upper echelon of the NCAA's Division I West Region.

From 2012-19, Lee guided the Mustangs to 268 victories, the seventh-highest total among the 24 California schools with Division I baseball programs. Averaging 34 wins per season during those eight campaigns, the victory total is eighth among 46 schools in the NCAA's West Region. In addition, from 2012-14, Cal Poly averaged 41 wins a year with 123 victories, more than any other Division I team in California.

Lee begins his 25th season at the helm in 2027, having led Cal Poly to fifteen 30-win campaigns, a 752-576-2 mark (56.6 winning percentage) and 20 top-four Big West finishes, including the 2014, 2025 tournament championship and 2026 regular-season and tournament championships and three consecutive second-place endings from 2017-19. Aside from the 2020 pandemic-shortened campaign, the Mustangs have averaged 33 victories per season under Lee's guidance.

Lee's 752 career victories entering the 2027 season rank No. 36 among active head coaches in NCAA Division I and fifth in the West Region.

In addition to claiming two Big West regular-season titles and a pair of conference tournament crowns, Cal Poly has finished second seven times (2005, 2012, 2013, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022) along with third-place finishes in 2011 and 2024 with Lee at the helm. The Mustangs have earned 35 or more victories 10 times and

have earned a quintet of NCAA Division I playoff berths, reaching the Super Regionals for the first time in 2026.

From 2011-19, Lee guided the Mustangs to wins in 54 of 81 Big West series, a 66.7 winning percentage. The Mustangs won seven of eight conference series in both 2014 and 2017, eight of 10 in 2024 and 2025 and nine of 10 in 2022 and 2026.

An assistant coach on the 2017 USA Baseball College National Team which won each of its friendship series against Chinese Taipei, Cuba and Japan for the first time since 2002, Lee was manager of Team USA in 2023, which swept Chinese Taipei 5-0 and won two of five games against Japan. Eleven former Mustangs, seven coached by Lee, have been invited to try out for Team USA with six advancing to play in friendship series, including catcher Ryan Stafford in 2023.

Lee ranks No. 1 in the Big West in overall wins (752), surpassing Fresno State's Bob Bennett in 2021, and No. 1 in the Big West in conference victories (348) in 2019, moving ahead of former Mustang and Long Beach State head coach Dave Snow. He has won 1,212 games overall in 40 seasons as a head coach.

Since early in the 2017 season, Cal Poly has drawn crowds of 1,000 or more fans in 263 of its last 265 home games (not counting 12 games in the 2021 campaign when stadium capacity was reduced by public health officials due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

The Mustangs have produced the top five seasons for average home attendance during the last five campaigns, including a record 2,056 average for 26 home games, another mark of 8,727 for a three-game series (Hawai'i) and a single-game high of 3,017 for the series finale against Hawai'i, all in 2025. Second on the list of crowd averages for a season is 1,900 for 32 home games in 2022 while the 1,885 average for 28 home dates in 2026 is No. 3. That year included a midweek-record crowd of 2,738 for Stanford. Cal Poly also averaged 1,710 fans in 2023 and 1,685 folks in 2024, including a season-high 2,792 in the season finale against Long Beach State.

The 2014 and 2026 Big West Conference Coach of the Year arrived at Cal Poly in July 2002 after 16 highly successful seasons as head coach at nearby Cuesta College. Lee was inducted into the California Community College Baseball Hall of Fame in 2010.

The Mustangs earned their first NCAA Division I regional playoff berth in 2009, returned to the postseason in 2013 at UCLA, giving the Bruins their toughest test of the postseason as UCLA overcame a 4-0 deficit in the second round en route to the 2013 College World Series championship, qualified for the 2014 postseason, hosting the San Luis Obispo Regional and finishing 2-2, and also posting a 2-2 mark in the Eugene Regional in 2025.

In 2026, Cal Poly swept through the Los Angeles Regional hosted by UCLA at Jackie Robinson Stadium with a 3-0 mark, earning its first trip to a Super Regional, where the Mustangs lost twice to West Virginia in a best-of-three series at Morgantown, W.Va. Cal Poly finished the season 39-24, led by catcher Ryan Tayman and relief pitcher Nick Bonn, both earning All-American awards and Tayman also notching Big West Co-Field Player of the Year honors. Tayman, Bonn, shortstop Nate Castellon and third baseman Alejandro Garza earned first-team All-Big West honors while center fielder Casey Murray Jr. was named the conference's defensive player of the year.

The historic 2014 campaign saw Cal Poly shatter the school record with 47 wins, finishing 47-12. The Mustangs, ranked No. 1 for a week by Collegiate Baseball Newspaper after sweeping Cal State Fullerton in mid-April, claimed the Big West title with a 19-5 record, two games ahead of Long Beach State and four in front of UC Irvine. The Mustangs have posted 19 seasons at or above the .500 mark and fourteen 30-victory campaigns since 2000. The 2014 squad's 47 wins marked the second year in a row and fourth time in school history that Cal Poly won 40 or more games.

The Mustangs also won 43 games in 2025, including a 12-game winning streak on the road, posting a 23-7

record for second place in the Big West regular season and capturing the first Big West tournament in 27 years with a 4-1 mark. Among the second-most wins in school history, accomplished after a 1-5 start, was a 3-2 triumph at preseason No. 1-ranked Texas A&M.

Griffin Naess, Ryan Fenn, Zach Daudet and Garza all earned first-team All-Big West honors. Fenn and Garza also were named ABCA All-West Region while shortstop Nate Castellon earned Freshman All-American honors. Lee earned the College Baseball Foundation's Wayne Graham Award for Teaching Excellence from the College Baseball Foundation, presented annually to the coach, at any college level, who demonstrates the qualities of teaching, developing, and coaching college baseball players that prepare them not only on the field and in the classroom, but for life after their baseball careers.

Cal Poly earned three second-place Big West finishes from 2017-19. The 2019 squad took conference title aspirations into the final game of the regular season before falling to eventual champion UC Santa Barbara.

In 2020, prior to the COVID-19 shutdown, Cal Poly upset No. 1-ranked and defending national champion Vanderbilt in the MLB4 Tournament at Scottsdale, Ariz., and also defeated No. 5 Michigan. The 2021 team won seven straight and 11 of its last 12 contests to finish 31-25 and tied for fourth in the Big West with Brooks Lee earning five All-America honors and Drew Thorpe one.

Cal Poly won 13 straight games near the end of the 2022 season, finishing 37-21. Brooks Lee was named on five All-American teams and Thorpe all six before both were drafted -- Lee eighth overall by the Minnesota Twins and Thorpe in the second round (61st overall) by the New York Yankees, marking the first time in program history that Mustangs were drafted in both the first and second rounds in a single draft.

A year after finishing 14 games under the .500 mark, Cal Poly rebounded with a 35-22 record in 2024, winning 33 of its last 48 games after a 2-7 start. Center fielder Jake Steels, starting pitcher Jakob Wright and Garza all earned first-team All-Big West honors, Naess earned freshman All-American honors and Wright and Steels landed on the All-West Region second team, leading the Mustangs to the fourth-best turnaround in the nation from the 21-35 campaign of 2023.

Lee guided the Mustangs to a 38-23-1 mark in 2004, his second season at Cal Poly, to break the school record for wins in a season in the Division I era and the 2013 squad to 40 victories, one shy of what was the school's all-time record for wins in a season (41 in 1977 and 1992, both in Division II).

In 2005, the Mustangs won 36 games and finished second in the Big West with wins over Cal State Fullerton and Long Beach State. The 2006 squad won 11 of 17 three-game series while the 2007 Mustangs won 19 of their final 27 games en route to a 32-24 record.

Cal Poly has enjoyed great success against Big West teams during Lee's 23 years at the helm. The Mustangs are 29-18 over the last 15 years against Cal State Fullerton, 18-7 versus Long Beach State the last seven seasons and won three straight series against UC Irvine from 2022-24 and eight of the last 14.

In addition, the Mustangs have gone 39-31 in Big West games and have won 12 of 23 series against UC Santa Barbara, winning 11 straight games versus the Gauchos from 2016-19. Cal Poly is 49-21 against CSUN with Lee as head coach, 34-13 versus Cal State Bakersfield, 29-11 when playing Hawai'i, 49-15 in 21 series versus UC Davis (including a 29-4 mark inside Baggett Stadium) and 35-11 against UC Riverside (winning 14 of the 15 series).

In 24 seasons with the Mustangs, Lee has produced 64 first-team All-Big West players, 15 All-Americans and 12 freshman All-Americans. A total of 95 Cal Poly players coached by Lee have signed professional baseball contracts, including 93 in the last 21 years.

During Lee's tenure, 44 Mustangs have been drafted in the top 10 rounds, led by his son, Brooks. Outfielder Mitch Haniger was a first-round compensatory pick (38th overall) by the Milwaukee Brewers in 2012. Southpaw Garrett Olson was chosen in the first round (compensatory) in 2005 (48th overall) and right-handed

pitcher Jimmy Shull was picked twice (fourth round in 2005, eighth round in 2004).

Cal Poly had just nine draftees in the top 10 rounds prior to Lee's arrival. Sixteen of Lee's Cal Poly players have reached the Major Leagues, compared to nine Mustangs who played in the Majors from the 1930s through the early 2000s. Also during Lee's tenure, Cal Poly has produced a selection in the first 10 rounds in 21 of the last 23 seasons.

Brooks Lee, Haniger and Olson are first-round picks coached by Lee. Four more were selected in the second round — Thorpe, Spencer Howard, Matt Imhof and Grant Desme — while six were drafted in the third round and seven more in the fourth, including Jakob Wright in 2024.

Third-round selections include Brent Morel, Mark Mathias, Logan Schafer, Chase Johnson, Gary Daley and Evan Reed. Also drafted in the fourth round were Shull, Nick Torres, Alex McKenna, Erich Uelmen, Bobby Crocker and Adam Buschini. Ryan Stafford was a fifth-round pick in 2024.

The 16 Mustangs coached by Larry Lee who have played in the Major Leagues include Haniger, Olson, Howard, Morel, Mathias, Schafer, Reed, Uelmen, Bryan Woo, Bud Norris. Mike Miller, Justin Bruihl, Casey Fien, Andrew Alvarez with the Washington Nationals in 2025, and Thorpe and Brooks Lee, both of whom made their MLB debuts in 2024 with the Chicago White Sox and Minnesota Twins, respectively.

Southpaw Matt Imhof was a second-round pick of Philadelphia in 2014, right-hander Spencer Howard was a second-round selection by the Phillies in 2017, second baseman Mark Mathias was chosen by the Cleveland Indians in the third round of the 2015 draft and pitcher Erich Uelmen went in the fourth round in 2017, taken by the Chicago Cubs. In 2018, Alex McKenna was taken in the fourth round by the Houston Astros and Nick Meyer was selected in the sixth round by the New York Mets.

Right-hander Bobby Ay, a ninth-round pick of the Arizona Diamondbacks, was the lone Mustang drafted in 2019 while Taylor Dollard, another right-hander, was chosen by the Seattle Mariners in the fifth round following the 2020 campaign and the Mariners also chose Bryan Woo in the sixth round of the 2021 draft. Relief pitcher Jason Franks was selected by Atlanta in the eighth round in 2022. Top Mustang pick in 2026 was pitcher Carson Turnquist in the seventh round by Arizona.

Upgrading the schedule is another hallmark of Lee's tenure at Cal Poly. The Mustangs have not played a non-Division I team since hosting Westmont for a pair of games in 2004 and Cal Poly has faced numerous Power 5 programs such as UCLA, USC, Stanford, Cal, Utah and Oregon State from the Pac-12, Alabama, Arkansas, Vanderbilt, Missouri and Texas A&M from the SEC, Baylor, Kansas State, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas and Nebraska from the Big 12, Michigan, Minnesota, Penn State and Ohio State from the Big 10 and North Carolina and Notre Dame from the ACC.

Lee led Cuesta to the California Community College State Final Four on four occasions, all in the last 11 years of his 16-year tenure. The Cougars reached the state's Final Four in 1992, 1997, 2001 and 2002 and qualified for the Southern California Regionals each of the last six years, including a No. 1 seed in 1999 and No. 2 in 2002.

Lee's overall record at Cuesta was 460-241-3, including a state-leading 44 wins in 1997. His teams qualified for the regionals 11 times in his last 13 years and Lee was No. 15 on the state's community college baseball coaches' list for career wins prior to being hired at Cal Poly. He was inducted into the California Community College Baseball Hall of Fame in 2010.

Under Lee's leadership, Cuesta claimed nine Western State Conference titles, including six in a row (1997-2002), and averaged 38 wins during that six-year stretch. His teams produced a 267-119 record in conference games and Lee earned conference coach of the year honors eight times.

During Lee's tenure at Cuesta from 1987-2002, he produced 26 all-state players, three Southern California Players of the Year and numerous professionals. Thirteen of his 16 teams finished above the .500 mark

overall, including the last seven.

Lee led his 2002 team to a school-record 24 consecutive wins en route to a 43-9 mark and a third-place state finish.

In 11 postseason appearances, Lee's teams at Cuesta compiled a 34-28 win-loss record.

A 1979 San Luis Obispo High School graduate, Lee was a standout baseball and football player for the Tigers before going on to play baseball at Santa Barbara City College (1980), Orange Coast College (1981) and Pepperdine University (1982-83).

Inducted into the San Luis Obispo High School Athletics Hall of Fame, Lee was a first-team All-South Coast Conference selection at Orange Coast College as well as a second-team All-Southern California pick.

At Pepperdine, Lee was a career .304 hitter and, as a junior, earned first-team All-Southern California Baseball Association and second-team All-District 8 honors as the Waves posted a 46-21-1 record and earned a berth in the NCAA West Regional at Fresno State.

Lee hit 13 sacrifice flies for Pepperdine in 1982, at the time an NCAA record. He is currently tied for No. 2 with two other players for sacrifice flies in a season.

He enjoyed a brief professional baseball career, playing one year for the Utica Bluesox (1983) and hitting .316 for the New York-Penn League team. He ended his career in the Seattle Mariners' organization.

Before becoming head coach at Cuesta College in 1987, Lee served as an assistant coach for the Cougars for two seasons (1984-85) and at Cal Poly for one year (1986).

Lee earned his bachelor's degree in physical education/kinesiology from Pepperdine in 1983 and a master's degree in physical education from Cal Poly in 1985 as well as an adaptive physical education credential from Cal Poly in 1988.

Lee and his wife, Liz, reside in San Luis Obispo and have two children, Jenna and Brooks.
