

2018 Athletes of the Year

Youth Female Athlete of the Year

Name: Punipua Skipp

Town/City: Carson

Age: 16

Sport: Rugby

Awards:

Punipua is a member of the highly successful South Bay Lady Spartans Rugby club. In 2017, she helped her team win the SCYR championships as well as gold at the California State Games. This year Punipua shows no signs of slowing down. Punipua, along with her team, has been named champion at the Las Vegas Invitational, Fullerton Tournament, and placed 3rd at the Nationals Club Championships in Tennessee and the North American Invitational in Utah. She is a fierce competitor and is always encouraging her teammates. Off the field, she participates in her church and helps to feed the homeless, visits the elderly, cleans the beaches, and makes blankets for cancer patients. Punipua is a great representative of the Games throughout all aspects of her life.

Youth Male Athlete of the Year

Name: Zachary Hastings

Town/City: Imperial Beach

Age: 16

Sport: Water Polo

Awards:

Zachary is the captain of his South Coast Water Polo club team along with being captain of his high school team. He has been participating in Water Polo for 4 years and has competed in the California State Games for the past 3 years. During these past Summer Games, he played on both his 16U South Coast team while also playing up on the 18U team. Both teams were honored to earn the gold medal for that division. Outside of the pool, Zach works hard to maintain a 4.0 GPA. He is a great leader and is very respectful to his coaches, teammates, and other players. Zach represents the spirit of the Games because he is fair, shows passion for the sport, and helps others along the way.

Sport Athletes of the Year

Basketball: **Queen Majesty Ruffin** (Genesis Hoops Girls 14) & **Chazz** (Rampage Blue Boys 16-17)

Diving: **Grace Gooding** (Dive San Diego)

Jr. Guards: **Camryn Delaney** (Carlsbad/Torrey Pines Jr Lifeguards)

Judo: **Ajalynn Jiminez** (Riverside Judo Club) & **Tyler Higashi** (San Gabriel Judo)

Rugby: **Skylar Gavin** (VC Avenger B18)

Skateboarding: **David Van-Mater** (San Diego, CA)

Synchronized Swimming: **Emily Louise West** (Westside Aquatics, Los Angeles)

Table Tennis: **Samuel Li**

Track & Field: **Aaliyah McCormick** (USA Rockets Youth Track Club) & **Namir Hemphill** (Cal Rising Stars)

Water Polo: **Ivana Lisabeth Reyes** (Otay Ranch High School)

Weightlifting: **Cesar Flores** (Murrieta, CA) & **Paulina Mejia Hernandez** (Team Basa Weightlifting)