

Sports

# Punahou's Stanley earns Player of the Year honors

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"He can pass, he can set, he can block, he can dig, he can serve, he can put pressure on the other team in a lot of different ways." Rick Tune, Punahou boys volleyball coach, on All-State Player of the Year Wil Stanley

Wil Stanley saw a glimpse of his current role last year.

His work in the offseason solidified everything he needed to be Punahou's go-to hitter this season.

Stanley transitioned from setting and hitting as a junior to playing at outside hitter as a senior. As a junior, Stanley watched teammate Micah Ma'a, who can set and hit, swing away to lead the Buffanblu. Stanley moved into that role this year, guiding the Buffanblu to a fifth straight state championship and being named the Star-Advertiser's boys volleyball Player of the Year.

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## VOLLEYBALL FAB 15

Rank	Player, School	Ht.	Cl.	Pos.
1.	Wil Stanley, Punahou	6-4	Sr.	OH
2.	Austin Matautia, Moanalua	6-4	Sr.	OH
3.	Ryan Wilcox, Punahou	6-2	So.	OH
4.	Kelsey Yogi, Punahou	5-7	Sr.	L
5.	Isaiah Laeha, Kamehameha-Hawaii	5-10	Sr.	OH
6.	Caleb Fisher, Hawaii Baptist	6-4	Sr.	OH
7.	Isaac Liva, Mililani	6-5	Sr.	OPP
8.	Addison Enriques, KS-Hawaii	5-11	Jr.	OH/S/L
9.	'Akahi Troske, Punahou	6-6	Sr.	MB
10.	Avery Enriques, KS-Hawaii	5-11	Jr.	S/L
11.	Don Thompson, King Kekaulike	6-4	Sr.	MB
12.	Todd Gruebner, Punahou	6-2	Sr.	S
13.	Brett Miller, Hawaii Baptist	6-2	Sr.	OPP
14.	Naone Passi, Kamehameha	6-3	Sr.	OH
15.	Kamalu Ka'a'a Mililani	6-4	Sr.	OH

Player of the Year: Wil Stanley, Punahou

Coach of the Year: Alan Cabanting, Moanalua

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"Seeing him (Ma'a) do that really gave me the confidence to do it (this) year," said Stanley, a 6-foot-4 senior outside hitter who's headed to BYU next season. "I kind of knew going into the season I'd have to adapt to that new role as the go-to hitter. I worked a lot in the offseason, in the weight room and with my teammates, Kelsey (Yogi) and all of them. They gave me the confidence to go in that spot and know that no matter what I was doing in that spot, the rest of my team trusted me to perform."

On a team with an abundance of talent and depth, Stanley never felt he had to shoulder the load for Punahou. But during the most critical moments, Stanley put the ball away. He had 22 kills and hit .562 in the state championship final against Moanalua.

"That was definitely a high point of our year, just knowing we can go one through

sixteen and put anybody in and they can do their job and do it well, and just having the confidence to set anybody on the team,” Stanley said. “It just gave everyone else confidence to play well and we want everyone else to do well. If we play well, then they’ll play well.”

Punahou coach Rick Tune described Stanley as a multidimensional player who could play every position on the court.

“He can pass, he can set, he can block, he can dig, he can serve, he can put pressure on the other team in a lot of different ways,” Tune said. “That’s a credit to his handwork and perseverance. It’s a credit to his family lineage that I think he’s more than lived up to at his point. We’re very lucky and blessed to work with a kid like that.”

Stanley’s father, Jon, and brother, Clay, were Olympic volleyball players.

Depth and team chemistry were key components of Punahou’s championship season. Most of the nine seniors went through the program together and 14 of the 16 players were returnees. Joining Stanley on the All-State team are senior libero Kelsey Yogi, senior middle blocker ‘Akahi Troske, senior setter Todd Gruebner and sophomore outside hitter Ryan Wilcox.

Tune said the chemistry was evident in how players supported one another. Starters from last season who lost their roles this year cheered the hardest from the bench and helped their teammates grow.

“That personifies the kind of team we want,” Tune said. “That’s the true definition of team, when you’re not focused on ‘me’ and ‘I,’ you’re focused on each other and the group’s success no matter if that comes at the expense of your success. That’s what this group really embodied for me this year and that’s what makes this senior class very special.”

Moanalua senior outside hitter Austin Matautia also received votes for Player of the Year. Matautia carried Na Menehune to their sixth straight OIA championship. Coach Alan Cabanting was voted Coach of the Year.

Kamehameha-Hawaii placed three players on the All-State team, led by outside hitter Isaiah Laeha. Twins Addison and Avery Enriques were recognized for their versatility at hitting, setting and playing libero.

Hawaii Baptist, which won its sixth consecutive Division II state title, was led by outside hitter Caleb Fisher and opposite Brett Miller. Mililani had two honorees in opposite Isaac Liva, an HBA transfer, and Kamalu Ka’a’a, who transferred from Moanalua. The two helped the Trojans reach the OIA championship match.

Don Thompson helped King Kekaulike win the MIL and reach the state tournament. Kamehameha outside hitter Naone Passi helped the Warriors reach the state

tournament.