

Casey Benford, Hamline

Mesa, Ariz. / Dobson
Week of: 2011-05-09



Hamline's **Casey Benford** (Mesa, Ariz./Dobson) worked a considerable amount of overtime for the Pipers Wednesday in a nonconference game against UW-Stout. When the sophomore pitcher walked off the victor he had pitched long enough to earn three decisions and nearly two complete games, earning a 12-inning shutout victory in a thrilling 1-0 Hamline win. As if that wasn't enough, Benford came on relief on just two days rest to help Hamline lock up a MIAC win against Bethel and clinch a top-three seed in the 2011 MIAC Baseball Playoffs. For his effort, Benford has been named the MIAC Baseball Pitcher-of-the-Week.

Benford's extra-long outing against Stout was the most remarkable performance of his young career, as he allowed no runs on eight hits and one walk with three strikeouts. He faced 42 batters over the course of the 12 innings, and allowed just one extra-base hit, a harmless double. He forced Stout hitters into 19 ground outs and nine fly outs and kept them off the scoreboard until his team finally provided the winning run with two outs in the bottom of the 12th. Saturday, Benford also entered Hamline's 15-7 win over Bethel and allowed two runs over two innings, allowing three hits and no walks with one strikeout. For the week, he was 1-0 with a 1.29 ERA, and this season, Benford is 6-3 with a 3.25 ERA.

The Pipers wrapped up the regular season with a 25-12 overall record and a 15-5 conference mark. Hamline will enter the MIAC Playoffs as either the No. 2 or No. 3 seed, depending on the outcome of Macalester's make-up series with Concordia Tuesday. Either way, they'll open the tournament against the Scots in Game 2 Friday at 7 p.m. The tournament will be played at Veterans Field in Minnetonka and will run Friday through Sunday.

Bryce Gapinski, St. Thomas

Foley, Minn. / Foley
Week of: 2011-05-02



The University of St. Thomas received great pitching last week to go 4-1 overall and record a pair of MIAC sweeps. In those four conference wins, UST allowed just three runs with two shutouts, but leading the way was starter **Bryce Gapinski** (Foley, Minn.). In an 8-0 win over Concordia the junior was brilliant, recording a two-hit shutout with two strikeouts and no walks. For his performance, Gapinski has been named the MIAC Baseball Co-Pitcher-of-the-Week.

In Gapinski's gem, he faced just 22 batters – one more than the minimum – and he retired the last 14 hitters he faced, including 20 of the last 21. With just the one appearance, he finished 1-0 for the week with a perfect 0.00 ERA and opposing hitters batted just .099 against him. The win helped Gapinski improve to 16-4 overall and 9-1 in the MIAC in his career. The shutout marked just the second time the Cobbers were blanked by a MIAC opponent in a 53-game span. This season, Gapinski is 4-1 with a 3.44 ERA in seven starts.

The four MIAC wins helped the Tommies improve to 19-14 overall and 12-4 in the MIAC – tied for second place – with one week to go in the regular season. UST has won 11 of its last 12 and hopes to stay hot with two huge MIAC doubleheaders on the schedule this week. The Tommies travel to first-place Macalester Wednesday for a 2:30 p.m. twin bill, and it hosts Saint Mary's Saturday for a 1 p.m. doubleheader to close out its MIAC schedule for 2011.

Cody Sulkaski, Gustavus



Gustavus senior **Cody Sulkaski** (Blue Earth, Minn.) picked a great time to turn in the finest pitching performance. Locked in a pitcher's dual, Sulkaski hardly let a Carleton College hitter reach base, let alone scoring position as he threw a two-hit shutout to help the Gusties earn a 1-0 win over the Knights. The senior starter recorded four strikeouts with no walks and faced just three more batters than the minimum to help his squad split the MIAC doubleheader. For his performance, Sulkaski has been named the MIAC Baseball Co-Pitcher-of-the-Week.

Only three times all afternoon did a Carleton hitter reach first base, on a hit batter in the first inning, and a pair of harmless singles in the second and the sixth. Only one of those two runners went beyond first base as Sulkaski faced just 24 hitters, and the Knights didn't advance anyone to third in the 1-0 loss. With just the one appearance, Sulkaski finished the week 1-0 with a 0.00 ERA and batter had an .090 average against him. This season, the senior is 2-3 in seven appearances with a 4.45 ERA and four complete games.

The split helped Gustavus stay near .500 in the MIAC with a 6-8 conference record and a 10-17 overall mark. The Gusties have a busy final week of conference play with a Monday doubleheader against Saint John's and twin bills against Hamline Wednesday and Concordia Saturday. Gustavus wraps up the regular season Sunday with a nonconference contest against Buena Vista.

Hayden Zimmerman, Saint John's



The Saint John's baseball team has been on a roll lately, but the unquestioned highlight came last week in a 3-0 win over MIAC rival Saint Mary's. Johnnies' starter **Hayden Zimmerman** (New Richmond, Wis.) dazzled on the mound with a complete-game no-hitter – the first for a Saint John's pitcher since April 11, 1998. The junior threw all seven innings with four strikeouts, no walks and no hits, and he showed incredible poise, pitching around five SJU errors and thwarting any Cardinal scoring chances. For his no-hit performance, Zimmerman has been named the MIAC Pitcher-of-the-Week.

Zimmerman's unforgettable performance signaled a return to form for the All-Region pick, who had struggled thus far – especially on the road. However, he was brilliant throughout the game, and especially when his team needed it the most. In the top of the sixth, back-to-back errors put SMU runners on second and third with no outs, but Zimmerman rose to the challenge to get a strikeout and induce two harmless grounders to first to squash the threat. Another error put another Cardinal in scoring position in the seventh, but Zimmerman completed the no-hitter with a fly ball to left for the final out. The no hitter was just the fourth in Johnnies' head coach Jerry Haugen's 34-year tenure, and it gave Zimmerman his first win of the season.

The no-hitter served as a spark for the SJU pitching staff, as the Johnnies went 4-0 in MIAC play on the week with a 1.16 ERA. Saint John's is now 15-8 overall and 9-3 in conference play with six straight wins, and victories in eight of its last nine games. This week, the Johnnies host Hamline Tuesday and travel to Gustavus Saturday as they look to keep their streak alive in a pair of crucial MIAC doubleheaders.

Brett Bugielski, Hamline

River Falls, Wis. / River Falls

Week of: 2011-04-18



Last week, the Hamline University baseball team knew who to call on when it needed big outs, and junior pitcher **Brett Bugielski** (River Falls, Wis.) answered the call each time. In four MIAC appearances, Bugielski gave the Pipers near-perfect work out of the bullpen, picking up a win and three saves without allowing an earned run in 7.1 innings. His late-inning brilliance helped Hamline go 5-1 in six MIAC games last week. As a result, Bugielski has been named the MIAC Baseball Pitcher-of-the-Week.

Bugielski opened his big week with four scoreless innings of relief to earn the win against Concordia. He allowed just three singles and no earned runs as Hamline hung on for the victory. He was just as good a day later against St. Thomas, as he picked up two saves in 2.1 hitless innings of work against the Tommies, and he added a save on Sunday in an extra-innings win over St. Olaf to secure a split for the Pipers. In all, Bugielski allowed just three hits (all singles) in 7.1 innings pitched with no runs, no walks and six strikeouts. This season, the junior is 2-1 with three saves in nine appearances with a 2.79 ERA and a 7-to-1 strikeout-to-walk ratio.

In all, Hamline went 6-1 last week to improve to 7-3 in the MIAC and 11-10 overall. The Pipers will try to continue their hot streak this week with a pair of doubleheaders on the schedule. Hamline hosts Luther for a nonconference twin bill Wednesday at 2:30 p.m., and Saturday it heads to Winona, Minn., to take on Saint Mary's in a MIAC doubleheader at 1 p.m.

Kris Edwards, St. Thomas

Edina, Minn. / Edina

Week of: 2011-04-11



After an opening-season split, the St. Thomas baseball team pulled itself back within a game of first place in the MIAC by taking three of four conference contests last week, and pitcher **Kris Edwards** (Edina, Minn.) had a big hand in two of the three victories without allowing a single run in either appearance. In addition to his complete-game, two-hit shutout of Saint John's, the senior added a save to his stat line with some big-time pressure pitching out of the Tommies bullpen in an eventual 7-3 win over Bethel. As a result, Edwards has been named the MIAC Pitcher-of-the-Week.

Edwards was at his best Thursday in Collegeville against Saint John's. The senior allowed just the two hits with seven strikeouts and no walks in a 5-0 shutout win. He was particularly good during one stretch when he set down 11 in a row before the Johnnies loaded the bases on a hit batter, a single and an error in the fifth, but Edwards induced an inning-ending grounder to second, and retired the final seven batters to lock down the shutout. Just two days later, he was called in to bail UST out as it clung to a 6-3, sixth-inning lead as Bethel threatened with two on and no outs, but Edwards allowed just one harmless single while recording the final six outs to earn the save. This season, Edwards is 1-0 with two saves and a perfect 0.00 ERA in three MIAC appearances. His 30 strikeouts rank third in the league, and he has a 10-to-1 strikeout-to-walk ratio (30-to-3).

The Tommies will likely need another big week out of Edwards as St. Thomas faces a busy week ahead. UST will travel across town to face Hamline in a MIAC twin bill Tuesday at 2:30 p.m., and it will take on the University of Minnesota Wednesday at Siebert Field at 3:05 p.m. The Tommies also host a home doubleheader Saturday when Gustavus comes to town for a 1 p.m. MIAC twin bill.

Ben Hughes, St. Olaf

Minnetonka, Minn. / Blake
Week of: 2011-04-04



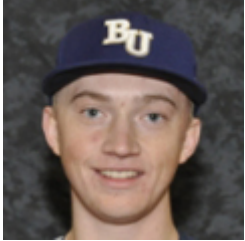
Starting pitcher **Ben Hughes** (Minnetonka, Minn./Blake) has been one of the reasons the St. Olaf baseball team is off to an amazing start to the 2011 season, and it appears he could be getting better as the Oles enter conference play. Hughes threw a complete-game, three-hit shutout Saturday to help lead St. Olaf to a two-game sweep at Saint Mary's to open MIAC play. Hughes was dominant against the Cardinals with 13 strikeouts against just one walk as he remained unbeaten this season. For his performance, Hughes has been named the MIAC Baseball Pitcher-of-the-Week.

Hughes was extremely good from the first pitch, as he retired the first 11 batters he faced in order. His bid for a perfect game was broken up by a harmless single with two outs in the fourth. Hughes faced just three batters in four of the seven innings and completed the shutout with a strikeout to strand SMU runners on second and third. This season, Hughes is 3-0 in four starts with a 3.46 ERA. In 26 innings he's allowed just 20 hits and four walks while striking out 37, which currently leads all MIAC pitchers. In fact, the next-highest strikeout total in the league trails Hughes by 15. Opponents are hitting just .208 off this junior in 2011.

As a team, the Oles have been the MIAC's top early-season story. After last weekend's sweep, St. Olaf sits at 14-3 overall and 2-0 in MIAC play, and are ranked No. 11 in Division III by the ABCA and No. 18 by D3Baseball.com. St. Olaf is scheduled to play its second MIAC series of the season Wednesday at Gustavus before hosting Saint John's for its MIAC home opener Saturday in Northfield at 1 p.m.

Matt Rowley, Bethel

Minnetonka, Minn. / Hopkins
Week of: 2011-03-28



During the early part of the 2011 season, Bethel pitcher **Matt Rowley** (Minnetonka, Minn./Hopkins) has played the role of both dominant starter and power closer to perfection over his first two appearances on the mound this year. The sophomore hurler is 1-0 with one save and a perfect 0.00 ERA to date for the Royals through their first nine games, including a complete-game shutout, and 17 strikeouts in nine innings. For his performance, Rowley has been named the inaugural MIAC Pitcher-of-the-Week of the 2011 season.

Rowley was at his absolute best in his lone start thus far in 2011. He threw a complete-game (seven innings), three-hit shutout March 17 against Fredonia in Fort Myers, Fla. Rowley overpowered the Fredonia hitters with 12 strikeouts to go with just one walk in the win. No runner reached third against Rowley in the shutout, and Fredonia never had more than one man on base at any point. He also earned a two-inning save March 13 against St. Lawrence when he struck out five and allowed just a single hit over a pair of shutout innings. Opponents are hitting just .125 off the sophomore.

Bethel has enjoyed some success throughout the early part of 2011 with a 7-5 record and numerous big wins on its resume' over its spring trip to Fort Myers. The Royals are scheduled to open MIAC play on April 2 with a home doubleheader against Saint John's at 1 p.m., but schedules are subject to change pending weather conditions.

Matt Butorac, Saint John's

Maple Grove, Minn. / Maple Grove

Week of: 2011-05-09



The Saint John's baseball team locked up the fourth and final spot in the MIAC playoff field last week thanks to a 3-3 record against a trio of conference opponents. Leading the charge for the Johnnies was senior **Matt Butorac** (Maple Grove, Minn.). The shortstop hit .474 with 11 RBI and a pair of runs scored to fuel the SJU offense and extended his hitting streak to 10 games and his RBI streak to eight games. For his performance, Butorac has been named the MIAC Baseball Player-of-the-Week.

The Johnnies split all three of their doubleheaders last week against Gustavus, Concordia and Macalester, with big performances from Butorac all week, especially in the clutch. He was 3-for-6 with three RBI against the Gusties, 3-for-8 with three RBI and two runs scored at Concordia, and 3-for-5 with five RBI in a home split against Macalester in a potential playoff preview. IN all, he was 7-for-9 (.778) with runners in scoring position and 8-for-11 (.727) with men on base. Butorac ended conference play as the Saint John's leader in batting average (.393), hits (24), doubles (eight), extra-base hits (10), RBI (22) and slugging percentage (.607).

The Johnnies closed the regular season with a 19-12 overall record and a 13-7 mark in conference play to finish fourth in the standings. SJU will open the 2011 MIAC Baseball Playoffs Friday as the No. 4 seed, and will face No. 1 St. Thomas in Game 1 at 3:30 p.m. The tournament will be played at Veterans Field in Minnetonka and will run Friday through Sunday.

Tony Rogers, Hamline

Rogers, Minn. / Elk River

Week of: 2011-05-02



The Hamline baseball team had a huge week in the MIAC, going 5-1 in three conference doubleheaders to move up the conference standings. The Pipers' offensive catalyst all week was senior **Tony Rogers** (Rogers, Minn./Elk River), who hit .611 with nine runs and seven RBI to power Hamline to its five crucial victories, which moved it into a second-place tie. Rogers accounted for 16 of Hamline's 36 runs last week and, for his prowess at the plate, has been named the MIAC Baseball Co-Player-of-the-Week.

Rogers opened the week with a huge series in a sweep (5-0, 6-2) of Saint Mary's last Monday. He hit for the cycle and then some over the two wins with two singles, a double, a triple and a home run with three runs, three RBI and two walks over the course of the two games. He added three more walks and three runs in Thursday's split with Saint John's (2-5, 9-3), and finished off his huge week with two doubles, three runs and four RBI in a sweep of Augsburg over the weekend (9-3, 5-2). Rogers was also perfect with the glove in the Hamline outfield in 11 chances and stole three bases.

The Pipers (19-11, 12-4) hope their star outfielder stays on his hot streak with an important final week of the regular season looming. Hamline has nonconference contests with Northwestern and UW-Stout Monday and Tuesday before hosting Gustavus Wednesday for a key MIAC doubleheader, and the Pipers close the regular season Saturday with a twin bill at Bethel. Hamline has won 14 of its last 16, and can clinch a spot in the MIAC playoffs this week.

Garrett Salzman, Macalester

Glendale, Calif. / St. Francis
Week of: 2011-05-02



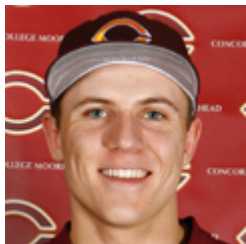
Macalester has been the MIAC's hottest baseball team, and over its most recent conference wins, **Garret Salzman** (Glendale, Calif./St. Francis) has been the Scots' hottest hitter. Salzman led Macalester to four more MIAC wins last week with sweeps of Bethel and Saint Mary's to help the Scots inch closer to becoming the first team to clinch a playoff spot. In the process, the junior hit .750 with three runs and six RBI and no errors in 18 chances in the field. For his powerful performance, Salzman has been named the MIAC Baseball Co-Player-of-the-Week.

Salzman collected nine hits in 12 at-bats last week in the sweeps of Bethel (8-3, 6-1) and Saint Mary's (7-3, 5-3). He finished the Bethel series 5-for-7 with his biggest hit of the week, a fourth-inning grand slam to extend the Scots lead to 6-0 in the second game. He also went 4-for-5 against Saint Mary's to improve his season stats to a .418 batting average with 17 runs, 18 RBI, eight doubles and two home runs. His .452 average in MIAC play leads all conference hitters and has had six three-hit games in 2011.

The Scots (21-9, 13-1) have been the surprise of the conference all season, and have been red-hot lately, with 11-straight wins in the conference; 10-straight wins overall and 14 wins in their last 15 games. Macalester will try to close in on a conference championship this week after Tuesday's nonconference contest with Northwestern. It won't be easy, though, as the Scots will face St. Thomas Wednesday, Saint John's Saturday and Concordia Sunday to close out the regular season.

Michael Olson, Concordia

Monticello, Minn. / Monticello
Week of: 2011-04-25



The Concordia baseball team had a big week, winning three of four MIAC games prevailing by either two runs or less in each win. Outfielder **Michael Olson** (Monticello, Minn.) was a big reason for the Cobbers' success last week, as the sophomore hit .538 and scored the eventual winning run in two of the three victories for Bucky Burgau's squad. Olson added two runs, two RBI, two doubles and a stolen base to his big week. For his performance, Olson has been named the MIAC Baseball Player-of-the-Week.

Olson was especially proficient in a Thursday sweep of Carleton. In the first game, he was a perfect 3-for-3 with a run, a double, a stolen base and an RBI. He singled, stole second and scored the eventual winning run in the first inning of the 3-1 victory, and he added the insurance run with an RBI double later in the game. He knocked in the tying run and scored the go-ahead run in the Cobbers' 4-2 win in the second game as part of a 2-for-3 performance with a run, an RBI and a double. He was also 2-for-7 in a split with St. Olaf Saturday, which featured a thrilling come-from behind win by Concordia to score a 3-2 win in the second game. This season, Olson is hitting .328 with 17 runs, 16 RBI, four doubles and two home runs. He's 6-of-7 on stolen base attempts this year, and has a .950 fielding percentage in the outfield.

The Cobbers used last week's 3-1 performance to improve to 11-6 overall and 6-4 in conference play. They'll try to move further above .500 with a pair of big MIAC twin bills on the schedule this week. Monday's doubleheader with Macalester has been postponed, but Concordia plans to host St. Thomas Tuesday in Moorhead, and Saturday it travels to Bethel for another conference doubleheader.

Charles Bruchu, St. Thomas

Lake Elmo, Minn. / Hill-Murray

Week of: 2011-04-18



The University of St. Thomas baseball team scored three big wins last week – including a surprising upset of the state’s flagship Division I program. Leading the way for the Tommies offensively was junior **Charles Bruchu** (Lake Elmo, Minn./Hill-Murray). The UST second baseman swung a hot bat all week, hitting .563 (9-for-16) with at least one hit in four of the Tommies’ five games, and he reached base in all five. He scored three runs, drove in three more and had two doubles with a .688 slugging percentage and he had just two errors in 20 chances in the field. For his performance, Bruchu has been named the MIAC Baseball Player-of-the-Week.

Bruchu was at his best in the Tommies’ 8-3 win over the University of Minnesota. The junior went 4-for-5 against the Gophers with two doubles and a run scored to lead UST to the upset of the defending Big Ten champs. Bruchu was also 1-for-3 in Sunday’s sweep of Gustavus, and he had a three-hit, three-RBI game in an 8-7 loss to Hamline earlier in the week. This season, Bruchu among the MIAC leaders in several offensive categories, including seventh in hitting (.414), first in hits (36) and total bases (51) and tied for second in doubles (10). He also has 22 runs, 20 RBI and has reached base in 21 of UST’s last 22 games.

Bruchu and the Tommies look to build on the momentum of their three-game winning streak with four home games on the schedule this week. Thus far, UST is a perfect 4-0 at home. The Tommies will host Bethany Lutheran Monday afternoon at 3 p.m. in a nonconference twin bill, and Augsburg comes to UST’s campus Wednesday for a 2:30 p.m. MIAC doubleheader. UST is close to getting back to .500 overall with an 11-13 record, and the Tommies are 6-4 in MIAC play.

Mitch Glasser, Macalester

Chicago, Ill. / The Latin School

Week of: 2011-04-11



The Macalester baseball team went 6-2 last week, including 3-1 in a pair of MIAC doubleheaders, and the Scot most responsible for his team’s success was junior **Mitch Glasser** (Chicago, Ill./The Latin School). The Macalester second baseman had an outstanding week, hitting .567 overall and .563 in the four MIAC contests with 17 hits, 11 runs, eight RBI, three doubles and two home runs while also helping to turn nine double plays in the field as the Scots rose to second place in the conference standings. For his performance, Glasser has been named the MIAC Baseball Player-of-the-Week.

In conference play, Glasser added an .813 slugging percentage and a .632 on-base percentage to his impressive numbers over the four crucial games, as Macalester swept Augsburg and split with Hamline last week. In the field last week Glasser made just one error with 15 putouts and 21 assists, and he was also a perfect 2-for-2 stealing bases over the eight games, which included a four-game set with the University of Wisconsin-Superior that Macalester took 3-1. Glasser’s huge week was part of an outstanding start to the 2011 season, as the junior ranks fifth in the MIAC in hitting (.429), second in hits (30) and first in total bases (45) to go along with 16 runs, 16 RBI, five doubles, two triples and two home runs with a .960 fielding percentage.

With last week’s success, Glasser and the Scots now sit above .500 at 11-9 overall and 3-1 in the MIAC, behind only 5-1 St. Olaf. They’ll get their chance to catch the Oles Tuesday, as Macalester hosts St. Olaf for a 2:30 p.m. MIAC doubleheader. The Scots will face two more MIAC opponents over the weekend with a Saturday twin bill in Moorhead at Concordia, and they’ll return home to host Hamline on Sunday.

Sam Maus, St. Olaf



The St. Olaf baseball team is off to a great start in 2011, and it's no coincidence that the Oles' success has coincided with the performance of freshman shortstop **Sam Maus** (Northfield, Minn.) as they started conference play over the weekend. The first-year leadoff hitter continued to pace the St. Olaf offensive attack in a MIAC sweep of Saint Mary's. Maus hit .667 with two runs, two doubles and three RBI as the Oles opened MIAC play with a pair of wins. For his performance, Maus has been named the MIAC Baseball Player-of-the-Week.

In St. Olaf's 7-0 opening win, Maus was 1-for-2 with a walk and an RBI sacrifice fly. He was even better in a 10-1 win in game two, going 3-for-4 with two doubles, two runs, two RBI and another sac fly, and he handled all six of his fielding chances without an error over the two games. This season, Maus has adjusted remarkably fast to the college game. His .411 batting average ranks sixth in the MIAC, and he's first in hits (23), tied for first in doubles (seven), second in runs (17) and tied for second in total bases (32) to go along with 13 RBI and a .901 fielding percentage.

As a team, the Oles have been the MIAC's top early-season story. After last weekend's sweep, St. Olaf sits at 14-3 overall and 2-0 in MIAC play, and are ranked No. 11 in Division III by the ABCA and No. 18 by D3Baseball.com. St. Olaf is scheduled to play its second MIAC series of the season Wednesday at Gustavus before hosting Saint John's for its MIAC home opener Saturday in Northfield at 1 p.m.

Drew Cremisino, St. Thomas



Though it's still extremely early in the 2011 MIAC baseball season, St. Thomas designated hitter **Drew Cremisino** (Forest Lake, Minn.) is already swinging the bat in midseason form. Through the Tommies' first 12 games, the senior star is hitting .500 with 12 RBI, 10 runs, four doubles and two home runs. For his early-season brilliance, Cremisino has been named the first MIAC Baseball Player-of-the-Week for the 2011 season.

Most of Cremisino's great hitting came on UST's 11-game spring trip to Florida. On the trip, he was 19-for-37 and hit safely in 10 of the 11 games, and those stats don't include a two-hit performance in an exhibition against the Minnesota Twins' rookie team. Cremisino also has four walks, one sacrifice and just three strikeouts in 2011 and a .738 slugging percentage through 12 games while hitting safely in exactly half of his at-bats (21-for-42).

Cremisino and the Tommies are off to a 4-8 start, with three one-run losses and five games against teams ranked in the Top 20 thus far. During his career, Cremisino has played in 99 games with a .342 batting average, 78 hits, 56 RBI, 42 runs, 21 walks, 15 doubles and eight homers. St. Thomas is 114-39 in his era, and won the Division III championship in 2009.