

2015 MIAC Football Preview and Preseason Coaches' Poll

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2015 MIAC FOOTBALL CONFERENCE PREVIEW

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. -- Some view the month of August as a conclusion as it marks the end of summer, and the end of freedom for students of all ages. However, in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC), August is the beginning, the build-up, the introduction to a season that fans across the league circle on their calendars.

It's football season.

Across the conference, preseason camps are in full swing, and the 2015 MIAC football season officially kicks off on Thursday, Sept. 3, and fans are starting to rejoice over the return of their favorite squad.

The 2015 season comes with elevated anticipation following a thrilling, dramatic 2014 season and tons of returning talent and optimism around the league. A year ago, Saint John's triumphantly returned to the top of the standings and hoisted the MIAC title in the second year under Head Coach Gary Fasching, with a 10-2 overall record and a 7-1 conference mark.

Right behind the Johnnies were a trio of 6-2 teams, putting nearly half the conference in title contention into the season's final Saturday. St. Thomas (8-3) joined the Johnnies in the NCAA Playoffs, and Concordia (8-2) and Bethel (7-3) were also Top 25 mainstays throughout the season to give the MIAC as formidable a top four as there was in the nation. All four have key pieces back this season and - pending the answers to a few big questions at quarterback - expect to be right back in MIAC title and NCAA Playoff contention again 2015.

Gustavus (6-4, 4-4 MIAC) and Augsburg (4-6, 3-5) both featured wildly entertaining, high-powered offenses in 2014 that return largely intact this season, to give the MIAC six teams with championship aspirations. Hamline (4-6, 2-6 MIAC) improved to a four-win team in 2014 and continues its considerable progress as it enters the third season under Head Coach Chad Rogosheske, and the two Northfield schools - Carleton (2-8, 1-9 MIAC) and St. Olaf (1-9, 1-7 MIAC) - rounded out the standings and both enter 2015 with higher hopes.

The MIAC led NCAA Division III in football attendance for the ninth time in the past 10 seasons, as 162,735 total fans (3,462 per game) packed the stands throughout the league to witness the tradition, rivalries and passion in person. As the 2015 season gets set to kick off, all nine MIAC teams are ready to put on another compelling 11-week drama for its die-hard fans. Summer may be coming to an end, but football season in the MIAC is when the fun really starts.

THE POLLS ARE IN

The dawn of a new season also brings a new wave of preseason polls and predictions, led by the 2015 MIAC Football Preseason Coaches' Poll. The MIAC coaches have tabbed the defending champion Johnnies to be at the forefront of the conference yet again, as Saint John's finished first in the poll with 63 total points and seven of the nine first-place votes. To add even more flavor to the historic Johnnie-Tommie rivalry, St. Thomas received the other two first-place votes and 58 points to finish second, putting the conference's two 2014 NCAA Playoff participants atop the 2015 poll.

Bethel - one season removed from the 2013 conference title - joined SJU and UST in the top three with 50 points. Concordia received 41 points to finish fourth in the poll, and Gustavus (36 points) edged Augsburg (31 points) for fifth place. Hamline received 22 points to slot in at No. 7, and the two Northfield, Minn., rivals - Carleton (14 points) and St. Olaf (nine points) - rounded out the final spots in the poll.

The MIAC has also been well-represented in the national preseason polls, starting with three teams in the top 20 of the D3football.com Top 25. Saint John's led the way at No. 9 in the D3football.com rankings, St. Thomas checked in at No. 14 and Bethel received the No. 20 ranking. Saint John's was ranked No. 7 and St. Thomas No. 15 by The Sporting News Division III Preseason Top 25, and Saint John's received the No. 4 ranking in the Lindy's Division III Top 25, with Bethel coming in at No. 16 and St. Thomas ranked No. 22.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

There are tons of talented players returning in the MIAC, but all eyes first turn to the backfield in Collegeville, where Saint John's hopes to repeat rest largely on the capable shoulders of senior running back Sam Sura. After a record-setting 2014 season (1,769 rushing yards) Sura was honored as the MIAC's Jim Christopherson Most Valuable Player, and the workhorse running back looks to close his career with a similarly successful final chapter. Also back is two-time All-MIAC receiver and returner Josh Bungum, whose dynamic playmaking ability gives the team a great compliment to Sura's bruising style, and All-MIAC linebacker Carter Hanson also returns as SJU aims to have one of the conference's elite defenses in 2015.

St. Thomas won three-straight MIAC titles from 2010-2012, and finished second each of the two past seasons, and this year the Tommies hope to ascend back to the top behind an outstanding variety of returning talent. All-Region tight end Charlie Dowdle is one of UST's many offensive weapons back in the mix, with veteran tackle David Simmet anchoring a stout Tommie offensive line. The defense has plenty of depth and speed, led by All-MIAC cornerback Mozus Ikuenobe.



Bethel said goodbye to 2013 MIAC MVP Erik Peterson and now has a question mark under center, but the Royals return their hard-nosed identity behind the likes of All-MIAC running back Marshall Klitzke and All-Conference linebacker Landon Mathis. Offensive lineman Dillon Crum is also back to lead another Bethel line that is ready to roll up yardage and points.

Concordia is also replacing a three-year starting quarterback following the graduation of Griffin Neal, but whoever the new Cobber passer is will benefit from the returning receiver tandem of Jon Baune and Brandon Zylstra. Concordia is also loaded at linebacker to key a strong defense, led by senior Levi Hintermeister. Gustavus had a record-setting aerial attack in 2014, and quarterback Mitch Hendricks and receiver Matt Boyce both return. If senior linebacker Zack Martinez and the Gustie defense can improve in 2015, they could find themselves in the hunt for the MIAC title.

Augsburg also has a dynamic offensive duo back to write their final chapter, as star quarterback Ayrton Scott and receiver Joey Sonnenfeld return to add to their record-setting numbers. Zach Swingen anchors the Auggie offensive line, and the defense hopes to be more aggressive and active in 2015. Hamline improved to a four-win team in 2014, and hopes for more this season thanks to the return of all-time leading rusher Austin Duncan (3,434 career yards, 25 career TDs). Leading receiver Phillip Sherman is back at tight end, and the Piper defense will be led by junior defensive back Zach Schwalbach.

The two Northfield rivals are both hoping for upward mobility in 2015, with both excited about their returning talent. Carleton has quarterback Zach Creighton back, and the dynamic Chris Madden will move from running back to receiver to use his speed on the outside. Mitch Heflin moves to defensive end to lead the Knights' defense in 2015. At St. Olaf, hopes are high for All-MIAC Second Team linebacker Colten Yahn, and both quarterback Nate Penz and running back J.J. Strnad return to give the Oles senior leadership, and some serious balance.

CIRCLE THESE DATES

Once the calendar flips to September, MIAC fans won't have to wait long for the 2015 season to kick off. All nine teams will be in action over the opening weekend of the season, with Bethel heading to UW-Stout on Thursday, Sept. 3, and the other eight teams all in action in nonconference games on Saturday, Sept. 5. Concordia, Carleton, St. Olaf, Saint John's and Hamline will all have their home opener that day, with Bethel, St. Thomas, Gustavus and Augsburg starting on the road and playing at home a week later (Sept. 12), with conference play beginning in Week 3 on Sept. 19.

There are plenty of huge games peppered throughout the MIAC schedule, starting with a huge nonconference tilt in Week 2. No. 20-ranked Bethel will host No. 6-ranked Wartburg in Arden Hills, Minn., on Sept. 12 at 1 p.m. Wartburg beat two MIAC teams (Augsburg and Bethel) in the regular season and two more in the NCAA Playoffs (St. Thomas and Saint John's) a year ago, so the Royals will face a tough, defining game early in the season.

The annual Johnnie-Tommie game will head to Collegeville, Minn., and this year the league's top rivalry showdown will again come with national attention and serious conference championship implications. St. Thomas will head to Saint John's on Sept. 26 for a 1 p.m. kickoff with pride - and much more - on the line.

On Oct. 17, the two Northfield rivals will square off with "The Goat" rivalry trophy on the line, as St. Olaf will host Carleton that day at 1 p.m. Nov. 7 will also be a huge day in the MIAC, as Gustavus heads to Concordia for a 1 p.m. kickoff as both teams will be looking for a big late-season win, and two Twin Cities rivals - Hamline and Augsburg - will battle for "The Hammer" at Hamline's Klas Field that same day at 1 p.m.

A CLOSER LOOK

The rest of the 2015 MIAC Football Preview contains complete results from the 2015 Preseason Coaches' Poll, information about the 2015 MIAC Football Camp Tour, helpful links and a preview for each team submitted by their sports information director. The MIAC web site - www.miacathletics.com - will be an outstanding source for MIAC football news, schedules, scores, stats and more throughout the 2015 season.

Visit the [MIAC scoreboard](#) on game days to follow all the action, and download the [MIAC mobile app](#) to have all the information with you anywhere you travel. Also, connect to the conference on its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) pages for updates and interaction all season long.

2015 MIAC FOOTBALL CAMP TOUR

To help fans gear up for the 2015 season, MIAC Media is going on a training camp tour to preview each of the conference's nine teams. Each stop on the tour will include a blog post with observations from practice and a video interview with each team's head coach and key players. Visit the MIAC Media Blog and the MIAC's YouTube Channel as we tour the conference. Last week, the MIAC visited Gustavus, Bethel, Augsburg, St. Olaf and Carleton, and will finish the tour with trips to St. Thomas, Hamline, Saint John's and Concordia this week.

| [2015 MIAC Football Camp Tour](#) | [MIAC Media Blog](#) | [MIAC YouTube Channel](#) |

2015 MIAC FOOTBALL PRESEASON COACHES' POLL

Coaches voted for every team in the conference except their own team. Points were assigned for each vote (eight for first, seven for second, etc.) Teams are ranked in order of highest point total to lowest with vote totals listed and first-place votes shown in parentheses.

2015 MIAC Football Preseason Coaches' Poll

Rank	Institution	Total
1	Saint John's (7)	63
2	St. Thomas (2)	58
3	Bethel	50
4	Concordia	41
5	Gustavus	36
6	Augsburg	31
7	Hamline	22
8	Carleton	14
9	St. Olaf	9

2015 MIAC FOOTBALL LINKS

| [2015 MIAC Schedule](#) | [2014 MIAC Statistics](#) | [MIAC Recordbook](#) | [MIAC Archives](#) |

MIAC WEEKLY PODCAST PREVIEWS FOOTBALL SEASON

The [MIAC Weekly Podcast](#) just aired its first fall episode, with a huge focus on the upcoming football season. Host Mike Gallagher interviewed reigning MIAC Football MVP, Saint John's senior running back Sam Sura, as the two took a look ahead at another exciting season on the gridiron in the MIAC.

TEAM-BY-TEAM PREVIEWS

Jump to: | [AUG](#) | [BU](#) | [CAR](#) | [CON](#) | [GAC](#) | [HU](#) | [SJU](#) | [STO](#) | [UST](#) |



AUGSBURG | [Auggies' football home page](#) |

Head Coach

- Frank Haege (11th season)

A Year Ago

- 3-5 MIAC (6th place) | 4-6 Overall

Top Returners

- Joey Sonnenfeld (WR, SR | D3football.com Preseason All-America 2nd team, Lindy's Sports Annuals Preseason All-Division III 2nd team; All-MIAC 1st team and D3football.com All-West Region 2nd team in both 2013 and 2014; Capital One Academic All-District in 2014; 70 receptions for 1,219 yards and 14 TDs in 2014; led MIAC in receiving yards per-game (121.9), total receiving yards and yards per-reception (17.4); 9th nationally in total receiving yardage and receiving TDs, 8th in receiving yardage per-game; 137 receptions for 2,306 yards and 27 TDs in Augsburg career.)
- Ayrton Scott (QB, SR | All-MIAC 1st team in 2012, 2013 and 2014, D3football.com All-West Region 3rd team in 2012 and 2014; 197-of-338 passing for 2,874 yards and 24 TDs against 12 interceptions, while rushing 180 times for 869 yards and 11 TDs in 2014; Ranked 2nd in MIAC in passing yardage per-game, total passing yardage and TDs, 3rd in completions and passing attempts; rushes, rushing yardage and rushing TDs all 3rd-best in MIAC; 2nd in NCAA D-III in total offense yardage per-game (374.3); Already holds Augsburg school records for career rushes (521), rushing yardage (2,952), rushing TDs (28) and passing TDs (75); ranks 2nd in career passing yardage (7,886), 3rd in completions (575) and 4th in pass attempts (967).)
- Zach Swingen (OL, SR | All-MIAC 2nd team in 2014; Capital One Academic All-America in 2014 (2nd team); Part of OL that allowed Augsburg to average 450.7 yards per-game (287.4 passing, 163.3 rushing), including 8 300-plus-yard games; 3-year starter on line that has averaged 458.6 yards per-game in his career.)

Key Losses

- Chris DeVet (DL | 2014 MIAC Mike Stam Award-winner as conference's top interior lineman; All-MIAC 1st team in 2013 and 2014, D3football.com All-West Region 3rd team in 2014; Capital One Academic All-America in 2013 (2nd team) and 2014 (1st team); 53 tackles (22 solo) in 2014, including 5.5 sacks and 12 tackles for-loss, both 2nd-most among MIAC players; 168 tackles (71 solo), 32.5 tackles for-

loss and 13.0 sacks in career.)

- Felix Coleman (DB | All-MIAC 2nd team in 2013 and 2014; Led Auggies with 77 tackles (49 solo) in 2014, with 2 tackles for-loss and 1 interception; 295 tackles (172 solo), with 8.5 tackles for-loss and 9 interceptions in 40-game Augsburg career.)
- Jerise Washington (RB | All-MIAC 2nd team in 2013 and 2014; Rushed 146 times for 690 yards and 6 rushing TDs, while catching 44 passes for 604 yards and 1 TD in 2014; 129.4 all-purpose yards per-game ranked 6th-best in MIAC; 356 rushes for 1,810 yards and 24 rushing TDs, along with 115 receptions for 1,374 yards and 2 receiving TDs in 39-game career.)

By the Numbers

- 5: Games Augsburg played against teams ranked in the top 25 in the D3football.com national polls during the 2014 season. This year, four of Augsburg's opponents are ranked in the D3football.com preseason top 25: No. 6 Wartburg, No. 9 Saint John's, No. 14 St. Thomas and No. 20 Bethel.
- 2: Consecutive years that Augsburg has had two football players selected to the Capital One Academic All-America team by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA). DL Chris DeVet earned first-team honors in 2014 after earning second-team honors in 2013, while OL Zach Swingen was a second-team selection in 2014 and OL Chad Thompson was a second-team selection in 2013 and first-team honoree in 2012. Augsburg football players have earned 11 CoSIDA Academic All-America honors since 1981.
- 123: Combined number of points scored in Augsburg's 62-61, two-overtime, season-ending win at Bethel on Nov. 15, shattering the MIAC's single-game combined scoring record. The teams combined for 1,245 yards of offense (Augsburg 656, Bethel 589). QB Ayrton Scott set Augsburg single-game records for passing yardage (563) and total offense yardage (630), while WR Joey Sonnenfeld set an Augsburg and MIAC single-game receiving yardage record with 334 yards on 15 catches, with three touchdowns.

Did You Know?

- Augsburg football will be back on the radio in 2014, with the nine afternoon games being aired on KYCR-AM 1570 in the Twin Cities. Augsburg football was last on the over-the-air radio in the 2004 season.

Off the Field

- Augsburg football volunteer assistant coach Mike Matson '07, who was an All-American linebacker in his playing days as an Auggie, currently serves as pastor at Bethany Lutheran Church in the Seward neighborhood of Minneapolis, just across I-94 from the Augsburg campus, in addition to serving on Augsburg's campus ministry staff. He was featured in a Minneapolis Star-Tribune story in April, which focused on an innovative program that serves his church's neighborhood, the "Soup for You! Café."



BETHEL | [Royals' football home page](#) |

Head coach

- Steve Johnson (27th season)

A Year Ago

- 6-2 MIAC (T-2nd Place) | 7-3 Overall

Top Returners

- Landon Mathis (LB, Sr. | 2014 All-MIAC First Team, 2014 D3football.com All-Region, 2013 All-MIAC Second Team)
- Marshall Klitzke (RB, Sr. | 2014 All-MIAC First Team, 2013 All-MIAC Second Team)
- Dillon Crum (OL, Sr. | 2014 All-MIAC First Team, 2014 D3football.com All-Region, 2014 D3football.com Team of the Week honoree)

Key Losses

- Erik Peterson (QB | 2014 MIAC All-MIAC Second Team, 2013 Jim Christopherson MIAC MVP, 2013 MIAC All-Conference, 2013 D3football.com All-West Region Second Team)
- Brandon Marquardt (RB | 2014 D3football.com All-American, 2014 All-MIAC First Team, 2013 All-MIAC, 2012 MIAC All-MIAC Second Team)
- Josh Treimer (CB | 2014 All-MIAC, 2013 All-MIAC Second Team, 2012 All-MIAC Honorable Mention, Two-time MIAC and D3football.com Team of the Week honoree)

By the Numbers

- 27: Steve Johnson begins his 27th year as the head football coach. During his tenure with the Royals, Johnson has amassed a 192-83-1 (.697) record, which ranks fourth among active NCAA Division III head coaches in career wins.
- 15: The Royals made their first trip to the NCAA Playoffs 15 years ago. Since then, they've posted a 9-8 record overall in eight total trips to the postseason. Since 2007, Bethel is 9-4 with two West Region championships.
- 6: Bethel's offensive front allowed just six sacks throughout the entire 2014 season. Their 0.6 sacks allowed per game ranked No. 1 across the conference and No. 4 nationwide. The offensive line gave up just two sacks in the final six games.

Did you know?

- The Bethel University football team is 23-4 (.852) at home over the last five seasons. The Royals have posted two unbeaten campaigns within that time span.

Off the Field

- Two former members (J.D. Mehlhorn, 14'; Joshua Perkins, 15') of the Bethel University football team have been honored to the AFCA Allstate Good Works Team over the past two seasons. For their contributions on the field and in the community both Mehlhorn and Perkins have been invited to New Orleans for multiple events surrounding the Allstate Sugar Bowl.

CARLETON | [Knights' football home page](#) |



Head coach

- Bob Pagel (4th season)

A Year Ago

- 1-7 MIAC (8th place) | 2-8 Overall

Top Returners

- Chris Madden (Wide Receiver, junior | All-MIAC Honorable Mention in 2014; 521 rushing yards and 3 rush TD; 214 receiving yards and 1 rec. TD; top punt returner and kick returner; averaged 130.4 all-purpose yards)
- Zach Creighton (Quarterback, junior | led team in rushing with 617 yards and 5 rush TD; passed for 741 yards and 3 TDs)
- Mitch Heflin (Defensive End, senior | third on team in total tackles and tops in tackles for loss. Also forced three fumbles, had an interception, and blocked a kick)

Key Losses

- Alex Polk (Safety | All-MIAC Honorable Mention; third in MIAC with team-best 83 tackles and fifth with 45 solo stops)
- Eric Wittenburg (Left Tackle | All-MIAC Honorable Mention; four-year starter on the O-line)
- Zach Heinrich (Linebacker | tied for MIAC lead with 9.5 tackles per game after registering 76 stops in eight games)

By the Numbers

- 130.4: Chris Madden averaged all-purpose yards in 2014, ranking 16th in the West Region
- 36.0: The Knights had only 36.0 penalty yards per game last fall, second in the MIAC
- 11: Carleton returns 11 starters from last year's team.

Off the Field

- For the last four years, the Knights football squad organized and volunteered for the local Meals on Wheels program by taking time out of their day to deliver meals to Northfield community members.

CONCORDIA | [Cobbers' football home page](#) |



Head coach

- Terry Horan (15th season)

A Year Ago

- 6-2 MIAC (T-2nd place) | 8-2 Overall

Top Returners

- Jon Baune (WR, Sr. | Led the team in receptions, receiving yards and receiving TD's in 2014)
- Levi Hintermeister (LB, Sr. | Tied for the team lead in tackles & led the team in solo tackled in 2014)
- Brandon Zylstra (WR, Sr. | 2-time All-MIAC; second on the team in receptions, receiving yards & receiving TD's in 2014)

Key Losses

- Griffin Neal (QB | 3-time All-MIAC; school's all-time leader in passing yards and TD's)
- Alex McLean (FB | 2014 All-MIAC 2nd Team; led the team in rushing in 2014)
- Ben Wagner (K | 2014 All-MIAC 2nd Team; 3-year starter; made 123 of 126 career extra points)

By the Numbers

- 3: Concordia head coach Terry Horan needs three more wins to become the third coach in program history to win 100 games
- 8: The Cobbers have won eight games the past three seasons marking the first time in program history that they have recorded three consecutive years with at least eight wins
- 140: The receiving combination of Jon Baune and Brandon Zylstra have combine to catch 140 passes the past two seasons

Did You Know?

- Concordia assistant coach Dave Klug is entering his 28th season with the Cobbers. This year his son, Jason, will be a freshman on the team.

GUSTAVUS | [Gusties' football home page](#) |



Head coach

- Peter Haugen (7th season)

A Year Ago

- 4-4 MIAC (5th place) | 6-4 Overall

Top Returners

- Matthew Boyce (WR, Sr. | 2014 First Team All-MIAC, D3football.com All-America Third Team, 78 receptions, 1,196 yards, 17 TDs)
- Mitch Hendricks (QB, Sr. | 2014 First Team All-MIAC, D3football.com All-West Region Team, 271-405, 3,403 yards, 35 TDs)

- Zack Martinez (LB, Sr. | 83 total tackles, 13 TFL, 2.0 sacks, 1 forced fumble)

Key Losses

- Thomas Scheusner (K/P | 2014 First Team Special Teams All-MIAC, 38.2 punt average, 5-9 field goals)
- Xavier Fust (S | 2014 Second Team All-MIAC, 61 total tackles, 2 interceptions, 7 passes deflected)
- Zach Severson (DL | 2014 Second Team All-MIAC, 28 total tackles, 4 TFL, 1.0 sack)

By the Numbers

- 2,788: passing yards within MIAC play last year, which ranked first in the conference
- 36.6: points per game in MIAC play last year, which ranked second in the conference
- 1: Preseason All-American - WR Matthew Boyce

Did You Know?

- The Gusties are coming off consecutive seasons of 6-4 overall records and 4-4 marks in the MIAC. A 6-4 finish or better this season would mark the first time the Gusties had three consecutive winning seasons since 2000-02. Gustavus has not had a winning record in the MIAC since 2001 (6-3), which is also the last time the program posted at least seven wins (7-3).

Off the Field

- Ten Gustavus football players were named to the 2015 National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame Hampshire Honor Society. The Hampshire Honor Society is comprised of college football players from all divisions who have maintained a 3.2 GPA or better.



HAMLIN | [Pipers' football home page](#) |

Head coach

- Chad Rogosheske (3rd season)

A Year Ago

- 2-6 MIAC (7th place) | 4-6 Overall

Top Returners

- Austin Duncan (Sr., RB) Holds school record for TDs in a career (25) and Yards Gained Rushing (3,434)
- Zach Schwalbach (Jr., DB) Second on team last year with 71 tackles; Also had two INT and two fumble recoveries
- Philip Sherman (Sr., TE) Led Pipers in Yds. Receiving (596) and Yds. Per Catch (13.9)

Key Losses

- Tim Bona (QB) Passed for 2115 yards and 13 TDs in 2014)
- Alec Grimm (OL) Four year starter who never missed a game
- Corey Touchette (LB) Led MIAC in Sacks last year with six

By the Numbers

- 2: number of night games HU will play in 2015 (same as last year)
- 87: the number of players who were on hand for the first day of 2015 drills. When Chad Rogosheske arrived on campus to take the job, there were just 39 players on the roster.
- 2,405: Attendance for last year's home night game against Macalester. Largest crowd to attend at Klas Field since it was redone a decade ago.

Did You Know?

- The Pipers won both traveling trophies they play for last year. They defeated Macalester to win the Paint Bucket for the first time in three years and edged Augsburg in OT to win The Hammer for the first time since 2009.

Off the Field

- The Pipers had a record eight players named to the MIAC Academic All-Conference team last fall.

SAINT JOHN'S | [Johnnies' football home page](#) |



Head coach

- Gary Fasching (Third season)

A Year Ago

- 7-1 MIAC (First place) | 10-2 Overall

In the 2014 Postseason

- W, 35-7 vs. St. Scholastica in NCAA Division III first round; L, 10-21 at Wartburg (Iowa) in second round

Top Returners

- Josh Bungum (WR, Sr. | 2014 All-MIAC first-team selection as a returner...2013 and 2014 All-MIAC second-team pick as a wide receiver...led the team in receptions (29) and receiving yards (420), and averaged 11.5 yards on 11 punt returns...finished third on the team with 300 rushing yards on 66 carries (4.5 avg.)...enters his senior season with 155 career receptions (fifth in school history) for 1,785 yards (10th)

- Carter Hanson (LB, Jr. | 2014 D3football.com All-West Region second team...All-MIAC first team...2014 MIAC Elite 22 Award recipient... posted six or more tackles in 10 of his final 11 games in 2014, leading the Johnnies in three categories: solo (55), assisted (45) and total (100)...also led the Johnnies with 7.5 tackles for a loss and tied for the team lead in both forced fumbles (2) and fumble recoveries (3)... begins the 2015 season with 142 total tackles (82 solo) in his last 17 games going back to the 2013 season)
- Sam Sura (RB, Sr. | 2014 consensus first-team All-American...2014 MIAC Most Valuable Player...2014 Gagliardi Trophy semifinalist...ended the regular season as the NCAA Division III leader in rushing yards and finished second in rushing yards per game despite not playing in the equivalent of two full games...finished with a school-record 1,769 rushing yards)

Key Losses

- Ross Carlson (OL | 2014 D3football.com All-America honorable mention...2014 D3football.com All-West Region second team...2014 All-MIAC first team...ended his career with 22 consecutive starts at right guard)
- Alex Jarosz (OL | 2014 All-MIAC first team...2014 D3football.com All-West Region second team...made 32 consecutive starts, including the last 22 at left tackle)
- Matt Workman (DL | 2014 All-MIAC first team...2013 All-MIAC second team...led the team in sacks (4) and quarterback hurries (5), was third in tackles for loss (6.5) and fifth in tackles (48)...posted 102 career tackles (62 solo), including 18 tackles for a loss and 10 sacks)

By the Numbers

- 8: Sura set eight new SJU rushing records last fall: season rushing yards (1,769); season rushing yards per game (147.4); regular-season rushing yards (1,605); 100-yard rushing performances in a season (10); 100-yard rushing performances in a regular season (9); consecutive 100-yard rushing performances (8); game rushing yards (281 at UW-Eau Claire on Sept. 13); and 200-yard rushing games in a season (3). He also finished two carries shy of SJU's single-season record of 303 set by Chris Moore in 2000.
- 17: The Johnnies are expected to return 17 of their 24 starters from last fall: eight on offense, seven on defense and both special-teams specialists.
- 89-7: The Johnnies registered a +23 (36/13) turnover ratio and outscored their opponents 89-7 off turnovers. The seven points were scored in SJU's season-ending loss at Wartburg (Iowa) in the second round of the NCAA Division III playoffs.

Did You Know?

- Sura's total of 1,769 rushing yards was more than 64 percent (155 of 242) of NCAA Division III teams last fall. He combined for 329 rushing yards in two games against teams that were ranked No. 10 nationally (210 at St. Thomas and 119 vs. Bethel) and registered 56 runs of 10 yards or more in 12 games, accounting for 1,008 of his 1,769 yards. Of the 56 carries, 16 were of 20 yards or more, including six over 30 yards.

Off the Field

- Senior offensive lineman Ben Brown (Ceylon, Minn./Fairmont) wa named a nominee for the 2015 Allstate American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) Good Works Team, which was released in July. A 2014 Academic All-MIAC (minimum 3.50 GPA) honoree, Brown started all 12 games at left guard on an offensive line that powered SJU to 222.8 rushing yards per game, the program's largest per-game total since 1980 and the first over 200 yards since 1991. Brown only appeared in four games as a sophomore in 2013 due to a season-ending ankle injury. The global business leadership major has served as a member of Collegeville Ducks Unlimited since 2012 and has collected homeless shelter donations since 2009. He has also volunteered with Kids Against Hunger (2011-15), the 4-H Club (2007-12) and coached basketball (2009-10).



ST. OLAF | [Oles' football home page](#) |

Head coach

- Craig Stern (3rd season)

A Year Ago

- 1-7 MIAC (7th place) | 1-9 Overall

Top Returners

- Nate Penz (QB, Sr. | All-MIAC honorable mention... 1,671 yards, 10 TDs.)
- J.J. Strnad (RB, Sr. | All-MIAC honorable mention... 743 yards, six TDs.)
- Colten Yahn (LB, Jr. | All-MIAC second team in 2014... Had 27.0 tackles including 3.0 TFL.)

Key Losses

- Colin Brown (DL | All-MIAC first team... Led MIAC with 16.5 TFL.. Had 32 solo tackles.)
- Chad Wagner (DL | Was third in MIAC in sacks.)
- Joel Reinhardt (Position | All-MIAC honorable mention... Team-best 55 receptions for 514 yards and five TDs.)

By the Numbers

- +9.0: St. Olaf scored 9.0 points/game more in the final five games of 2014 than it did in its first five.

Off the Field

- St. Olaf welcomed Jose Reedy to its program in April, as the eighth-grader from Farmington joined the Oles in a ceremony at Tom Porter Hall. Reedy joins the St. Olaf football program through Team Impact, an organization that pairs courageous kids battling illness with college athletic teams. As a fourth-grader Reedy was diagnosed with Rhabdomyosarcoma, a form of cancer that attacks connective tissue.

ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' football home page](#) |

**Head coach**

- Glenn Caruso (8th season)

A Year Ago

- 6-2 MIAC (T-2nd Place) | 8-3 Overall

In the 2014 Postseason

- NCAA postseason: Lost at Wartburg, 37-31

Top Returners

- Charlie Dowdle (TE, Sr. | All-Region, 2014; 11 games, 49 catches, 704 yards, 12 TDs)
- Mozus Ikuenobe (CB, Sr. | All-MIAC: Career: 21 games, 48 Tackles, 18 break-ups, 2 FF, 2.5 TFL)
- David Simmet (OT, Sr. | CoSIDA Academic All-America; 2013 and 2014 (21 games): Blocked for nine 100-yard rushing performances, eight 240-yard passing days)

Key Losses

- T.J. Woodrow (Center, Grad | Consensus All-America, 49 starts, team 43-7)
- Matt O'Connell (QB, Grad) | Career: 35 games, 30-4 as starter, 1,556 rushing yards, 5,033 passing yards, 17 rushing touchdowns, 33 passing TDs;
- Brenton Braddock (RB, Grad | Career: 3 seasons, 30 touchdowns, 10 postseason TDs, 2,031 rushing yards).

By the Numbers

- 7: Transfer players in 2015 expected to compete for playing time
- 14: Preseason ranking for UST by D3Football.com, the 79th time in its last 80 polls UST was included in top 25
- .849: Winning clip in his seven UST seasons for Caruso (73-13), including 11 postseason victories and a 14-0 regular-season non-conference mark

Did You Know?

- St. Thomas led all NCAA football schools at all levels in fewest punts last season (19 in 11 games). The Toms also finished third in D-III in rushing TDs (41), and also ranked in the top 15 in points (45.7 ppg), total offense (501 ypg), third-down conversions (53%), sacks allowed (11) and first downs (26.2).

Off the Field

- Tommie Football raised more than \$13,000 for St. Jude's Research Hospital in 2014 to earn that organization's "Top Fundraising Team" distinction. Five Toms traveled to Memphis in July to take part in St. Jude's Collegiate Leadership Seminar.

[MIAC Football Home Page](#)