

2014 MIAC Men's Golf Championship Preview

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COON RAPIDS, Minn. -- The Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) will crown its first team champions of the season at the 2014 MIAC Golf Championships, which will be held Saturday to Monday at Bunker Hills Golf Course in Coon Rapids, Minn. On the men's side, parity appears to be at an all-time high which should make for an unforgettable three days and 54 holes of golf.

A year ago, Saint John's pulled away from a crowded field of contenders to score an eight-shot win and capture the MIAC championship. The Johnnies - ranked No. 17 in the GCAA Division III Coaches' Poll - will be among the favorites to defend their title, but there are plenty of other top teams in the mix. No. 25-ranked St. Thomas also has high hopes for a MIAC title after finishing second a year ago, and Gustavus, Bethel, Concordia and Augsburg also need to be in the championship conversation.

Just 12 strokes separates the top seven teams on the MIAC leader board this fall, and any of the seven aforementioned squads could certainly put three great rounds together and emerge with the title. In recent years, a three- or four-team race wasn't uncommon, but rarely has the league seen a field of contenders this deep.

After finishing third a year ago, Bethel enters the tournament with the lowest scores in the league this fall. The Royals are averaging just 297.5 shots per round to lead the MIAC by five shots, and they are also tied for the No. 19 ranking in Golfstat's national statistical ranking. St. Thomas ranks second in the MIAC with an average of 302.5, and the Tommies are the only other MIAC team ranked in Golfstat's top 50 at No. 29.

Concordia was fourth last year at the MIAC meet, and hoping for a rise into contention with the league's third-best scoring average at 305.0. Augsburg also hopes to continue its ascent after a top-five finish last year, and a 306.9 scoring average this fall. Gustavus received votes in the GCAA poll and is ranked fifth in the MIAC with an average of 307.7. The defending-champion Johnnies come in with a 308.8, which is affected by a tough outing at a primarily-Division-I tournament, and St. Olaf rounds out the field of contenders with an average of 309.4 and some strong performances this fall.

Rounding out the bottom of the MIAC leader board this fall are Macalester, which edged Carleton by a tenth of a shot for the No. 8 spot. The Scots average 317.1 shots per round, while the Knights are averaging 317.2, and Saint Mary's rounds out the final spot with an average of 331.3.

A big reason for the anticipated parity in 2014 is the amount of returning talent back with big-time championship experience. Nine of the top 11 golfers return from the 2013 MIAC Championships, and 11 golfers who earned All-Conference honors in 2013-14 will be competing in this weekend's field.

The returning stars start with a pair of former MIAC Championship medalists looking to add to their resume's. Last year's winner, Saint John's Ryan Draxler, returns after shooting a 2-over-par 218 in 2013 to win the title. St. Thomas star Alex Kapraun - who tied for medalist honors as a freshman and finished second and sixth in his other two appearances - leads the MIAC with a 72.7 scoring average this fall.

Carleton's Ned Rohrbach takes the league's second-best scoring average into the tournament at 73.1, and he's followed on the leader board by a trio of Bethel teammates. AJ Oster (73.7), Grant Exsted (74.5) and Dillon John (75.0) are the three Royals to rank in the top five. A pair of Concordia teammates - Coy Papachek (75.0) and Cade Montplaisir (75.5) have also had outstanding falls, and St. Olaf's J.R. Shimpach (75.6), Bethel's Alex Case (75.7) and Saint John's Collin Seal (75.7) round out the MIAC's top 10. Last year, Rohrbach, John and Papachek all earned All-MIAC honors.

Also back are golfers who finished second, third and fourth last season and earned All-MIAC honors. Concordia's Landon Poss was the runner-up at the MIAC Championships, Augsburg's Brandon Jones was third and St. Thomas' Bennett Schroeder was fourth, and all return for their respective squads. Also back from last year's top 10 and All-MIAC team are sixth-place Drew Lynch of Saint John's, Concordia's Sam Christian (seventh) and St. Thomas' Alex Gabriel (eighth).

Other golfers to watch this weekend include Gustavus' Andrew Brandt and Matt Spier, who each carry a 76.8 scoring average into the tournament. Macalester's Drew Gumlia has been the Scots' top golfer this fall with a 77.1 average and two top-five finishes, and Saint Mary's will be led by Blake Westerberg and his 79.4 scoring average. Westerberg also has two top-five finishes and another in the top 10 this fall.



The three-day, 54-hole MIAC Golf Championships will tee off [Saturday at 11:28 a.m.](#) at Bunker Hills. Sunday's second round will also tee off at 11:28 a.m., and Monday's final round will tee off at 9 a.m. Spectators are welcome to attend and there is no admission fee, and spectators are encouraged to read and follow the tournament's [spectator rules](#).

There will be a short awards ceremony following Monday's final round to honor the top teams and individuals. The championship team will receive the MIAC championship plaque, as well as the conference's automatic bid to the 2015 NCAA Division III Golf Championships. The top 10 individual finishers will be named to the All-Championship team, and will be automatically eligible for All-Conference honors in the spring.

Fans who can't make the trip to Coon Rapids can follow all the action on the [MIAC Golf Championships web site](#), which will include [unofficial hole-by-hole live scoring updates](#), results, pairings, tee times, recaps, photos and more. Fans can interact on social media throughout the tournament on the MIAC's [Facebook](#) page, or on [Twitter](#) using the hashtag [#MIACgolf](#). The [MIAC's YouTube channel](#) also includes a [promotional video](#) for the event.

FOLLOW THE ACTION

There are numerous ways fans that aren't traveling to Coon Rapids can follow all the action throughout the tournament. The MIAC is enhancing its (unofficial) live scoring, and now will offer hole-by-hole updates through Golfstat's live scoring system. Fans will easily be able to track team and individual progress throughout all three rounds.

The MIAC has a championship home page for the event, that will serve as the online home of the tournament. The championship page will include tee times, pairings and results as they become available, as well as recaps, photos and more.

| [Championship Home Page](#) | [Men's Live Scoring](#) |

MIAC GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

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TEAM-BY-TEAM PREVIEWS

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AUGSBURG | [Auggies' men's golf home page](#) |

Head Coach

- Eric Rolland (Second season)



A Year Ago

- Fifth place | 914 (+50)

Golfers to Watch

- Brandon Jones (JR | 75.9 season stroke average (tied for 12th-best among MIAC players)810 winning percentage (346-81) ... 2 top-10 finishes this fall ... Placed 3rd at 2013 MIAC Championships ... Tied for 26th at 2012 MIAC Championships ... 78.2 career stroke average, .657 career winning percentage.)
- Brett Gaustad (SO | 76.2 season stroke average763 winning percentage (326-101) ... Tied for 18th at 2013

MIAC Championships ... 76.6 career stroke average, .746 career winning percentage.)

- Michael Barrette (SO | 78.2 season stroke average548 winning percentage (234-193) ... Tied for 26th at 2013 MIAC Championships ... 79.0 career stroke average, .531 career winning percentage.)
- Drew Bahl (SR | 78.5 season stroke average581 winning percentage (248-179) ... 80.6 career stroke average, .480 career winning percentage.)
- Kyle Korva (SO | 79.0 season stroke average529 winning percentage (226-201) ... Tied for 23rd at 2013 MIAC Championships ... 79.0 career stroke average, .521 winning percentage.)

By the Numbers

- 306.9: Augsburg's team stroke average entering the 2014 MIAC Championships, its best stroke average since a 305.7 average in the 2006-07 season. It is a 1.2-stroke improvement over last season's 308.1 average. The 306.9 average currently stands fourth-best among MIAC squads entering the conference meet.
- 3rd: Finish for Brandon Jones at the 2013 MIAC Championships, the best individual finish for an Auggie at the conference meet since Tony Vanyo finished second in 2008. It marked Augsburg's first All-MIAC honoree in men's golf since 2010.
- 5th: Augsburg's team placing at the 2013 MIAC Championships, its best conference meet finish since finishing third at the 2008 championships.

Did You Know?

- Eric Rolland, a 1997 Augsburg alumnus who was named Augsburg's men's and women's golf coach in January 2014, earned All-American honors as an Auggie golfer in 1995, when he placed 17th at the Division III national championships, the first of three straight national tournaments for the Auggies.



BETHEL | [Royals' men's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Tony Weber (Fourth season)

A Year Ago

- Third place | 908 (+44)

Golfers to Watch

- AJ Oster (So. | 73.7 average per round; Low round of 68)
- Grant Exsted (So. | 74.5 average per round; Three Top 10 finishes in five events)
- Dillon John (Jr. | 75.0 average per round; 2013 MIAC All-Conference)
- Bennett Smed (Jr. | 76.3 average per round; Four-over-par average)
- Alex Case (So. | 75.7 average per round; Two rounds at par or under par)

By the Numbers

- 297.5: For the first time in program history, Bethel's men's golf team is averaging under 300 strokes per round as a team. After five matches played, the Royals are averaging 297.5 strokes as a team, which breaks down to 74.4 strokes per golfer.
- 7: In the five events played thus far this fall, Bethel's squad has posted seven Top 5 finishes. Leading the way for the Royals is AJ Oster, Grant Exsted, and Dillon John, who have each carded two Top 5 performances.
- 0: Bethel's squad has zero seniors on its team and, with the progression taking place over the last four years, anticipates continued success for the next several years.

Did You Know?

- In Tony Weber's three years as head coach of the Royals, the men's golf team has posted a better result than the year before in every MIAC Championship event. In 2011, Bethel finished fifth overall, better than the sixth place result in 2010. BU then followed 2011's mark with a fourth place finish in 2012. Finally, in 2013 Bethel set a program record for total strokes with 908, placing them third overall.

Off the Course

- Bethel's Devon Johnson was honored to the Academic All-Conference list last fall after posting a GPA above 3.50 and participating in the MIAC Championship event.

CARLETON | [Knights' men's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Jerry Ericksen (Eighth season)

**A Year Ago**

- Ninth place | 971 (+107)

Golfers to Watch

- Ned Rohrbach (Jr. | All-MIAC in 2013-14; ranks second in the MIAC with a team-best 73.1 stroke average this fall... three top-5 finishes in 4 tournaments this fall)
- Perry Strong (Fy. | Second on the team with a 79.9 stroke average this fall)
- Jorde Ranum (Sr. | Third on the team with an 81.3 stroke average this fall)

By the Numbers

- 4: The Knights used 4 different lineups in the team's 5 tournaments this fall
- 4: All of Ned Rohrbach's rounds this season have been within a 4-stroke range (71-75)
- 6: Rohrbach posted the low score for the Knights in 6 of his 7 rounds played this fall.

Off the Course

- Senior Jorde Ranum in president of Carleton's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).

**CONCORDIA** | [Cobbers' men's golf home page](#) |**Head coach**

- Duane Siverson (Seventh season)

A Year Ago

- Fourth place | 912 (+48)

Golfers to Watch

- Coy Papachek (Sr. | Won the 2014 Augsburg Fall Invitational, leads the team in scoring average at 75.0, 2012 GCAA All-Region)
- Landon Poss (Jr. | Two-time All-MIAC, 2nd place at the 2013-14 MIAC Championship Meet)
- Cade Montplaisir (So. | 3rd place at the season-opening Concordia Invite, 2nd on the team in scoring at 75.5)

By the Numbers

- 7: Concordia has finished in the top 5 of the MIAC for seven of the past nine seasons.
- 572: Concordia shot a two-round total of 572 at the season-opening Concordia Invite which is one of the lowest two-round totals in program history.
- 4496: Cobber senior golfer Coy Papachek has taken 4,496 shots in his career over the course of 59 collegiate rounds. Papachek has a 76.2 average for his three-plus year career.

Did You Know?

- Concordia senior Micah Megorden has had four holes-in-one in his career.

**GUSTAVUS** | [Gusties' men's golf home page](#) |**Head coach**

- Scott Moe (18th season)

A Year Ago

- Sixth place | 925 (+61)

Golfers to Watch

- Matt Spier (Jr., Prior Lake, Minn.) | Leads team with a stroke average of 76.8 (+5) after nine rounds and 691 strokes.
- Andrew Brandt (Jr., Medina, Minn.) | Ranks second on team with a stroke average of 77 (+5) after 10 rounds and 770 strokes...Has recorded one top ten finish this season, which came at the Saint John's Fall Invitational where he placed 10th with 76-76--153 (+9)... Finished 26th at the MIAC Championships last season with a score of 234 (+18).
- Chris Captain (Fr., Rochester, Minn.) | Ranks third on team with a stroke average of 77.3 (+6) after 10 rounds and 773 strokes...Recorded a season-low round of 72 (E) on day one of the Twin Cities Classic.

By the Numbers

- 3: The number of Gustavus players who have shot recorded a team-low score of 71 this season. Those players include Matt Spier (Day 2, Augustana Invite), Andrew Brandt (Day 1, Twin Cities Classic), and Alec Aunan (Day 2, Frank Wrigglesworth Blugold Invite).

Did You Know?

- Gustavus's new state-of-the-art Drenttel Golf Facility is nearing the final stages of completion. Located on the northwest corner of campus and designed by Minnesota-based architectural firm TKDA, the 2,650-square foot Drenttel Golf Facility will feature three heated hitting bays that open to an outdoor driving range, a putting green, space designated for a golf simulator and new video analysis equipment, a team lounge, and full restrooms.

Off the Course

- The 2013-14 Gustavus Adolphus men's golf team was the recipient of All-Academic Team honors announced by the Golf Coaches Association of America (GCAA) in late July. Gustavus was one of 23 total NCAA Division III institutions to earn the award. Matt Jensen '14

Tyler McMorrow '14, and Andrew Oakes '14 also earned GCAA Cleveland Golf/Srixon All-America Scholar honors last season. It was the second time that McMorrow and Oakes received the award, while Jensen earned the distinction for the first time in his career.

MACALESTER | [Scots' men's golf home page](#) |



Head coach

- Tomas Adalsteinsson (Third season)

A Year Ago

- Eighth place | 947 (+83)

Golfers to Watch

- Drew Gumlia (So. | 38th 2013 MIAC Championship, 77.1 Avg., 190-126 W/L Record)
- Dan Shi (Sr. | tie 12th 2013 MIAC Championship, 78.6 Avg., 171-145 W/L Record)
- Jack Buan (Fr. | 81.5 Avg.)
- Joshua Wingardner (So. | tie 28th 2013 MIAC Championship, 81.7 Avg.)
- Blaze Beecher (Fr. | 82.1 Avg.)

By the Numbers

- 1: Number of strokes James Meyerson needed on the 153-yard, 17th hole at Windyke Country Club, March 21, 2014, in a match play event versus Rhodes College.
- 300: The school record Macalester set, Aug. 29, 2014, in a dual meet win over St. Mary's.
- 73: The lowest score (even par), versus par, shot by a Macalester golfer this season – Jack Buan, Aug. 29, 2014, Mac/Mary's Dual on the Silver Course at Emerald Greens Golf Course in Hastings, Minn.

Did You Know?

- The only two first-year golfers on the Macalester roster are also the only two Minnesotans on the roster (Blaze Beecher, Edina/Breck; and Jack Buan, Osseo/Wayzata).

Off the Course

- Tim Hultquist (Macalester '72) was inducted into the M Club Hall of Fame last weekend. He was a member of the Scots' last MIAC men's golf championship team.

SAINT JOHN'S | [Johnnies' men's golf home page](#) |



Head coach

- Bob Alpers (22nd season)

A Year Ago

- MIAC Champions | 898 (+34)

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- 15th place at NCAA Division III Championship

Golfers to Watch

- Brett Draxler (Sr. | 2013 MIAC Medalist; 2014 GCAA All-America Scholar; tied for second on the team with five top-10 finishes in 2013-14; posted a 77.6 stroke average in 23 rounds last season)
- Drew Lynch (Sr. | Two-time All-MIAC; 2013 GCAA All-America third-team selection; 2014 GCAA All-America Scholar; second on the team with three rounds at par or better in 2013-14; tied for second with five top-10 finishes; third on the team with a 76.3 stroke average in 24 rounds last season; has a 75.9 stroke average in 77 career rounds)
- Ryan Gallagher (So. | 2014 MIAC Freshman of the Year, led all MIAC freshmen during the regular season with a 77.1 stroke average; finished with a 77.6 average in 24 rounds)
- Collin Seal (So. | Currently leads SJU with two rounds below par and a 75.7 stroke average in nine rounds this season)
- Josh Polingo (Fr. | Is third on the team with a 76.2 stroke average in nine rounds this fall, has two rounds at par)

By the Numbers

- ≤15: The Johnnies have finished 15th or better in 13 of their 14 trips to the NCAA Division III Championship. Of those 13 top-15 finishes, 12 were eighth or better.
- 26: The SJU golf program has produced 26 All-Americans since 2000.
- 8: Last fall, senior Brett Draxler became the eighth Johnnie to win the MIAC Championship since 2000.

Did You Know?

- SJU has won 10 MIAC golf championships since 1999. The program's 11th, and only other, title was in 1968.

Off the Course

- The 2013-14 Saint John's University golf team earned Golf Coaches Association of America (GCAA) All-Academic team recognition for the sixth consecutive season. To be eligible for GCAA All-Academic Team honors, a college or university must submit the grade points earned and hours attempted for each player on its official squad list for the academic year and carry a team GPA of 3.00 or higher. The 17 Johnnies

on the team combined for a 3.14 GPA to earn the program's sixth honor in the award's sixth year of existence. SJU has also had at least one All-America Scholar in each of the past 15 seasons (a total of 24 during that span).



SAINT MARY'S | [Cardinals' men's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Matt Johnson (First season)

A Year Ago

- 10th place | 979 (+115)

Golfers to Watch

- Blake Westerberg (5-8, 190, Jr. | Team-best 79.4 scoring average. ... 4 of 7 rounds this season, and 12 of 17 over the past two years, in the 70s — including a career-best 75).
- Tim Wolford (5-10, 165, Jr. | 81.0 scoring average. ... Carded team's low round of season a year ago with 75).
- Brett Jackson (6-3, 185, Fr. | 81.7 scoring average, including season-best 76 at Winona State).

By The Numbers

- 8: The Cardinals have carded 8 rounds in the 70s this season, including a 75 and two 76s.
- 75: Blake Westerberg (Red Wing, Minn.) carded a collegiate-best three-over-par 75 during the second round of the Mount Mercy Cropper Classic on Sept. 7.
- 79.4: Blake Westerberg (Red Wing, Minn.) leads the team in scoring average for the third straight season, posting a 79.4 average through seven rounds.

Did You Know?

- The Cardinals do not have a senior on their 2014 roster. Saint Mary's boasts four juniors, one sophomore and four freshmen.
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ST. OLAF | [Oles' men's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Glen Peterson (10th season)

A Year Ago

- Seventh place | 941 (+77)

Golfers to Watch

- Charlie Johnson (Jr. | 74.7 scoring average, won Culver's Edgewood Fall Invite, two rounds under par.)
- JR Shimpach (Sr. | 75.6 scoring average... Two top-20 finishes this fall.)
- Phillip Boldt (Fy. | 78.6 scoring average... six rounds 78 or better.)

By the Numbers

- 308: The Oles' best round at the 2013 MIAC Championships, helped by a 75 by Shimpach and a 77 by Johnson. Johnson was 18th at the 2013 MIAC's while Shimpach was 19th.
-



ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' men's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Scott Proshek (Sixth season)

A Year Ago

- Second place | 906 (+42)

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- Alex Kapraun qualified, missed 36-hole cut

Golfers to Watch

- Alex Kapraun (SR | 2X All-America, Academic All-America, 2X meet medalist so far in fall 2014)
- Bennett Schroeder (SR | Will compete in fourth MIAC Championship, 2X All-MIAC)
- Jack Riester (JR | 75.9 stroke average this fall)
- Jordan Bachmeier (JR | 75.9 stroke average this fall)

By the Numbers

- 5: Consecutive top-three team places at MIAC Championships for Tommies
- 72.7: Fall 2014 stroke average thus far for senior Alex Kapraun, tops in the conference
- 2: Fall 2014 team championships thus far for Tommies (SJU Invite, Twin Cities Classic)

Did You Know?

- St. Thomas has had 10 different players shoot a 73 or lower score so far in fall 2014

Off the Course

- Alex Kapraun made the 2013-14 Capital One Men's At-Large Academic All-America honor team – the first Tommie men's golfer so honored. A two-time All-America and three-time nationals qualifier, Kapraun has a 3.96 grade-point average while majoring in Actuarial Science.

[MIAC Men's Golf Home Page](#)