

2018 MIAC Men's Soccer Preview and Preseason Coaches' Poll

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BLOOMINGTON, Minn. – The two-time defending Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) men's soccer champion St. Thomas Tommies are picked to make it three in a row, as the nation's No. 6-ranked team claimed the top spot in the annual MIAC Men's Soccer Preseason Coaches Poll on Tuesday with 100 points and 10 first-place votes.

The Toms are coming off a 22-2 season that featured a 12-0 run through Conference play. St. Thomas scored a program-record 56 goals last season; however, head coach Jon Lowery will have to find a way to replace the production of 10 graduated seniors - five of whom were All-Conference selections - including 2017 NCAA Division III National Player of the Year, Shae Bottum, and Second Team All-America pick Justin Oliver. Fortunately for the Tommies, First Team All-North Region goalkeeper **Aidan Hogan** will be back in goal for his senior season. Hogan led the MIAC with five shutouts in Conference play last season and has compiled a 36-6-1 record with 22 shutouts in 47 career games through three seasons at UST.

Macalester earned the No. 2 spot in the Preseason Coaches' Poll with 85 points and one first-place vote. The Scots were the Conference runner-up last year and return three All-MIAC selections, including junior defender **Max Kent**. An honorable mention All-Conference selection in his first year at Macalester in 2016, Kent landed on the United Soccer Coaches' All-North Region Second Team as a sophomore last year. He and returning goalkeeper **Colton Wenig** figure to make the Scots a tough team to score on again this season.

After landing the No. 2 seed in last year's Conference Playoffs, the Golden Gusties of Gustavus Adolphus College have been picked to finish third in the 2018 Preseason Coaches' Poll. Gustavus announced the hiring of former All-MIAC forward **Tudor Flintham** as the program's new head coach in April and the Gustie faithful are optimistic for the return of All-North Region selection **Arthur Parens**, who tallied 27 points in 17 starts last fall before an injury ended his season prematurely. With Parens back in the lineup, all signs point to Gustavus challenging for a Conference crown once again.

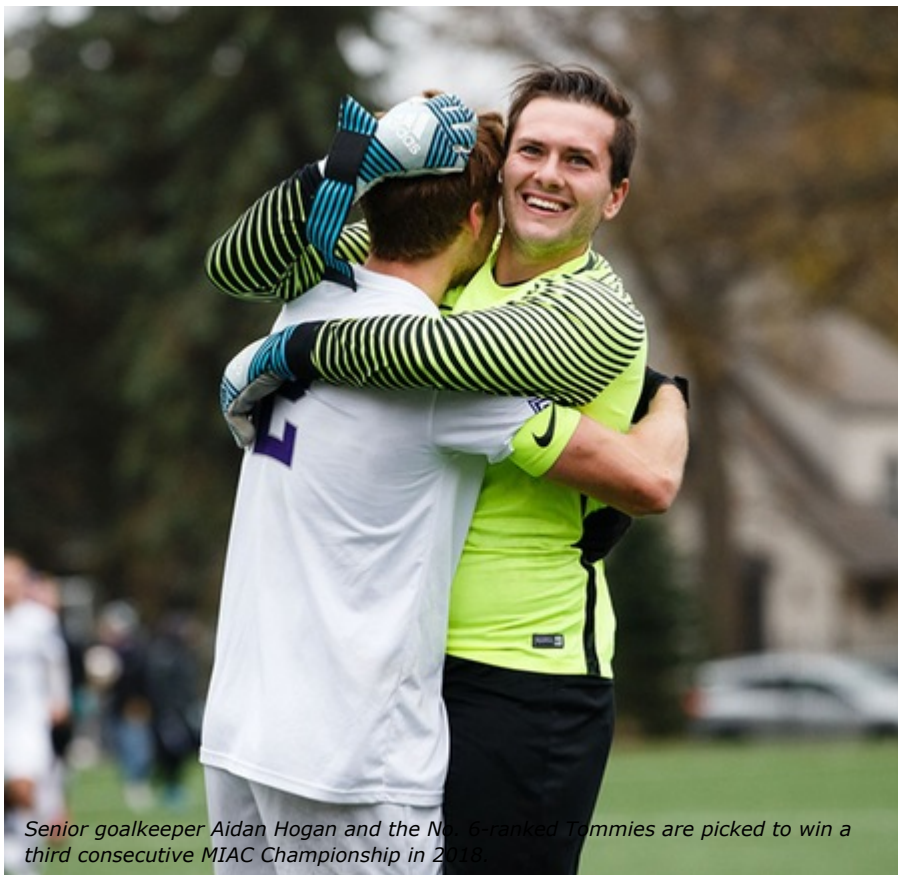
With 67 points in the preseason balloting, Saint John's University is slotted at No. 4 in the MIAC Coaches' Poll. Two-time All-MIAC midfielder **Zack Boerjan** figures to lead the SJU offensive attack, while the defense looks to be anchored by honorable mention All-Conference goalkeeper **Payton Spencer**, who ended his sophomore season last year as the MIAC's overall leader in both saves (74) and save percentage (.871).

Coming in at No. 5 in the 2018 Preseason Coaches' Poll is Carleton College. The Knights have reached the MIAC Playoffs a Conference-best 11 consecutive seasons and will look to make it 12 in a row this fall. All-MIAC and All-North Region defender **Mark Roth** will be relied upon on both sides of the pitch, as the rising senior tied for the team lead with four assists and paced the Knights with 1,684 minutes played from the outside back position in 2017.

No. 6 in the 2018 Coaches' Poll is Hamline University. HU tied a program record with 12 wins overall in 2017 and the Pipers' six victories in Conference play earned the squad its first home playoff game in school history. The two-headed goalie tandem of **Dean Isaacson** and **Malachy Zamocona** will be back between the pipes this season - the latter earned honorable mention All-Conference honors as a sophomore last season, while Isaacson has logged 13 shutouts in three seasons at Hamline.

Augsburg University landed at the No. 7 spot in the Preseason Coaches' Poll. Two-time All-MIAC forward **Lionel Vang** is back for his junior season after collecting 13 goals and three assists through his first two years as an Auggie. Senior defender **Emmanuel Egbujor** is also on the 2018 roster. The most-decorated men's track athlete in Augsburg history, Egbujor showed off his blazing fast speed at the 2018 MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championships when he set a new Conference record in the 60-meter dash, clocking in at 6.81 seconds.

St. Olaf College locked up the No. 8 spot in the preseason balloting. The Oles are just two years removed from reaching the third round of the NCAA Tournament and now face the difficult task of replacing the production of leading scorer Kyle Leemon, who accounted for eight of the squad's 14 goals as a senior last fall. Senior **Jovan Carter** figures to be the frontrunner to fill that void, having scored one goal and assisting on five more last year.



Senior goalkeeper Aidan Hogan and the No. 6-ranked Tommies are picked to win a third consecutive MIAC Championship in 2018.

In the No. 9 position is Concordia College. When defender **Austin Peterson** was named to the MIAC All-Conference Team following his junior campaign last season, it was the first time since 2011 that the Cobbers landed an All-MIAC honoree in back-to-back seasons. Peterson started nine Conference games in 2017 and contributed offensively when his team needed him most, scoring his lone MIAC goal in a 1-1 double-overtime tie at St. Olaf and pitching in assists in a 3-3 tie with Saint John's and on the game-winning goal of the season's final contest at Saint Mary's.

At No. 10 in the Coaches Poll is Saint Mary's University. SMU forward **Charles Reit** was one of only four sophomores to earn All-MIAC honors last season. Reit led the Cardinals with six points in league play while finishing 2017 with six goals and three assists overall.

Finishing off the Poll at No. 11 is Bethel University. The Royals will be looking to bounce back from a tough 2017 season and get back to the form they showed in 2016 when the team finished 5-1 against non-conference opponents and with a 7-3-1 mark at home.

Complete 2018 Preseason Coaches' Poll

Coaches voted for every team in the conference except their own team. Points were assigned for each vote (10 for first, 9 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.

2018 MIAC Men's Soccer Preseason Coaches' Poll

| Rank | Institution (First-Place Votes) | Total |
|-------------|--|--------------|
| 1. | St. Thomas (10) | 100 |
| 2. | Macalester (1) | 85 |
| 3. | Gustavus | 83 |
| 4. | Saint John's | 67 |
| 5. | Carleton | 62 |
| 6. | Hamline | 53 |
| 7. | Augsburg | 52 |
| 8. | St. Olaf | 41 |
| 9. | Concordia | 26 |
| 10. | Saint Mary's | 23 |
| 11. | Bethel | 13 |

2018 MIAC Men's Soccer Playoffs

The 2018 MIAC Men's Soccer Playoffs will feature the Conference's top six teams from the regular season in a single-elimination, high-seed host tournament. The top two seeds receive byes to the semifinals, while teams seeded No. 3-6 will square off in the quarterfinals. The two quarterfinal games will take place Tuesday, Oct. 30, the two semifinal games will follow on Wednesday, Oct. 31, and the championship is set for Saturday, Nov. 3. The winner will receive the MIAC's automatic bid to the 2018 NCAA Division III Men's Soccer Tournament.

Odds and Ends

-Six of the 13 United Soccer Coaches All-North Region selections from the MIAC in 2017 (Augsburg's Vang, Carleton's Roth, Gustavus' Parens, Hamline's **Adam King**, Macalester's Kent and St. Thomas' Hogan) will return to the field in 2018. The MIAC had six All-Region honorees total in 2016.

-The newly-renovated Rolf Mellby Field in Northfield, Minn. - which now features synthetic turf - will see its first official action of the season on August 31 when the Oles host a double-header against Wis.-Stevens Point (women's) and Martin Luther College (men's).

-A total of 79 student-athletes on record have earned First Team All-MIAC honors at least three times in men's soccer. Three more players could join that list in 2018, as Augsburg's **Lionel Vang**, Gustavus' **Arthur Parens** and Saint John's **Zack Boerjan** each earned All-Conference honors in 2016 and 2017.

For the Record

The MIAC is in the process of overhauling its sport record books to provide a better historical perspective of the Conference and the accomplishments of its student-athletes over the last century. The 30-page MIAC Men's Soccer Record Book contains annual Conference championship information, year-by-year standings, all-time award winners, individual records, and more. The information included in the 2018 Record Book is based on available data and research for additional historical documents is ongoing. The 2018 MIAC Men's Soccer Record Book is now available for download [here](#).