

# 2007 MIAC Men's Tennis Playoffs

## Gustavus Adolphus Captures Title, Automatic Bid to NCAA

The Gustavus Adolphus College men's tennis team posted wins over Concordia (9-0) and Carleton (6-3) Saturday in St. Peter to capture the MIAC Tournament title and lock down one of 41 spots in the 2007 NCAA Division III Men's Tennis Championships. Selections for this year's national meet will be disclosed Monday, April 30.

### Semifinal #1 - Gustavus Adolphus 9, Concordia 0

Gustavus posted a 9-0 win over Concordia in one of Saturday morning's semifinal matches. The Gusties swept through doubles with an 8-2 win by Jesse Brauer and Andy Bryan over Jordy Kamerling and Paul Tuchscherer at No. 1 and 8-1 wins by Mike Burdakin and Charlie Paukert at No. 2 and Ben Tomasek and Nick Hansen at No. 3.

In singles play, Brauer, John Kauss, Burdakin, Paukert, and Danny Suchy combined to drop only seven games while picking up sweeps at positions 2-6. At No. 1 singles, Bryan battled back after dropping the first set to defeat Kamerling 4-6, 7-5, 1-0 (10-3) to complete the Gustavus sweep and send the team to the MIAC Tournament final against Carleton.

### Semifinal #2 - Carleton 8, Bethel 1

Carleton advanced to the championship final after derailing Bethel 8-1 in the other morning semifinal. The Knights took a 3-0 lead after sweeping doubles and then closed out the match with wins in five of six singles matches. Colin Russell, Brendan Cooper, Peter Varnum, and Julian Tokarev each posted sweeps in singles play after taking wins in doubles. Kartheek Koneru needed three sets to post a 6-4, 6-7 (4-7), 1-0 (10-3) win over Chris Scheevel at No. 1 singles.

Jordan LeFebvre captured Bethel's only match with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Eirik Thoen at No. 6.

### Final - Gustavus Adolphus 6, Carleton 3

The Gusties secured the MIAC's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament with a 6-3 win over Carleton in the Saturday afternoon tournament final. Gustavus led 2-1 after doubles play behind wins at No. 1 from Jesse Brauer and Andy Bryan and at No. 3 from Ben Tomasek and Nick Hansen. The Knights took the match at No. 2 doubles as Winston Park and Colin Russell topped Mike Burdakin and Charlie Paukert 8-3.

Gustavus put the match out of reach and secured the dual victory with wins in four of the six singles matches. Bryan topped Kartheek Koneru 6-2, 6-1 at No. 1, Brauer downed Park 6-0, 6-2 at No. 2, Burdakin defeated Brendan Cooper 6-2, 6-0 at No. 4 and Paukert bested Peter Varnum 6-1, 6-3 at No. 5. Carleton tightened up the match with wins in the final two singles matches. Julian Tokarev defeated Suchy 6-3, 6-1 at No. 6 and Russell survived a three-set match with John Kauss 6-1, 1-6, 1-0 (10-3).

Already assured of a spot in the field of 41, Gustavus must wait until Monday, April 30 for the complete draw to be announced. First, second, and third round matches will be held at on-campus sites May 4-6. The eight remaining teams will advance to the Championship Round May 15-17 at the Dwight Davis Tennis Center in suburban St. Louis, Mo. Washington University of St. Louis is this year's host. Individual competition in singles and doubles will be contested at the same site May 18-20.

### Day One Recap

Third-seed Bethel advanced to a Saturday morning semifinal match against second-seed Carleton with a 6-3 win over sixth-seed St. Thomas. The Royals led 2-1 after doubles play and then used wins at No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and No. 4 singles to put away the Tommies. Bethel nearly swept doubles competition, but St. Thomas' Ben Herding and Drew Carlson topped Chris Scheevel and Mark Hallstrom 9-8 (7-4) at No. 1 doubles. St. Thomas picked up victories at No. 5 and No. 6 singles, highlighted by a marathon match between St. Thomas' Kevin Manzel and Bethel's Joel Cassens at No. 5. Manzel and Cassens split the first two sets with each going to a tie-breaker and battled back-and-forth in the third-set super-breaker before Manzel emerged with a 16-14 victory as the last vestiges of sunlight disappeared over the horizon west of St. Peter.

In Friday's other quarterfinal, fifth-seed Concordia overcame a 4-2 deficit midway through singles play to post a 5-4 come-from-behind win over fourth-seed Saint John's. Down 2-1 following doubles, Concordia's Jordy Kamerling knotted the dual at 2-2 with a 6-2, 6-1 win over Trevor Beach at No. 1 singles. The Johnnies responded with wins at No. 5 and No. 6 to lead 4-2, but the Cobbers answered right back with victories at No. 2 and No. 4 to tie the match at 4-4 and put all eyes on the match at No. 3 singles between Saint John's sophomore Mark Steelman and Concordia senior Paul Tuchscherer. After dropping the first set in a tie-breaker, Tuchscherer battled back to take the second set 6-3 and then prevailed 10-4 in the super-breaker to give the Cobbers a 5-4 victory and a date with top-seed Gustavus Adolphus in Saturday morning's other semifinal. Concordia was also able to avenge a 7-2 defeat at the hands of the Johnnies in Moorhead less than two weeks ago.

Gustavus defeated Concordia 9-0 in a dual February 10 in Moorhead, while Carleton posted a 9-0 win over Bethel February 21 in Burnsville.

### Tournament Preview

ST. PETER, Minn. - Gustavus Adolphus College plays host this weekend as the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference crowns a tournament champion in men's tennis. The host Gusties captured their 19th consecutive league title and earned the top seed in this weekend's tournament by going 9-0 in league play. The tournament champion receives the MIAC's automatic bid to the field of 41 teams for the 2007 NCAA Division III Men's Tennis Championships.

Gustavus enters the tournament as the only MIAC team ranked nationally by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association. The fifth-ranked Gusties are also the top-ranked team in the Central Region, taking over the top spot from DePauw University in the first rankings of the spring. Gustavus posted a strong finish at the ITA Division III National Men's Team Indoor Championships in St. Peter, Minn., placing fourth in a

field that contained five of the nation's top eight NCAA Division III teams. Carleton enters the weekend ranked eighth in the Central Region, up from 12th in the ITA's initial fall rankings.

Gustavus' Jesse Brauer and Andy Bryan lead the list of ranked men's players from the MIAC. Bryan is ranked fifth nationally in singles, while Brauer is rated 11th. The pair are also the second-rated doubles team in NCAA Division III. Bryan is also rated first in the Central Region in singles with Brauer holding down the third slot. Carleton first year Winston Park is ranked 14th in the most recent Central Region singles rankings.

Two MIAC doubles teams are also rated in the top-10 of the Central Region. Gustavus' Brauer and Bryan top the list, while teammates Mike Burdakin and Charlie Paukert, winners of last fall's ITA Central Region doubles title, are rated ninth.

Gustavus finished atop the league standings with a perfect record for the 22nd consecutive season, capturing the school's 42nd MIAC title in the process. Carleton finished second with an 8-1 league mark, followed by Bethel (6-3), Saint John's (5-4), Concordia (5-4), and St. Thomas (4-5). Bethel was the biggest mover in the league standings from 2006 to 2007, improving five spots from eighth to third. The Royals finished 9-10 overall, 2-7 in the MIAC a year ago, but enter the 2007 MIAC Tournament with a 9-7 record overall and a 6-3 mark in the conference. St. Olaf (4-5), Hamline (3-6), Saint Mary's (1-8) and Macalester (0-9) round out the standings.

This year's tournament will begin at 4:30 p.m. Friday, April 27 with two first-round matches on the Brown Outdoor Courts on the campus of Gustavus Adolphus College. Play continues Saturday, April 28 with semifinal matches scheduled for 9 a.m. and the championship match slated for 2:00 p.m. In the event of rain, play will be moved to Gustavus' Swanson Tennis Center. All matches contested outdoors will be played to completion. If weather forces the tournament indoors, matches will be played to decision.