

2014 MIAC Men's Cross Country Championships Preview

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2014 MIAC MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS PREVIEW

ST. PAUL, Minn. -- The 2014 Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) Men's Cross Country Championships will be held Saturday at St. Paul's Como Golf Course, and the St. Olaf men not only return as the two-time defending conference champions to headline a talented field of runners, but the No. 4-ranked Oles are the defending national champions as well.

A year ago, Head Coach Phil Lundin's team dominated en route to its second-straight MIAC title, as the Oles swept the top three individual places and put four in the top six, six in the top 10 and seven in the top 16. St. Olaf won with 20 points and a decisive 61-point margin over runner-up Carleton, and the Oles' score was the lowest in the MIAC Championships since St. Thomas scored 19 in 1986.

This season, St. Olaf has been just as impressive while defending its MIAC and Division III titles. The Oles opened the season ranked No. 1 in the nation, and have never dropped lower than its current No. 4 national ranking. St. Olaf is joined by No. 23-ranked Carleton and No. 33-ranked St. Thomas in the USTFCCA Coaches' Poll. The Oles are also ranked No. 1 in the Central Region, and are joined in the top 10 by No. 4 Carleton, No. 5 St. Thomas, No. 7 Saint John's, No. 9 Hamline and No. 10 Gustavus, to give the MIAC six of the region's top 10 teams.

A year ago, Carleton (81 points) was the runner-up to its Northfield, Minn., rival. St. Thomas (104) barely edged Saint John's (108) for third, and Hamline (175) rounded out the top five. Macalester (184) was sixth, Gustavus (207) was seventh, Concordia (226) finished eighth and Saint Mary's (239), Bethel (243) and Augsburg (274) rounded out the final 2013 standings.

The Oles aren't just trying to add to their team dynasty on Saturday. Senior star Grant Wintheiser is also looking to make individual MIAC history. Wintheiser won the MIAC men's race in both 2012 and 2013 and Saturday will aim to become just the second runner in conference history to win three MIAC championships in a row. He also could become just the third to win three MIAC titles overall. St. Thomas' Bert Budd is the only other MIAC runner to ever win three in a row (1949-1951) and Saint John's John Cragg also won three in his career (1967, 1969, 1970).

Wintheiser's winning time of 24:48.9 a year ago is the second-fastest recorded in MIAC Championship history since the course expanded beyond four miles in 1968. Only Saint John's Chris Erichsen's 24:44.2 in 2007 was faster than Wintheiser's first-place time in 2013. The senior is writing a great final chapter to his stellar career, and was named the MIAC Men's Cross Country Athlete-of-the-Week twice this fall.

St. Olaf's hopes for a three-peat go well beyond Wintheiser, as the Oles return nearly their entire team from a year ago. Jake Brown (second), Jake Campbell (sophomore) and Phillip Meyer (eighth) all joined Wintheiser on the All-MIAC team in 2013, and Paul Escher (16th) earned Honorable Mention honors.

There are three other All-Conference runners back this season, as Carleton's Jonah Barry, Augsburg's Mohamed Mohamed and Saint Mary's Aaron Haley all return after finishing in the top 13 at the MIAC meet a year ago. St. Thomas' Jacob Gerhartz, Ben Rascher and Dylan Baumann and Saint John's Preston Jimmy also return after earning All-MIAC Honorable Mention Honors (places 16-25) at the 2013 Championships. Gerhartz started his 2014 season strong, winning the MIAC Men's Cross Country Athlete-of-the-Week award on Sept. 2.

Several other talented runners throughout the league also return, and should make for a competitive season and championship. Carleton's Hart Hornor (three times) and Saint John's Thomas Feichtinger (twice) each won the MIAC Men's Cross Country Athlete-of-the-Week award multiple times this fall and could be among Wintheiser's top competitors for the title.

Hamline has a pair of talented seniors back atop its lineup in Chris Gill and Ryan Peterson. Macalester will again be led by top runner Joe Giamberdino and also has high hopes for sophomore standout Lachlan Hinwood. Gustavus will be led by a pair of talented sophomores - Thomas Knobbe and Evan Jones, and Concordia will count on senior Ryan Sederquist and sophomore Carl Wahlin to lead the way for the Cobbers.

In addition to Haley, Saint Mary's welcomes back sophomore Jovan Newsum, who has consistently been the Cardinals' No. 2 runner. Bethel has been without injured All-American Matt Berens, but has gotten great performances out of junior Thomas Ritter and sophomore Connor Haugen throughout the fall. Augsburg is certainly glad All-MIAC runner Mohamed is back in the lineup, and 2014 top runner Abdullahi Salan and senior Luke Iverson add to the Auggies' hopes to ascend up the MIAC standings on Saturday.

The men's 8K championship race will begin Saturday's meet at 2:15 p.m. and the women's 6k race will follow at 3:15 p.m. Once the results are tabulated and deemed final, a short awards ceremony will follow the conclusion of the men's race on the hillside near the clubhouse. The top 15 runners in each race will be honored as All-Conference selections, with runners finishing in places 16-to-25 receiving All-



Conference Honorable Mention. The two team champions will also be honored and awarded their championship plaque.

Spectators are encouraged to attend the event and admission is free. All spectators are reminded to stay out of the runners' way on the course, and no dogs, bikes or artificial noisemakers are allowed on the course.

The MIAC has a [home page](#) for the event, which will be the first place to find results, recaps, photos and more online following the conclusion of the championships. The page also includes course maps for both the men's and women's races, directions to Como Park Golf Course and other helpful links.

Carleton College is serving as the host institution for this year's championship and athletic training services will be provided by MIAC partner Twin Cities Orthopedic. Bethel University will again be collecting used athletic shoes to be redistributed to those in need through the Soles4Souls organization. There will be a collection bin at the MIAC Championships. There will also be a very limited number of MIAC Cross Country Championship shirts available for purchase in the clubhouse.

In addition to the preview, the MIAC also released a [promotional video](#) Wednesday to promote the big race. Fans can stay connected throughout the 2014 MIAC Cross Country Championships on social media through the MIAC's [Facebook](#) page or on [Twitter](#) using the hashtag #MIACXC.

| [2014 MIAC Cross Country Championships Home Page](#) |

2014 MIAC CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS PROMO VIDEO

MIAC MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY LINKS

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

Head Coach • Meghan Peyton (Interim, First season)

A Year Ago

• 11th place | 274 points

Runners to Watch

- Mohamed Mohamed (JR | All-MIAC with 12th-place, personal best 25:58.8 at 2013 MIAC Championships ... Team's No. 2 runner most of this season ... 2014 season-best 26:11.19 at UW-La Crosse 8K on 10/18)
- Abdullahi Salan (JR | Team's No. 1 runner in 4 of 5 meets this season ... Personal best 26:20.37 at Disney 8K on 10/11)
- Luke Iverson (SR | Personal best 27:30.6 at 2013 UW-La Crosse 8k)

By the Numbers

- 2: Augsburg men's cross country runners who earned Academic All-MIAC honors in 2013.
- 8: Augsburg's team finish in at the University of Minnesota Roy Griak Invitational on 9/27, Augsburg's best-ever team finish at the event.

Did You Know?

- Head Coach Meghan Peyton is also a professional runner; she joined the Team USA Minnesota training center in 2008 after a four-time All-American career at the University of Iowa. She has finished in the top 11 in various USA distance and cross country championships 18 times since 2009, most recently an 11th-place finish in the women's 10,000-meter run at the 2014 USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

Off the Course

- Augsburg earned U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association Division III All-Academic Team honors in 2013 with a 3.15 team grade-point average.



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

Head coach

- Jim Timp (18th season)

A Year Ago

- 10th place | 243 points

In the 2013 NCAA Championships

- Matt Berens 7th place individual finish at the 2013 NCAA DIII Cross Country Championships

Runners to Watch

- Thomas Ritter (Jr. | Bethel's top runner in four meets, personal best 26:42 at Les Duke Invitational)
- Connor Haugen (So. | Bethel's top runner in two meets, personal best 27:00 at Les Duker Invitational)
- Harrison Hitt (Sr. | Bethel's third runner in every meet this season except for second spot at UW-Eau Claire Bugold Invite)
- Marcus Danner (Fr. | Personal best 29:01 at Roy Griak Invitational)
- David Huffman (Fr, | Has been between 29:22 and 29:25 in three different meets)

By the Numbers

- 12: The Bethel men finished in 12th place as a team at the 2014 Roy Griak Cross Invitational hosted by the University of Minnesota.
- 4: Four of Bethel's top seven runners this season have been freshman, including twin brothers David and Taylor Huffman along with Marcus Danner and Nick Lowery.
- 1: Harrison Hitt has been the only senior in Bethel's top seven this season.

Did You Know?

- Matt Berens, who finished in 7th place at the 2013 NCAA Championships, but is out this season with an injury will be back to compete for the Royals next season.

Off the Course

- Once again the Royals cross country teams are collecting shoes that can be donated to help support the Soles for Souls, a global non-profit institution fighting the devastating impact and perpetuation of poverty. The organization advances its anti-poverty mission by collecting new and used shoes and then distributing them via direct donations to people in need.



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

Head coach

- Dave Ricks (Eighth season)

A Year Ago

- 2nd place | 81 points

In the 2013 NCAA Championships

- 4th at Regionals
- 16th at NCAA Championships

Runners to Watch

- Hart Hornor (Jr. | 26th at 2013 MIAC Championships; 11th at regionals [All-Region]; MIAC Athlete of the Week three times this fall with four top-5 finishes this season)
- Jonah Barry (Jr. | 7th at 2013 MIAC Championships [All-MIAC]; 20th at regionals [All-Region])
- Joe Haase (Jr. | 29th at 2013 MIAC Championships, 47th at Regionals)

By the Numbers

- 4+: Carleton returns four of its seven runners—Hornor, Barry, Haase, and Thor Laack-Veeder '15—from last year's entry to the NCAA Championships. Also returning is nationals alternate Noah Laack-Veeder '15.
- 16: Carleton returned to the NCAA Championships in 2013 for the first time in six seasons. The Knights finished 16th in the team competition.
- 23: The Knights are ranked No. 23 in the USTFCCCA's final regular- season national poll.

Did You Know?

- The 32-person squad is the largest in recent Carleton men's cross country history.

Off the Course

- For the eighth consecutive season, the Carleton men's cross country team was recognized as an All-Academic team by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association. The Knights posted a 3.52 cumulative grade-point average for the 2013 fall term, the 12th-best figure in the nation.



CONCORDIA | [Cobbers' men's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Garrick Larson (18th season)

A Year Ago

- 8th place | 226 points

Runners to Watch

- Carl Wahlin (So. | Team's No.1 runner in five meets in 2014; won the Crown College Invite; has had four top5 finishes in 2014)
- Ryan Sederquist (Sr. | Team's No.2 runner in 2014; has placed in the top 10 in three meets this season)

By the Numbers

- 4: Cobber sophomore Carl Wahlin is the fourth generation of his family to have attended Concordia.
- 18: Cobber head coach Garrick Larson is coaching in his 18th season which is the longest by any coach in program history.
- 1966: Concordia's highest finish at the MIAC Meet came back in 1966 when they placed second.

Did You Know?

- Concordia sophomore Matthew Lillehaugen has traveled to 49 of the 50 states in the U.S. and has run in most of the states he has visited.

Off the Course

- For the past 13 years Concordia has volunteered with the Itasca State Park and the Park Service doing various conservation projects. This year the Cobbers helped the Department of Natural Resources with maintenance to the trails in the LaSalle Lake State Recreational.



GUSTAVUS | [Gusties' men's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Dale Bahr (Sixth season)

A Year Ago

- 7th place | 207 points

Runners to Watch

- Thomas Knobbe (So., Decorah, Iowa) | Led team in each meet this season with his personal best coming at the Jim Drews Invitational on Oct. 18 where he finished in 26:00 for a 32nd place finish...Finished 40th overall and second on team at the 2013 MIAC Championships with a time of 27:15.6...Led Gustavus with a 71st place finish in 26:56.37 at the NCAA Central Region Championships.
- Evan Jones (So., Pella, Iowa) | Recorded a personal-best time of 26:19 to finish 37th at the Blugold Invitational on Oct. 3...Finished 54th overall at the 2013 MIAC Championships with a time of 28:08.5...Finished 95th overall and second on the team at the NCAA Central Region Championships with a time of 27:36.27.

By the Numbers

- 21: The number of Minnesota natives on the 2014 Gustavus cross country roster. This year's Gustavus squad had a regional flavor with three Iowa natives and two products of Wisconsin.
- 3: The number of places Gustavus moved up in the standings of the MIAC Championships in 2013 compared to 2012. In 2012, Gustavus finished in a tie for 10th place alongside Augsburg with 252 points.

Off the Course

- The Gustavus men's and women's cross country teams have committed to improving their favorite training venue. The Gusties took part in a community service project that will make upgrades and improvements to Seven Mile Creek County Park, a 628 acre park with 10 miles of multi-use trails located off highway 169 between St. Peter and Mankato. The student-athletes will help clear and widen trails, split firewood and fill sandbags to aid washout areas.



HAMLIN | [Pipers' men's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Paul Schamedeke (30th year)

A Year Ago

- 5th place | 175 points

Runners to Watch

- Ryan Peterson (Sr.) Finished 7th at Roy Griak Invite
- Chris Gill (Sr.) Finished 30th in last year's meet

- Nathan Rock (Jr.) Top Five at St. Catherine Invite

By the Numbers

- 5: Where Hamline finished at the prestigious Roy Griak Invite
- 6: number of HU runners who competed in last year's MIAC meet
- 7: freshmen on the HU roster

Did You Know?

- Assistant coach Adam Frye still competes. He ran in the Chicago Marathon in October.

Off the Course

- Paul Schmaedeke is in Hamline's Hall of Fame as a coach and athlete.

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



Head coach

- Matt Haugen (12th season)

A Year Ago

- 6th place | 184 points

Runners to Watch

- Joe Giamberdino (Senior | Has been Macalester's top runner in all but one meet this season; placed 50th out of 181 runners at 2013 Central Regions; 31st at MIAC Championships)
- Lachlan Hinwood (Sophomore | Was Macalester's top runner at the 2014 Roy Griak, placing 28th overall in the field of 235 runners, has consistently been Mac's number two runner all season)
- Trevor Maggart (Junior | placed 80th out of 181 runners at 2013 Central Regions; 43rd at MIAC Championships)

By the Numbers

- 12: Macalester met its team goal of 12th place when it closed out the 2013 Central Region Championship out of 26 teams.
- 13: The Macalester men's cross country roster features players from thirteen different states and two different countries

Did You Know?

- Head Coach Matt Haugen is a former MIAC Champion, winning the race for St. Olaf College in 1977.

Off the Course

- Senior Eric Biggers (Verona, Wis.) was a member of the winning team at Macathon 2014—which is an overnight student-led contest in which Macalester students work to create a new tech-enabled product or service. Biggers team created cOBO—a more secure and localized service for buying and selling.

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



Head coach

- Tim Miles (36th season)

A Year Ago

- 4th place | 108 points

Top Returners

- Thomas Feichtinger (Jr. | Has led SJU at each of its four meets in 2014...two-time MIAC Athlete of the Week this fall...led SJU at three of its four varsity cross-country meets before suffering an ankle injury the week prior to the MIAC Championship, where he took 35th, in 2013...finished 18th at the 2012 NCAA Central Regional and 52nd in 2013)
- Preston Zimny (Jr. | Finished in the top 35 at the 2012 and 2013 MIAC Championship...57th at the 2013 NCAA regional)
- Caleb LeClaire (Jr. | Crossed the finish line in 46th at the 2013 MIAC Championship...83rd at the 2013 NCAA regional)

By the Numbers

- 31: The Johnnies have 31 top-eight finishes at their last 32 NCAA Central Regionals (back to 1982), including five titles and 23 top-five finishes. SJU finished eighth last fall.
- 16: The SJU cross country program has finished in the top 10 at the national meet 16 times since 1968, including five in the top five.
- 27: Since 1967, SJU has 27 combined individual (13) and team (14) MIAC cross country championships.

Did You Know?

- SJU's John Cragg '71 advanced to the Division I championship in both 1969 and 1970 and recorded 49th- and 21st-place finishes at those meets, respectively. His time over the six-mile course in 1970, held at Williamsburg, Virginia, was 28:56. The individual winner in that race was the late Steve Prefontaine of Oregon with a time of 28:00.2.

Off the Course

- The 2013 SJU cross country team earned U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches' Association (USTFCCCA) All-Academic

recognition. Fifty-eight Johnnies combined for a cumulative team GPA of 3.22. The MIAC led all conferences with 10 institutions on the All-Academic list. To qualify as a USTFCCCA All-Academic Cross Country Team, the team must record a cumulative team GPA of 3.10 or better.



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

Head coach

- Ward Berndt (10th season)

A Year Ago

- 9th place | 239 points

Top Performers

- Aaron Haley (5-6, Sr. | Two-time First-Team All-MIAC, 2013 NCAA All-Central Region ... Broke school's 8K record with time of 25:59 at MIAC in 2013)
- Jovan Newsum (6-0, So. | Placed second on team at both MIAC (27:13) and NCAA regional (27:25) in first collegiate season)

By The Numbers

- 1: For the second year in a row, Aaron Haley (Plainview, Minn.) broke the school's eight-kilometer record with a time of 25:59 at the 2013 MIAC Championships.
- 1: Jovan Newsum (Glendale Heights, Ill.), capped a memorable freshman season with his top two times of the year in SMU's final two meets a year ago, recorded a career-best 8K time of 26:22 at the Jim Drews Invitational two weeks ago.
- 2: Aaron Haley (Plainview, Minn.) earned a pair of post-season honors in 2013 — earning a spot on the All-MIAC team with his 11th-place showing at the conference championships, while landing a spot on the All-NCAA Central Region team with a 35th-place effort at the regional meet.

Did You Know?

- Aaron Haley's (Plainview, Minn.) back-to-back All-MIAC performances marked the first time in the nine-year tenure of head coach Ward Berndt that an athlete has all-conference honors in consecutive seasons.

Off The Course

- The Saint Mary's men's cross country team boasted three athletes on the 2013 Academic All-MIAC Team — John Soucheray (Woodbury, Minn.), Gabe Thiel (Berlin, Wis.) and Aaron Haley (Plainview, Minn.) — while Haley also earned USTFCCCA All-Academic honors.
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ST. OLAF | [Oles' men's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Phil Lundin (Seventh season)

A Year Ago

- MIAC Champions | 20 points

In the 2013 NCAA Championships

- 2013 NCAA Division III Champions

Runners to Watch

- Grant Wintheiser (Sr. | 2x MIAC Individual Champion, was national athlete of the week Oct. 7, was 3rd at NCAA's in 2013)
- Jake Campbell (Jr. | 6th at MIAC's, 31st at NCAA's in 2013)
- Paul Escher (Jr. | Was 16th at MIAC's in 2013)
- Jake Brown (Sr. | Runner up at MIAC's in 2013... All-America at NCAA's with 8th place finish)

By the Numbers

- No. 3: The Oles are ranked third in the latest USTFCCCA Division III rankings... St. Olaf began the year at No. 1 and have been in the top three all season.
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ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' men's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Pete Wareham (22nd season)

A Year Ago

- 3rd place | 104 points

In the 2013 NCAA Championships

- Keaton Wendroth (2013 senior) 101st place

Runners to Watch

- Jacob Gerhartz, SO | 19th MIAC CC, 28th NCAA regional in 2013)

- Dylan Baumann, JR | 24th MIAC CC in 2013)
- Robby Williams, SR | 25th MIAC CC in 2013)
- Trevor Smith, SO | 39th MIAC CC in 2013)

By the Numbers

- 33: National ranking for Tommies after getting fourth of 19 D-III teams at LaCrosse
- 9: Tommies who broke 27:00 for 8K at UW-LaCrosse in last meet
- 3: Number of top-5 scorers to graduate from Tommies' 2013 regional team

Did You Know?

- Each member of the Tommies' current top five has set a personal best for 8,000 meters this fall led by Gerhartz (25:30) and Baumann (25:46).

Off the Course

- Tommie Nos. 1-2 runners Gerhartz and Baumann each has a 4.00 grade-point average.

[MIAC Men's Cross Country Home Page](#)