

2015 MIAC Men's Cross Country Championships Preview

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2015 MIAC MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS PREVIEW

ST. PAUL, Minn. -- In recent years, the St. Olaf College men's cross country team has ascended to tremendous heights highlighted by a national championship, a national runner-up finish, and three consecutive Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) championships. Saturday, the Oles aim for an impressive fourth-straight conference title while the other 10 teams all try to dethrone the conference's recent king at the 2015 MIAC Men's Cross Country Championships at Como Golf Course in St. Paul, Minn.



Last year, St. Olaf was downright dominant en route to a third-straight MIAC championship with a miniscule score of 16 points as the Oles swept the top four individual spots and five of the top six places to win by 56 points. St. Olaf's score was the lowest recorded at the MIAC championships since Macalester scored 15 in back-to-back years in 1963 and 1964. The three-time defending champs are trying to become just the seventh team to win the MIAC title four (or more) straight times, and the first since Saint John's won four-straight from 1996 to 1999.

The Oles enter Saturday's 2015 championship race with aspirations of winning a fourth-straight title, and they carry a No. 1 Central Region ranking and a No. 4 national ranking into the conference meet. However, things will look a little different for St. Olaf this time around. Three-time MIAC individual champ Grant Wintheiser has graduated, along with fellow stars Jake Brown and Phillip Meyer, but Head Coach Phil Lundin still has plenty of talent back in Northfield. All-American senior stars Jake Campbell and Paul Escher are back to lead the way in 2015, and fellow senior Calvin Lehr and junior Joe Coffey give the Oles a strong, veteran nucleus to try and continue their reign.

The two teams with the biggest designs on knocking St. Olaf off its perch are the teams that finished second and third a year ago - Carleton (second, 72 points) and St. Thomas (third, 105 points). The Tommies are ranked 33rd in the nation and fifth in the Central Region, with the Knights right behind at No. 6 in the region rankings. Carleton will be led by senior star Hart Hornor who was the only non-St. Olaf runner in the top five last year, and he'll be joined by fellow All-MIAC teammates Jerry Cook-Gallardo and Jonah Barry. St. Thomas has All-MIAC seniors Jacob Gerhartz and Dylan Baumann back to lead the way in 2015 as UST will also try to topple St. Olaf.

Saint John's was fourth a year ago with 120 points and is currently ranked seventh in the Central Region, and the Johnnies hope to contend for another top-four finish in 2015. Saint John's has star senior Thomas Feichtinger back, who was seventh in the MIAC meet and a national qualifier last year, and he'll be joined by junior Ryan Bugler and senior Jake Burr. Hamline was just 12 points behind SJU a year ago in fifth, and the Pipers are also eyeing another top-five finish on Saturday. The Pipers will be led by senior Nathan Rock, who was 15th a year ago, and junior James Logan.

Gustavus has had a strong season with a No. 8 ranking in the Central Region after finishing sixth at the MIAC Championships last year with 155 points. Junior Thomas Knobbe returns after All-MIAC honors and a spot in the NCAA Championships in 2014, and he'll be joined by senior Paul Nordquist who has been the team's top runner this season. Saint Mary's also has an NCAA qualifier back in junior Jovan Newsum, who was an All-MIAC Honorable Mention runner in 2014, and Austin O'Hare and Sherman Moga are also back for the Cardinals who were seventh at the MIAC meet with 191 points a year ago.

Macalester has a pair of upperclassmen atop its otherwise young lineup as junior Lachlan Hinwood and senior Alex Ropes hope to lead the Scots upward to build on 2014's eight-place finish (201 points). Augsburg took ninth a year ago (225 points) and is looking for improvement under second-year Head Coach Meghan Peyton. She'll lean on top runners Abdullahi Salan and Mohamed Mohamed to lead the Auggies up the standings.

Bethel was 10th a year ago with 279 points, but the Royals have two key additions in 2015 - new Head Coach Joe Stephens and the return of senior star Matt Berens, who was an All-American in 2013 and missed 2014 with an injury. Concordia finished 11th a year ago (292 points) and will look to its top two runners all season - sophomore Brandon Quibell and senior Race Heitkamp - to spark some improvement at Saturday's 2015 championship race.

The women's 6k championship race will begin Saturday's meet at 2:15 p.m. and the men's 8k 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. St. Olaf 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.

In addition to the preview, the MIAC also released a [promotional video](#) Wednesday to promote the big race. Fans can stay connected throughout the 2015 MIAC Cross Country Championships on social media through the MIAC's [Facebook](#) page, [Instagram](#) account or on [Twitter](#) using the hashtag #MIACXC.

| [2015 MIAC Cross Country Championships Home Page](#) |

2015 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 (2nd season)

A Year Ago

- 9th place | 225 points

Runners to Watch

- Abdullahi Salan (JR | Team's top runner in all four races this season; season-best 26:04.65 at the UW-La Crosse 8k on 10/17; Has run sub-26:30 times in all three 8k races so far this season)
- Mohamed Mohamed (SR | Team's No. 2 runner in every race he competed in this year; season-best 26:33.78 at the UW-La Crosse 8k on 10/17)
- Chris Huss (JR | Personal-best time of 27:51.74 at the UW-La Crosse 8k on 10/17)

By the Numbers

- 2: Augsburg's roster of 14 only has two seniors, Mohamed Mohamed and Ahmed Nur.
- 2: Top-30 finishers for Augsburg at the 2014 MIAC Championships, as Mohamed Mohamed placed 22nd and Abdullahi Salan placed 26th.
- 14: Augsburg's team finish at the 2014 NCAA Division III Central Regional, its best finish at the regional since finishing seventh in 2009.

Did You Know?

- Augsburg's top runner, Abdullahi Salan, is from Burnsville, Minn. and speaks four different languages.

Off the Course

- The Augsburg cross country teams are committed to civic engagement throughout the community. This past summer, each member of the team completed close to 15 hours of community service, for a total of over 300 hours. The teams participated in such events as helping the Department of Natural Resources with invasive species removal and seed collection for the restoration of native prairie grasses and flowers at the Lost Valley Prairie Scientific and Natural Area.



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

Head coach

- Joe Stephens (1st season)

A Year Ago

- 10th place | 279 points

Runners to Watch

- Matt Berens (Sr. | 2013 All-American, Two-time Roy Griak Invitational Champion)
- Tom Ritter (Sr. | 26:40 at UW-Oshkosh AAE Invitational)
- Evan Hatton (Fr. | 26:29 at UW-Oshkosh AAE Invitational)
- Connor Haugen (Jr. | 26:39 at UW-River Falls Invitational)
- Christian Svennes (Sr. | 27:06 at UW-Oshkosh Invitational)

By the Numbers

- 2: Senior Matt Berens won his second career Roy Griak Invitational invite this season. Berens took home the crown in 2013 and after missing the 2014 season to an injury, Berens has returned in style this year as he won the Griak by 18 seconds with a time of 26:30.
- 4: Berens Griak victory was the fourth in Bethel cross country history for both the men's and women's programs. Dan Greeno was victorious in 2008 along with Marie Borner in 2009, as she went on to win the NCAA DIII national championship, along with Berens two victories in 2013 and 2015.
- 3: The Royals finished third as a team at the University of Minnesota's Roy Griak Invitational, the highest team finish in Bethel's history. The Royals used a pack running technique to near perfection as the group of next four runners after Berens ran together throughout the majority of the race.

Did You Know?

- Matt Berens was the USA Track and Field Minnesota Athlete of the Month for October.

Off the Course

- Royals first-year head coach Joe Stephens competed in the Roy Griak Invitational with his fourth different school. Stephens previously was a part of the Invite with a pair of NCAA DI schools in Colorado State and Wyoming along with NAIA, now NCAA DII, Black Hills State (S.D.).



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

Head coach

- Dave Ricks (9th season)

A Year Ago

- 2nd place | 72 points

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- 4th at NCAA Central Regionals
- 18th at NCAA Championships

Runners to Watch

- Hart Horner (Sr. | 2nd at 2014 MIAC Championships [All-MIAC]; 6th at regionals [All-Region]; 18th at 2014 NCAA Championships [All-American]; posted a top-5 finish at all four races he's run this fall)
- Jerry Cook-Gallardo (So. | 8th at 2014 MIAC Championships [All-MIAC]; 19th at regionals [All-Region]; second-fastest true freshman racer in NCAA Championship field last season)
- Jonah Barry (Sr. | 9th at 2014 MIAC Championships [All-MIAC]; 14th at regionals [All-Region] in 2014)
- Walter Edstrom (Jr. | 21st at 2014 MIAC Championships; 36th at regionals)

By the Numbers

- 5+: Carleton returned five of its seven runners- Horner, Cook-Gallardo, Barry, Edstrom and Joe Haase '16- from last year's qualifier for the NCAA Championships. Also returning is nationals alternate Ryan Hanselman '18.
- 6: The Knights are ranked No. 6 in the USTFCCCA's central region.
- 18: Carleton returned to the NCAA Championships in 2014 for the second consecutive season. The Knights finished 18th in the team competition.

Did You Know?

- In his last meet, Hart Hornor broke the course record at Harkness Memorial State Park, while running in the Connecticut College Invitational, with a time of 24:32.1.

Off the Course

- For the ninth consecutive season, the Carleton men's cross country team was recognized as an All-academic team by the U.S. Track and Cross Country Coaches Association. The Knights posted a 3.48 cumulative grade-point average for the 2014 fall term, the 22nd-best figure in the nation.



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

Head coach

- Garrick Larson (19th season)

A Year Ago

- 11th place | 292 points

Runners to Watch

- Brandon Quibell (Sophomore | Led the team at the Jamestown and MSUM Twilight Invitational)
- Race Heitkamp (Senior | Led the team last week at the Crown Invite with a finish time of 28:24)
- Ryan Turner (Sophomore | Top 5 finisher for the Cobbers in every meet this year)

By the Numbers

- 3: The Cobbers have missed the tandem of Erik Larson, Brandon Quibell and Will Corbett as of late, who are battling injuries. They are three of the team's top seven runners.

Did You Know?

- Race Heitkamp is a former Concordia wrestler. This is his first season running cross-country for the Cobbers.

Off the Course

- Every year the team heads to Itasca State Park near Park Rapids, Minnesota to assist with park projects. This year the team moved 10,000 pounds of gravel around various areas of the park.



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

Head coach

- Dale Bahr (Seventh season)

A Year Ago

- Sixth Place | 155 points

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- Thomas Knobbe ran a 25:43.3, good for 136th place

Runners to Watch

- Thomas Knobbe (Jr., Decorah, Iowa | Led the Gusties in each meet in 2014... placed 11th at 2014 MIAC Championships with 25:35.6, giving him All-Conference honors ... first Gustavus male runner to compete at NCAA Championships since Chris deLaubenfels in 2007)
- Paul Nordquist (Sr., Edina, Minn. | Led Gusties in all but one meet in 2015 ... placed 24th at 2014 MIAC Championships with 26:19.8 ... set personal best with a 25:29.7 at UW-River Falls on Sept. 11)
- Evan Jones (Jr., Pella, Iowa | Placed 32nd at 2015 MIAC Championships with 26:46.0 ... has been Gusties third runner for all but one meet in 2015 ... set a personal best with a 26:46.0 at UW-La Crosse on Oct. 17)

By the Numbers

- 9: The number of places Gustavus moved up in the standings of the NCAA Central Region Championships from 2013 to 2014. The Gusties finished 10th in 2014 compared to 19th in 2013
- 7: The number of runners the Gusties return from their top seven entries in last season's MIAC Championships

Did You Know?

- Gustavus placed first in two of its four meets this season, the first time the Gusties have won two meets during the same season since the school began keeping cross country records in 1985.

Off the Course

- The Gustavus men's and women's cross country teams continue work on improving their favorite training venue, 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. For the past several years, the Gusties have taken part in a community service project that will make upgrades and improvements to Seven Mile Creek, including the clearing and widening of miles of trails, the splitting of firewood, and filling sandbags to aid washout and flooding areas.



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

Head coach

- Paul Schmaedeke (31st season)

A Year Ago

- 5th place | 132 points

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- Ryan Peterson (205th place)

Runners to Watch

- Nathan Rock (Sr, 15th in last year's race, 4th at Roy Griak race this year)
- James Logan (Jr., 47th in last year's race, second best runner at most meets this year)

By the Numbers

- 4: number of runners in Hamline's top seven in 2014 returning this year
- 6: place where Hamline finished at the prestigious Roy Griak meet
- 17: number of runners on Men's CC roster

Did You Know?

- Doran Clark, a former CC runner at Hamline and a member of the school's Board of trustees, finished in 33rd place at the recent Twin Cities Marathon.

Off the Course

- The Men's CC team worked the finish line at the annual Victory memorial race in Minneapolis. It is the 25th consecutive year Hamline has worked this race.

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



Head coach

- Matt Haugen (12th season)

A Year Ago

- 8th place | 201 points

Runners to Watch

- Lachlan Hinwood (Junior | Top runner all season for Mac, overall winner at the St. Bonifacius Invite on Oct.17, 7th overall at Griak this season)
- Alex Ropes (Senior | Number two runner for Macalester this season, ran a 27:25 at the St. Bonifacius Invite on Oct. 17)
- Nate Merrill (Sophomore)
- Mac Doherty (Freshman)
- Chris Boranian (Freshman)

By the Numbers

- 4: The Mac Pack has had FOUR different runners score as the #2 man this season
- 9: Nine of the 20 roster members are new to the team this season.
- 17: Top returner and senior captain Trevor Maggart made his 2015 racing debut on Oct. 17, as did top returning sophomore Nolan Ebner, boosting the Scots' top five depth for the championships.

Did You Know?

- Macalester has four freshmen runners in their top ten performers this season.

Off the Course

- Macalester school record holder and All-MIAC runner Joe Giamberdino '15, returned as the Scots' Men's Cross-Country Assistant Coach this season.

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



Head coach

- Tim Miles (37th season)

A Year Ago

- Fourth place | 120 points

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- Thomas Feichtinger – 77th out of 280 runners

Runners to Watch

- Ryan Bugler (Jr. | Finished 33rd at the 2014 MIAC Championships, fifth for SJU, with a time of 26:47...has finished second, behind Feichtinger, at all three of SJU's collegiate races this fall)
- Jake Burr (Sr. | Rounded out the Johnnies' top 7 runners at the 2014 MIAC Championship in 37th ...claimed 63rd at the 2014 NCAA Regional)
- Thomas Feichtinger (Sr. | Has led SJU at each of its last 10 cross-country meets dating back to fall of 2013...crossed the finish line in seventh at the 2014 MIAC Championship...earned a trip to nationals with an 11th-place finish at the NCAA Regional...took 77th out of 280 runners at the 2014 NCAA Division III Championship)

By the Numbers

- 10: Feichtinger has led SJU at each of its last 10 cross-country meets dating back to fall of 2013.
- 6: The Johnnies return six of their top seven runners from last year's MIAC Championship.
- 32: The Johnnies have 32 top-eight finishes at their last 33 NCAA Central Regionals (back to 1982), including five titles and 23 top-five finishes. SJU finished eighth last fall.

Did You Know?

- Feichtinger is a combined 10-time All-MIAC honoree as a student-athlete in cross country (1), indoor (4) and outdoor (5) track and field.

Off the Course

- SJU earned U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches' Association (USTFCCCA) All-Academic Team recognition in 2014. Forty-four Johnnies combined for a cumulative team GPA of 3.26. A total of 152 men's programs earned the Division III honor and the MIAC once again led all conferences with nine 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 (11th season)

MIAC A Year Ago

- Seventh place | 191 points

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- Jovan Newsum (Glendale Heights, Ill.) placed 107th in the NCAA Division III National Championships, clocking a school-record eight-kilometer time of 25:24.

Runners to Watch

- Jovan Newsum (6-0, Jr. | Broke school's 8K time three times in 2014 ... 2014 Honorable-mention All-MIAC ... 2014 All-Central Region. ... NCAA Division III national qualifier)
- Austin O'Hare (6-4, So. | Clocked top two 8K times at the MIAC (27:20) and Central Region (27:27) meets last season. ... Has been one of Cardinals' top 2 runners all season in 2015)
- Sherman Moga (6-3, Jr. | Among Cardinals' top five runners all season. ... Clocked career-best 27:17 8K at the 2014 MIAC Championships).

By The Numbers

- :01: Jovan Newsum (Glendale Heights, Ill.) and Aaron Haley (Plainview, Minn.) finished one one-hundreth of a second apart at the 2014 MIAC Championships. Newsum clocked a time of 26:06, with Haley right on his heels at 26:07. Both earned honorable-mention All-MIAC honors for their efforts.
- 1: Jovan Newsum (Glendale Heights, Ill.) became the first male in Saint Mary's program history to qualify for the NCAA Division III National Championships in 2014. Newsum placed 107th with a time of 25:24.
- 3: The Cardinals' 8K school record was broke three times last season—all three times by Jovan Newsum (Glendale Heights, Ill.). Newsum clocked a then-school-record time of 26:06 at the MIAC Championships, followed that up with time of 25:40 at the NCAA Central Regional, and posted school-record No. 3 with a 25:24 showing at the NCAA Division III National Championships.

Did You Know?

- Jovan Newsum (Glendale Heights, Ill.) or Austin O'Hare (Rushford, Minn.) finished first in each of the Cardinals' four races this season. O'Hare led the Cardinal charge in the team's opening race, while Newsum has led the way over the past three.

Off The Course

- Aaron Haley (Plainview, Minn.) represented the Cardinals on the 2014 MIAC Fall All-Academic Team.

ST. OLAF | [Oles' men's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Phil Lundin (8th season)

A Year Ago

- 1st place | 16 points



In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- Second place overall as a team with 143 points. Grant Wintheiser was the NCAA champion, and juniors Jake Campbell and Paul Escher both finished with All-American honors.

Runners to Watch

- Jake Campbell (Senior | 2014 All-American in cross country with a 9th place finish, 2015 NCAA champion in the indoor 3k (8:10.55) and All-American in the indoor 5k (4th - 14:32.55), 3rd in the outdoor 1500 at the NCAA championships with a PR of 3:45, Second at 2014 MIAC Championships in cross country)

- Paul Escher (Senior | NCAA National Champion in the indoor mile and outdoor 1500 last spring, All-American in Cross country last year with a 14th place finish, School record holder in the 1000m, finished 6th at MIAC Championships last year in cross country)
- Calvin Lehn (Senior | 15:01 5k runner last spring, finished third at the Jim Drews invitational with a time of 24:51.6.)
- Joe Coffey (Junior | Qualified for the 1500 finals at the NCAA outdoor championships this spring, has run 25:18 for 8k.)

By the Numbers

- 2: Highest national ranking this season for St. Olaf
- 14: Number of runners who ran under 26:30 at the Jim Drews Invite
- 3: Consecutive MIAC cross country championships won by St. Olaf

Did You Know?

- Of the 14 St. Olaf runners to break 26:30, 9 will be returning to compete in the 2016 season.

Off the Course

- Senior captain Paul Escher was named the USATFCCA Scholar-Athlete of the Year after maintaining a 3.96 GPA while claiming two individual national titles in indoor and outdoor track.



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

Head coach

- Pete Warehem (23rd season)

A Year Ago

- 3rd place | 105 points

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- 31st place of 32 teams

Runners to Watch

- Jacob Gerhartz (Senior) | 2014: (10th at MIAC, 15th at Regions, 112th at NCAA Champ., All-MIAC, All-Academic MIAC)
- Dylan Baumann (Senior) | 2014: (12th at MIAC, 18th at Regions, 163rd at NCAA Champ., Academic All-MIAC)
- Trevor Smith (Junior) | 2014: (30th at MIAC, 46th at Regions)
- Ephraim Bird (Freshman) | 5th place Minn. Class A state CC in 2014; top 30 finisher at all five individual races this fall)
- Tim Van Laarhoven (Sophomore) | 2014: (71st at MIAC)

By the Numbers

- 5: Of a possible 5, events in which UST's team finished in the top four this fall, led by a third-place at St. Olaf Invite
- 33: Latest USTFCCA national ranking for Tommies
- 5: Top-five individual finishes this fall for Jacob Gerhartz, including two firsts

Did You Know?

- Coach Pete Warehem has two sons competing in college athletics, junior Nate (golf) at St. Thomas, and freshman Nick (cross country/T&F) at Georgetown.

Off the Course

- The Tommies' team grade-point average of 3.32 includes unblemished 4.00s recorded by Jacob Gerhartz and Dylan Baumann.

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