

# 2017 MIAC Men's Cross Country Championship Preview

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[Jump to:](#) | [Unofficial Results](#) | [Poll](#) | [Storylines](#) |

**NORTHFIELD, Minn.** – The Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) will crown its 2017 men's cross country champion on Saturday. For the first time since 1992, that coronation will happen at a site other than St. Paul's Como Golf Course, as St. Olaf College will host the 2017 MIAC Championships on-campus in Northfield, Minn.

The 11-team men's 8K race is set to begin at 11 a.m. on Saturday. St. Olaf – ranked 30th in the nation in the latest U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) Top 35 Poll – enters the race as a prohibitive favorite, having claimed five consecutive Conference titles.

St. Olaf and Carleton have represented the MIAC in the national spotlight all season, with the Oles climbing as high as 16th in the national rankings and the Knights up to 27. St. Olaf has finished no lower than fifth at any event this season, while Carleton – a program receiving votes in the last national poll – has placed sixth or higher in every race this year and claimed victory at the UW-River Falls Falcon Invite in September.

This will be far from a two-team race; however. While the Oles also hold the third spot in the USTFCCCA Central Region rankings and Carleton ranks fifth, St. Thomas is not far behind at seventh followed by Saint John's in ninth. Not to mention, Gustavus registered a third-place finish at last year's MIAC Championships, and Augsburg, Bethel, Concordia, Hamline, Macalester and Saint Mary's will all be looking to play spoiler.

Once the results of the 2017 MIAC Men's Cross Country Championship are tabulated and deemed final, a short awards ceremony will follow the conclusion of the women's race, which begins at noon. The top 15 runners will be honored as All-Conference selections, with runners finishing in places 16-to-25 receiving All-Conference Honorable Mention. The championship team will also be honored with the presentation of the MIAC Championship plaque.



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## FOLLOW THE ACTION

Fans who are not traveling to Northfield will have access to unofficial results soon after the action concludes courtesy of [Fast Finish Results](#).

The MIAC has a championship home page for the event, that will serve as the online home of the meet. The championship page will include results and photos as they become available.

| [Championship Home Page](#) | [Men's Team Results](#) | [Men's Individual Results](#) | [Course Map](#) |

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## IN THE POLLS

St. Olaf is ranked 30th in the nation in the latest USTFCCCA Poll, while Carleton received votes.

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## KEEP AN EYE ON

A few MIAC storylines and runners to keep an eye on heading into Saturday.

**Back for More:** One-third of last year's All-Conference team returns to race this season, including **Alex Berhe** (St. Olaf-5th), **Trey Collins** (Saint John's-9th), **William Anderson** (St. Olaf-10th), **Cameron Meikle** (Carleton-11th), and **Tris Dodge** (Carleton-14th). Five more returning runners - **Jack Henschel** (St. Olaf-16th), **Thomas Lerdall** (St. Olaf-18th), **Eric Bakken** (St. Olaf-20th), **Alex Wischnack** (Gustavus-22nd) and **Parker Rosenau** (St. Thomas-23rd) – earned honorable mention All-MIAC last year.

**Action Jack:** St. Olaf sophomore **Jack Henschel** finished 16th at last year's MIAC Championships with a time of 26:48.3. This year, he was the top finisher for the Oles at the St. Olaf home invite, placing fourth overall with a time of 26:05.3.

**Youth Movement:** St. Thomas enters the 2017 MIAC Championships young and hungry. No active Tommie has garnered All-Region or All-America honors thus far, but the group of largely underclassmen is among the deepest in the Conference.

**Perfect Start:** Saint John's opened the 2017 season with a first-place team finish at the four-mile Luther Invitational in Decorah, Iowa. The Johnnies had three runners in the top-10, led by senior **Matthew Burgstahler**, who placed fourth overall and second among all collegiate runners with a time of 21:06.

**Donson Domination:** Carleton senior Donson Cook-Gallardo has won not one, not two, but *three* MIAC Athlete of the Week honors in 2017. The Moscow, Idaho native placed second as an individual at both the St. Olaf Invitational and Lewis & Clark Invitational this year.