

2013 MIAC Women's Golf Preview

Posted: Sep 04, 2013

Jump to: | [Championships](#) | [Links](#) | [Team Previews](#) |

2013 MIAC WOMEN'S GOLF CONFERENCE PREVIEW

ST. PAUL, Minn. -- A year ago, the women's golf capital of the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) was Northfield, Minn., as St. Olaf captured its second-straight conference championship and cross-town rival Carleton came in second. As the 2013 season tees off, the Oles and Knights will look to remain atop the MIAC, as the rest of the league strives to catch the duo.

St. Olaf had never won a MIAC women's golf championship until 2011, and last season they added their second in a row with a three-day score of 966 at the unseasonably cold conference championship meet in early October, which was good for an 11-shot win over Carleton. The Knights carded a 977 as they continue to climb the conference ladder. Gustavus - seemingly always in contention for the MIAC title - was eight shots behind Carleton in third at 985.

St. Thomas also continued the progression of its program, carding an even 1,000 to finish fourth, and Saint Benedict rounded out the top five in the standings with a score of 1,017. Concordia was solidly in sixth place (1,042) and Augsburg (1,076) edged Macalester (1,077) by a single stroke for seventh. Bethel (1,098), St. Catherine (1,113) and Saint Mary's (1,145) rounded out the final three spots in the standings.

The 2012 results provide an indication of where these programs sit, but they aren't a crystal clear prediction for the 2013 as a lot can change in a year's time. After leading to the Oles to back-to-back titles, Head Coach Luke Benoit resigned to pursue other interests and two-time MIAC Player-of-the-Year Molly Erickson graduated to end her stellar career. In addition to Erickson, three other All-MIAC honorees graduated or transferred - all from the conference's top three teams - so the rest of the conference could have an opening to close the gap.

The 2013 season teed off Friday with many of the MIAC teams in action over Labor Day weekend to start writing the story of the new campaign. With the dramatic final chapter looming in early October at the 2013 MIAC Championships, it will be fun to turn the pages over the next month to see which direction each of the conference's 11 teams are heading.

WHAT'S NEW?

There will be a pair of new faces coaching in the conference this season, starting with Katie Connelly, who was hired this summer to replace Benoit and continue building upon the strong foundation he left behind. Connelly comes to the defending champs from Edgewood College (Wis.) where she was the head coach, following an All-Big Ten career as a student-athlete at the University of Wisconsin.

She won't be the only rookie coach this year, as Ryan Egan replaces Kevin Landrum as the head coach of both the Saint Mary's men's and women's teams. Egan was promoted to the head gig after two years as the Saint Mary's assistant coach, and he is also an assistant men's hockey coach at SMU, a position he has held since the start of the 2009-10 season.

With Connelly and Egan joining the fold, more than half the teams in the conference (six) have hired new head coaches in the past five years. Concordia's Duane Siverson is the dean of MIAC golf coaches, as he enjoys his milestone 30th season with the Cobbers, with Carleton's Eric Sieger and his 13 years as the second-longest tenure in the league.

Also, the coaches and administrators agreed upon a new way to determine the All-MIAC honors. Previously, the honor was bestowed upon the top 10 finishers at the MIAC Championships. Now, those same top 10 individuals will be recognized at the meet as the All-MIAC Championship Team, and they will also automatically earn All-MIAC honors, which will now be awarded in May along with the rest of the MIAC Golf Awards. In addition, the coaches can elect to honor a total of 15 players. This new system allows someone who had an outstanding season but finished outside the top 10 at the MIAC meet to still be eligible for recognition. It also allows golf to present all of its honors at once, rather than the All-MIAC team in the fall and top individual honors in the spring.

WHO'S BACK?

Though the Oles said goodbye to their head coach, Erickson, and three-time All-MIAC performer Molly Knutson, the cupboard certainly isn't bare as Connelly takes over. Maxine Carlson, who earned All-Conference honors in each of her first two seasons, is back for her junior season. Two more juniors, Linde Sundell and Nadia Baka, tied for 12th at the MIAC Championships a year ago and contributed to the Oles' championship, so a strong nucleus is still in place.

Carleton also welcomes back an outstanding junior duo, despite the loss of All-MIAC and All-Region golfer Gina Kabsakalis. Kelsey Moede returns after All-MIAC and All-Region honors a year ago, and she was the runner-up to Erickson at the conference meet. Two-time All-Conference and All-Region star Taylor Wells is also back after setting a school record last year with an even-par 72 on the second day of the MIAC Championships, though she'll be studying abroad this fall.



The influx of junior talent continues when one takes a look at Gustavus' roster, as the Gusties will be led by a trio of third-year players. Sam Falk and Liz Strom both finished in the top 10 at the MIAC meet a year ago to earn All-Conference honors, and Jordan Drenttel had a pair of top-10 finishes a season ago as well for Gustavus.

St. Thomas welcomes back the conference's top senior in Doyle O'Brien, a two-time All-MIAC and All-American, who finished in the top 10 at the Division III Championships each of the past two seasons. She's joined by senior Emma Wilson and 2012 MIAC Rookie-of-the-Year Erin Dingmann to give the Tommies high hopes in 2013. Saint Benedict also welcomes back a talented trio made up of juniors Grace Todora and Bridget Cummings and senior Jill Sampair, who led the Blazers to a top-five MIAC finish a year ago.

As Siverson enters his 30th season, he returns a lot of talent from Concordia's sixth-place squad. The Cobber lineup returns intact, led by a trio of talented juniors - Amy Mireault, Katie Nelson and Molly Zavadil. Augsburg welcomes back a pair of players - junior Rachel Kristofferson and senior Hannah Shafer - who finished in the top 23 at last year's MIAC Championships. Macalester will try to replace Grace Caird, but has a strong core in Head Coach Thomas Adalsteinsson's second season, led by senior Maddie Arbisi and sophomore Jessica Stone.

Bethel graduated a pair of seniors from its lineup, but returns three of its top four MIAC finishers. Senior Emily Gerry was 27th at the MIAC meet last season, and sophomore Erica Schwaibe and Danae Johnson are also back in the Royals' lineup. St. Catherine hopes to continue its progress in the third year of its program, and the Wildcats are in position to do so with the return of juniors Ellen Rager and Whitney Nash, as well as sophomore Kate Caron. Egan must replace leader Jenna Mrozinski in his first season, but will rely on sophomores Kendra Palkowski and Haley Jung to continue their progression after both contributed in their first year of collegiate golf.

CIRCLE THESE DATES

Clearly, the first three dates any MIAC women's golf fan will want to mark on the calendar are Oct. 5, 6 and 7, which are the three days the conference title will be decided at the 2013 MIAC Golf Championships. The three-day, 54-hole event will again be held at Bunker Hills Golf Course in Coon Rapids, Minn. Spectators are welcome and the MIAC will provide "live" updates throughout the tournament.

This coming Saturday and Sunday (Sept. 7-8) will feature six MIAC teams (Augsburg, Bethel, Concordia, Macalester, Saint Benedict and St. Catherine) competing against one another at the Concordia Invitational at Detroit Lakes, Minn. Nearly the entire conference - Bethel, Carleton, Concordia, Gustavus, Macalester, Saint Benedict, St. Catherine, St. Olaf and St. Thomas - will all meet the following weekend at the Division III Classic in Lake City Minn.

Other MIAC invites of interest include the Blazer Invite, hosted by Saint Benedict Sept. 21-22 in St. Cloud, Minn. Those same two dates, Carleton will also host the College City Challenge in Northfield, Minn. Gustavus will host its Fall Invitational Sept. 28-29 in Le Sueur and Mankato, Minn.

A CLOSER LOOK

The rest of the 2013 MIAC Women's Golf Preview contains MIAC Championship details, helpful links and a preview for each team submitted by their sports information director. The new MIAC web site - www.miacathletics.com - will be an outstanding source for MIAC women's golf news, schedules, results, stats and more throughout the 2013-14 season.

This year, the [MIAC scoreboard](#) will include women's golf events, with links to results to see how each fared throughout the season. Also, download the [MIAC mobile app](#) to have all the information with you anywhere you travel. Also, connect to the conference on its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) pages for updates and interaction all season long.

2013 MIAC WOMEN'S GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2013 MIAC Golf Championships will be held Oct. 5-7 at Bunker Hills Golf Course in Coon Rapids, Minn. The 2013 host school is Carleton College. The MIAC has a championship home page for the event, which will feature complete details as well as live scoring and continual updates throughout the event. The three-day, 54-hole championship will crown the MIAC team championship, and the top 10 individuals (including ties) will be honored with All-Championship Team honors. Admission is free and spectators are encouraged to attend.

| [2013 MIAC Golf Championship Page](#) |

MIAC WOMEN'S GOLF LINKS

| [MIAC Women's Golf Page](#) | [Schedule](#) | [2012 Statistics](#) | [Recordbook](#) | [Archives](#) |

TEAM-BY-TEAM PREVIEWS

Jump to: | [AUG](#) | [BU](#) | [CAR](#) | [CON](#) | [GAC](#) | [MAC](#) | [CSB](#) | [SCU](#) | [SMU](#) | [STO](#) | [UST](#) |

AUGSBURG | [Auggies' women's golf home page](#) |

Head Coach

- Ted Vickerman (Seventh season)



A Year Ago

- Seventh place (1,076)

Top Returners

- Rachel Kristofferson (JR | Team-best 85.7 stroke average and .717 (210-83) win-loss percentage in 2012-13; 17th place at 2012 MIAC Championships (253) in first year at Augsburg after transferring from Bemidji State)
- Hannah Shafer (SR | 89.2 stroke average and .565 (177-136) win-loss percentage in 2012-13; t-23rd place at 2012 MIAC Championships (260); 90.2 career stroke average)
- Katie Kristofferson (SO | 96.0 stroke average in 2012-13)

Key Losses

- Jill Ferguson (97.2 stroke average in 2012-13; 97.8 career stroke average in 57 career rounds)
- Courtney Barthel (96.3 stroke average in 2012-13; 97.9 career stroke average in 29 career rounds)
- Emilee Howe (97.7 stroke average in 2012-13; 103.3 career stroke average in 24 career rounds)

By the Numbers

- 1,076: Augsburg's team score at the 2012 MIAC Championships, Augsburg's school record for a 54-hole meet, eclipsing the 1,089 total set at the 2010 conference meet.
- 10: Rounds in the 80s shot by Rachel Kristofferson in 2012-13. Kristofferson had 10 of the 19 rounds shot in the 80s by Augsburg women's golfers in 2012-13.
- 365.0: Augsburg's team stroke average in 2012-13, a 28.8-stroke improvement from the team's 393.8 average in 2011-12.

Did You Know?

- Augsburg has finished seventh at the MIAC Championships in three of the last four seasons. Augsburg's best-ever team finish at the MIAC tournament was in its first year of the program, 1991-92, when the Auggies finished fourth in the seven-team conference meet.



BETHEL | [Royals' women's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Trent Anderson (Fifth season)

A Year Ago

- Ninth place (1,098)

Top Returners

- Erika Schwalbe (So. | T-38th in 2012 MIAC Championships)
- Emily Gerry (Sr. | T-27th in 2012 MIAC Championships)
- Danae Johnson (Jr. | T-44th in 2012 MIAC Championships)

Key Losses

- Erika Anderson (T-41st in 2012 MIAC Championships)
- Laura Nicholson (2012 MIAC Championships participant)

By the Numbers

- 88.5: In her debut season, Erika Schwalbe led the Royals throughout the 2012 campaign with an average 18-hole score of 88.5 strokes.
- 12: After firing a pair of 370's on the opening two days of the 2012 MIAC Championships, Bethel dropped 12 strokes on the final day to finish the match with 1,098 strokes.
- 364: Bethel's strongest performance last year came in the Macalester Invitational, when the Royals fired 364 strokes in an 18-hole triangular with Macalester and St. Catherine.

Did You Know?

- Bethel University's women's golf team returns its Top 3 players, according to average score per 18 holes, from its 2012 squad.

Off the Course

- The Royals received two MIAC Academic All-Conference awards following the 2012 season, which included junior golfer Danae Johnson.



CARLETON | [Knights' women's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Eric Sieger (13th season)

A Year Ago

- Second place (977)

Top Returners

- Kelsey Moede (Jr. | All-MIAC and All-Region for 2012-13 season, finished runner-up at last year's MIAC Championships)
- Taylor Wells (Jr. | 2011-12 and 2012-13 All-MIAC selection and WGA All-Region, set school record at last year's MIAC Championships with her second-round, even-par 72)

Key Losses

- Gina Kabasakalis (2011-12 and 2012-13 All-MIAC selection and 2011-12 WGCA All-Region)

By the Numbers

- 2: The Knights finished 2nd at the 2012-13 MIAC-Championships with a three-round total of 977, which is 25 strokes lower than their next best finish. The second-place finish was the best performance in team history at the MIAC Championships
- 3: Three members of the Carleton squad earned All-MIAC honors for the 2012-13 season: Kelsey Moede (2nd), Gina Kabasakalis (T4th), and Taylor Wells (8th)
- 11: Last season, the Knights climbed to as high as 11th in the national rankings

Did You Know?

- Kelsey Moede finished runner-up at last year's MIAC Championships with a three-day total of 236, just one stroke behind St. Olaf's Molly Erickson.

Off the Course

- Taylor Wells is the first Carleton women's golfer to earn WGCA All-Region and All-American Scholar honors in her first two seasons



CONCORDIA | [Cobbers' women's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Duane Siverson (30th season)

A Year Ago

- Sixth place (1,042)

Top Returners

- Amy Mireault (Jr. | Led the team in scoring average in 2012-13; Finished in the top 20 at the 2012 MIAC Meet)
- Katie Nelson (Jr. | Top Concordia golfer at the 2012 MIAC Championship Meet)
- Molly Zavadil (Jr. | 3rd on the team in scoring average in 2012-13)

Key Losses

- None

By the Numbers

- 5: Concordia returns all five golfers who competed at the 2012 MIAC Championship Meet
- 13: The Cobbers have 13 athletes on the 2013-14 roster – the most since 1995-96
- 30: Concordia head coach Duane Siverson is entering his 30th season at the helm of the Cobbers. He was the head coach for CC from 1980-02 and then returned in 2008

Did You Know?

- Cobber freshman Allison Burns is a second degree black belt



GUSTAVUS | [Gusties' women's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Scott Moe (10th Season)

A Year Ago

- Third place (985)

Top Returners

- Sam Falk (Jr., Glenwood, Minn.) - 2012 All-MIAC with seventh place finish (242, +26)... Ranked second on the team and fifth in the MIAC in stroke average per round last season (81.3)... Racked up seven top 10 finishes, including four top fives and two first place standings.
- Liz Strom (Jr., Fargo, N.D.) - 2012 All-MIAC following 10th place finish at MIAC Championships (246, +30)... Ranked third on the team and 13th in the MIAC in stroke average last season (84.5)... Finished in the top 10 four times.
- Jordan Drenttel (Jr., Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) - Played in nine events during the 2012-13 season, finishing inside the top 10 twice... Held a stroke average of 85.8 (sixth/team)... 2013-14 team captain.

Key Losses

- Kayleigh Dittes (Eden Prairie, Minn.) - 2012 All-MIAC after finishing sixth at MIAC Championships (245, +29)... Led team in stroke average at 80.5 (fourth/MIAC)... Totaled nine top 10 finishes, including three in the top five.

By the Numbers

- 0: The number of seniors on this year's roster.
- 329.4: Gustavus' team stroke average per round last season, which ranked second in the MIAC.
- 3: The number of rounds the Gusties produced in the top seven lowest rounds among conference competitors last year.

Did You Know?

- First-year Mallory Drenttel (Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) is the third Drenttel to play for head coach Scott Moe in the last six years. Mallory follows in the footsteps of sisters Taylor `12 and current captain Jordan `15 in joining the Gustie women's golf team in St. Peter.

Off the Course

- Last season, four women's golfers were named Women's Golf Coaches Association (WGCA) All-American Scholars for Division III. Kayleigh Dittes `13 (Eden Prairie, Minn.), Liz Strom (Jr., Fargo, N.D.), Chloe Altmann (So., Olivia, Minn.), and Emilie Anderson (So., Osceola, Wis.) were among just nine women's golfers from the MIAC who were awarded the honor.

MACALESTER | [Scots' women's golf home page](#) |



Head coach

- Tomas Adalsteinsson (Second season)

A Year Ago

- Eighth place (1,077)

Top Returners

- Jessica Stone (So., 91.8 avg. in 2012-13)
- Maddie Arbisi (Sr., 92.5 avg. in 2012-13)

Key Losses

- Grace Caird (top player on team; 88.9 avg.)

By the Numbers

- 74 – Elena Baker opener her collegiate career earlier this fall with a 74 in a dual with St. Mary's, the second-best single-round score in program history.
- 351 – Macalester best single round last year was a 351 posted at the MIAC tournament.

Did You Know?

- Head Coach Tomas Adalsteinsson is a former golfer for Iceland's national team and in 2000 placed 25th at the European team championship. In 2001 he was Icelandic Junior champion and Icelandic Junior Tour champion.

Off the Course

- Suzanne Dufault made the Academic All-MIAC squad last year.

SAINT BENEDICT | [Blazers women's golf home page](#) |



Head coach

- Darly Schomer (Fourth season)

A Year Ago

- Fifth place (1,017)

Top Returners

- Grace Todora (Jr. | One win, five top-five's, six top-10's, team best 83.1 average, low round of 74)
- Bridget Cummings (Jr. | One top-five, two top-10's, 87.1 average, low round of 74)
- Jill Sampair (Sr. | One top-10, 88.4 average, team's only senior low round of 81)

Key Losses

- Karly Pratt (One win, two top-five's, 89.8 average)

By the Numbers

- 3: Consecutive team titles at the Blazer open after last season
- 2: Individual medalists in the final two tournaments of the regular season, with Grace Todora winning the Blazer Invite and Karly Pratt winning the SCSU Dual.
- 74: Low rounds for Cummings and Todora, the sixth best round in the MIAC in 2012.

Did You Know?

- Head Darly Schomer was runner-up at the 2012 State Amateur Tournament, while winning the Mixed Amateur Team Championship.

ST. CATHERINE | [Wildcats' women's golf home page](#) |



Head coach

- Kris Wessinger (Third season)

A Year Ago

- 10th place (1,113)

Top Returners

- Ellen Rager (Jr. | Career low round – 81, top Wildcat finisher at MIAC championships (t-30th), 3rd place at Blazer Invite (Sept. 22), top-10 at Concordia Invite)
- Whitney Nash (Jr. | Career low round – 85, won Bethel's Royal Match (May 5), MIAC Athlete-of-the-Week (May 7))
- Kate Caron (So. | Career low round – 86, top-10 finish at Blazer Invite (Sept. 22))

By the Numbers

- 81: Ellen Rager shot two-consecutive rounds of 81 during the second round of the Concordia Invite on Sept. 8 and the first round of the Division III Classic on Sept. 15. Her 81 was not only a career low, but is also the lowest score by an individual in St. Catherine golf history.
- 356: The Wildcat squad shot a program low-round of 356 during the second round of the Concordia Invite on Sept. 9.

Did You Know?

- Whitney Nash won Bethel's Royal match on May 5 with a career-low round of 85 to bring in the first MIAC Athlete-of-the-Week on honor in St. Catherine golf program history. Nash also became the first individual in Wildcat golf history to win a tournament.

Off the Course

- The Wildcat golf team volunteered with Minnesota's Loaves & Fishes organization as part of Division III Week in April. They served meals to needy families at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Minneapolis.



SAINT MARY'S | [Cardinals' women's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Ryan Egan (First season)

A Year Ago

- 11th place (1,145)

Top Returners

- Kendra Palkowski (5-5 So. | 99.4 scoring average)
- Haley Jung (5-5, So. | 99.9 scoring average)

Key Losses

- Jenna Mrozinski (Team-best 92.2 stroke average)

By the Numbers

- 4: Jenna Mrozinski recorded the team's low four scores this season — including a season-best 89 in the third round of the MIAC Championships on Oct. 8
- 92: Haley Jung (Monticello, Minn.) carded a career-best 92 during the second round of the MIAC Championships, and then-fellow freshman Kendra Palkowski (Arcadia, Wis.) equaled that effort during the conference championship's third round
- The Cardinals recoded a season-low 375 during the third round of the 2012 MIAC Championships

Did You Know?

- Haley Jung (Monticello, Minn.), Kendra Palkowski (Arcadia, Wis.) and Jennie Marx (Hector, Minn.) all posted collegiate-best scores at their first MIAC Championships a year ago. Jung carded a career-best 92 during the second round of the 54-hole tournament, while Marx — who had not broken 100 in her first six collegiate rounds — shot 97-99-98—294 at the season-ending conference championships, and Palkowski tallied a final-round 92.



ST. OLAF | [Oles' women's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Katie Connelly (First season)

A Year Ago

- First place (966)

In the 2013 NCAA Championships

- 15th at NCAA Championships, Molly Erickson 22nd overall as top individual

Top Returners

- Maxine Carlson (Jr. | 2x All-MIAC... Was 4th at MIAC's... Was 6th at Wartburg Spring Invite.)
- Linde Sundell (Jr. | Was 12th at MIAC's... Finished 3rd at Wartburg Spring Invite.)
- Nadia Baka (Jr. | Was 12th at MIAC's in 2012.)

Key Losses

- Molly Erickson (2x MIAC Player of the Year, 2x Second-Team All-America... Won four tournaments, including three straight in 2012-13... Collected best round in at least 10 years at St. Olaf, a 71 at D3 Classic.)
- Molly Knutson (3x All-MIAC, was second on team in scoring at 83.4 strokes/round)

By the Numbers

- 2: St. Olaf won MIAC titles in each of the last two seasons, its first two in program history.

- 79: Back-to-back 79's to close the MIAC Championships for Maxine Carlson helped St. Olaf clinch its second straight MIAC Title
 - 1st: 2013 will be the first season for Katie Connelly as the Oles' head coach. Connelly, an All-Big Ten golfer at Wisconsin, was the head coach at Edgewood College last season.
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ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' women's golf home page](#) |

Head coach

- Sara Evens (Ninth season)

A Year Ago

- Fourth place (1,000)

In the 2012 NCAA Championships

- Tommie junior Doyle O'Brien tied for 10th out of 110 players at the May national meet, her second consecutive top-10 finish.

Top Returners

- Doyle O'Brien, SR, (2X All-America; 3rd MIAC, 10th NCAA; 78.9 average, second best in MIAC)
- Emma Wilson SR (9th, 18th, 14th career MIAC Championships; 83.6 stroke average in 2011-12)
- Erin Dingmann, SO (8th in 2012 MIAC Championships; MIAC Rookie of the Year, 83.6 average)

Key Losses

- Cassy Norton, SR (19th in 2012 MIAC Championships, four-year starter)

By the Numbers

- 30: Consecutive tournaments without a team title for UST before it placed first in back-to-back September 2012 multi-team events
- 4: Number of Tommie seniors -- Emma Wilson, Annelise Keune, Kristin Tischer and Doyle O'Brien -- among seven returning players
- 5: Number of Wisconsin natives on UST's 10-player roster, including freshman all-stater Rachel Morris of Mequon (Homestead High)

Did You Know?

- St. Thomas topped six other MIAC teams in the fall 2013 opening tournament as it took first place in a 15-team field at the UW-Eau Claire Invite.

Off the Course

- The Tommies' seven returning players have a combined cumulative grade-point average of 3.64, led by Dingmann's 4.00.
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[MIAC Women's Golf Home Page](#)