

2017 MIAC Women's Golf Championship Preview

Posted: Oct 06, 2017

[Jump to:](#) | [Championship 101](#) | [Live Scoring](#) | [Storylines](#) |

BECKER, Minn. – The Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) is set to tee off the 2017 Women's Golf Championships Saturday morning.

MIAC teams will compete in a three-day, 54-hole Conference tournament, which will call a new course home in 2017. The College of Saint Benedict will play host this year from Pebble Creek Golf Club in Becker, Minn.

CHAMPIONSHIP 101

The action will begin Saturday morning, with the first wave of golfers set to tee off at 10:27 a.m. Teams are seeded based on their finish in last year's Championships and golfers will tee off in descending order of their place in the lineup (No. 5 to No. 1). St. Catherine and Carleton will tee off first beginning at 10:27 a.m., followed by Gustavus and St. Thomas at 11:12 a.m. Individual entrants from Macalester will join the last two pairings in the Gustavus/St. Thomas group. Bethel, Saint Benedict and St. Olaf will begin teeing off at 11:57 a.m. while Concordia, Saint Mary's and Augsburg will begin the last wave of golfers at 12:42 p.m.

Sunday pairings will be ordered according to first day scores and teams will reorder their golfers according to Day One results, with the highest score playing in the No. 5 spot and the lowest at No. 1. Day Two tee times begin at 8:57 a.m. Round 3 on Monday will follow a hybrid format with tee times once again starting at 8:57 a.m. Each school enters five players, with the four best performances each day determining the team score.

The team that comes away with the lowest score over the course of the weekend will receive the MIAC's automatic qualifier to the 2018 NCAA Division III Women's Golf Championship.

Day One pairings and tee times can be found [here](#).



FOLLOW THE ACTION

There are numerous ways fans who are not traveling to Becker can follow all the action throughout the tournament. The MIAC will once again offer enhanced (unofficial) live scoring and hole-by-hole updates through Golfstat's live scoring system. Fans will easily be able to track team and individual progress throughout all three rounds.

The MIAC has a championship home page for the event, that will serve as the online home of the tournament. The championship page will include tee times, pairings and results as they become available, as well as recaps and photos.

| [Championship Home Page](#) | [Women's Live Scoring](#) |

TIDBITS FROM THE TEEBOX

A few MIAC storylines and golfers to keep an eye on throughout the tournament.

Back for More: The 2017 field of competitors features eight returning golfers who placed in the top-10 at last year's MIAC Championships, including: **Alyssa Akiyama**, Carleton (1st); **Christine Piwnica**, Bethel (2nd); **Ayumi Sakamoto**, Carleton (T-5th); **Sydney Busker**, St. Catherine (7th); **Natalie Amundson**, Saint Benedict (8th); **Melissa Biesmann**, St. Olaf (9th); **Jessica Nelson**, Gustavus (T-10th); and **Kaitlyn Alvarez**, St. Catherine (T-10th).

Leading the Way: Carleton went 4-for-4 this fall, competing in four tournaments and securing four team victories. The Knights also displayed their depth during this run, as **Ziyi Wang** recorded three top-three finishes, **Ayumi Sakamoto** landed in third twice, and **Alyssa Akiyama** collected medalist honors to go along with two additional top-seven performances.

Record-Breaking Wildcats: St. Catherine golfers **Sydney Busker** and **Kaitlyn Alvarez** have gotten off to a history-making start to 2017. Busker recorded the first under-par single round in program history with a one-under 71 on Day One of the Wartburg Invitational. Right behind was Alvarez, who scored a 72 that day, marking the first time in Wildcats history that two golfers shot under-par or even-par scores in the same round. Two weeks later, Alvarez made more history, setting a two-round tournament record of 150 and earning medalist honors at the College City Challenge.

Queen of the Course: Bethel senior **Christine Piwnica** teed off the 2017 season right where she left off in the spring, leading the Royals with a two-under-par 70 on the final day of the CSB Invitational in September. Piwnica amassed four birdies in the final round to earn the top spot in the tournament, while her second-day total of 70 represents the lowest 18-hole score in program history. Piwnica has twice finished second at the MIAC Championships, recording a 232 (79-78-75) in 2014 and a 231 (77-76-78) last year.

Team Effort: For the third straight year, Gustavus claimed the Georgianni Blugold Invitational championship, positioning five golfers among the top-10 scorers at the tournament. **McKenzie Swenson** and **Morgan Bleyhl** tied for medalist honors with two-day totals of 162, while **Jessica Nelson** finished in fourth place, just three shots off the lead. The victory was one of two top-10 finishes for Swenson on the year, who also carded a 154, sixth-place finish at the College City Challenge.

Emily as Expected: St. Thomas senior **Emily Thul** entered the 2017-18 campaign with a career stroke average of 79.0 over 64 collegiate rounds. The former MIAC Player of the Year and honorable mention All-American has stayed exceptionally close to that mark in her final season as a Tommie, averaging 79.1 strokes over her eight rounds thus far in 2017, while raising her number of career rounds of 76 or better to 17. Thul's best finish at the MIAC Championships was a three-day 234 (83-73-78), good for second-place, in 2015.

Top-10 Three-peat?: CSB junior **Natalie Amundson** is set to compete in her third MIAC Championship. She tied for second in her first year of competition in 2015 and followed up with an eighth-place finish at the MIAC Championships last season. Saint Benedict's top-seeded golfer will try to make it three top-10 tournaments in a row this year, entering the 2017 Championships with a 79.8 average and top-15 finishes at all four competitions CSB has attended this fall.