

2018 MIAC Women's Golf Championship Preview

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BECKER, Minn. – The Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) is set to tee off the 2018 Women's Golf Championships on Saturday morning.

MIAC teams will compete in a three-day, 54-hole Conference tournament, which will return to Pebble Creek Golf Club in Becker, Minn. for the second year in a row. St. Catherine University and the College of Saint Benedict will play hosts.

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). Carleton and Saint Benedict will tee off first beginning at 10:27 a.m. (weather permitting), followed by St. Thomas, St. Catherine, and Gustavus at 11:12 a.m. St. Olaf, Bethel, and Concordia will begin teeing off at 11:57 a.m., while Saint Mary's, Augsburg, and Macalester will begin the last wave of golfers at 12:42 p.m. Tee times are subject to change due to weather.

Sunday pairings will be ordered according to first day scores and teams will reorder their golfers according to Day 1 results, with the highest score playing in the No. 5 spot and the lowest at No. 1. Day 2 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 2019 NCAA Division III Women's Golf Championship.

Day 1 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 2018 field of competitors features eight returning golfers who placed in the top-10 at last year's MIAC Championships, including: **Ziyi Wang**, Carleton (1st); **Abby Euyang**, Carleton (4th); **Bridget Amundson**, Saint Benedict (T-5th); **Natalie Amundson**, Saint Benedict (T-5th); **Sydney Busker**, St. Catherine (7th); **Alyssa Akiyama**, Carleton (8th); **Ayumi Sakamoto**, Carleton (T-9th); and **Madeline Pagel**, Saint Benedict (T-9th).

Five in a Row: A Carleton golfer has earned MIAC medalist honors each of the last five seasons. Two of those golfers -- **Ziyi Wang** and **Alyssa Akiyama** -- will be back in action this year. The last non-Knight to claim first place at the conference meet was Molly Erickson at St. Olaf in 2012. As fate would have it, Erickson is now in her first season as head coach at Carleton.

Dominant Knights: Carleton has won all four tournaments the Knights have attended this season - with four sub-300 rounds - and finished atop the leaderboard at 15 consecutive regular-season meets, a stretch that dates back to April 15, 2017. The Knights also have a pair of top-7 results at the NCAA Championships over this span.

All-Conference Sweep: Only 10 women on record have earned All-MIAC honors four times. Four more could join that list after this weekend, as Carleton's **Ayumi Sakamoto** and **Ziyi Wang**, along with Saint Benedict's **Natalie Amundson** and St. Catherine's **Sydney Busker**, enter the 2018 Championships with three career All-Conference honors apiece. The top-10 finishers at the Conference tournament automatically earn All-MIAC honors.

How Low Can You Go: The MIAC 54-hole Championship record of 224 set by Katie Schenfeld of Gustavus in 2010 has been tied at the conference meet each of the last two seasons. **Alyssa Akiyama** shot a 224 in 2016 and teammate **Ziyi Wang** reached the mark herself last year. Both will be in competition this weekend.

Back in the Fold: Kari Weidner-Ceniceros earned co-medalist honors for the Cobbers at the 1999 MIAC Championships. This year, she will return to the conference meet in her first season as Concordia's head women's golf coach. Oddly enough, she is not the only former MIAC women's golf champ on the Cobbers' coaching roster either. Two-time MIAC medalist Maureen (Hardwick) Greiner was hired in July to take over Concordia's women's hockey program.

Super Sophomore: Bethel sophomore **Nicole Miller** fired a 2-under-par 70 in the second round of this year's Wartburg Fall Invite, the lowest single-round score by a MIAC women's golfer this season.

Youth Movement: St. Thomas enters the 2018 Championships with much less experience than usual, as the Tommies top-five consists of one senior, one sophomore and a trio of first-year players. **Courtney Shorter** leads the pack, having tied for seventh place overall at the second collegiate tournament of her career, the Cobber Fall Invite, earlier this month.

Junior to Watch: St. Olaf's **Solveig Christenson** finished third overall and improved by five strokes in the second round to move up three spots at last weekend's St. Kate's Invite. Christenson posted her career-best two-day tournament score of 155, including a second-round 75 (+2), which was the second-lowest for an Ole in five seasons.

Kraft-y First-year: Just three tournaments into her collegiate career, Augsburg first-year **Emma Kraft** has quickly established herself as a force to be reckoned with. Kraft tied for sixth overall at her second meet as an Auggie, shooting a 180 at the Saint Mary's Invite two weeks ago.

Golden Gustie: Gustavus first-year **Emily Kratz** is tied for the sixth-best average in the MIAC this season at 77.8 through six rounds of play. Kratz fired a 1-under-par 71 to open the D3 Classic two weeks ago, the second-lowest single-round score in the league.

Mac Attack: **Tenley Smith** leads Macalester with an average of 85.22 shots per round and has claimed the team's two lowest rounds of the year with a 78 at the St. Kate's Invite and an 81 at the CSB meet.

Off to a Fast Start: First-year **Jessica Massimo** has paced the Cardinals at all five meets this season. The Kenosha, Wis. native has accounted for SMU's five lowest single-round scores as well, including the top two - an 86 and 88 - both at the CSB Invite.

Peaking at the Right Time: Concordia junior **Katie Krueger** continued her breakout season by posting the best multi-round finish of her career earlier this month at the Jimmie Classic, taking second place with a two-day total of 164. Her first round 79 at the CSB Invite to open the month of September is the best by a Cobber in two seasons.