

2019 MIAC Women's Golf Championship Preview

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BECKER, Minn. – The Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) is set to tee off the 2019 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 third year in a row. St. Olaf College and the College of Saint Benedict will serve as 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 Gustavus, St. Catherine, and St. Olaf at 11:12 a.m. Bethel, Macalester, and St. Thomas will begin teeing off at 11:57 a.m., while Concordia, Augsburg, and Saint Mary's 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 starting at 8:57 a.m. on holes 1 and 10. 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 tournament will receive the MIAC's automatic qualifier to the 2020 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](#) | [Live Scoring](#) |

TIDBITS FROM THE TEEBOX

The 2019 Championship field will feature many fresh faces, with just five competitors having earned All-Championship accolades by finishing among the meet's top-10 scorers before. Only three of those women - Carleton's **Alyssa Akiyama** (2nd), Bethel's **Nicole Miller** (6th), and Saint Benedict's **Emily Olson** (T-8th) - earned top-10 finishes in 2018, a stark contrast to the eight returning honorees a season ago. Two more competitors - Saint Benedict's **Bridget Amundson** (T-5th, 2017) and St. Olaf's **Melissa Biesmann** (9th, 2016) - have previously placed among the top-10 scorers at the MIAC meet.

Five MIAC teams are receiving national attention heading into the championship meet. Defending champion Carleton is ranked No. 9 in the nation in the latest [WGCA Top 25 poll](#), with St. Catherine at No. 15, Bethel at No. 18, Gustavus at No. 23, and St. Thomas receiving votes.

Carleton placed all five of its golfers among the top-five in last year's MIAC Championships, marking the first time in conference history that one team swept the top of the leaderboard. A Carleton golfer has also earned MIAC medalist honors each of the last six seasons with the last non-Knight to claim first place at the conference meet being former Carleton coach Molly Erickson while she was a competitor at St. Olaf in 2012.

Ziyi Wang set a new individual 54-hole MIAC Championship record last year with her three-day total of 221. As a team, the Knights set new MIAC records for 36- and 54-holes in 2018 as well, with scores of 602 and 904, respectively. The 18-hole team record for the MIAC meet is 297, set by St. Thomas in round two of the 2015 Championships.

Carleton's **Alyssa Akiyama** is the only returning competitor to have placed among the tournament's top-10 multiple times. Akiyama earned medalist honors with a then-record score of 224 in her debut season in 2016 before placing eighth with a 235 in 2018 and coming in second with a personal-best 223 last year. A top-10 finish in 2019 will assure that Akiyama becomes the 15th woman in conference history



to earn four consecutive All-Conference honors in golf, while a victory would make her just the third woman ever to win individual MIAC titles non-consecutively, joining St. Thomas' Maureen Hardwick (2002, 2005) and Concordia's Kelly Cornell (1989, 1991). Akiyama still holds the 18-hole MIAC record with her round three 70 in 2016.

St. Catherine University enters the 2019 MIAC Championships with the season's low score after setting a program-record with an 18-hole total of 297 at the Wartburg Invitational earlier this month. Only three teams - St. Thomas (297 in 2015), Carleton (299 in 2014), and Carleton again (299 in 2018) - have ever carded sub-300 scores at the MIAC Championships. The Wildcats also posted a program-best 36-hole total of 602 at Wartburg - the same total that set the two-round MIAC championship record for Carleton at Pebble Creek Golf Club last fall.

Concordia head coach Kari Weidner-Ceniceros earned co-medalist honors for the Cobbers at the 1999 MIAC Championships. Now in her second season at the helm in Moorhead, Weidner-Ceniceros joins Gustavus head coach Scott Moe - a three-time MIAC men's medalist for the Gusties from 1992-94 - as former conference champions now coaching at the meet.

Augsburg head coach Eric Rolland and Carleton head coach Matt Stangl each earned a pair of All-MIAC honors during their playing careers. Rolland finished third at the MIAC Men's Championship in 1995 and fourth in 1996, helping the Auggies claim the men's title in '95. Stangl took third and sixth overall in 1999 and 2000, respectively, while competing for the Knights. Another competitor-turned-coach, Macalester's Tucker Weisman captained his alma mater, St. Olaf, to a fourth-place team finish at the 2007 Men's Championships.

NAMES TO KNOW

Augsburg sophomore **Emma Kraft** has scored the six lowest rounds of the year for the Auggies and is averaging a team-low 84.6 shots per 18 holes this season. Kraft entered the season on a high note after winning the first flight of the Minnesota Golf Association Women's Amateur Championship in July.

Bethel first-year **Anna Tollefson** tied for medalist honors and led the No. 18-ranked Royals to a first-place finish this past weekend at the St. Kate's Invitational. A strong first round led Tollefson to shoot a career-low 74 thanks to three birdies on the front nine. Tollefson shot a 76 in round two for a two-day total of 150.

Carleton sophomore **Kristin Miyagi** will make her MIAC Championship debut with momentum on her side, as the sophomore has finished among the top-three low-scorers at each of her last three tournaments and earned medalist honors twice in the last three weeks. The 2018-19 MIAC Rookie of the Year did not compete at the 2018 Championships but was one of a record six Knights to receive All-MIAC honors last year.

Concordia junior **Bailey Klause** fired her third round of 82 or better this season on Tuesday in a dual match with Minnesota State-Moorhead. Klause's low score for the year is a 79 recorded in the second round of the DIII Classic. She leads the Cobbers with an average of 84.1 over nine rounds this fall.

Gustavus sophomore **Erin Ericson** captured her first career medalist honor in a field of 90 golfers at the DIII Classic two weeks ago. Ericson is the first Gustie to win a tournament since Morgan Bleyhl and McKenzie Swenson shared medalist honors at the 2017 Georgianni Blugold Invite and her score of 147 at the tournament tied for the second-lowest 36-hole total in program history, one stroke behind Kelli Groff's record of 146, set in 2005.

Macalester sophomore **Kiwa Anisman** won medalist honors at the Saint Mary's Invitational two weeks ago, finishing with a two-day score of 164, good for the lowest among the 42 competitors. Anisman's career-best round of 78 on day two propelled her into first place.

Saint Benedict junior **Emily Olson** has recorded a team-best four rounds of sub-80-shot golf this fall, including both rounds of the DIII Classic in Hastings, Minn. earlier this month. This will be Olson's third MIAC Championship meet after tying for eighth overall last year. Her brother, Sam, earned medalist honors at the 2016 MIAC Men's Championships as a junior at Saint John's.

St. Catherine junior **Jordan Amelon** enjoyed a record-breaking weekend at the Wartburg Fall Invitational earlier this month, shooting a career-low and even-par 72 in the tournament's opening round. She carded 11 pars and three birdies to finish with a 36-hole career-best and program-low 145 (+1), propelling the Wildcats to a first-place finish. Amelon's 36-hole score topped Sydney Busker's four-year-old St. Catherine mark by seven shots.

Saint Mary's sophomore **Jessica Massimo** has led the Cardinals at every tournament this season, including a pair of top-10 finishes. In fact, Massimo has been the team's low-scorer in 11 of her 12 collegiate tournaments over the last two seasons.

St. Olaf senior **Solveig Christenson** picked up the Oles' first individual top-10 finish of the season last weekend with a ninth-place performance at the St. Kate's Invite. Christenson shot a season-best 79 in both rounds of the tournament.

St. Thomas first-year **Claudia Kim** got off to an impressive start to her collegiate career at the Wartburg Fall Invitational earlier in September, tying for first place after carding a three-under-par 69 in the tournament's opening round. That score is tied for the second-best by a MIAC competitor over the last 12 years and is believed to be a Tommie program record.