

2012 MIAC Women's Indoor Track & Field Championship Preview

Posted: Feb 28, 2012

ST. PAUL, Minn. -- The MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championships will be held in St. Paul for the second-straight year, with the 2012 event taking place at the Leonard Center on the Macalester College campus. The conference meet starts Thursday with the multi-event competitions and the rest of the action will be spread out over Friday and Saturday.

St. Thomas returns as the defending champion. Actually, the Tommies have won the last 12 indoor titles, and return a talented team that has its sights set on its 13th consecutive championship. Last year, UST pulled away with 146 points to win by nearly 40. Saint Benedict was the runner up at 107. Gustavus and Hamline tied for third at 88 points and St. Olaf rounded out the top five at 62.5.

Carleton and Augsburg were neck-and-neck in sixth and seventh with 54 and 51 points, respectively. Bethel (49.5) edged Concordia (47) for eighth place with St. Catherine (40), Macalester (31) and Saint Mary's (16) completing the conference standings.

Two Tommie runners headline the team's hopes for title No. 13, starting with last year's Outstanding Track Athlete, Emily Van Heel. As a freshman, Van Heel won the 55-, 200- and 400-meter dashes and the triple jump, and she enters the 2012 meet as the top seed in the 200. Meanwhile, teammate Taylor Berg has the top times this season in the 800-meter and mile runs, and she leads the UST distance medley relay team. Erika Tripp will challenge her teammate, Van Heel, in the 55 as the 2012 top seed.

Perhaps the team threatening to make the biggest leap in the standings is Carleton. The Knights captured the 2011 MIAC Cross Country Championship, and its strong crop of distance runners is led by star Simone Childs-Walker, who seems poised to put an exclamation point on an amazing career. Childs-Walker is looking for her fourth-straight titles in the 3,000- and 5,000-meter runs, and her second-straight title in the mile. She received the 2011 Outstanding Performance-of-the-Meet honor.

In addition to Childs-Walker, Carleton has the top-seeded runners in two other events. Ellie Wilson has the league's fastest time in the 400, and Hailey Johnson is seeded first in the 1,000-meter run.

Last year's runner-up, Saint Benedict, also has an athlete looking to add a few more titles to her stellar career. Julia Renner is seeded first in the long jump and the pentathlon. The versatile Renner is the 2009 long jump champ and she won the triple jump in 2010 before finishing second last year.

Hamline also boasts a handful of athletes excited to make a mark at the conference meet, starting with a pair of Piper stars in the throwing events. Brenna Coyle returns as the top seed and defending champ in the weight throw, while teammate Becky Culp is seeded first in the shot put. Kaitlyn Frenchick has the fastest time in the 600-meter run this season.

Other athletes to watch during the championships include Concordia's Tatjana Muller Dahlberg, who is seeded first in the triple jump after finishing as the event's runner up each of the last two seasons. Bethel's Rachel Kalk leads the field in the 60-meter hurdles, Dani Larson from St. Olaf is seeded first in the high jump and could impress in multiple events and Gustavus' Allyson Voss is the top seed in the pole vault.

The conference has set up a home page for the 2012 MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championships with complete information and links about the event, including links to live scoring that will be updated as the meet progresses each day. Webcast America is also filming the event for the MIAC, and on-demand video will be available shortly following the meet on [Webcast's America's site](#).

Thursday's women's pentathlon final and men's first day of heptathlon events starts at 2 p.m. The men's heptathlon finished Friday morning at 9:30 a.m., with Friday's field events starting at 3:30 p.m. and track events beginning at 5:15 p.m. Saturday's field events start at 11:30 a.m. with track events starting at 2 p.m. Saturday's final event begins at 5:15 p.m., and there will be a short awards ceremony following the conclusion of the meet to honor the team champions.



Admission for the event is \$7 for adults and \$3 for students per day, with children ages 5 and under admitted free. MIAC passes will be honored. Macalester is offering free parking for spectators in the Leonard Center lot and other campus lots, with street parking available near the facility as well. Visit Macalester's [event page](#) for complete details.

2012 MIAC Indoor Track & Field Championships Website

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Coach: Dennis Barker (18th season)

2011 Championship Finish: 7th (51 points)

Augsburg Championship Preview

Coming off last season's seventh-place performance at last year's MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championships, the Augsburg College women's track and field team will enter this year's conference meet with a talented, yet inexperienced group.

Leading the Auggies at the conference meet this season will be veteran sprinter Ashley Carney (JR, Lakeville, Minn./Lakeville South HS). Carney has had a spectacular start to the 2012 season, earning multiple top five-finishes and one MIAC Athlete of the Week award. Carney currently owns the conference's top time in the 60-meter dash at 7.81 seconds, which is also ranked as the eighth-fastest time among all DIII participants in the event this season. In addition to her performance in the 60-, Carney will also compete in the 200-meter dash, where she currently owns the seventh-best time in the conference this season at 26.50 seconds.

In the field events, Augsburg pole vaulter Brittany Tuberg will look to build on last season's fourth place finish at the conference meet. Tuberg, who currently owns the school record in both the indoor and outdoor pole vault, will enter this year's conference meet ranked fifth with a height of 3.16 meters (10-feet-4.25).

Sprinter Molly Allen (FY, Stillwater, Minn.) will enter her first conference meet looking to qualify for the event finals in both the 60- and 200-meter dashes. Allen recorded a season-best time of 8.35 seconds in the 60-meter dash earlier this season at the College of Saint Benedict Invitational on Feb. 11.

Distance runner Jennifer Pulscher (SR, Colorado Springs, Colo./Liberty HS) will enter her last indoor conference meet looking to make a difference in the mile run. Pulscher recorded a personal-best time of 5:45.11 at the Parents Day Open hosted by the University of Minnesota earlier this season.



Bethel

Coach: Jim Timp (7th season)

2011 Championship Finish: 8th (49.5 points)

Bethel Championship Preview

Excitement is brewing among the Bethel University women's track and field followers, as several student-athletes have proven thus far that they have the talent and drive to be successful. Many competitors have put forth a strong effort and have seen their times go down while their conference ranking has coincidentally gone up. The Royals hope to steal a number of events and maintain a strong competitiveness in all categories.

The women's 4x200 team has made a name for themselves thus far this season, as the team composed of Ashley Magelssen (So., Forest Lake, Minn.), Courtney Fregeau (So., Andover, Minn.), Krista McCright (Jr., Cedar Rapids, Iowa), and Ashley Quick (So., Johnston, Iowa) have captivated the top spot in the MIAC with a total time of 1:45. Not only have they achieved the top spot among all other conference competitors, but they have also vaporized any thought of a BU school record by over a second. The quartet has also been a force in the 4x400 relay, ranking second among all other athletes competing with a total time of 4:04.09.

Magelssen and McCright are also top performers in the 60-meter dash, considering Magelssen has garnered a top-25 nationwide spot and stolen the top spot in that event in BU history and McCright is typically right on her heels.

Courtney Fregeau, another component to the exceptional 4x200 team, has propelled up the ranks of the 400-meter dash. The sophomore's time of 59.37 ranks third among all MIAC runners and just .36 seconds away from another all-time record being disbanded. Ashley Quick also has been nipping at Fregeau in the 400-meter event, so be sure to watch each of them push the pack.

Mollie Gillberg (Fr., Coon Rapids, Minn.) has been a healthy addition to the Bethel program, as the freshman out of Coon Rapids, Minn. has tallied the fifth fastest time in the MIAC with an 800-meter time of 2:20.72.

Lauren West (So., Rochester, Minn.) will highlight the women's field events, as the Rochester, Minn. native has posted a high jump mark of 1.53 meters.

In 2011 BU's women's indoor track and field team finished fifth and the Royals will look to improve that mark in 2012. Key returners and welcomed newbies will all be an asset as Bethel looks to be among the top teams in the conference.



Carleton

Coach: Donna Ricks (19th season)

2011 Championship Finish: 6th (54 points)

Carleton Championship Preview

Carleton will look to improve on last year's sixth-place finish at the MIAC Indoor Championships. The Knights will again rely on their dominant performances in the distance events, led for the fourth straight year by All-American Simone Childs-Walker (Sr./Seattle, Wash./Lakeside). Last season she became the first MIAC woman known to win the three-longest races contested at the same MIAC meet with triumphs in the 5,000-meter, 3,000-meter, and mile runs. She went on to her third straight third-place finish at the NCAA Championships in the 5K.

Childs-Walker again holds the top times in the 3K and 5K races, but this year her stiffest competition comes from teammates Alison Smyth (Sr., Billings, Mont./Billings West) and Taylor Ffitch (Sr./Portland, Ore./St. Mary's Academy) who hold the second and third top times in conference in both the 3K and 5K. Childs-Walker is also seeded fifth in the mile run.

Currently Smyth holds the second-fastest time in the mile with Sarah Trautman (So./Lexington, Mass./BBN) and Colette Celichowski (Fy./Shorewood, Minn./Minnetonka) ranking third and fourth. The latter pair also own top-10 times in the 1,000-meter run.

The Knights will add depth in the middle distance races with Haley Johnson (Jr./Golden Valley, Minn.), Clare Franco (Sr./Brunswick, Maine) and Kaitlin Randolph (Sr./Drummond, Wis.). Johnson and Franco finished seventh and eighth respectively in the 1,000-meter run at last year's event. Johnson holds the third-fastest 600-meter dash time this season as well as a top-10 time in the 800-meter run. Randolph is ranked fifth in the 800-meter run and eighth at the 1,000-meter distance.

Ellie Wilson (Fy./Roseville, Minn./Roseville) owns the third-fastest 200-meter dash time on the MIAC's performance list. Her time in the 400-meter dash (58.19) makes her the second-fastest all-time at Carleton. Franco also owns a top-5 time in the 400-meter dash and the 11th-best mark at the 600-meter distance.

Pole vaulter Megan Erlandson (Sr./Minneapolis, Minn./Minnehaha Academy) is seeded fourth and also possesses a top-10 time in the 1,000-meter run.

Carleton could also score points in the 4x400 meter relay, where the Knights currently rank third in the MIAC. They have also had strong showings in the distance medley relay, with Carleton setting a new school record (12:00.05) on Feb. 18.



Concordia

Coach: Marv Roeske (17th season)

2011 Championship Finish: 9th (47 points)

Concordia Championship Preview

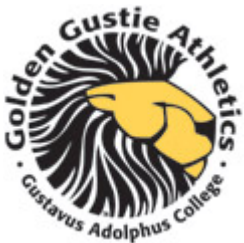
Concordia-Moorhead will be looking to reverse their trend of downward growth at this year's MIAC Championship Meet. The Cobbers have steadily dropped finishing spots since finishing fourth in 2008. Concordia has a tremendous chance in bettering their ninth-place finish at last year's conference meet thanks to some outstanding individual talent and a field corps that is one of the deepest in recent memory.

Concordia has seven field athletes ranked in the top 8 of the conference heading into the MIAC Meet. The best event for Marv Roeske's crew should be the triple jump where CC owns the top 2 marks of the year. Senior Tatijana MuellerDahlberg (Fargo, N.D./Oak Grove HS) is poised to cap her indoor career with one of the best meets in her four seasons. Her distance of 36-09.75 in the triple jump is the farthest of the season by any athlete in the MIAC. MuellerDahlberg is also ranked in the top 16 in the 60-meter dash. Teammate Hilary Thompson (So., East Helena, Mont./Helena HS) is right behind MuellerDahlberg in the triple jump with a mark of 36-06.25. Thompson is also ranked seventh in the long jump.

The other top field marks come from a pair of freshmen. Chelsea Klemetson (Moorhead, Minn.) is second in the high jump and Cherae Reeves (West Fargo, N.D.) is sixth in the shot put.

Perhaps the best overall showing at the meet will come from junior Kaari Jensen (Pierz, Minn.). Jensen is ranked in the top 7 in three different events. She owns the fourth-best mark in the pentathlon. Her top single events will be the long jump and 60-meter hurdles. She is sixth in the long jump and seventh in the hurdles.

The top two track athletes for the Cobbers will come from the middle distance crew. Sophomores Callie Christianson (Glenburn, N.D.) and Morgan Christian (Moorhead, Minn.) both have top 11 times in the 800 meters. Christianson and Christian are tied for the 11th fastest time. Both have posted marks of 2:22.31 during the year. Christian is also ranked 15th in the 600 meters. Fellow sophomore Paige Rygg (Fargo, N.D./Fargo South HS) has recorded the 13th fastest time in the 1000 meters.



Gustavus

Coach: Dale Bahr (3rd season)

2011 Championship Finish: T-3rd (88 points)

Gustavus Championship Preview

The Gustavus women's indoor track and field team will look to build on its third place finish from last season at the 2012 MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championships hosted by Macalester College in St. Paul on March 2-3.

The Gusties have 11 individual in seven different events ranked in the top ten on the MIAC performance list heading into the meet. Junior Allyson Voss (Wausau, Wis.) is the lone Gustie woman to top the conference in her respective event. Voss tops the league in the pole vault with a height of 11-3.75 feet.

Also cracking the top ten in the pole vault is senior Holly Hoffman (7th) with a height of 10-4.0 feet and sophomore Nevada Wendlandt (9th) at 10-0.75 feet. The field competitions are where the Gusties typically excel with five other individuals ranking in the MIAC top ten. Senior Emily Klatt ranks third in the long jump with a distance of 17' 3.5", while sophomore Leah Brossoit is eighth with a leap of 16' 8.75". Senior Megan Endresen ranks fifth in the weight throw with a toss of 49' 7.75". And in the triple jump, junior Lauren Rothschiller ranks seventh with a distance of 34' 11.25", while Klatt is tenth at 34' 4.75".

On the track, first-year Haley Kemper is tenth in the 400-meter run with a time of 60.15. Junior Beth Hauer ranks ninth in the 3000-meter run at 10:44.50. In the 5000-meter run, first-years Rebecca Hare and Caitlin Fermoye rank fourth and tenth, respectively, in the league with a times of 18:15.31 and 18:53.23.

The MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championships begin on Friday, March 2 with the first competitions at 3:30 p.m.



Hamline

Coach: Shawn Johnson-Hipp (6th season)

2011 Championship Finish: T-3rd (88 points)

Hamline Championship Preview

Like their male counterparts, Hamline will enter a strong field unit at this weekend's MISC Indoor Meet. Brenna Coyle, the defending indoor champ and Shawny Kramer have been 1-2 nearly all season in the Weight Throw. Coyle's best of 57 0 ³/₄ is nearly five feet better than anybody else has done this year.

She has been named MIAC Indoor AOTW twice this winter. Becky Culp, who ranks first in the Shot Put, is also a Top Ten Thrower and has also been named an AOTW on one occasion. Culp finished second in this event last year.

In fact, the Pipers are so deep in the Weight Throw that they head into this weekend's meet with six of the top 12 efforts recorded this year.

HU is nearly as deep in the Shot Put. In addition to Culp, Kramer, Erin Urbanowicz and Jerri Koltveit are all among the top 11 performances this year. In the Pole Vault, Carly Braun's best effort of 10-11 ³/₄ is only four inches shy of the top leap of the year. Braun was third in last year's meet.

On the track side, senior Kaitlyn Frenchick has been the Pipers' best sprinter. Her time of 1:38.34 is tops in the 600 meter event and she ranks fourth (but less than three seconds from first) in the 800 Meter Dash. Sophomore Maria Theisen has also been a Top Ten all year in the 1000 Meter Run and the Mile. The same is true for junior Christina Walker in the 55 Meter and 200 Meter dash.

Last year, Hamline tied Gustavus for third place with 88 points. The strong field contingent combined with better track times this year may make them a threat to move up the ladder.



Macalester

Coach: Martin Peper (13th season)

2011 Championship Finish: 11th (31 points)

Macalester Championship Preview

Macalester is competing on its home facility and several Scots have the potential to do quite well.

A couple of the team's brightest hopes of running to high MIAC finishes are Irene Gibson (Fy., Carmel, Ind.) in the endurance sprints and Anna Schmitz (So., St. Paul, Minn. / Central) in the distance races. With just one meet left before the MIAC championships, Gibson is ranked first in the 600-meter dash (1:39.56) and third in the 800 (2:20.35). Schmitz has run a 10:38 this winter in the 3000 meters and could also be a factor in the 5K.

Ana Armitage (So., Rickton, Ill. / Hononegah Community) is another Scot capable of scoring team points. Armitage placed fifth in the 200-meter dash at last year's MIAC meet at St. Thomas and is currently eighth on the honor roll (26.71). Alexa Simpson (Jr., St. Elizabeth, Jamaica / Hampton School) was 10th last year in the 60 dash and is running well again. Endurance sprints, in addition to Gibson, include 400-meter contestants Armitage and Marta LeFevre-Levy (So., Wayland, Mass.).

Mac's top-ranked contender in the field events is high jumper Audrey Mills (Sr., Marine, Minn. / Forest Lake). Triple jumper Kate Rochat (Jr., Portland, Ore. / Cleveland) is also ranked in the top ten. Macalester hurdlers are led by Judy Syrkin-Nikolau (Fy., Ames, Ia.).



Saint Benedict

Coach: Robin Balder-Lanoue (13th season)

2011 Championship Finish: 2nd (107 points)

Saint Benedict Championship Preview

The College of Saint Benedict Blazer indoor track and field team could not be more ready for the 2012 MIAC Indoor Track & Field Championships. Ever since the start of their season, the Blazers have been focused on preparing for a strong showing at the conference meet. CSB have earned three first place finishes during the indoor season.

Seniors Allison Eckrich, Katy Torchia, Julia Renner, as well as junior Clare Murn and sophomores Kelsie Larson and Sam Imholte have led the Blazers with their consistent top-of-the-pack finishes this winter.

The MIAC Women's Indoor Track & Field Championships will provide the final test for the Blazers for the indoor season, while preparing them for the upcoming outdoor season.



St. Catherine

Coach: Michael Henderson (6th season)

2011 Championship Finish: 10th (40 points)

St. Catherine Championship Preview

There will be many new faces wearing purple and gold for the Wildcats at the 2012 MIAC Championships. The top three point scorers from 2011 graduated last spring, so the team will turn to a handful of returners and a plethora of first-years for this championship event.

Seniors Sam Levercom (sprints) and Jamie Kelly (throws) provide a boost to the Wildcats. After both missing the 2011 season with injuries, they have returned to top form and turned in impressive performances so far this indoor season. Both will be looking to end their indoor track careers on a high note.

Senior Brianna Ludtke was all-conference in the 55m dash last season and is one of the top returners in that event. Along with Ludtke and Levercom, the Wildcat sprinters will be led by juniors Erin Coughlin and Kelsey Eder, both members of the winning 4x400m relay last outdoor season and veteran MIAC meet performers.

The rest of the Wildcat squad is a youth movement, with first-year athletes comprising the bulk of the team. This talented group of first years is already making their impact felt on the school record books, with first-years Ailee Larson (mid-distance), Sophie Shogren (mid-distance), Holly Staples (sprints/jumps), Amanda Grundhofer (throws), Makayla Skluzacek (sprints/jumps), and Kalyse Engebretson (sprints) already adding their names to the St. Kate's top-ten performance lists.

The Wildcats hope this combination of youth and experience results in another exciting and productive championship meet.



Saint Mary's

Coach: Shawn McMahon (5th season)

2011 Championship Finish: 12th (16 points)

Saint Mary's Championship Preview

With the graduation two-time All-American Andrew Brueggen and national-qualifier Sara Harstad, center stage — and the spotlight that goes with it — is vacant for the Saint Mary's University men's and women's track and field teams.

For now — and not for long.

"As is the case every year, great athletes leave us," SMU coach Shawn McMahon said. "And as is the case every year, returning athletes dig in and rise to the top of their own game — and I don't think this year will be any different.

"When someone re-writes the record books — especially at the MIAC level — you don't replace them. I think Andrew's example and his commitment to improve still very much exists among our returning athletes," McMahon added. "People like Andrew, Brittany Kuehn and Sara Harstad are virtually impossible to replace, but we will be saying that about some of our current athletes once they move on, too.

"We've got some real talent ready to step forward."

And step forward they have.

Peter Borash (Bowlus, Minn.) heads into the MIAC Indoor Championships coming off a school-record performance in the 1,000 at the St. Olaf Ole Qualifier, while Coco Booker (St. Paul, Minn.) and Kassondra Burtis (Fairmont, Minn.) have been among the top throwers in the conference this season. Booker just won the shot put at the Ole Qualifier, while Burtis was fourth in the weight throw and eighth in the shot.

"I'm very encouraged by the potential on both our men's and women's teams," McMahon said. "There's some real top-end talent on both squads."

On the men's side, the Cardinal distance runners are ready to steal the show, according to McMahon.

"A formerly young group, our distance and middle-distance runners have matured and I think those guys should expect to do some damage this year," said McMahon. "David Feather and Robby McGuire are All-MIAC level competitors that have the experience and talent to get it done, and (juniors) Peter Borash (Bowlus, Minn.) and Jake Traxler (Le Center, Minn.) had great years last year and are coming off real solid cross country seasons.

"The distance squad is possibly the deepest Saint Mary's has ever had — the work of cross country coach (Ward) Berndt and assistant Brett Ayers is very evident."

On the women's side, McMahon expects Burtis and Booker to continue to pick up a bit of the slack left by the graduation of Harstad, while Stephanie Sturges and Regina Quandt lead a talented group of runners.

"Kassondra and Coco had strong off-seasons and are on pace to be All-MIAC caliber performers," McMahon said. "We'll be looking for Steph and Regina to provide some points (at the conference championships), while Bethany Schmidt really started coming on last year as a great runner and I expect some good things from her this year."

Add to that the emergence of distance runners Amy Spitzmueller and Katie Stolz on the women's side, and Aaron Haley on the men's side — all three coming off exceptional cross country seasons — and it's no wonder McMahon is walking around campus with a permanent smile on his face.

"It's always exciting this time of year," said McMahon. "The potential is certainly there, and I'm looking forward to seeing what lies ahead for both squads."



St. Olaf

Coach: Andrea Gelle (2nd season)

2011 Championship Finish: 5th (62.5 points)

St. Olaf Championship Preview

Coming off of a 5th place finish a year ago, the Oles look to move up in the MIAC.

Leading the charge will be freshman Dani Larson, this week's MIAC Field Athlete of the Week. She has the highest pentathlon score heading into Thursday's competition, as well as the best high jump in the MIAC this season at 1.71 meters (5-07.25 feet). In addition, Larson's time in the 60 meter hurdles is tied for the second fastest in the conference this year. She also ranks sixth in the 400.

Moriah Novacinski, the defending 1,000 meter champion, will lead the strong corps of St. Olaf middle distance runners. Novacinski's time of 3:00.50 is the second fastest time in the 1,000 this season and is four seconds faster than her winning time last year.

Freshman Emily Stets will look to place in a few open events and contribute to the team's relays. She has the ninth fastest time in the 400 and the eighth fastest time in the 600. Sophomore Shaina Rud and Jamie Mosel also have top ten seed times in the 600.

St. Olaf will once again rely heavily on its depth in the distance events with veterans Maren Westby, Rachel Dean, Emma Larson, and Becca Bevans. All four were members of the St. Olaf cross country team that placed tenth at the NCAA national championships last fall.



St. Thomas

Coach: Joe Sweeney (32nd season)

2011 Championship Finish: 1st (146 points)

St. Thomas Championship Preview

Will 13 be a lucky number for the St. Thomas women? The Tommies will attempt to win the program's 13th consecutive team crown at this week's MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championships at Macalester.

The three-day meet will be held at Macalester, starting Thursday with multi-events for men and women. The rest of the events will be contested starting at 3:30 p.m. on Friday and on 11:30 a.m. on Saturday.

Last year, the Toms held off runner-up St. Ben's by a 39-point margin indoors and runner-up Gustavus by a mere 11-point margin outdoors.

The Toms have captured 51 of the last 57 MIAC team championships contested indoors and outdoors since 1983. St. Thomas men and women have won 107 all-time MIAC team titles in indoor and outdoor track and field.

Coach Joe Sweeney's squad, which has an infusion of freshmen and sophomores, will look to score in most events and hope to ride its balance to a team victory. The Tommies' strength comes in the sprints and relays, with hurdles, throws and middle distance also expecting steady contributions.

UST is ranked first in the 4x400 and distance medley relays and second in the 4x200.

- Sophomore Emily Van Heel and freshmen Erica and Angela Tipp will lead the sprints;
- Freshman Kayla Goeman, senior Larissa Peyton, junior Taylor Berg and soph Erin Statz will look to score in the 600, 800, 1000, mile, 3K and 5K;
- Junior Katie Ryan and soph Mallory Burnham will contend for the title in the hurdles.
- Senior Amy Maas and sophomore Haley Zajac are seeded in the top four in the weight throw and/or shot put.

In the conference season-best lists, UST has 12 performances ranked first or second, and eight others ranked third or fourth.