

2011 MIAC Women's Soccer Preview and Preseason Coaches' Poll

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ST. PAUL, Minn. -- The 2010 Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) women's soccer season couldn't have been much more competitive. There were five teams within three points of one another for the final three playoff spots, and those playoffs saw one semifinal literally won at the buzzer, and another late goal forced a shootout in the championship.

Though it may be unreasonable to expect a similarly exhilarating campaign in 2011, with 25 All-Conference selections back and some talented new coaches in the league, it's possible the conference could be even more competitive from top to bottom. In fact, more than half of the teams in the league finished .500 or better overall in 2010, and all 12 teams won at least five games.

Defending regular-season champion Carleton College (15-3-2, 9-1-1 MIAC) looks loaded again with three All-MIAC First Team selections back to try for another title, and Playoff champion Concordia College (12-5-4, 7-2-2 MIAC) again appears poised to compete with the Knights all season long.

However, last year's other two playoff teams - the College of Saint Benedict (11-7-1, 7-3-1 MIAC) and the University of St. Thomas (11-7-1, 7-3-1 MIAC) - are ready to jump back into contention, and after just narrowly missing the playoffs a year ago, St. Olaf College (13-5, 7-4 MIAC) and Macalester College (11-6-2, 6-3-2 MIAC) return with aspirations of joining the postseason party.

Ready to repeat?

With all its returning talent and its 9-1-1 conference record a year ago as supporting evidence, the league coaches tabbed Carleton as the favorite to repeat in the 2011 MIAC Women's Soccer Preseason Coaches' Poll. The Knights received 10 of 12 first-place votes and 120 points to claim the top spot, and a second-straight title is a real possibility for head coach **Keren Gudeman's** team.

After finishing second a year ago and claiming the MIAC Playoff title in dramatic fashion, Concordia was picked to be Carleton's top competition with 110 points and the other two first-place votes. St. Thomas was predicted to finish third with 94 points, and as evidence to the conference's competitiveness, Saint Benedict and St. Olaf tied for the fourth and final playoff spot in the poll with 88 points apiece. Macalester came in sixth with 76 points, and it appears those six will again be the top contenders for the league's four playoff berths.

Augsburg College (6-8-4, 5-4-2 MIAC) and Bethel University (8-8-2, 4-6-1 MIAC) tied for seventh place with 50 points apiece. Gustavus Adolphus College (6-11-1, 2-8-1 MIAC) came in ninth with 39 points. Saint Mary's University (7-9-1, 4-6-1 MIAC) is slotted at No. 10 with 30 points, and just one point separated the final two teams as St. Catherine University (6-11-1, 2-9 MIAC) edged Hamline University (5-13, 0-11) for 11th place, 24-23.

What's new?

With so many talented returning players, the newest faces in the MIAC in 2011 will be on the sidelines. During the offseason, a third of the MIAC women's soccer teams made coaching changes, meaning there will be four new coaches in the league this season. **Jeremy Iwaszkowicz** took over both the women's and men's programs at Bethel, **Chris Citowicki** was hired at St. Catherine University, **Neil Cassidy** took over the Saint Mary's women's team, and Macalester named **Jemma Perkins** interim head coach for 2011.

Iwaszkowicz comes to Bethel after coaching stints as an assistant at Murray State University and head coach at Chrichton College (now Victory University). He played collegiately at Clemson University and twice helped the Tigers reach the NCAA Elite 8. Citowicki spent last season as an assistant at Augsburg, and has coached with Minnesota's Olympic Development Program and the Woodbury Soccer Club. He also has played professionally in Australia and served as an assistant coach at Bemidji State.

Cassidy is also familiar with the MIAC, after serving as an assistant at both Carleton and Saint Mary's. He is the director of the Rochester Youth Soccer Association, and he played semi-pro soccer in England. Perkins was given the interim job with the Scots in late June after serving as a Macalester assistant since 2007, and she played collegiately both for the Scots and for Division I Virginia.

Who's back?

The 25 returning All-MIAC players have already been mentioned, and that talented group is headlined by the return of the reigning MIAC Women's Soccer Player-of-the-Year, Carleton senior forward **Niki Tomita**. Last year, Tomita had eight goals and five assists while directing the Knight's offense en route to their conference title. She's not the only talent back for Carleton either. Teammates **Abby Wills** and **Marlena Hartman-Filson** were also All-MIAC selections and **Lily VanderStaay** was an Honorable Mention selection.

Playoff champ Concordia also has a pair of stars back, despite the graduation of star forward **Sam Johnson**. Forward **Sarah Rounds'** 35 points led the MIAC a year ago and she was an All-MIAC First Team pick, and goalkeeper **Ali Nelson** was an Honorable Mention selection. Saint Benedict also brings back a loaded squad with **Heather Beshears**, **Collen Bouchard** and **Sami Meyman** retuning to the Blazers' lineup. That trio earned All-MIAC First Team honors a year ago.



St. Thomas in another team with a ton of talent back, and almost all are underclassmen. Sophomore **Katy Scherer** was a First-Team selection last year, while senior **Allie Byron** and fellow sophomores **Jaclyn Glaser** and **Jenna Savino** earned Honorable Mention honors. Bethel and St. Olaf both have a pair of First-Team honorees back in 2011, as the Royals welcome back **Kelsey Flaherty** and **Carolyn Kishaba** in addition to Honorable Mention pick **Lydia Bergeson**. The Oles have First Teamers **Caitie Christoffel** and **Deanne Schmidt** back in the mix, and **Ellie Steiner** also returns after an Honorable Mention selection in 2010.

The other returning First-Team selection belongs to Macalester in the form of junior defender **Kat Lenhart**, and the Scots also bring back Honorable Mention pick **Rosie Glenn-Finer**. Hamline has a pair of Honorable Mention selections - **Natalie Cooper** and **Heather Hollinger** - returning, and Augsburg's **Courtney Gamrath** and Saint Mary's **Sloane Kuramoto** are also back after earning Honorable Mention status in 2010.

And while there was a lot of coaching turnover, there will still be plenty of familiar names patrolling the sidelines this fall, starting with Gudeman, the reigning MIAC Coach-of-the-Year. Gustavus' **Mike Stehlik** enters his third decade leading the Gusties after reaching the 20-year milestone last year. Augsburg's **Mike Navarre** returns for season No. 13, and Concordia's **Dan Weiler** is entering his ninth year with a MIAC Playoff title to defend.

Dates to remember

MIAC women's soccer fans don't have long to wait now to see their favorite teams in action. The 2011 season officially begins Thursday with seven of the 12 MIAC schools taking the field for nonconference contests. In fact, over the opening Holiday weekend MIAC teams will play in 23 games, with 11 of those taking place at MIAC sites.

Conference play begins with one game on Sept. 13, and the rest of the league is in action the following day, Sept. 14. The final day of the regular season is Saturday, Oct. 29, and this year's Playoff schedule features two semifinal matches on Tuesday, Nov. 1, and the championship on Saturday, Nov. 5, with the high seed hosting each contest.

A closer look

The rest of the 2011 MIAC Women's Soccer Preview contains more details and information about each team to provide a closer look at each MIAC squad as the season draws near. Scroll down to see complete results from the 2011 MIAC Women's Soccer Preseason Coaches' Poll, helpful links, playoff dates and team-by-team previews along with links to each team's women's soccer home page, roster and schedule.

Continue to visit the MIAC Web site throughout the season for updated scores, standings, stats and more, and for additional updates and interaction connect to the MIAC on its social media pages, including [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

2011 MIAC Women's Soccer Preseason Coaches' Poll

Coaches voted for every team in the conference except their own team. Points were assigned for each vote (11 for first, 10 for second, etc.) Teams are ranked in order of highest point total to lowest with vote totals listed and first-place votes shown in parentheses.

2011 MIAC Women's Soccer Preseason Coaches' Poll		
Rank	Institution	Total
1	Carleton (10)	120
2	Concordia (2)	110
3	St. Thomas	94
T-4	Saint Benedict	88
T-4	St. Olaf	88
6	Macalester	76
T-7	Augsburg	50
T-7	Bethel	50
9	Gustavus	39
10	Saint Mary's	30
11	St. Catherine	24
12	Hamline	23

2011 MIAC Playoff Dates

Semifinals (Tuesday, Nov. 1), Finals (Saturday, Nov. 5)

| [2011 MIAC Schedule](#) | [2010 MIAC Statistics](#) | [MIAC Recordbook](#) | [MIAC Archives](#)

Augsburg

Coach: Mike Navarre

Career Record: 97-87-31 (12 seasons)

2010 Finish: 7th (6-8-4, 5-4-2 MIAC)

Augsburg Season Preview

Winning the close games will be the key for success for the Augsburg College women's soccer team this season, in its bid to return to the upper echelon of teams in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

Augsburg played in seven overtime games in 2010, but only had a 0-3-4 record to show for it. The Auggies were very competitive, claiming a 1-1 tie with MIAC regular-season champion Carleton and a 2-1 win over conference playoff participant St. Thomas. But Augsburg fell short of its goal of returning to the four-team conference playoffs, finishing 6-8-4 overall, 5-4-2 in MIAC play.

"In some sense, we're there. But it's a level of consistency, being more consistent and finding ways to win the big games," said Mike Navarre

Key contributors are back

Starting every one of the 54 Augsburg games over the last three seasons, midfielder *Courtney Gamrath* (SR, St. Michael, Minn./St. Michael-Albertville HS) leads a solid group of returners. En route to earning All-MIAC honorable-mention honors in 2010, Gamrath led the Auggies in scoring with five goals and six assists for 16 points. Navarre said that Gamrath has been a "great player, a very steady player" throughout her career.

Gamrath leads a group of five seniors in the Auggie lineup. Defender *Lindsey Niederhaus* (SR, Ramsey, Minn./Anoka HS) started all 18 games last season, and will be joined by midfielder *Katie Jacobson* (SR, St. Cloud, Minn./Apollo HS), who has battled injuries throughout her career, but was able to appear in 10 games last season. Goalkeeper *Taylor Becker* (SR, Red Wing, Minn.) and forward *Laurie Barger* (SR, Monticello, Minn.) are also veterans of the Auggie roster.

In the middle, Gamrath and Jacobson will be joined by returner *Bri Dorale* (JR, Ramsey, Minn./Anoka HS), an athletic player who scored a goal with an assist last year, starting all 18 games. *Kelsey Sorensen* (JR, Eden Prairie, Minn.), an attacking midfielder, scored a goal with two assists last year in her 18 starts. *Abby Kangas* (SO, Eagan, Minn.), who appeared in seven games last year, also returns to the midfield.

Up front, junior forwards *Bri Clark* (JR, Mound, Minn./Mound-Westonka HS) and *Carly Reimer* (JR, Eagan, Minn./Henry Sibley HS) will lead the Auggie attack. Reimer stood second on the team in total scoring last year, with five goals and four assists for 14 points, while Clark stood third with four goals and an assist for nine points. *Rachel Nelson* (SO, Coon Rapids, Minn.), who appeared in 15 games in her first season with two goals and an assist, also returns to the Auggie front line. *Alexis Houle* (SO, Albertville, Minn./St. Michael-Albertville HS) appeared in 10 games last year.

On defense, veterans *Devon Ellena* (JR, Wales, Wis./Kettle Moraine HS) and *Alekzandra Miller* (SO, St. Paul, Minn./Highland Park HS) join Niederhaus as returners from last year. Ellena started all 18 games and recorded three assists, while Miller appeared in 15 games. Returning to the defense after a year's absence will be *Olivia Faison* (SO, Minneapolis, Minn./South HS), who appeared in 14 games in the 2009 campaign.

In goal, Katie Gajewski (SO, Wausau, Wis./Wausau East HS) joins senior Becker. Gajewski made the most of her first season as an Auggie, starting nine games and recording a 1.52 goals-against-average, with a 4-4-2 record, 60 saves and 14 goals allowed with three shutouts.

Eight first-years in Auggie lineup

A strong group of eight first-year players will be counted on to contribute for the Auggies this season.

Forward *Olivia Muires* (FY, Rochester, Minn./Lourdes HS) earned all-state and all-conference honors for a Lourdes team that won back-to-back conference titles (2009-10) and finished fourth at the state tournament in 2008. Midfielder *Bri Felton* (FY, Fridley, Minn.) was a two-time all-conference honoree and two-time team Most Valuable Player at Fridley.

Midfielder *Molly Allen* (FY, Stillwater, Minn.) was an all-conference member of a conference championship squad that finished third at the 2010 state tournament, while fellow midfielder *Abi Rodstein* (FY, Eagan, Minn.) was a member of two state tournament teams at Eagan. Defender Hannah Schafer (FY, Brooklyn Park, Minn./Park Center HS) was an all-conference selection, while defender *Ellie Schaaf* (FY, Inver Grove Heights, Minn./Simley HS) was a two-time honorable-mention all-conference honoree. Midfielder *Brooke Vroman* (FY, Cottage Grove, Minn./Park HS) was a member of two state champion club teams, and defender *Alex Jamieson* (FY, Maple Grove, Minn.) was a two-year varsity letterwinner at Maple Grove.

| [Augsburg women's soccer home page](#) | [2011 roster](#) | [2011 schedule](#) |

Bethel

Coach: Jeremy Iwaszkowicz

Career Record: 0-0-0 (first season)

2010 Finish: T-8th (8-8-2, 4-6-1 MIAC)

Bethel Season Preview

First-year Head Coach Jeremy Iwaszkowicz welcomes back 16 members from last year's squad.

"I am thrilled to get on the field and start kicking a ball," said Iwaszkowicz. "The ladies are extremely excited for the fall. Expectations are very high as we are returning a number of key contributors, and the incoming new students should not only challenge for starting positions, but also add quality depth in every position."

The Royals will lean heavily on their three senior captains for leadership on and off the field, midfielders Carrie Kishaba (2010 MIAC All-Conference) and Leah Hardie, and forward Sophie Christiansen. Other key returners include two-time All-Conference team member Kelsey Flaherty, and 2010 All-Conference Honorable Mention winner Lydia Bergeson. Bethel will host an exhibition match with Century College on Thursday, August 25. The Royals will then open the 2011 season at Buena Vista (Storm Lake, Iowa) on September 2 and play a couple of road games before hosting the first home game on Friday, September 9, at the Ona Orth Complex.

| [Bethel women's soccer home page](#) | [2011 roster](#) | [2011 schedule](#) |

Carleton

Coach: Keren Gudeman

Career Record: 68-25-10 (5 seasons)

2010 Finish: 1st (15-3-2, 9-1-1 MIAC)

Carleton Season Preview

Last year, the Carleton Knights captured their first conference crown since 1982 and advanced to the NCAA Championships for the third straight year. The squad opens 2011 at No. 23 in the NSCAA national rankings. Keren Gudeman's squad paced the MIAC in goals (28) and was the second-stingiest defense (allowed 7 goals), a definite recipe for victories.

Despite the loss of five key players to graduation, the roster has several key veterans returning, including five All-Region selections.

Senior forward Niki Tomita (Redwood City, Calif./Woodside), the 2010 MIAC Player of the Year, was limited by a knee injury but still performed at an All-Region level. She was second on the roster in both goals (8) and assists (5) despite starting just eight times.

Forward Marlena Hartman-Filson (Jr./Evergreen, Colo./Colorado Academy) accounted for 13 goals, tied for the most by a MIAC player last season and the highest total by a Carleton player since 2001. She was tabbed to the All-North Region squad and elevated her performance when the team needed it most, scoring in three of the Knights' four post-season matches.

Two other seniors provide time-tested experience at the forward position. Cassie Burke (Sr./Sunfish Lake, Minn./Minnehaha Academy) battled injuries in 2010, yet managed to tally five goals and four assists. Linnea Carlson (Sr./Evanston, Ill./Evanston Township) appeared in 17 games—starting seven—and saw action at both the offensive and defensive ends.

The Knights have strong play and experience in the midfield with senior All-Region picks Abby Wills (Sr./Portland, Ore./St. Mary's) and Lily VanderStaay (Sr./Bellingham, Wash./Bellingham) leading the way. Wills is one of the MIAC's top playmakers and received some level of all-conference recognition in each of her first three seasons. From one of the outside spots, VanderStaay paced the team with six assists last fall and was third with seven goals. Sarah Hagerty (Jr./Boulder, Colo./Boulder) started all 20 games as the other outside midfielder and figured in five goals.

Along the backline, Rachel Foran (River Forest, Ill./Oak Park River Forest) is a three-year starter and was an All-MIAC pick in 2009. Layne Teska (So./Wilmette, Ill./New Trier) moved into the starting lineup for the regular-season finale and post-season, gaining valuable experience against top-notch competition. Junior **Megan Morrison** (Acton, Mass./Middlesex) saw action in 18 matches.

The Knights also have a veteran presence returning at goalkeeper. Beth Ashinsky (Jr./Mount Kisco, N.Y.) earned All-Region honors in 2010 after leading the MIAC in goals against average (0.42) and save percentage (.908) in each of her first two seasons.

| [Carleton women's soccer home page](#) | [2011 roster](#) | [2011 schedule](#) |

Concordia

Coach: Dan Weiler

Career Record: 114-50-16 (8 seasons)

2010 Finish: 2nd (12-5-4, 7-2-2 MIAC)

Concordia Season Preview

The 2011 women's soccer season has been circled on every calendar in the MIAC as the one where Concordia will finally come back to the rest of the conference.

After watching last year's seniors tear through the conference by winning 32 conference games, earning four MIAC regular season or playoff championships and making three trips to the NCAA Tournament the league is ready to take their swings at a program which lost 10 players to graduation. Not only did CC lose quantity from last year's team which won the conference postseason tournament, they also lost a boatload of quality. Gone is two-time All-American Sam Johnson as well as four-time All-Region midfielder Sue Obermiller and two-time All-Region defender Erika Swenson.

The 2011 season might finally be the year where Weiler will finally have to coach instead of just filling out the lineup card and sitting down to watch a talented group of players overpower their opponent.

Despite the high turnover from 2010, there is still room for optimism in the Cobber camp. Concordia will return several players who have been solid players the past couple of seasons but have stood in the shadows of the class of 2011. The top two returners bookend the field and will give CC a solid core to build upon. Juniors Ali Nelson (Maple Grove, Minn.) and Sarah Rounds (Plymouth, Minn./Wayzata HS) are two-year starters who are ready to step forward and take over "star" status. Nelson has started in goal in 40 games over the past two seasons. She has amassed 18 shutouts over her career and has a career goals against average of 0.67. Last year she had a 0.69 GAA and was named to the NSCAA All-North Region Second Team. Rounds led the team in scoring in 2010 as she netted 13 goals and added nine assists. She has 64 points in her first two years in maroon and gold - a pace that is 17 better than Johnson had in her first two years. Rounds earned All-Region honors for the first time in her career last season.

The biggest whole to fill for the Cobbers will come in the midfield where the departure of Obermiller on the wing and Abby Habein and Brittany Mayer in the middle will create a void in the Cobbers' ability to keep possession and also slow down the opposing team's offensive attack. The only returning starting midfield player for CC is sophomore Gina Weiss (Monticello, Minn.) who was fourth on the team in scoring with five goals and eight assists. Weiler will have to decide if he is going to train more experienced players who played other positions to take over the midfield or turn the center of the park over to newcomers.

Despite the lack of experience in the midfield, Concordia will return three of its four starting defenders. Senior Kelsey Swagger (Burnsville, Minn./Apple valley HS) as well as junior Nikole Koehn (Fargo, N.D./Fargo South HS) and sophomore Jessica Scherr (Great Falls, Mont.) have all started on the back line since they stepped on the CC campus. Swagger has been a starter for over 60 games and her presence on the wing will help the Cobber wing midfielders ease into the season. Koehn is the most versatile of the three as she can play in the middle or on the wing. Scherr has a year of experience under her belt and should make the loss of Swenson less severe.

The key for Weiler and the rest of the Cobbers will be to get through the early part of their conference schedule where they will face defending regular-season champion Carleton and last year's MIAC semifinal foe St. Thomas in back-to-back games. Weiler will be hoping that tradition and experience in pressure situations will help Concordia continue their winning ways as they try and reload the dynasty they have established over the past seven years.

| [Concordia women's soccer home page](#) | [2011 roster](#) | [2011 schedule](#) |

Gustavus

Coach: Mike Stehlik

Career Record: 218-126-30 (20 seasons)

2010 Finish: 10th (6-11-1, 2-8-1 MIAC)

Gustavus Season Preview

The Gustavus women’s soccer team will finish up its preseason workouts and begin play on Friday, September 2 against the University of Wisconsin-Stout on the Gustavus soccer pitch at 12:00 p.m. The Gusties are looking to improve on last season’s 6-10-1 overall record as well as replacing their top point-scorer, Ashley Anderson, and goalkeeper, Chelsea Bayer, who have since graduated.

“We are starting to put together the vision for how we want to play, but it is not going to happen overnight,” said Head Coach Mike Stehlik. “We are building a fire, and everyday we train, we add more fuel. Too much too soon and the fire smothers. But bit-by-bit we are stacking wood, and at just the right moment, we light the match.”

The Gusties welcome 24 players to their 2011 roster with just one senior, forward Meghan McMillan (Minneapolis, Minn.). McMillan scored 15 points on six goals and three assists in her junior year, leading the team in shots with 32. Sophomore forward Amanda Cartony (Stillwater, Minn.) recorded the second most points for the Gusties last season with 19 (8G, 3A) in 17 games played. Junior goalkeeper Jessica Richert (Freeburg, Ill.) will replace Bayer in the net.

Coach Stehlik wants to make sure that his squad improves through hard work and commitment to the team.

“Nobody's really a natural, not even Roy Hobbes,” Stehlik acknowledged. “No one on our team is a natural, and I really don't want one. You work hard to get good and then work harder to get better. If playing college soccer came that easy, then anyone that ever kicked a ball would be out here. But they aren't because they can't make the commitment. But for our team it is the hard work that is rewarding, it is sweat that is rewarding, it is the challenge of improvement and playing the game to our collective best ability that is rewarding. If you watch a game, it's fun. If you play it, it's recreation. If you work at it, it's college soccer.”

The Gustavus women’s soccer team finished 10th in the league last season with a record of 2-8-1. Within conference play, the Gusties scored an average of .91 goals per game (9th), while allowing 1.73 goals per game (9th).

| [Gustavus women's soccer home page](#) | [2011 roster](#) | [2011 schedule](#) |

Hamline

Coach: Ted Zingman
Career Record: 23-32-0 (4 seasons)
2010 Finish: 12th (5-13, 0-11 MIAC)

Hamline Season Preview

Hamline women's soccer coach Ted Zingman makes no bones about it. He knows the Pipers are ready for the next stage in their development and believes they have the talent, work ethic and attitude required to make a big leap forward in the very competitive Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

"We spent the last couple of years building the foundation," Zingman said. "Now we're ready to step up to the next level of competitiveness." In other words, MIAC opponents can expect to be a rugged time when a veteran Piper team takes the field this fall.

Hamline returns 14 players – including its top seven scorers – from the 2010 squad that finished with a 5-13 overall mark. Add in a dozen first year players – some of whom may make an immediate impact – and you can understand why Zingman says, "We're looking forward to continuing to build this program. We have players from all over the nation that are excited to be here."

The returnees are led by last year's leading scorer, junior forward Natalie Cooper. The Stillwater, Minn. native scored 10 goals last season and was one of two Pipers who earned Honorable Mention notice on the All-MIAC team. "She really came into her own last season," Zingman noted. Cooper won't be the only scoring threat this season. Aileen Scheibner (Woodbury, Minn.), who earned All-State Honorable Mention honors last fall as a senior at East Ridge High School, is a frosh she may see a lot of action early. So could fellow first-year player Jordan Sammons (Apple Valley, Minn.). A three-sport star at Apple Valley High School, she and Scheibner may provide the Pipers with some instant offense.

"They're dynamic players who I think will match up well with Natalie," Zingman said. "I feel they have the ability to raise our scoring potential considerably."

Four experienced Midfielders return. Junior Izzy Benjamin-Alvarado (Omaha, Neb.) and sophs Allyse Eide (North Pole, Alaska), Alyssa Koulentis (Gresham, Ore.) and Heather Hollinger (Las Vegas, Nev.) all logged over 1200 minutes playing time last season. Koulentis chipped in three goals and Hollinger was the Pipers' other Honorable Mention All-MIAC rep. "They all got a lot of playing time last year," Zingman said. "They should be a cohesive unit this year."

The same can be said about the defense where Courtney McMoore (Minneapolis, Minn.) a senior who has been a three-year starter is joined by junior Kelsey Caracciolo (Belgrade, Mont.) and sophomore Hannah Plagman (Cedar Rapids, Iowa). McMoore led the team in Minutes Played and Plagman started every game in 2010. They will be joined by first-year players Tania Russell (Eagan, Minn.) who comes to the Pipers from the powerhouse Saint Paul Academy program and Kristin Berry (Vancouver, Wash.) "Tania is a very experience defender and Kristin is a very versatile player," Zingman said. "We'll have some depth in the back this year."

Senior Liz Stock (Savage, Minn.), who started a dozen games last year in goal and has been a three-year starter, is the returning incumbent. But she may be pushed hard by a pair of westerners – first-year player Erin Urbanowicz (Gresham, Ore.) and sophomore Molly Jacobs (Portland, Ore.). "Liz is an experienced leader who is a stable force in goal," Zingman said. "It will be a very positive training environment and great competition for the starting job."

Although the final won-loss mark didn't necessarily reflect it, the Pipers made progress in 2010. Building on that – as well as the influx of new talent – hopefully will be the trigger to being a northern move in the standings.

"We're building this program on three principles: Integrity, Responsibility and Accountability," Zingman said. "If you achieve that, good things will follow."

| [Hamline women's soccer home page](#) | [2011 roster](#) | [2011 schedule](#) |

Macalester
Coach: Jemma Perkins (Interim)
Career Record: 0-0 (first season)
2010 Finish: 6th (11-6-2, 6-3-2 MIAC)

Macalester Season Preview

Interim head coach Jemma Perkins, a former Macalester player and assistant coach, takes over the program this fall and has high hopes for a program looking to make a return trip to the NCAA Division III playoffs. Macalester is going for its 16th NCAA playoff bid. The Scots lose All-North Region forward Emily Bardwell to graduation, but plenty of key standouts return on this veteran-loaded squad. Mac is going for its 23rd straight winning conference record.

The Scots feature one of the MIAC's top players in all-conference and all-region defender Kat Lenhart (Jr., Fairview, N.C. / A.C. Reynolds). With the return of Lenhart and goalkeeper Rosie Glenn-Finer (Jr., San Francisco, Calif. / Lick Wilmerding), Macalester's defense is expected to be stingy again after yielding just 13 goals in 11 conference matches last year. Since taking over the team's goalkeeping duties late in her frosh campaign, Glenn-Finer has posted a 14-6-2 record with 10 shutouts and a 0.84 goals against average. Key returning defenders, along with Lenhart, include Claire Henkel (Jr., Lexington, Ky. / Bryan Station), Hannah Boston (Jr., Mill Valley, Calif. / Tamalpais), Jenna Machado (Sr., Boulder, Colo. / Fairview) and Erica DeJong (Jr., Woodinville, Wash. / Eastside Catholic).

Macalester looks solid in the midfield as returning veterans include Matea Wasend (Sr., Denver, Colo. / George Washington), Lucy Miner (Sr., Seattle, Wash. / Ballard) and Emily Humphreys (Jr., Eau Claire, Wis. / Memorial).

Looking to pick up the scoring slack up front following the graduation of leading goal producers Bardwell and Lauryn Gutierrez, will be the likes of Georgia Cloepfil (So., Portland, Ore. / Lincoln), Izzi Speer (So., Madison, Wis. / West) and Maggie Molter (So., Cedarburg, Wis.).

"There is great energy with the players back on campus in pre-season camp," said Coach Perkins. "The returners are geared up for the season and we have a healthy class of first-years to add to the mix. I'm excited to get the team out on the field to kick off the competitive season."

Mac opens its season Sept. 1 at home against St. Scholastica. The MIAC opener is set for Sept. 14 at St. Benedict.

| [Macalester women's soccer home page](#) | [2011 roster](#) | [2011 schedule](#) |

Saint Benedict

Coach: Steve Kimble

Career Record: 21-14-2 (2 seasons)

2010 Finish: T-3rd (11-7-1, 7-3-1 MIAC)

Saint Benedict Season Preview

After reaching the MIAC Playoffs and narrowly missing the MIAC Championship game last season, the College of Saint Benedict Blazer soccer team will attempt to claim its first conference title since 2003.

The Blazers tied for third in the MIAC with an 11-7-1 overall record and a 7-3-1 conference standing in 2010. CSB took top seeded Carleton into overtime in the conference semifinal but lost in heartbreaking fashion as the Knights won the game 2-1 with less than one second remaining.

Third year head coach Steve Kimble returns with a squad led by five seniors, including two all-conference and second team all-region players in defender Sami Meyman and forward Heather Beshears (13 goals, 30 points). Other top contributors returning include all-conference sophomore forward Colleen Bouchard (12 points) and senior defender Kelsey Faber, a three-year starter.

With a talented group of premier defenders, strong scorers and a deep first-year class, the Blazers look well equipped to contend for a MIAC Championship.

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St. Catherine

Coach: Chris Citowicki

Career Record: 0-0-0 (First season)

2010 Finish: 11th (6-11-1, 2-9-0 MIAC)

St. Catherine Season Preview

“New” might be the word to describe the Wildcats heading into the 2011 soccer season. First-year head coach Chris Citowicki plans to take the Wildcats in a new direction after a 6-11-1 season and will be relying on plenty of new faces to lead the charge. After injuries stymied their offensive attack in 2010, the Wildcats are excited to turn things around this season. As Citowicki says “It’s a fresh start for everyone and we’re really looking to change the culture of the program and head in a new direction this season.”

The Wildcats have plenty of new leaders ready to take charge of the team after losing a large senior class to graduation. With only one senior on the squad, many underclassmen are expected to step up as leaders and help the team form a new identity. That starts with junior captains Christina Paik and Liesl Wolf, who both return as starters on defense. Sophomore defender Kristi Thorwick joins Paik and Wolf, and adds a scoring touch as well, having led the Wildcats in assists in 2010.

Offensively, the Wildcats will be paced by senior Kaitlin Kramer, junior Kelsey Moll, and sophomore Lensa Gurmessa. Moll led the Wildcats in 2010 with seven goals and 16 points. Gurmessa provided a spark coming off the bench last season, blasting two game-winning goals and notching four goals total. With nine career goals, Kramer brings an experienced scoring touch. Eight incoming players will help bring a new energy to the squad, including goalkeeper Abbey Hinton, who should challenge for the starting job.

With the potent mix of newcomers and returners and an attitude of looking forward, the Wildcats expect this season to lay the groundwork for future success. “We’re expecting great things over the next few seasons, but it all begins this year, with this team,” says Citowicki, who is confident that his squad has the ability to step up to the challenge.

The Wildcats spring into action on September 1st at Luther, before hosting the Wildcat Invitational on September 3-4. They open conference play on September 14th against Carleton.

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Saint Mary's

Coach: Neil Cassidy

Career Record: 0-0-0 (First season)

2010 Finish: T-8th (7-9-1, 4-6-1 MIAC)

Saint Mary's Season Preview

As if entering his first season as the head coach of the Saint Mary’s University women’s soccer team isn’t filled with enough questions, there’s one more that first-year coach Neil Cassidy must find an answer to: How do you replace graduated senior Amy Sibik, an All-Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference First-Teamer and the team’s leading scorer each of her four seasons in a Cardinal uniform.

Sibik closed out her illustrious collegiate career as one of the top scorers in program history. She led the Cardinals in all three offensive categories in 2010, collecting 12 goals — most among MIAC players and two shy of her single-season career best — five assists and 29 points. Sibik scored 10 or more goals in three of her four seasons as a Cardinal, while her 46 career goals rank No. 5 in program history and her 105 career points are No. 6 all time.

So just how does Cassidy plan to fill Sibik’s goal-scoring cleats?

He’s not going to.

“There’s really two ways you can look at (a season without Sibik in an SMU uniform),” said Cassidy, who took over for Eric Zimmerman in late March and is entering his first season as a collegiate head coach, having spent the last five years as an assistant coach for the Carleton women’s soccer team. “Sure, it’s tough to replace your top scorer, but I was never a part of that experience, so I’m starting fresh — to me, I haven’t lost anything, I’ve gained 20 players.”

Among those 20 players are seven seniors — including Cassie Hulett (Milwaukee, Wis.), Rachel Gates-Vickery (New Brighton, Minn.), Ellie Bradford (Whitefish Bay, Wis.), Amanda Rahman (Rochester, Minn.), Kelsey Schneider (Portland, Ore.), Kelsey Brown (Elk River, Minn.) and Ashley Gernes (Lake Elmo, Minn.) — which certainly makes Cassidy’s job a bit easier.

Hulett returns after a stellar junior season in which she appeared in all 17 games in goal for the Cardinals, compiling a 1.36 goals-against-average and a .798 save percentage, while Rahman shared the team lead in assists (5) and was second to Sibik in both goals (5) and points (15).

“We have a good mix of returners and new players,” said Cassidy. “So far it’s been an awesome experience.”

During his five years as Carleton’s assistant women’s coach, the Knights compiled a 68-25-10 record — including a 2010 MIAC regular-season championship and a 39-11-4 mark in conference play. The Knights reached the second round of the NCAA Division III national tournament a year ago, and has played in each of the last three conference tournaments.

Cassidy is no stranger to Saint Mary’s, having served as a volunteer assistant for the men’s program during the 2004 and 2005 seasons.

“I really enjoyed my time here working with coach (Eric) Luzzi,” Cassidy explained. “Since that time, I have been trying to find a way to get back involved in the Saint Mary’s soccer program. The atmosphere and sense of family that Saint Mary’s creates is a very special thing.”

And it’s that sense of family that Cassidy is planning on instilling with his team.

“I’m so proud of the ladies so far — seeing them grow from levels to levels,” said Cassidy. “We’ve spent a lot of time creating that sense of family, getting everyone to understand that they will always be there for each other.”

Cassidy wasn’t about to reveal his own personal goals for his first season at the helm, but he is certain that if the Cardinals continue to progress the way they have early this preseason, the sky is the limit.

“My philosophy is, in order for the forwards to score, or the goalkeepers to stop the ball, they’ve either got to get through players or get the ball to players,” Cassidy explained. “So there’s always the team aspect — as long as we keep working together as a team — and we’ve got some really good team things going — I think we’ll be OK and it should be a great season.”

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St. Olaf
Coach: Jeremy Driver
Career Record: 44-40-6 (5 seasons)
2010 Finish: 5th (13-5, 7-4 MIAC)

St. Olaf Season Preview

The St. Olaf women's soccer team aims to take another step forward in 2011 after collecting a school record 13 wins last fall, but falling a game short of the league's postseason tournament.

FORWARDS

The Oles tout a pair of returners with over a combined 50 career goals and each of the top three scorers from the 2010 squad. Lindsay Howard (Sr., Minnetonka, Minn.), an All-MIAC pick as a sophomore, and Catie Christoffel (Sr., Woodbury, Minn.). Howard has 29 career goals to her credit and Christoffel 23. The Oles also return Amanda Leone (Soph., Plymouth, Minn./Wayzata), who had six goals and an assist in her first season.

MIDFIELDERS

The midfield will be the team's most experienced group. St. Olaf returns seven, including two starters and Deanne Schmidt (Sr., Omaha, Neb./Marian), an All-MIAC pick in 2010 who will move back to the midfield after playing in the backfield in 2010. Also returning are Christina Herron-Sweet (Sr., San Diego, Calif./Francis Parker) and Emma Crumley (Soph., Plymouth, Minn./Wayzata). Herron-Sweet started the team's first 15 games in 2010 before suffering an injury. Crumley had three goals and an assist as a first year, drawing nine starts.

DEFENDERS

The St. Olaf backfield will be young, but experienced. Three returners -- Susie Jelenik (Soph., Engelwood, Colo./Cherry Creek), Megan Campbell (Soph., Hampton, N.J./N. Hunterdon), Allyson Connor (Sr., Oregon, Wis.) -- who started nearly all of the Oles' games last season. Christine Barringer (Jr., Littleton, Colo./Arapahoe) returns as well, after starting seven games last year.

GOALKEEPERS

Nora Forbes (Soph., Edina, Minn.) will get the starting job early on. Forbes went 4-2-0 in seven appearances last year, with a 1.08 GAA and .750 save percentage. Lindsay Dolan (Fy., Middleton, Wis.) will also compete for time.

SCHEDULE

St. Olaf opens play on September 1 at UW-River Falls. The team's MIAC opener is Sept. 14 at home against Gustavus.

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St. Thomas

Coach: Sheila McGill

Career Record: 48-21-8 (4 seasons)

2010 Finish: T-3rd (11-7-1, 7-3-1 MIAC)

St. Thomas Season Preview

Coach Sheila McGill has a young but talented roster as she starts her fifth season as Tommie women's soccer head coach.

St. Thomas finished 11-7-1 last season, including a 7-3-1 record good for third place in the MIAC and a return to the conference playoffs.

The Tommies share the best record in MIAC play over the last three seasons. In 33 league games, UST and Carleton are each 24-5-4, just ahead of Concordia's 23-5-5 mark.

UST has just two seniors and three juniors, but McGill likes the energy so far in fall practices. Five players who have received All-MIAC mention during their careers are back, including sophomores Katie Scherer, Jaclyn Glaser and Jenna Savino; senior goalie Allie Byron; and senior defender Tess Hanson. Two other team leaders in the field for the Tommies are juniors Brittany Cochlin and Anna Strehlow.

Scherer, a rare freshman All-MIAC first-team selection, joined Savino in the top 10 of MIAC scoring last season. In 11 conference games, Scherer had five goals and three assists, while Savino had five goals and two assists. In 19-game overall stats, Scherer scored seven goals and seven assists, while Savino collected nine goals and three assists.

Byron led MIAC keepers in lowest goals-against average in MIAC play at 0.46 with just four goals surrendered in parts of nine games. She was second in saves percentage (.907). In all games, Byron was 9-5-1 with a 1.01 GAA. On her three-year career, Byron is 17-11-4 in 36 games.

Hanson, an Academic All-America candidate with a 3.98 grade-point average, has played in all 59 games on her career and helped the Tommies post 38-14-7 record in that span. She was an honorable mention All-MIAC pick as a sophomore in 2009.

Cochlin has started all 39 games on her career and has four assists. Strehlow has five goals and six assists in 35 career games. Glaser finished with two goals and two assists in her first season.

The team gets the distinction of opening the 2010-2011 St. Thomas athletics season as they play host to UW-Stevens Point this Thursday at 4 p.m. on UST's South Campus field.

"Our strong attacking players, coupled with our experienced back line, are a great combination for success," McGill said. "We have a young but strong team, led by upperclassmen with great experience and drive."

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