

SJU's Jantscher, Bethel trio headline 2015 MIAC Baseball Awards

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BLOOMINGTON, Minn. -- The 2015 Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) baseball season saw Bethel University capture its first conference championship, and Saint John's University win the MIAC's postseason title, so it was fitting that individuals from those teams claimed the league's top honors when then the 2015 MIAC Baseball Awards were announced Wednesday.

Saint John's senior catcher/pitcher Kurt Jantscher (Plymouth, Minn. / Robbinsdale Armstrong) was named the MIAC Max Molock Most Valuable Player, and MIAC champion Bethel swept the other three awards. Royals' starter Joe Zorn (Stillwater, Minn.) was named the Mike Augustin Pitcher-of-the-Year, Esteban Velasco (San Diego, Calif. / Bonita Vista) was voted Rookie-of-the-Year and Head Coach Brian Raabe was selected as the Jim Dimick Coach-of-the-Year by his peers. The conference also announced the 2015 MIAC All-Conference Team, the All-Defensive Team and the All-MIAC Sportsmanship Team.



The versatile Jantscher earned his MVP honor thanks to a tremendous season in the batter's box, behind the plate and on the mound. The SJU senior did remarkable damage with his bat during conference play, as led the MIAC in home runs (seven), on-base percentage (.550) and slugging percentage (.959). He was third in the league in total bases (47), and batting average (.449), fourth in runs (20) and he drove in 17 runs.

He was also a huge contributor out of the bullpen, as he went 4-0 with four saves and a 2.57 ERA in nine MIAC relief appearances. Jantscher ranked third in the MIAC in both wins and saves, and he struck out 17 batters in just 14 innings. Overall, Jantscher hit .373 with seven home runs, 29 runs and 26 RBI, and he was 4-1 with eight saves and an even 3.00 ERA. He helped Saint John's finish in a tie for second in the MIAC with a 12-6 conference record (26-15 overall) and win the 2015 MIAC Playoff championship.

Zorn was voted the MIAC's top pitcher for his work on the mound and his role in the Royal's conference title. In MIAC games, Zorn was 3-1 with two saves and a 4.02 ERA. He ranked first in the MIAC with two shutouts, second in innings pitched (40.1) and third with 38 strikeouts. Overall, Zorn went 6-2 with a 3.50 ERA and was the MIAC leader in complete games (five), shutouts (two), innings pitched (69.1). In 13 appearances (nine starts), he struck out 62 against just nine walks.

Velasco received the Rookie-of-the-Year honor for his breakout season and his role in Bethel's championship. The freshman infielder batted .349 with 25 RBI and 22 runs scored in overall games, and he hit .333 with nine runs and 17 RBI in conference play. He had six doubles and a .383 on-base percentage overall, and had a .944 fielding percentage on 72 chances in 18 conference games.

Raabe's first MIAC Coach-of-the-Year honor coincides with Bethel's first-ever MIAC regular-season championship. He guided the Royals to a 30-9 overall record and a 15-3 MIAC mark to win the conference's regular-season title by three games. The 30 overall wins and 15 MIAC wins both set new Bethel school records. The Royals had the MIAC's best overall team ERA (3.74) and the top fielding percentage (.975) in conference play. Raabe coached Zorn and Velasco to their postseason awards, in addition to five All-Conference and five All-Defensive team selections.

The All-Conference team included seven players who received their second-straight honor. Bethel's Zorn, Saint John's Brett Becker, St. Thomas' Eric Veghlahn, Saint Mary's Willie Doll, Carleton's Nolan Baker and Hayden Tsutsui and Augsburg's Tanner Oakes were all repeat All-Conference selections. Concordia's Devin Johnson also earned his second career All-MIAC honor, as he was also a member of the 2013 squad.

The 27-member All-Conference team was heavy on upperclassmen, as 22 were either seniors or juniors. The team included 13 seniors, nine juniors and five sophomores. The league's top three teams in the regular-season standings - Bethel, Saint John's and Concordia - led the way with five All-MIAC players each. St. Thomas and Saint Mary's each had three, Carleton had two and Augsburg, Gustavus, Hamline and Macalester had one selection apiece.

The conference also honored a 10-player All-Defensive Team with one player at each position and an additional pitcher. Saint Mary's Doll earned his third-straight selection in the outfield, and Hamline outfielder Dan Moro was also a repeat pick. MIAC champ Bethel had five All-Defensive selections, Saint Mary's had three and Concordia and Hamline had one each. The team included four seniors, four juniors and two sophomores.

As part of a conference-wide sportsmanship initiative, the MIAC announced the ninth-annual All-MIAC Sportsmanship team for baseball. Members of the All-MIAC Sportsmanship team are selected by their coaches and teammates as individuals who demonstrate ideals of positive sportsmanship both on and off the field of competition.

Max Molock Most Valuable Player - Kurt Jantscher, Saint John's (Sr., C/P, Plymouth, Minn. / Robbinsdale Armstrong)
Mike Augustin Pitcher-of-the-Year - Joe Zorn, Bethel (Sr., P, Stillwater, Minn.)
Rookie-of-the-Year - Esteban Velasco, Bethel (Fr., INF, San Diego, Calif. / Bonita Vista)
Jim Dimick Coach-of-the-Year - Brian Raabe, Bethel (Fourth season)

2015 MIAC BASEBALL ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Hometown/High School</u>
Nolan Baker	Carleton	Sr.	DH	Appleton, Wis. / North
Brett Becker	Saint John's	Sr.	2B	North Oaks, Minn. / Mounds View
Sam Berk	Macalester	Jr.	1B	Miami, Fla. / Palmer Trinity School
Nick Bornhauser	Concordia	Sr.	1B	Northfield, Minn
Ben Buerkle	Saint Mary's	So.	OF	Roseville, Minn.
Eric Carlsen	Concordia	Sr.	OF	Alexandria, Minn. / Jefferson
Evan Cordell	Hamline	Sr.	OF	Lakeville, Minn. / North
Willie Doll	Saint Mary's	Jr.	OF	Amherst, Wis.
Bryce Feia	Concordia	Sr.	P	Avon, Minn. / Holdingford
Collin Felhaber	Saint John's	Sr.	P	North St. Paul, Minn.
Bill Ferderer	St. Thomas	So.	P	The Woodlands, Tex. / College Park
Garrett Fuchs	Gustavus	Sr.	OF	Cold Spring, Minn. / Rocori
Aaron Green	Concordia	So.	OF	Fargo, N.D. / South
Tyler Heitmann	Bethel	Jr.	P	Baldwin, Wis. / Baldwin-Woodville
Logan Hershey	Saint John's	Jr.	SS	Maple Grove, Minn.
Kurt Jantscher	Saint John's	Sr.	C/P	Plymouth, Minn. / Robbinsdale Armstrong
Brady Johnson	St. Thomas	Jr.	SS	Andover, Minn.
Devin Johnson	Concordia	Sr.	OF	Willmar, Minn.
Tyler Lursen	Saint Mary's	Jr.	C	Maple Grove, Minn. / Osseo
Bryce Marquardt	Bethel	So.	OF	Champlin, Minn.
Tanner Oakes	Augsburg	Sr.	P	Jordan, Minn.
Derek Schiebel	Saint John's	So.	3B	Apple Valley, Minn. / Eastview
Mike Schultz	Bethel	Sr.	C	Forest Lake, Minn.
Hayden Tsutsui	Carleton	Jr.	OF	Northridge, Calif. / Chatsworth
Eric Veglahn	St. Thomas	Jr.	P	LaCrescent, Minn.
Jarad Watts	Bethel	Jr.	2B	La Quinta, Calif.
Joe Zorn	Bethel	Sr.	P	Stillwater, Minn.

2015 MIAC BASEBALL ALL-DEFENSIVE TEAM

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Hometown/High School</u>
Nik Anderson	Bethel	Sr.	3B	Shoreview, Minn. / Mounds View
Drew Denning	Saint Mary's	Sr.	2B	St. Paul, Minn. / Cretin-Derham Hall
Willie Doll	Saint Mary's	Jr.	OF	Amherst, Wis.
Ben Johnson	Saint Mary's	Jr.	P	Brooklyn Park, Minn. / Osseo
Phil Kuball	Concordia	Jr.	SS	Hutchinson, Minn.
Bryce Marquardt	Bethel	So	OF	Champlin, Minn.
Dan Moro	Hamline	Jr.	OF	Calgary, Alberta / Vauxhall
Bret Neuville	Bethel	So.	1B	Green Bay, Wis. / Bay Port
Mike Schultz	Bethel	Sr.	C	Forest Lake, Minn.
Joe Zorn	Bethel	Sr.	P	Stillwater, Minn.

2015 BASEBALL ALL-MIAC SPORTSMANSHIP TEAM

Augsburg - Chris Bambenek (Sr., St. Charles, Minn.)
 Bethel - Paul Weidner (Sr., Randolph, Minn.)
 Carleton - Nolan Baker (Sr., Appleton, Wis. / North)
 Concordia - Eric Carlsen (Sr., Alexandria, Minn. / Jefferson)
 Gustavus - Max Fidler (Sr., Lino Lakes, Minn. / Centennial)
 Hamline - Joel Riordan (Sr., Windom, Minn.)

Macalester - Scott Foltz (Sr., St. Louis Park, Minn.)
Saint John's - Alex Toninato (Sr., Woodbury, Minn. / Hill-Murray)
Saint Mary's - Kevin Miley (Jr., St. Paul, Minn. / Cretin-Derham Hall)
St. Thomas - Ben Waltz (Jr., Minneapolis, Minn. / Washburn)

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