



2006 MIAC BASEBALL PREVIEW

It appears that the 2006 baseball season will once again be a competitive one for teams in the MIAC. Teams have shown strong play in the preseason, whether their play will carry into the conference season will be the deciding factor in their ability to capture the MIAC title.


St. Thomas looks to defend its conference title once again this season but the Tommie's quest won't come without a fight. Augsburg, Concordia, and St. Olaf qualified for the MIAC Tournament last season with Gustavus, Bethel, and Saint John's not far behind. These teams will be battling hard to earn their way into the top four spots in the conference. Saint Mary's, Hamline, Macalester, and Carleton will all be looking to improve upon last years finish.

The 2006 MIAC Playoffs will take place on May 12-14, 2006 in Northfield and Dundas, Minnesota with the winner receiving the MIAC's automatic bid to the 2006 NCAA Tournament. The top four teams at the end of the conference regular season will qualify for the tournament.


Augsburg College		
Head Coach:	Keith Bateman , 3rd Season	
2005 Record:	12-8 MIAC (3rd Place) / 24-18 Overall	
Key Returners:	Darren Ginther (3B/P, Sr., Crystal, Minn. / Robbinsdale Armstrong) Troy Deden (C, Sr., Northfield, Minn.) Matt Johnson (SS, Jr., Plymouth, Minn./Osseo) Tyler Kraft (P, Jr., Savage, Minn./Burnsville)	
Season Preview:	<p>With the bulk of its lineup returning, the Augsburg College baseball team is aiming to improve upon last season's 24-18 record (12-8 MIAC). Last year, the Auggies qualified for the MIAC postseason playoffs for the first time in school history, reaching the championship round against St. Thomas. Head coach Keith Bateman, last season's MIAC Co-Coach of the Year, enters his third season as the Auggies' mentor.</p> <p>Augsburg has one of its largest rosters in recent years to enter the 2006 season -- 42 players -- with 22 letterwinners and seven starters returning to the lineup. Four All-MIAC selections return to the lineup this season, led by first-team selections Darren Ginther (Sr., Crystal, Minn./Robbinsdale Armstrong HS) and Troy Deden (Sr., Northfield, Minn.). Honorable-mention selections Matt Johnson (Jr., Plymouth, Minn./Osseo HS) and Tyler Kraft (Jr., Savage, Minn./Burnsville HS) also return. Ginther, Deden and Kraft earned Division III "Players to Watch" recognition by Collegiate Baseball newspaper in its 2006 preseason preview issue.</p> <p>Ginther, an All-Midwest Region second-team selection and ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America first-team selection last year, has been one of the top players in the MIAC at both third base and pitcher. He hit .413 last season with 59 hits, 35 runs and 17 extra-base hits, all team highs. As Augsburg's No. 2 starter last season, he finished with a 4.10 earned-run-average and a 6-3 record in 12 starts.</p> <p>Deden, a catcher, hit .364 last season with a team-high 36 RBI and 17 extra-base hits. He also shined in the field with a .985 fielding percentage (just three errors in 196 chances). Deden earned All-Midwest Region third-team honors last year.</p> <p>Kraft established himself as one of the top relief pitchers in the MIAC last year, appearing in a conference-high 24 games last season with a 5-1 record, 2.51 ERA and five saves, with 32 strikeouts against just six walks. Johnson, a two-year starter at shortstop, hit .313 last season with 19 RBI and 10 extra-base hits.</p> <p>Augsburg's starting outfield returns intact, with Ricky Schreier (Jr., St. Paul, Minn./Cretin-Derham Hall HS), Jeff Stomberg (So., Lino Lakes, Minn./Centennial HS) and Brian Bambenek (Jr., St. Charles, Minn.) all returning. Andrew Werner (So., Vermillion, Minn./Hastings HS) also returns to split time at third base with Ginther. He also will be counted on to produce some solid innings as a starting pitcher this year. Also returning this season is second-baseman Andy Nelson (Sr., Waseca, Minn.), who missed most of last season due to injury.</p>	

Bethel University		
Head Coach:	Greg Indlecoffer, 4th Season	
2005 Record:	10-10 MIAC (6th Place) / 18-18 Overall	


Key Returners:	<p>Kirby Carr (OF, Jr., Fergus Falls, Minn.)</p> <p>TJ Therrien (SS, Sr., Spring Lake Park, Minn.)</p> <p>Mike Gaustad (2B, Jr., Fergus Falls, Minn.)</p> <p>Dane Hansen (1B/P, Sr. Roseville, Minn.)</p> <p>Travis Wermedal (C/DH, Sr., Wells, Minn. / United South Central)</p> <p>John Buteyn (RHP/1B, So., Eden Prarie, Minn.)</p>
Season Preview:	<p>Bethel's baseball team finished their 2005 season with an 18-18 overall record. At first glance, a mediocre season as the team struggled to get their powerful offense (.344 team batting average finishing 10th in the nation) and pitching performance to coincide. Coach Indlecoffer is quick to state "We played an aggressive schedule trying to play the best competition in our region as well as in the nation on our spring trip to Ft. Myers FL".</p> <p>The Royals said goodbye to eight seniors in 2005 but have a solid core of returning players to anchor the squad. The coaching staff is encouraged with the type of physical talent and teachable attitudes demonstrated by the returning players and new recruits. These character qualities help to provide a solid foundation from which to build upon. Indlecoffer adds, "At the core, this program and team is all about transformation...both physically in the development of our God-given baseball skills as well as spiritually in the development of our attitude, outlook and love for our fellow teammates." Bethel returns to the line up seven starters from last season and will look to some young players to fill in the gaps.</p>

Carleton College		
Head Coach:	Aaron Rushing, 1st Season	
2005 Record:	5-15 MIAC (11th Place) / 10-26 Overall	
Key Returners:	Luke Muellerleile (SS, Sr., White Bear Lake, Minn. / Mahtomedi) Ben Coopridr (OF, Sr., DeKalb, Ill.) Fran Glover (C, Sr., Minnetonka, Minn.) Brian Sharkey (P, Sr., Bow, N.H. / St. Paul's School)	


Season Preview:	<p>Two years ago, the Carleton College baseball team started seven players that were either sophomores or first-year players. That group greatly improved their win total in 2005 and enters 2006 with great optimism about the chances for a similar improvement, as they return every player from last year's squad along with a talented group of newcomers in head coach Aaron Rushing's first season.</p> <p>Carleton will be led by two-time All-MIAC shortstop Luke Muellerleile (Sr./White Bear Lake, Minn./Mahtomedi). He hit .360 a year ago, including 13 doubles, two triples and a home run, and had 22 RBI, which was second most on the team.</p> <p>Joining him in the core of the Knights' lineup will be Carleton's best power hitter, leftfielder Ben Coopridner (Sr./DeKalb, Ill.). Coopridner was surprisingly left off last year's All-MIAC team despite hitting for an average of .333, and belting seven home runs and 32 RBI and finishing eight in slugging percentage, fourth in RBI and third in homers in the conference.</p> <p>The Knights' infield will most likely have the same look this year as it did a year ago, with first-baseman Roddy Theobald (Sr./Bloomington, Ind./Bloomington North), second-baseman Matt Bond (Sr./Falls Church, Va./George Mason) and third-baseman Nick Shepard (Jr./ New York, N.Y./Fieldston School) joining Muellerleile around the diamond. Theobald hit .307 a year ago, which was third best on the team, and his slick-fielding prowess should help solidify a somewhat shaky infield defense.</p> <p>The Knights are solid behind the plate, as they return two-year starter and captain Fran Glover (Minnetonka, Minn.). Glover was fourth on the team with a .291 batting average last season while starting 31 of Carleton's 36 games at catcher.</p> <p>Sophomore leadoff hitter Doug Sylvester (Fargo, N.D./North), who earned the starting centerfield job as a rookie last year, joins Coopridner as a returning starter. The speedy lefty batted .281 a year ago and gave the team a base-stealing threat, leading Carleton with five stolen bases. The rightfield slot was a question mark for the Knights a year ago, and remains the position most open for competition this season.</p> <p>On the mound, Carleton returns a quartet of experienced starters in Brian Sharkey (Bow, N.H./St. Paul's School), Sam Chotiner-Gardner (Hamden, Conn./Hamden Hall Country Day), Andy Krominga (LeSueur, Minn./LeSueur-Henderson) and Topeff. Sharkey is the unquestioned ace of the staff, as he led the team in wins (four) and innings pitched (63.0) a year ago.</p> <p>Rushing begins his first season as head coach of the Knights, replacing long-time skipper Bill Nelson. Rushing comes to Carleton from his alma mater, Grinnell College (Iowa), where he was an assistant football and baseball. In addition, Rushing has served as interim head coach at Minot State (N.D.), played internationally and coached 12 players who went on to be drafted by Major League Baseball.</p>
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Concordia College		
Head Coach:	Bucky Burgau, 28th Season	
2005 Record:	12-8 MIAC (4th Place) / 18-21 Overall	
Key Returners:	Billy DeNet (Sr., SS, Eagan, Minn.) Kevin Engebretson (Jr., P, Alexandria, Minn./Jefferson) Chris Klabo (Jr., OF, Brainerd, Minn.) Brian Schumacher (Sr., 3B/P, Thompson, N.D.) Blake Trenbeath (Sr., P, Cavalier, N.D.)	


Season Preview:	<p>Having made the MIAC playoffs in four of the past five seasons, the expectations for the 2006 Concordia baseball season are once again set in the clouds. The Cobbers are coming off a year where they finished tied for third in the conference and finished with at least 10 wins in league play for the seventh straight season – and 24th in the past 26 years.</p> <p>Buck Burgau is entering his 28th season as head coach of the Cobbers and will once again push Concordia to the top of the MIAC race. Burgau is the league’s all-time winningest coach when it comes to conference games. He has won 325 league games and was the first coach in the history of the MIAC to win over 300 conference games.</p> <p>This year’s edition of the Cobber baseball team will feature an outstanding defensive lineup, a powerful and potentially very deep offensive attack and a freshman class that could make an immediate impact. The question mark will come from the pitching staff that only returns three of the top six pitchers from last year and has to fill in the no. 1 starting spot and the team’s closer role.</p> <p>The team will be led by senior captains Brian Schumacher (Thompson, N.D.) and Billy DeNet (Eagan, Minn.). Schumacher, the two-time MIAC MVP in football, earned All-Midwest honors last season while finishing second on the team in hitting in overall games with a .361 average and third in conference games with a .382 average. He tied for the team lead in home runs with nine, falling two short of the school record for most home runs in a season. He also led the team in RBIs (41) and slugging percentage (.654). He led the MIAC (conference games) in RBIs (30) and tied for the lead in home runs (6).</p> <p>DeNet was named to the 2005 MIAC All-Conference Team for the first time in his career after leading Concordia in hitting with a .390 average. He hit .444 against conference opponents, which placed him third in the MIAC in batting. He was also fourth in the MIAC in on-base percentage (.518). As the team’s starting shortstop, he had a .927 fielding percentage and .939 mark in conference play. He finished the regular season by cleanly handling his last 24 chances and 47 of his last 48 chances.</p> <p>Schumacher and DeNet will form the cornerstone of the defense for the Cobbers. The pair has now anchored the left side of the defense for a full year and their teamwork will allow the Cobber pitching staff to feel more at ease with any ground ball hit to their left.</p> <p>The third member of the returning all-conference trio is outfielder Chris Klabo (Jr., Brainerd, Minn.). Klabo was one of only two Cobbers to play in every game in 2005. He tied for the team lead in home runs with nine and led the MIAC in conference games in runs scored (25). He also tied for fourth in walks (12), tied for fifth in home runs (4), 12th in RBIs (15) and 15th in total bases (35).</p>
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<u>Gustavus Adolphus College</u>		
Head Coach:	Mike Carroll, 10th season	
2005 Record:	11-9 MIAC (5th Place) / 21-18 Overall	
Key Returners:	<p>Ben Sherer (1B, Sr., Bismarck, N.D.)</p> <p>Anders Schmidt (P, Sr., Lakeville, Minn.)</p> <p>Tony Konicek (OF, Jr., Rochester, Minn.)</p> <p>Wade Vrieze (OF/P, Jr., Richfield, Minn.)</p> <p>Aaron Madson (IF, Sr., North Mankato, Minn.)</p>	


Season Preview:	<p>The Gustavus baseball team returns all but three players from a team that posted a 21-18 record overall and finished fifth in the MIAC with a 11-9 mark. Coach Mike Carroll's 2006 squad features All-MIAC selections Ben Sherer at first base and Anders Schmidt on the mound and has hopes of advancing into the MIAC Post-Season Tournament for the third time in five years. The Gusties will also strive to win their first MIAC title since claiming three straight crowns from 1978 to 1980.</p> <p>Overall, the Gusties return five of their eight starters from last season. Sherer had a .357 average from the plate last season and led the team in hits (45), doubles (9) and RBIs (33). Sherer led the MIAC in batting with an average of .513 in 2004 and claimed league MVP honors in his sophomore season. Schmidt appeared in 14 games for Gustavus on the mound and finished the season with a 7-2 overall record. He had a 2.65 ERA, pitched four complete games and converted the Gusties' only save of the season.</p> <p>Outfielders Tony Konicek and Wade Vrieze and infielder Aaron Madson will also be key contributors for the Gusties offensively. Konicek ended last season with a .386 batting average while leading the team in home runs (5). Vrieze led all Gusties with a batting average of .429 and an on-base percentage of .491. Madson had 39 hits in 122 at-bats for a .320 batting average last season.</p> <p>Along with Schmidt, Gustavus will return four other pitchers to the line-up this season – David Wold, Josh Spitzack, Kraig Olson and Justin Hahn. Wold had a 3.23 ERA and was 1-0 in nine appearances. Spitzack was second on the team in wins (5) and strikeouts (41). Olson pitched 16.2 innings, including three starts, while Hahn saw limited time in his freshman year.</p> <p>Complete Gustavus baseball preview at: http://www.gustavus.edu/oncampus/athletics/news/2041</p>
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Hamline University			
Head Coach:	Jason Verdugo, 5th Season		
2005 Record:	6-14 MIAC (9th Place) 16-22 Overall		
Key Returners:		<p>Andrew Bennett (SS, So., St. Paul, Minn. / St. Paul Academy)</p> <p>Charlie Paulson (3B, So., Minneapolis, Minn. / De La Salle)</p> <p>Owen Waller (1B/DH, Sr., Maplewood, Minn. / Tartan)</p>	


Season Preview:	<p>The 2005 campaign was set up to be a dream season for the Hamline baseball team. They had loads of returning talent on the mound and in the field coupled with a solid recruiting class that would put the Pipers over on top and into the MIAC Playoffs. But that dream turned out to be a nightmare as the Pipers battled inconsistency en route to a 16-22 record, 6-14 in the MIAC. That season is over, but it is not forgotten as the Pipers prepare for the 2006 season.</p> <p>First-year and sophomores will dominate the lineup, but Verdugo believes that will be one of the team's strengths. "The strength of this team is that we have a lot of youth," Verdugo said. "We don't have a lot experience as far as understanding who we are playing against. We are just going to go out and compete and play the game. A lot of time when you're in that situation, I think you tend to be more relaxed."</p> <p>In the field, the Pipers could have as many as six first-years and sophomores in the lineup on a given day, including four in the infield. Sophomore Andrew Bennett (St. Paul, Minn.) returns at shortstop. Despite battling injuries as a first-year Bennett was named All-MIAC honorable mention after hitting .316 with eight doubles, three triples, and a home run. He was also third on the team in runs with 20. He will be joined on the left side of the infield by sophomore third baseman Charlie Paulson (Minneapolis, Minn.), who also was named All-MIAC honorable mention.</p> <p>Senior Owen Waller (Maplewood, Minn.) will make the switch from third base to first base after undergoing reconstructive knee surgery. He was an All-MIAC honorable mention performer after hitting .329 with four doubles and 14 RBIs.</p> <p>Behind the plate, senior Brian Kingery (Atwater, Minn.) and sophomore James Bachmeier (St. Paul, Minn.) will platoon. Kingery hit .299 a season ago with three doubles. Bachmeier hit .300 in limited duty a season ago.</p> <p>Outfield positions remain up in the air. Junior left fielder Aaron Thompson (Vadnais Heights, Minn.) will look to regain the form of his first-year season when he was named All-MIAC honorable mention. Last year, he hit .262 with 11 RBIs and 20 runs scored. Sophomore Josh Roiger (West St. Paul, Minn.) will see time in center when he is not on the mound. Verdugo has plenty of options after that. Kingery earned playing time in the outfield during his first-year and sophomore seasons. Senior Robin Young (Madelia, Minn.) moves to the outfield after spending his first three seasons as an infielder.</p> <p>On the pitching staff, Verdugo will cut the rotation down to six or seven players after trying to find work for 10-12 pitchers in year's past. Lefthanders Roiger and Brian Martin (Golden Valley, Minn.) both will increase their contribution as sophomores. Roiger was named All-MIAC honorable mention after posting a 4-3 record with a 4.91 ERA in 44 innings of work. He also batted .327 with 13 RBIs. Martin was tabbed a 'Player to Watch' by Collegiate Baseball magazine. As a first-year, Martin was 2-2 with a 5.44 ERA. He led the Pipers in strike outs with 44 in 43 innings pitched. Rounding out the rotation will be righthanders Anders Kronberg (Brooklyn Center, Minn.), Chris Parent (Forest Lake, Minn.), and Kyle Foster (Apple Valley, Minn.). Kronberg will focus on just pitching in his senior season. He was 2-2 with a 5.16 ERA last season. Foster could be the most talented of the pitchers, but will need to get back into baseball shape after finishing basketball season. Foster had a 5.85 ERA with 37 strikeouts in 40 innings pitched.</p>
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<u>Macalester College</u>		
Head Coach:	Matt Parrington, 7th Season	
2005 Record:	6-14 MIAC (9th Place) / 12-24 Overall	
Key Returners:	Andrew Percival (3B, Sr., Seattle, Wash. / Seattle Prep) John Simkins (OF/P, So., Galesburg, Ill.) Liam Bowen (LHP, Sr., Silver Spring, Md. / Montgomery Blair) Ted Kimble (LHP Jr., Pine Island, Minn.)	

Season Preview:	<p>Macalester was disappointed in last year's 12-24 overall record and ninth-place league finish, and is eagerly awaiting the start of the '06 season, which begins with three Metrodome doubleheaders in early March and eight games over Spring Break in Phoenix.</p> <p>The Scots graduated all-conference outfielder Mike Merrill, who had a .539 MIAC on-base percentage last year and finished with a .348 career batting average, but most of the regulars from '05 return as the Scots have their most experienced team of the past few years. Macalester was second in the MIAC a year ago in steals and tops in stolen base percentage, and was in the middle of the pack in fielding percentage. What they must improve on this season in their .260 MIAC batting average from a year ago.</p> <p>Macalester's infield returns veterans Andrew Percival at third base, Chris Papalia at shortstop, Adam Wedwick at second and Kier Palmer-Klein at first. Percival hit .330 and led the team with 22 RBI and 18 runs scored. The outfield competition is wide open between the likes of Kyle Goerschler, Allen Combs, John Simkins and Ted Kimble. Simkins led the team with a .347 average. The Macalester pitching staff is led by lefties Liam Bowen (43 strikeouts), Kimble and Simkins.</p> <p>Complete season outlook at: http://www.macalester.edu/athletics/baseball/news02/06_season_outlook.html</p>
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Saint John's University		
Head Coach:	Jerry Haugen, 29th Season	
2005 Record:	10-10 MIAC (7th Place) / 17-17 Overall	
Key Returners:	<p>Jay Kasner (P/OF, Jr., Rochester, Minn./Lourdes)</p> <p>Casey Haugen (C, Jr., St. Cloud, Minn./Apollo)</p> <p>Jeff Ostrom (IF, Jr., St. Anthony, Minn.).</p> <p>Blake Cheeley (P, Sr., St. Cloud, Minn./St. John's Prep)</p>	
Season Preview:	<p>The 2006 season is filled with high expectations as a young and optimistic Saint John's University baseball team looks to improve on last season's 17-17 overall record. The Johnnies finished 10-10 in the MIAC in 2005, good for seventh in the final conference rankings.</p> <p>Position players looking to lead SJU to a successful season are 2005 All-MIAC selection junior pitcher/outfielder Jay Kasner (Rochester, Minn./Lourdes), junior catcher Casey Haugen (St. Cloud, Minn./Apollo) and junior infielder Jeff Ostrom (St. Anthony, Minn./H.S.).</p> <p>Kasner batted .371 with four home runs in 116 plate appearances and led the team with a .569 slugging percentage in addition to driving 26 runs last season. Haugen hit .327 in 110 at bats with 14 RBIs in 2005. Ostrom returns as one of SJU's top defensive players with a .973 fielding percentage and was one of 11 Johnnies to bat over .300 in 2005, hitting .304 and driving in 8 runs in 56 plate appearances.</p> <p>Pitching is expected to be a strength for the 2006 Johnnies. Senior Blake Cheeley (St. Cloud, Minn./St. John's Prep) is expected to perform well after going 4-4 with a 3.60 ERA in 11 appearances in 2005. Adding depth to the SJU pitching staff will be 2005 All-MIAC selection junior Josh Hollenhorst (St. Cloud, Minn./Cathedral), senior Nathan Deutz (Ghent, Minn./Marshall) and junior Dusty Wilfahrt (Hanska, Minn./New Ulm Cathedral).</p> <p>Hollenhorst went undefeated with a 4-0 record in 2005 while holding opponents to a 1.59 ERA, which was second best in the MIAC. Deutz finished 4-2 with a 5.92 ERA in 12 appearances in 2005, and Wilfahrt went 3-4 with a 5.95 ERA in 11 appearances last season.</p> <p>Head coach Jerry Haugen will look for pitcher/outfielder Michael Crees (Wayzata, Minn./H.S.), catcher Mike Krempa (Burnsville, Minn./Holy Angels), and third basemen Case Paxton (Brooklyn Park, Minn./Osseo) to make an impact this season as freshmen.</p> <p>SJU will open its 36-game regular season Feb. 25 in Port Charlotte, Fla. with a doubleheader against Loras College, Iowa. Conference play begins on April 1 with two games against Concordia-Moorhead in Collegeville. Saint John's has 12 home games scheduled this season. The top four teams in the MIAC regular season standings will qualify for the MIAC playoffs, held May 12-14 in Dundas and Northfield.</p> <p>Jerry Haugen, SJU class of 1976, begins his 29th season as the Johnnies head coach in 2006. Haugen currently holds an overall record of 529-448, which places him on the NCAA Division III winningest active coaches list. Under Haugen, the Johnnies have had 14 winning seasons in the last 18 years.</p>	

Saint Mary's University	
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Head Coach:	Nick Whaley, 10th Season	
2005 Record:	8-12 MIAC (8th Place) / 16-15 Overall	
Key Returners:	<p>Brady Knudsen (OF, So., Racine, Wis. / Park)</p> <p>Dan Cosgrove (1B/OF, Sr., South St. Paul, Minn. / South St. Paul)</p> <p>Nick Winecke (3B/1B, Jr., St. Paul, Minn. / Cretin-Derham Hall)</p> <p>Kevin Black (3B, So., Mahtomedia, Minn. / Mahtomedia)</p> <p>David Reiter (P/OF, Sr., Elgin, Minn. / Elgin-Millville)</p> <p>Matt Popek (P, Jr., Eagan, Minn. / Henry Sibley)</p>	
Season Preview:	<p>When the final out was made in their season-ending loss to NCAA Division II power and cross-town rival Winona State on May 10, 2005, Saint Mary's University baseball coach Nick Whaley felt a knot in the pit of his stomach. Not only did that final out, a groundout to short by Kevin Black (Mahtomedi, Minn.) mark the end of another season, but it also marked the end of the stellar collegiate careers of six Cardinal seniors. And so, when his Cardinals return to the field at Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tenn., in late February, it's a bittersweet feeling for the SMU head coach.</p> <p>For the first time in 98 straight games, Ryan Majerus won't be running out to his starting position in center field. Matt Rink won't be launching tape-measure home runs, Jesse Pedersen won't be making opposing hitters look silly trying to hit his fastball, and Jose Rueda and Pat Jacobsen won't be manning their familiar positions at third and behind the plate.</p> <p>On the other hand, it's a chance for returners like Black, Nick Winecke (St. Paul, Minn.), Dan Cosgrove (South St. Paul, Minn.) and Brady Knudsen (Racine, Wis.) to step into the spotlight.</p> <p>"We lost a great deal," admitted Whaley. "That was a great group of experienced, positive leaders with tireless work ethics and it's going to take time to replace that. But we do have an enthusiastic group of returners and first-year players who are eager to make their mark on this program," Whaley added.</p> <p>"The numbers are great, not only the quantity, but the quality." Now all Whaley has to do is figure out a way to put all the pieces together.</p>	

St. Olaf College		
Head Coach:	Matt McDonald, 12th Season	
2005 Record:	13-7 MIAC (2nd Place) / 23-17 Overall	
Key Returners:	<p>Eric Tobias (LHP, Sr., Prescott, Wis.)</p> <p>Dan O'Malley (RHP, Sr., New Brighton, Minn. / St. Anthony Village)</p> <p>Chris Terrazas (SS/3B, Jr. Prescott, Wis.)</p> <p>Andrew Schmeising (OF, So., Stillwater, Minn.)</p>	

Season Preview:	<p>The St. Olaf College baseball team will ride an experienced pitching staff and solid defense in its run towards a Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference title in 2006. Since 1999 the Oles, who were second last year, have won three titles, finished second three times and third once.</p> <p>Seniors Eric Tobias and Dan O'Malley anchor a pitching staff that led the league with a team ERA of 2.75 last spring. Tobias was an All-MIAC and second team All-Region selection in 2004 and, though only 3-5, had a 2.97 ERA and held opposing hitters to a .221 average in 2005. O'Malley rode a 20-inning scoreless streak last year to his best season as an Ole. He finished 5-2 with a 2.95 ERA.</p> <p>Paul Johnson, the third mainstay in the starting rotation last spring, will hope to continue his success in 2006. Johnson was third in the MIAC in ERA (1.87) and sixth in opponent batting average (.203). He started six games and appeared in 11, allowing only 32 hits in 42 1/3 innings.</p> <p>The staff has plenty of support defensively. Last year, St. Olaf was tops in the MIAC in fielding percentage (.962).</p> <p>St. Olaf will look to Chris Terrazas, an All-MIAC and third team all-region selection, and Andrew Schmeising to fuel the offense. Terrazas led the team in almost every offensive category - average (.398), doubles (12), RBI (28) and slugging percentage (.575). Schmeising had a team-best 49 hits. Seniors Brett Thoreson and Brett Berry return as well after hitting .337 and .319 in 2005, respectively. Brian Astry returns to patrol centerfield after he was in the league's top ten in stolen bases as the lead-off man in 2005.</p> <p>St. Olaf plays two doubleheaders in the Metrodome before traveling to Port Charlotte, Fla. for an eight-day, nine-game non-conference trip. Conference play begins with a doubleheader at Bethel University on April 1.</p>
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University of St. Thomas		
Head Coach:	Dennis Denning, 12th Season	
2005 Record:	17-3 MIAC (1st Place) / 30-12 Overall	
Key Returners:	<p>Riley Bosch (RHP, Jr., Vadnais Heights, Minn. / White Bear Lake)</p> <p>Chris Bullis (RHP, So., Waconia, Minn.)</p> <p>Mike Moran (OF/DH, Mendota Heights, Minn. / Henry Sibley)</p> <p>Mike Kimlinger (SS, Sr., St. Paul, Minn. / Cretin-Derham Hall)</p> <p>Zach Goldberg (C, Sr., Wichita, Kan. / Wichita Heights)</p> <p>Jordan Roering (OF, Sr., North St. Paul, Minn.)</p> <p>Sean Young (1B, Sr., St. Paul, Minn. / Cretin-Derham Hall)</p>	

Season Preview:	<p>St. Thomas has won either the MIAC regular-season or post-season baseball title in each of the last 10 seasons. The last two seasons it swept both. The 27th-ranked Toms will look to chase another conference title in 2006 with a blend of young arms and experienced position players. UST has 17 returning varsity players and 13 junior-varsity returners on its 50-man preseason roster. That will eventually be divided into varsity and JV groups.</p> <p>Now in his 29th season as a head baseball coach, Dennis Denning has surpassed 750 wins (760-186, .801 win %) at Cretin-Derham Hall and St. Thomas. He needs 18 this spring to reach 400 victories with the Tommies. Under Denning, the Toms are 382-112 overall with 30-win seasons seven of the last eight years. Denning's teams are 184-36 in MIAC regular-season games and 201-40 in all games vs. conference foes. In 110 regular-season conference doubleheaders under Denning, St. Thomas has swept 77 twinbills, split 30 and has been swept itself just three times. Denning has guided UST to an amazing 47-24 postseason record (45-18 since 1998).</p> <p>The Tommies start conference play April 1 at home vs. Augsburg in a rematch of the 2005 MIAC playoff finals. The Toms are 40-6 vs. MIAC foes over the last two seasons -- including a 6-0 record in the postseason. In 2005, St. Thomas went 17-3 to win the conference race by four games -- the second largest winning margin in MIAC baseball history. In the regional tournament, UST lost to eventual national champion UW-Whitewater 7-4 and lost 2-0 to UW-Stevens Point and closed the season 30-12.</p> <p>St. Thomas, 26-3 in its last 29 home games, will play on a new artificial turf infield starting this spring at their remodeled home field.</p> <p>Denning has unusual starting pitching depth led by junior Riley Bosch (Career: 21 appearances, 3.17 ERA, 2-4, 60 Ks in 74 innings); sophomores Chris Bullis (4-1, 4.64 ERA) and Lonnie Robinson (3-0, 4.74 ERA, 31 Ks in 31 innings); and freshman Dan Leslie, the Class AAA state Player of the Year and the Twin Cities Metro Player of the Year at Henry Sibley. Others pushing for starting roles are seniors Dan Rasmussen (Career: 14 appearances, 3.12 ERA, 3-2) and Ryan Naughton (Career: 31 appearances, 3.81 ERA, 3-4), and junior Will Montgomery (4-0, 3.13 ERA). Leslie is one of five freshmen pitchers on the varsity roster and joins righthanders Mark Helsper of Woodbury, Erik Olson of DePere, Wis., David Rivers of Mankato East and lefty Willie Shetka of Cretin-Derham Hall.</p> <p>The infield is solid with four senior returners -- Sean Young, Nick Bellmont and Mike Kimlinger from first to shortstop, and catcher Zach Goldberg. Young has 94 hits, 75 RBI, 16 HRs and 30 walks in 117 career games. Kimlinger has 132 hits, 87 runs and 70 RBI in 120 career games. Bellmont has 53 hits and 27 RBI in 83 career games. Goldberg has 52 hits and 35 RBI in 67 career games.</p> <p>Leslie and Bullis will share duties at third base. Bullis hit .404 with 19 hits in 19 games last season. Senior Eric Bloom (35 hits in 60 career games) will be a DH and utility player, sophomore Matt Pexa will log time at catcher, and soph Mark Boland and freshman Louie Salmen add infield depth.</p> <p>Seniors Mike Moran (52 hits, 45 RBI over last two seasons) and Jordan Roering (88 hits, six HRs in 91 career games) return in the outfield. Other outfield candidates include sophomore transfer Chris Carino, 2005 junior-varsity players Matt Stengel, Reece Collins and Bryan Johnson, and returner senior Darrin Hubbard (.312 BA, 20 hits in 2005).</p>
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