

2016 MIAC Baseball Preview and Preseason Coaches' Poll

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2016 MIAC Baseball Season Preview

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. -- History was made in 2015, as Bethel University captured its first-ever Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) baseball championship. As the 2016 season begins, the Royals find themselves in unfamiliar territory as the defending champs, with a ton of talented contenders all hoping this season is their turn to rise to the top of the standings.

Prior to the 2015 season, Bethel was the only MIAC team to have never won a regular-season conference championship, but Head Coach Brian Raabe and the Royals crossed that off their list with an outstanding 30-9 regular season and 15-3 conference record to win the title by three games. In the process, Bethel ended a remarkable run by the University of St. Thomas, which had won or shared the regular-season crown for 12-straight seasons dating back to 2003.

After an outstanding regular season, Saint John's University used a magical run to capture its second MIAC Playoff title in the last three years and earn a trip to the NCAA Tournament. The Johnnies dropped their first game of the four-team, double-elimination tournament, then rattled off four-straight wins to claim the postseason crown. SJU finished the season with a 26-16 record, and shared second place in the regular-season standings at 12-6.

Concordia had an outstanding season in its first campaign under Head Coach Chris Coste, as the Cobbers shared second place with the Johnnies at 12-6, and finished with a 26-16 overall record. After 12-straight years on top, St. Thomas fell to fourth in the MIAC with a 24-16-1 overall record and an 11-7 conference mark. The Tommies reached the MIAC Playoff title game without a loss, but fell twice to Saint John's to settle for second place in the tournament.

Saint Mary's had a great season with a 24-12 overall record, and the Cardinals finished 9-9 in conference play to take fifth and just miss out on a trip to the Playoffs. Hamline was also above .500 at 21-19 overall and the Pipers went 8-10 in conference play to finish sixth. Augsburg (18-20 overall) and Carleton (16-23 overall) both went 7-11 in the MIAC to share seventh place, Gustavus (14-22) was ninth at 6-12 and Macalester (14-22, 3-15 MIAC) rounded out the 2015 standings. St. Olaf went 6-6 in its first 12 games before the rest of its 2015 season was cancelled, so the MIAC operated as a 10-team league in 2015, and welcomes the Oles back in 2016.

Though Bethel rose above the rest in 2015, there is serious parity throughout the conference in 2016, and the Royals, Tommies and Johnnies all appear ready to contend for the MIAC title, with Concordia and Saint Mary's also in the mix and a number of other teams expecting to improve and angle for a spot in the postseason.

In addition to all the excitement about the upcoming season, there are also some important changes to the MIAC Baseball Playoffs. After five years at Veterans Field in Minnetonka, Minn., the tournament gets a new location and schedule in 2016. Saint John's University will serve as host, with games scheduled for May 12-14, with games taking place at both Saint John's Field and nearby Cold Spring (Minn.) Baseball Park. The move back to campus is an exciting one for the MIAC Playoffs, and moving up a day frees up Sunday in case inclement weather postpones the tournament.

Between a level playing field, lots of talent back around the MIAC, and some exciting changes to the conference tournament, the 2016 MIAC baseball season figures to be one to remember on all 11 diamonds around the league.

THE POLLS ARE IN

According to the MIAC coaches, there are three clear contenders for the conference championship in 2016, and all three received significant support in the 2016 MIAC Baseball Preseason Coaches' Poll, with each receiving at least three first-place votes, and only three total points separating the trio at the top.

Bethel was predicted to repeat as MIAC regular-season champs by the slimmest of margins over St. Thomas and MIAC Playoff champ Saint John's. The Royals received four first-place votes and 92 points to finish atop the poll, while the Tommies also received four first-place votes and 90 points to come in second. Saint John's was just a point behind UST and three back of Bethel with three first-place votes and 89 total points.

Concordia received 70 points to edge Saint Mary's by six (64) for the final spot in the top four to round out the coaches' predicted MIAC Playoff field, as the Cobbers and Cardinals are both expected to again contend for a postseason bid. After that, just four points separated teams No. 6-8, as St. Olaf received 48 points to 45 for Hamline and 44 for Augsburg. Carleton was ninth with 27 points and Macalester (20) edged Gustavus (16) for 10th to round out the poll.



PLAYERS TO WATCH

Bethel hopes it doesn't have to wait as long for MIAC title No. 2, and has a nucleus back that could bring another title in 2016. Starting pitcher Tyler Heitmann and 2B Jarad Watts are both back after earning All-Region and All-MIAC honors last season, and All-Conference CF Bryce Marquardt is back to give the Royals a boost with both his bat and his glove. The team will have to replace MIAC Pitcher-of-the-Year Joe Zorn and All-Region catcher Mike Schultz, but Bethel appears poised to keep on rolling.

St. Thomas' hopes to return to the top of the MIAC start on the mound, where two-time All-Region starter Eric Veglahn is back to lead the UST staff. Sophomore 2B Zach Gottfredsen returns as well after starting all 41 games as a rookie and hitting .290, and he could be poised for a breakout second season in the Tommie lineup. UST graduated just three seniors from its 2015 team.

Saint John's hopes to carry last season's Playoff momentum into the 2016 season, while trying to replace MIAC Player-of-the-Year Kurt Jantscher and fellow All-Region picks Brett Becker and Aaron Pfaff. Shortstop Aaron Hershey is back to anchor the infield after earning Second Team All-Region honors in 2015, and catcher Game MacDonald and 3B Derek Schiebel also return after their Third Team All-Region performances a season ago.

Concordia's lineup has plenty of pop, as All-Region outfielder Aaron Green returns after setting a school record in total bases in 2015. Shortstop Phil Kuball and catcher Tim Carlson are both three-year starters, and Kuball was a MIAC All-Defensive Team selection while Carlson is a .336 career hitter. Saint Mary's postseason hopes again rest on the capable shoulders of outfielder Ben Buerkle, who earned All-Region honors in each of his first two seasons and added All-American honors last year after hitting .462 as a sophomore. Senior catcher Tyler Lursen also returns after hitting .406 and earning All-MIAC and All-Region honors in 2015.

St. Olaf's return to the field will be led by a pair of versatile juniors, as both Tim Maus and Jake Mathison pitch and play the infield. Maus was off to a .333 start a year ago, and Mathison was just below .300 in 2014 while logging more than 40 innings on the mound. Hamline has high hopes of reaching the postseason in its second year in CHS Field, with speedy outfielder Dan Moro and his 19 stolen bases back in the lineup. Junior Colin Olstad and his .351 average also return, and Brandon Rushmeyer will lead the Piper pitching staff.

Augsburg's biggest question mark will be on the mound after the graduation of pitchers Tanner Oakes and Ryan Mestnik, but Head Coach Keith Bateman has an experience infield back to lead the way. Andrew Julkowski and Billy Brookshaw are both back at 3B and 2B, respectively, and the team will look for big things from junior pitcher Lincoln Hochmuth. Carleton's Hayden Tsutsui will look to write an outstanding final chapter to his remarkable career, as the C/OF hit .399 last season while earning his third-straight All-MIAC and All-Region honors. Juniors Jack Atterberry and Willie Freimuth are both back in the Knights' infield after strong sophomore seasons.

Macalester is glad to have All-MIAC 1B Sam Berk back in the lineup after he hit .384 with 17 doubles a year ago. In fact, the Scots should have plenty of offense in 2016, as infielder Quentin Stuart and Nick McMullen each return after batting over .300 a year ago as well. Gustavus embarks in its first season under Head Coach Brad Baker - who returns to coach the Gusties after a one-year stint in 1981 - with a talented outfield back to the lead the way. Josh Chatfield (.350) and Joe Melles (.295) both return to the Gustavus outfield, and junior Daniel Carlson is also back in the Gustie infield.

CIRCLE THESE DATES

The first big date on the 2016 calendar has already come and gone, as both Saint Mary's and Concordia officially opened the season on Sunday on their spring break trips to Winter Haven, Fla. This weekend Augsburg will head to Missouri for its first action, and Bethel will attempt to set a new Minnesota record for earliest outdoor game, as the Royals are scheduled to play at Northwestern on Saturday at 2 p.m.

The rest of the conference will hit the field in March with trips to Florida, Arizona, Illinois and other surrounding states to try to get as many games in as possible before MIAC fields are playable. The first conference date is Saturday, April 2, and the MIAC season will run through Sunday, May 8, with a strong possibility that the MIAC title and four Playoff bids could come down to the final weekend.

Speaking of the postseason conference tournament, fans are also reminded to make a change to their calendars as the new location and format slid the action up a day. The tournament, hosted at Saint John's University and nearby Cold Spring, Minn., will take place May 12-14. There will be two games - one at each site - at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 12, and two more at 3 p.m. on Friday, May 13. That evening, all the action will shift to Saint John's with a semifinal game at 7 p.m. on Friday, and the championship series set for Saturday, May 14, starting at noon. The tournament champ will receive the MIAC's automatic bid to the 2016 NCAA Baseball Tournament, which will begin the following week.

A CLOSER LOOK

The rest of the 2016 MIAC Baseball Preview contains complete results from the 2016 Preseason Coaches' Poll, MIAC Playoff details, helpful links and a preview for each team submitted by their sports information director. The MIAC web site - www.miacathletics.com - will be an outstanding source for MIAC baseball news, schedules, scores, stats and more throughout the 2016 season.

Visit the [MIAC scoreboard](#) on game days to follow all the action, and download the [MIAC mobile app](#), which is a free download for Apple and Android devices, to have all the information with you anywhere you travel. Also, connect to the conference on its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#) pages for updates and interaction all season long.

2016 MIAC Baseball Preseason Coaches' Poll

Coaches voted for every team in the conference except their own team. Points were assigned for each vote (10 for first, nine 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.

2016 MIAC Baseball Preseason Coaches' Poll

Rank	Institution	Total
1.	Bethel (4)	92
2.	St. Thomas (4)	90
3.	Saint John's (3)	89
4.	Concordia	70
5.	Saint Mary's	64
6.	St. Olaf	48
7.	Hamline	45
8.	Augsburg	44
9.	Carleton	27
10.	Macalester	20
11.	Gustavus	16

2016 MIAC Baseball Playoffs

The MIAC Baseball Playoffs are getting a new location and schedule in 2016. The four-team, double-elimination tournament will move to Saint John's Field in Collegeville, Minn., with Saint John's University serving as host. The tournament will also move up a day and will be held Thursday, Friday and Saturday, May 12-14, 2016. Also new in 2016, there will be two fields in use for the first two rounds, with games played simultaneously. The other site will be Cold Spring Baseball Park in Cold Spring, Minn. There will be one game at each site Thursday at 7 p.m. and again Friday at 3 p.m. From there, all the action will move to SJU, with a 7 p.m. semifinal Friday and Saturday's championship series starting at 12 p.m. The winner will receive the MIAC's automatic bid to the 2016 NCAA Division III Baseball Tournament.

| [2016 MIAC Baseball Playoff Home Page](#) |

MIAC Baseball Links

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Team-by-Team Previews

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AUGSBURG | [Auggies' baseball home page](#) |

Head Coach

- Keith Bateman (12th season)

A Year Ago

- 7-11 MIAC (T-7th place) | 18-20 Overall

Top Returners

- Andrew Julkowski (INF, SR | 2-year starting 3B; tops among Auggie regulars with .369 batting average in 2015, 18 doubles, 1 triple, 17 RBI, .533 slugging percentage and .490 on-base percentage; Career .345 hitter with 23 doubles, 5 triples, 37 RBI, .489 slugging percentage and .447 on-base percentage)
- Billy Brookshaw (INF, SR | 3-year starting 2B; As No. 2 hitter in lineup, hit .299 with 9 doubles, 1 triple, 19 RBI, .366 slugging percentage and .346 on-base percentage in 2015; Career .294 hitter with 13 doubles, 1 triple, 39 RBI, .335 slugging percentage and .348 on-base percentage)
- Lincoln Hochmuth (P, JR | Appeared in 14 games as reliever in 2015 (26.1 IP) with 2-0 record, 2 saves, 3.76 ERA, 29 strikeouts against 7 walks; 17 appearances in career with 4.94 ERA, 32 strikeouts against 13 walks)

Key Losses

- Tanner Oakes (P | All-MIAC 2014 and 2015, D3baseball.com All-Midwest Region 3rd team in 2014, MIAC All-Defensive Team in 2012; 3-5 in 2015 with 3.64 ERA, 52 strikeouts against 7 walks in 11 appearances (9 starts), and 64.1 IP; 16-12 in career with 5 saves in 49 appearances (31 starts), 232.1 IP, 3.72 ERA and 165 strikeouts against 28 walks)
- Ryan Mestnik (P | MIAC All-Defensive Team in 2013, D3baseball.com All-Midwest Region 3rd team in 2012; 1-1 with 2.04 ERA in 6 appearances in 2015; 11-6 in career with 4.34 ERA in 124.1 IP, 49 strikeouts against 28 walks)
- Gordon Kappers (INF | 4-year starting shortstop; hit .365 with 12 doubles, 3 triples, 1 HR, 26 RBI, .519 slugging percentage and .480 on-base percentage in 2015; Career .314 average with 26 doubles, 3 triples, 2 HR, 67 RBI, .400 slugging percentage and .426 on-base percentage)

By the Numbers

- 93: Doubles for Augsburg in 2015, second-most against MIAC teams in overall statistics.
- .490: On-base percentage for Andy Julkowski in 2015, 4th-best among MIAC hitters in overall statistics.
- 165: Career strikeouts against just 28 walks for Tanner Oakes, who completed his Auggie career with school records for walks per-nine innings (1.08) and shutouts (5). His 165 strikeouts are sixth-most in school history.

Did You Know

- Augsburg had five baseball players earn Academic All-MIAC honors, carrying overall 3.50 or better grade-point averages.

Off the Field

- For the past six years, Augsburg's baseball program has hosted an annual Be The Match bone marrow donor registry drive on campus, adding hundreds of Auggies to the potential bone marrow donor roster. Assistant Coach Troy Deden '07 underwent a bone marrow transplant recipient in 2009, after being diagnosed with leukemia in 2008.



BETHEL | [Royals' baseball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Brian Raabe (5th season)

A Year Ago

- 15-3 MIAC (1st place) | 30-9 Overall

In the 2015 Postseason

- 1-9 loss vs. St. Thomas (MIAC Playoffs)
- 7-9 loss vs. Saint John's (MIAC Playoffs)

Top Returners

- Jarad Watts (2B, Sr. | 2016 D3baseball.com Preseason All-American, 2015 D3baseball.com and ABCA/Rawlings All-Region Team, 2015 MIAC All-Conference, 2015 MIAC All-Defensive Team)
- Tyler Heitmann (SP, Sr. | 2015 D3baseball.com and ABCA/Rawlings All-Region Team, 2015 MIAC All-Conference)
- Bryce Marquardt (CF, Jr. | 2015 MIAC All-Conference, 2015 MIAC All-Defensive Team)

Key Losses

- Joe Zorn (SP | 2015 MIAC Pitcher of the Year, Two-time MIAC All-Conference, 2015 D3baseball.com and ABCA/Rawlings All-Region, 13-9 career record, 3.66 career ERA, 192.0 career innings pitched, 148-24 career K-BB ratio)
- Mike Schultz (C | 2015 D3baseball.com and ABCA/Rawlings All-Region, 2015 MIAC All-Conference, .314 career AVG, .384 career OBP, .575 career SLG, 124 career hits, 36 career doubles, 15 career HR's, 87 career RBI's)
- Kelvin Minnig (RP | 2015 stats: 3.27 ERA, 3-0, 14 appearances, 5 saves, 22.0 innings pitched, 28 K's, 91 batters faced, .253 b/avg.)

By the Numbers

- 30: Bethel won its first-ever MIAC Championship in 2015 with a 30-9 record overall and a 15-3 mark against conference opponents. Last year was also the first time in program history that the Royals reached the 30-win plateau.
- 97: Head coach Brian Raabe was awarded his first and Bethel's first MIAC Coach of the Year honor at the conclusion of 2015. Raabe, who has a career record of 97-56 (.634) heading into 2016, has the highest winning percentage of any Bethel baseball coach since 1966.
- 9: Bethel finished 2015 with a fielding percentage of .970, which ranked No. 9 nationwide and No. 1 across the conference. The team's defensive effort was rewarded with five Royals recognized to the MIAC All-Defensive Team—a new team record.

Did You Know?

- The Royals pitched seven shutouts during the 2015 campaign, which ranked No. 6 nationally and No. 1 across the MIAC. Among the seven shutouts were four road games against league opponents.

Off the Field

- Bethel's baseball team participated in the Lakeville Polar Plunge on February 20 to raise funds for the Minnesota chapter of Special Olympics.



CARLETON | [Knights' baseball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Aaron Rushing (11th season)

A Year Ago

- 7-11 MIAC (eighth place) | 17-23 Overall

Top Returners

- Hayden Tsutsui (C/OF, Sr. | D3baseball.com All-Region in 2013, 2014 and 2015; ABCA All-Region Team in 2015; three-time All-MIAC; 2015 stats — .399 average, 12 home runs, 39 RBI, .715 Slugging Percentage)
- Jack Atterberry (IF, Jr. | 2015 stats — .340 average, 13 doubles)

- Willie Freimuth (IF, Jr. | 2015 stats — .296 average, team-best 39 runs scored, second on team with .426 OBP)

Key Losses

- Nolan Baker (P/DH | .365 average, .547 slugging with team-best 15 doubles and 41 RBI; 2-3 with a 4.97 ERA)

By the Numbers

- 25: Carleton slugged 25 home runs last season, the top total in recorded team history.
- .326: The Knights had a .326 batting average as a team last season, third-best in recorded team history.
- 440: The Knights were second among MIAC squads last season with 440 hits

Did You Know?

- Hayden Tsutsui's career totals already ranks first or second in recorded team history in nine statistical categories, including batting average (.428), hits (194), doubles (43), home runs (19), and RBI (112).

Off the Field

- All-Region performer Nolan Baker '15 was selected to the CoSIDA Academic All-District First Team.



CONCORDIA | [Cobbers' baseball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Chris Coste (2nd season)

A Year Ago

- 12-6 MIAC (T2nd place) | 26-11 Overall

In the 2015 Postseason

- MIAC postseason results (W 9-8 vs. St. John's; L 12-6 vs. St. Thomas; L 9-5 vs. St. John's)

Top Returners

- Aaron Green (OF, Jr. | 2015 ABCA All-Region; 2015 MIAC All-Conference; set school record for total bases in a single season in 2015; top 20 in the nation in home runs and RBI per game)
- Phil Kuball (SS, Sr. | 2015 MIAC All-Defensive Team; led the MIAC in assists; had a .946 fielding percentage in MIAC play; 3-year starter)
- Tim Carlson (C, Sr. | Hit .346 in 2015; 3-year starter; career .336 hitter and has played in 79 games)

Key Losses

- Nick Bornhauser (1B | 2015 ABCA All-American, All-Region and All-MIAC; set the school record for RBI and doubles in 2015; in the top 2 in the MIAC in six different stat categories in 2015)
- Devin Johnson (OF | 2-time ABCA All-Region; 2-time All-MIAC; in the top 10 in the MIAC in four different stat categories in 2015)
- Eric Carlsen (OF | 2015 All-MIAC; second in the MIAC in batting average in 2015; hit safely in all but one MIAC game in 2015)

By the Numbers

- T2: Concordia has finished in a tie for second place in the final league standings in 3 of the past six years.
- 14: The Cobbers have 14 freshmen on this year's roster.
- 26: Concordia had 26 overall wins in 2015 which was the most since 1995.

Did You Know?

- Concordia head coach Chris Coste was a part of the Philadelphia Phillies legends group who participated in the Phillies Fantasy Camp in January. Coste played for the Phillies and won a World Series championship in 2008.



GUSTAVUS | [Gusties' baseball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Brad Baker (Second season)

A Year Ago

- 6-11 MIAC (9th place) | 14-22 Overall

Top Returners

- Josh Chatfield (OF, Jr. | started all 36 games last season350 batting average ... 48-137 ... 24 R ... 21 RBI ... 8 2B392 on-base percentage)
- Joe Melles (OF, Sr. | started 22 games last season295 batting average ... 23-78 ... 12 R ... 14 RBI360 on-base percentage)
- Daniel Carlson (IF, Jr. | started all 36 games last season264 batting average ... 32-121 ... 14 R ... 12 RBI ... 7 2B322 on-base percentage)

Key Losses

- Garrett Fuchs (OF | All-Conference ... started all 36 games last season ... team-high .392 batting average ... 49-125 ... 28 R ... 8 2B ... 4 3B443 on-base percentage)
- Grand Soderberg (P | 3-4 ... 8 appearances ... 8 games started ... 3.88 ERA ... 48.2 IP)
- Michael Strelow (P | 2-5 ... 8 appearances ... 8 games started ... 4.35 ERA ... 39.1 IP)

By the Numbers

- 4/4: Starting pitchers lost and returning
- 45: Players on the 2016 roster
- 18: Letterwinners returning

Did You Know?

- Brad Baker is in his second season as the Gustavus head coach, but first since the 1981 season. Baker directed the 1981 club to a 16-10 overall record and 10-6 mark in the MIAC. Baker is a 1980 graduate of Gustavus and is currently the CEO of Craig-Hallum Capital Group, LLC.

Off the Field

- Many members of the Gustavus baseball team have volunteered their time to help with multiple Special Olympics events hosted by the College.



HAMLIN | [Pipers' baseball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Jim Weyandt (4th season)

A Year Ago

- 8-10 MIAC (6th place) | 21-19 Overall

Top Returners

- Dan Moro (Sr., OF, .343 BA, 19 SB – 2nd in MIAC)
- Colin Olstad (Jr., IF-OF, .351 BA, 16 2B, 52 hits – 2nd on team)
- Brandon Rushmeyer (So, RHP, 11 GP, 4 GS, 1-1, 23K in 34 IP)

Key Losses

- Chris Zeller, SS (.368 BA, 4 SB)
- Nicolas Roesler (P, 4-1, 3.82 ERA)

By the Numbers

- 7: returning position players
- 48: players on HU roster
- 83: pitching appearances among returnees

Did You Know?

- That Hamline has won 220 baseball games since 2006 – the second most of any MIAC team in that time period.

Off the Field

- The Pipers had a combined team GPA of 3.10 in the fall 2015 semester.

MACALESTER | [Scots' baseball home page](#) |



Head coach

- Matt Parrington (18th season)

A Year Ago

- 3-15 MIAC (10th place) | 14-22 Overall

Top Returners

- Sam Berk (1B, Sr. | All-MIAC, .384, 17 2B, 26 RBI)
- Quentin Stuart (INF, Jr. | .317, 8 HR, 34 RBI)
- Nick McMullen (OF, So. | .353, 5 HR, .824 slug%)

Key Losses

- Nick Mar (OF | .340, 5 HR, 21 RBI)
- Tom Forster (OF/C | .310, 30 R, 13 2B, 4 HR, 33 RBI)

By the Numbers

- 81.5: Percentage of innings pitched that return from last season's pitching staff
- 34: Number of at-bats for Nick McMullen, who hit five homers last season
- -3: Scoring differential for the entire 2015 season, as the Scots were outscored by their opponents, 266-263

Did You Know?

- Sam Berk was named to the Jewish Sports Review College Baseball All-American Team in 2015.

Off the Field

- The Scots baseball team hosted a kickball tournament for Special Olympians this past December.

SAINT JOHN'S | [Johnnies' baseball home page](#) |



Head coach

- Jerry Haugen (39th season)

A Year Ago

- 12-6 MIAC (T-Second place) | 26-16 Overall

In the 2015 Postseason

- MIAC Tournament – lost to Concordia (8-9 in 11 inn.), defeated Bethel (9-7), defeated Concordia (9-5), defeated St. Thomas (9-6 and 5-1)
- NCAA's La Crosse Regional – lost to Coe (2-4), lost to UW-Whitewater (0-1)

Top Returners

- Logan Hershey (SS, Sr. | 2015 Capital One Academic All-American...2015 ABCA All-Midwest second-team selection...2015 All-MIAC first-team selection...started all 42 games at shortstop and led SJU with 39 RBI...tallied a .363 batting average in MIAC play and a .383 batting average in all games...tied for the team lead with 88 total bases...led the Johnnies with 122 assists in the field...tied for second with five home runs)
- Gabe MacDonald (C, Sr. | 2015 D3baseball.com and All-Midwest Region third-team selection...started 30 games between catcher and designated hitter...batted .352 in MIAC play, .343 in all games...tied for second on the team with five home runs...recorded a 22-game hit streak throughout the 2015 season)
- Derek Schiebel (3B, Jr. | 2015 ABCA All-Midwest Region third-team selection...started all 42 games at third base...led the team in doubles (16) and tied for the team lead in triples (2) and total bases (88)...finished second on the team in runs scored (39) and hits (62)...batted .371 in conference play, .365 in all games)

Key Losses

- Brett Becker (2B | Two-time All-MIAC first-team selection...two-time All-Midwest Region honoree...two-time Academic All-American started 41 games for SJU...tallied the second-best batting average in MIAC play with .458...stole 13 bases)
- Kurt Jantscher (C/P | 2015 MIAC Most Valuable Player and All-MIAC first-team selection...unanimous 2015 All-Midwest Region first-team selection...started 32 games and led SJU with seven home runs...ended the conference schedule as the MIAC leader in home runs (7), slugging percentage (.959) and on-base percentage (.550), for an impressive 1.509 OPS, in 16 conference games...made 16 appearances on the mound, pitching 24 innings and allowing eight earned runs...made four saves in MIAC play, eight saves in all games)
- Aaron Pfaff (OF | 2015 ABCA All-Midwest Region...led SJU in batting average (.400), runs scored (42) and hits (70), and tied with Becker with a team-leading 13 stolen bases on the year...despite not earning All-MIAC recognition throughout his four-year stint as a starter, Pfaff ended his career as the school's leader in games played (146), at-bats (537) and runs scored (123), while finishing second in hits (182), walks (75) and stolen bases (46)

By the Numbers

- 1997: Last spring, Kurt Jantscher became the first Johnnie to be named the MIAC Most Valuable Player since Ryan Roder '97 in 1997. A year earlier, Justin Thompson '14 became the first Johnnie to earn to be named the MIAC Pitcher of the Year since 1998 (Andy Schneider '00).
- 31: The Johnnies hit 31 home runs in 42 games last season, up from seven hit in 2014.
- .346: SJU's .346 team batting average in 2015 was its best since 1997 (.349).

Did You Know?

- SJU has the second-most MIAC, regular-season wins since 2010: St. Thomas (98-20), SJU (75-41), Bethel (67-51) and Concordia (63-55).

Off the Field

Five Saint John's student-athletes earned Academic All-MIAC honors in 2015, including senior shortstop Logan Hershey (Maple Grove, Minn.), who was also named an Academic All-American last spring.

SAINT MARY'S | [Cardinals' baseball home page](#) |



Head coach

- Nick Winecke (8th season)

A Year Ago

- 9-9 MIAC (5th) | 24-12 Overall

Top Returners

- Ben Buerkle (6-1, Jr., OF | 2015 ABCA/Rawlings and D3baseball.com All-American and All-Region ... 2015 Capital One Academic All-American ... 2015 All-MIAC ... 2014 MIAC Rookie of the Year ... 2014 ABCA/Rawlings All-Midwest Region ... 2-time Saint Mary's Outstanding Male Athlete ... Team leader in batting average (.462), hits (61), runs (46), doubles (11), triples (4), home runs (7), RBIs (47), total bases (101), slugging percentage (.765), and on-base percentage (.517). ... had 20 multiple-hit games, owned a team-best 14 multiple-RBI contests, and had a hit in 34 of the team's 36 contests

- Tyler Lursen (5-10, Sr., C | 2015 First-Team All-MIAC ... 2015 ABCA/Rawlings and D3baseball.com All-Midwest Region406 BA, 10 2B, 1 3B, 4 HRs in 2015. ... 27 RBIs—including first collegiate 5 RBI game against Saint John's on April 4.644 slg %, .459 ob%)

Key Losses

- Drew Denning (2015 MIAC All-Defensive Team ... 2015 ABCA/Rawlings Gold Glove winner ... 141 field chances at 2nd base with 1 error (.993 %).292 BA, 26 H, 21 R, 17 RBs)
- Jon Schlemmer (2-time First-Team All-MIAC, 2012 D3baseball.com All-Region354 BA, 45 H, 23 R, 11 2B, 5 HR, 40 RBIs, .575 slg %)
- Kevin Miley (.286 BA, 20 R, 34 H, 8 2B, 6 HR, 32 RBIs, .521 slugging %, .396 on-base %)

By The Numbers:

- 2: Ben Buerkle (Roseville, Minn.)—named to both the ABCA/Rawlings and D3baseball.com All-America Teams—set two single-season school records in 2015 with his 46 runs scored and 47 RBIs.
- 21: Willie Doll (Amherst, Wis.) closed out the 2015 season with a team- and conference-leading 21 stolen bases. Doll's 21 stolen bases season rank second all-time—two back of his school-record 23 steals set in 2014—while his 58 career stolen bases are the most in program history.
- 24: The Cardinals closed out 2015 boasting a 24-12 overall record—the most wins in a season since the Cardinals went 24-11 in 1995. The Cardinals have now won 20 or more games twice under coach Nick Winecke—Saint Mary's finished 22-20 in 2012.

Did You Know?

- The Cardinals' 7-5 win over Wheaton on March 20 was coach Nick Winecke's 100th collegiate coaching victory.

Off The Field

- Ben Buerkle (Roseville, Minn.)—named Capital One Academic All-America earlier in the spring—led the three Saint Mary's baseball players on the MIAC All-Academic Team, and was joined by Willie Doll (Amherst, Wis.) and Kevin Miley (St. Paul, Minn.).



ST. OLAF | [Oles' baseball page](#) |

Head coach

- Matt McDonald (22nd season)

A Year Ago

- 6-6 Overall

Top Returners

- Tim Maus (P/IF, Jr. | Hit .275 in 2014 with nine doubles... Hit .333 in 12 games in 2015.)
- Jake Mathison (P/IF, Jr. | Hit. 294 in 2014... Threw 40 1/3 innings in 2014, posting 4.69 ERA.)
- Nate Gelle (P, Sr. | Was 5-3 with 5.02 ERA in 2014.)

By the Numbers

- 500: Head coach Matt McDonald has 500 career wins entering 2016.



ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' baseball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Chris Olean (7th season)

A Year Ago

- 11-7 MIAC (4th place) | 24-16-1 Overall

In the 2015 Postseason

- MIAC postseason results (2nd, 2-2: def. Bethel 9-1; def. Concordia 12-6; lost to St. John's 6-9, 1-5)

Top Returners

- Eric Veglahn (LHP, Sr; | 2X All-Region; 2015: 5 W, 3.08 ERA, 62 K, 61.1 IP; Career: 18-1 W-L, 161 K, 32 walks, 185 IP)
- Zach Gottfredsen (2B, So,; | 2015: started all 41 games as a freshman; .290 BA, 47 hits, 27 runs, 24 RBI.

Key Losses

- Ryan Gerber (1B-OF, grad; | 2015: 41 games, 9 HRs, 51 hits, .329 BA, 36 RBI, 28 runs, 14 walks)
- Greg Clute (RHP, grad; | 2015: 13 app., 2-0 W-L, 3.41 ERA, 23 K, 8 walks, 31.2 IP)
- Colin Wendinger (RHP, grad; | 2015: 2 W, 6.81 ERA, 31 K, 37.0 IP)

By the Numbers

- 26 (of possible 36): MIAC regular-season and playoff crowns won by UST since 1996, including 12 of the last 13 regular-season titles
- 24/21: Consecutive winning seasons and consecutive years in postseason for Tommie baseball.
- 5: 2016 UST non-conference opponents ranked in the top 25 (UW-LaCrosse, UW-Whitewater, UW-Stevens Point, Southern Maine and Wartburg)

Did You Know?

- St. Thomas' third-place NCAA finisher in 2014 had 15 seniors among 30-plus on its varsity. Last year's team has only three seniors -- one

in the lineup (OF Ryan Gerber), one starting pitcher (Colin Wendinger), and one reliever (Greg Clute).

Off the Field

- Senior All-Region SS Brady Johnson has a 3.53 grade-point average in Actuarial Science. After batting .239 in 2014, Johnson improved to .379 in 2015 with 33 RBI, 34 runs, 19 walks and 11 doubles in 41 games.

[MIAC Baseball Home Page](#)