

2002-03 MIAC Men's Hockey Athletes of the Week

March 3, 2003

Saint John's University junior forward **Kevin Willey** (Maple Grove/Osseo HS) had one goal and two assists in two wins in the MIAC playoffs on Feb. 28 and March 1. In a 4-2 semifinal win over Gustavus, Willey had an assist on SJU's first goal of the game to cut the Gustavus lead to 2-1 in the second period. Willey then scored an empty-net goal to seal the 4-2 semifinal win. In the 4-3 overtime win over St. Thomas in the championship game, Willey had an assist on the third period goal that gave SJU a 3-2 lead. On the season, Willey has 12 goals and nine assists for 21 points. SJU, ranked eighth nationally, is 20-6-1 overall and will advance to the NCAA tournament, which begins on March 12.

February 17, 2003 (Co-Players of the Week)

Saint John's University freshman **Ryan Langenbrunner** (Cloquet, Minn.) had four assists in a weekend sweep of eighth nationally ranked St. Thomas to clinch this year's MIAC regular season title and the number one seed in the upcoming playoffs. Langenbrunner had assists on all three goals in a 3-2 overtime win on Thursday and an assist in a 3-2 win on Friday in St. Paul. The weekend sweep was only the second time in 20 years that St. Thomas was swept in a MIAC series. The Johnnies, ranked 13th in the nation, are 18-6-1 overall and 13-2-1 in the MIAC.

Saint John's University senior goaltender **Rick Gregory** (Flin Flon, Manitoba) made 49 saves in a weekend sweep of eighth nationally ranked St. Thomas to clinch this year's MIAC regular season title and the number one seed in the upcoming playoffs. Gregory made 25 saves on Thursday and 24 saves on Friday to pick up his 43rd and 44th career wins, which is a new SJU career record.

February 10, 2003

Gustavus Adolphus College junior forward **Tom Awaijane** (Coon Rapids, Minn.) tallied four points on two goals and two assists to help Gustavus sweep St. Olaf 4-1 and 8-2 in a critical MIAC series last weekend. Awaijane scored one goal in Friday's 4-1 win in Northfield and then added one goal and two assists in Saturday's 8-2 win in St. Peter. With Gustavus leading 3-2 after two periods on Saturday, Awaijane assisted on the first two goals and scored the third goal as the Gusties scored five third period goals to break the game open. Awaijane has been on fire in the Gusties late season charge to make the MIAC Playoffs. He has scored seven goals and added three assists as the Gusties have compiled a record of 5-1-0 in the past three weekends. Gustavus, which is currently in a fourth place tie in the MIAC with a record of 6-7-1, can guarantee themselves a league playoff berth with two wins over Bethel this weekend.

February 3, 2003

Hamline University first-year defenseman **Ben Gustafson** (Elk River, Minn.) had an outstanding weekend for the Pipers as they split with Concordia-Moorhead. Gustafson tallied five points, all assists, on the weekend. In Friday's 5-4 overtime win, Gustafson assisted on the Pipers' second and fourth goals. He added three helpers in the Pipers' 6-5 loss on Saturday. For the weekend, the defenseman was plus five.

January 27, 2003

Saint John's University senior goaltender **Rick Gregory**, (Flin Flon, Manitoba/Notre Dame HS) made 66 saves on 71 shots he faced in a weekend sweep of Saint Mary's. Gregory made 33 saves in both a 5-3 win on Saturday, Jan. 25 and a 3-2 win on Sunday, Jan. 26, at the National Hockey Center in St. Cloud. On the season, Gregory is 12-2-1 with a 2.75 goals against average and a .898 save percentage. Gregory is 5-0-1 in his last six decisions. The Johnnies, ranked #13 in the latest USCHO.com poll, are 14-4-1 overall and 9-0-1 in the MIAC.

January 20, 2003

Gustavus Adolphus College junior goaltender **Dan Melde** (Maplewood, Minn.) recorded 45 saves in two games to help the Gustavus pick up a 4-1 win and a 3-3 tie over Concordia in Moorhead last weekend. Melde turned away 22-of 25 shots in Friday's 3-3 tie and then on Saturday he stopped 23-of-24 shots as the Gusties won 4-1. Melde was particularly strong when the Gusties were a man-down as he made 19-of-20 saves when the Cobbers were on the power play. Concordia managed only one goal on 14 power play opportunities in the two games. The win was the first in MIAC play this season for the Gusties who have suffered five one-goal losses including two in overtime. Gustavus has rebounded from a tough 0-9-0 start by losing only once in its last eight games which was a 4-2 loss to #3 UW-River Falls.

January 13, 2003

Saint John's University freshman forward **Ryan Langenbrunner** (Cloquet, Minn.) recorded four goals and two assists for six points in a weekend road sweep of Concordia on Jan. 10-11. Langenbrunner had three goals, including two power play goals, and an assist in a 9-3 win on Friday. In Saturday's 5-4 overtime win, Langenbrunner had a goal and an assist as the Johnnies rallied from a 4-0 deficit. On the season, Langenbrunner leads the team with 11 goals and 15 assists for 26 points. Langenbrunner currently leads the MIAC with eight goals and 13 points in six MIAC games. The Johnnies, currently ranked #15 nationally, are 11-4-0 overall and 6-0-0 in the MIAC.

January 6, 2003

Saint Mary's University's junior forward **Al Schumacher** (Oakdale, Minn.) scored three goals and added a pair of assists as the SMU men's hockey team went 1-0-1 in its final two nonconference games last weekend. Schumacher scored once and assisted on two others as the Cardinals opened the weekend with a 6-2 win over UW-Eau Claire. The junior forward then netted both goals - including his NCAA Division III-leading fifth shorthanded goal - as the Cardinals skated to a 2-2 tie with UW-Stevens Point. For the season, Schumacher leads the Cardinals in goals (16) and points (19).

December 16, 2002

Saint John's University freshman defenseman **Darryl Smoleroff** (Maple Grove, Minn.) had a goal and an assist in a 2-1 win at number two nationally ranked Wis.-River Falls on Saturday, Dec. 14. Smoleroff scored the game-winner with 42 seconds remaining in the game for the Johnnies, who are 9-2-0 overall and ranked 10th in the nation.

December 9, 2002 = Co-Players of the Week

Gustavus Adolphus College forward **Jerod Klava**, a Fargo, North Dakota native, tallied two goals and four assists for six points as the

Gusties claimed wins over UW-Eau Claire (6-0) and UW-Stevens Point (6-2). On Friday, Klava contributed two assists as Gustavus defeated UW-Eau Claire. On Saturday, Klava had a big night with two goals and two assists against UW-Stevens Point. Both of Klava's goals against the Pointers were power play goals and both of his assists were also when the Gusties were playing with the man advantage. Klava has been a big part of the Gusties recent scoring binge. Gustavus has scored 17 goals in its last three games after scoring 16 goals in its first eight games. The Gusties are currently 2-9-0 overall and 0-6-0 in the MIAC.

Gustavus Adolphus College goaltender **Dan Melde** picked up two wins in the nets over the weekend as the Gusties claimed a sweep against NCHA opponents UW-Eau Claire (6-0) and UW-Stevens Point (6-2). Melde picked up his first shutout of the season on Friday night as he recorded 16 saves in the Gusties 6-0 win over UW-Eau Claire. Then on Saturday night, Melde turned away 24 shots and allowed two goals in the teams 6-2 win over UW-Stevens Point. Melde recorded a .950 save percentage and a 1.0 goals against average in the two games. This is the first time that Gustavus has swept a weekend series against Northern Collegiate Hockey Association opponents since the two conferences began inter-conference play three years ago. Gustavus is currently 2-9-0 overall and 0-6-0 in the MIAC.

December 2, 2002

University of St. Thomas goaltender **Zack Sikich** (Soph., Gilbert, Minn./Eveleth-Gilbert) stopped 34 of 35 shots in goal as the No. 8-ranked Tommies scored a 2-1 win over No. 6-rated and defending NCAA champion UW-Superior. Sikich, a transfer from Division I Air Force, improved to 4-1 on the season, lowered his goals-against average to 1.63, and improved his save percentage to .941. The Tommies climbed to 6-2-2 on the season and play No. 1-ranked UW-River Falls Dec. 6.

November 25, 2002 = Co-Players of the Week

Augsburg College forward **Jaro Cesky** (Sr., Prague, Czech Republic) had a six-point weekend in Augsburg's split with conference leader (ranked 10th nationally) Concordia-Moorhead. Cesky had a goal and assist in Friday's 6-4 loss and two goals and two assists in Saturday's 5-1 win. Augsburg rallied from a 5-1 deficit to make Friday's game close, and Cesky played a part in four of Augsburg's five goals on Saturday. This season, Cesky leads the Auggies in goals (six), assists (eight) and total points (14).

Saint John's University forward **Bryan Talbot** (Sr., Anoka, Minn.) scored both game-winning goals in a weekend sweep of Gustavus. On Friday in St. Peter, Talbot scored at 3:38 of the overtime period for a 2-1 win. On Saturday in St. Cloud, Talbot scored a power play goal at 18:39 of the third period to break at 5-5 tie and give the Johnnies a 6-5 win. SJU is now 5-1 overall and 4-0 in the MIAC.

November 19, 2002

Concordia-Moorhead College forward **Aaron Marsh** (Senior, Summerland B.C.) collected four points in Concordia's weekend Wisconsin sweep. On Friday night against 10th ranked UW-Stevens Point, Marsh had an assist on the first of Concordia's three goals. In Saturday's 6-5 victory over UW-Eau Claire, Marsh scored his first collegiate hat trick. The three goals helped Concordia to their sixth win of the season. With the four-point weekend Marsh moves to second on the team in scoring. (5 goals, 3 assists - 8 points). The Cobbers are currently 6-1, and ranked 10th in the latest USCHO.com national poll - it is their best start since the 1980-81 season when they began the year 8-1-1.

November 12, 2002 = Co-Players of the Week

Concordia-Moorhead College forward **Shawn Klevin** (So., Crookston, Minn.) scored both goals in the Cobbers 2-1 victory over defending MIAC champion St. Thomas on Saturday. Both goals were scored in the second period over a span of three minutes. The victory helped Concordia gain a split with the Tommies and remain tied for first place in the league. The win also helped push the Cobbers to the 14th spot in the recently released USCHO national poll.

Hamline University forward **Ryan Manke** (So., 5-11, 205, Brooklyn Park, Minn.) led the Pipers to a series sweep over Bethel. Manke scored a hat trick in the Pipers' 5-4 win over the Royals in Friday. The sophomore scored Hamline's last three goals of the game, including the game-winner at the 19:01 mark of the third period.

November 5, 2002

University of St. Thomas sophomore forward **Anthony Blumer** (Eagan/St. Thomas Academy) had three of the Tommies' five goals in a 2-1, 3-2 weekend sweep of No. 14 Gustavus. In Saturday's 3-2 win in St. Peter, St. Thomas trailed 2-1 when Blumer broke away and scored the tying goal with 8:00 to go. With just over three minutes remaining, Blumer scored what proved to be the game-winner. In Friday's 2-1 win, Blumer scored the game's first goal. The No. 7-ranked Tommies are 2-0 overall and in the MIAC and host a weekend series vs. unbeaten Concordia-Moorhead.