

2008 MIAC Men's Indoor Track & Field Championship Awards

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St. Paul, Minn. -- The 2008 Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) Indoor Track & Field Championships came to a close on Saturday evening with the St. Thomas men capturing the team title. This week, individual awards were announced and the honorees are listed below.



As part of a conference-wide sportsmanship initiative, the MIAC selected the second annual All-MIAC Sportsmanship team for Men's Indoor Track & Field. 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.

Outstanding Men's Track Athlete - **Tom Ballinger, Carleton**

- Ballinger (Jr., Wenatchee, Wash.) was a two-time event champion, crossing the line first in both the 400-meter and 600-yard dashes as well as earning all-conference honorable mention in 55-meter hurdles and 200-meter dash. Ballinger concluded his weekend by running the anchor leg on the 4x400m relay, propelling the Knights to an overall fifth-place finish in the team competition, Carleton's second-best finish over the last 11 conference meets.

Outstanding Men's Field Athlete - **Eric Buss, Saint John's**

- Buss (Jr., Coon Rapids, Minn.) won the triple jump with a national-qualifying jump of 14.66 meters on Saturday. He added third place finishes in the long jump (6.83 meters) and high jump (1.94 meters) to become a three-time All-MIAC performer.

Men's Outstanding Performance of the Meet - **Chris Erichsen, Saint John's**

- Erichsen (Sr., Spring Valley, Minn./Kingsland) automatically qualified for this weekend's NCAA Division III Indoor Championships in the 5,000 meter run with a time of 14:31.02. The time also broke the McNeely Spectrum record which Erichsen also held.

Men's Coach of the Year - **Steve Mathre, St. Thomas**

- Mathre, in his thirteenth season as head coach of the Tommies, led St. Thomas to their 24th consecutive conference team crown. The Tommies made it 24-of-24 in all-time conference indoor titles, an MIAC all-sport record for consecutive team titles. The Toms' 235.5 points were the second most in the 24-year history of the event. Coach Mathre's Tommies scored in 18 of 20 events with 26 different athletes contributing points.

2008 All-MIAC Sportsmanship Team

Augsburg - Shane Pantila (Fy., St. Michael, Minn.)

Bethel - Carl Gladitsch (Jr., Bloomer, Wis.)

Carleton - Joe Sepe (Sr., Fargo, N.D.)

Concordia - Justin Shobe (Sr., Lewistown, Mont.)

Gustavus - Drew Hood (Sr., Mankato, Minn.)

Hamline - Patrick Mitambo (Sr., Minneapolis, Minn.)

Macalester - Matt Wegmann (Sr., North Oaks, Minn.)

Saint John's - James Peterson (Sr., Minnetonka, Minn.)

Saint Mary's - Chris Fisette (Jr., Elmhurst, Ill.)

St. Olaf - Tom Nickerson (Sr., Stillwater, Minn.)

St. Thomas - Neil Atzinger (Sr., Ann Arbor, Mich.)