

2009 MIAC Men's Indoor Track & Field Championship Preview

3/3/2009 10:27:15 AM

St. Paul, Minn. -- The 2009 Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) Men's and Women's Indoor Track & Field Championships will take place this Thursday-Saturday, March 5-7 at Olson Forum on the campus of Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn.

St. Thomas has won every MIAC Indoor Championship (24 seasons) competed and will again be the favorite in 2009. Saint John's will challenge the Tommies for the top spot along with strong teams from Hamline, Bethel, and Carleton. St. Olaf, Gustavus, and Concordia all have talented rosters and each could make a leap in team standings. Saint Mary's, Macalester, and Augsburg will each look to break into the upper tier of the conference.



[2009 MIAC Indoor Track & Field Championships Website](#)

Augsburg

Coach: Dennis Barker (15th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 11th

Augsburg Championships Preview

Although the Auggie men's track and field team only lost one senior to graduation, they are still going to be a young team in 2009, with 20 of the 29 team members being sophomores or first years. Last season, Augsburg moved up three places in the conference standings between the indoor and outdoor meets and the Auggies are looking to keep that momentum rolling in 2009.

The Auggie men will be led this season by a diverse group of returners. Looking to score points in both the sprints and jumps will be Nick Ward (SO, Coon Rapids, Minn.). Ward is the defending MIAC champion in the 100 meters and is an honorable-mention all-conference performer in the long jump. Also looking to pick up points for the Auggies in the running events will be D.J. Wendell (SR, Princeton, Minn./Charles M. Russell (Mont.) HS), who finished fourth in the 100 meters, and Brent Haglund (JR, Fridley, Minn.) and Victor Sanchez (JR, Minneapolis, Minn./Southwest HS), who both earned All-Central Region honors in cross country this fall. Adam Horkey (JR, Windom, Minn.) looks to be a strong contender for the Auggies in the hurdles and Josh Groll (JR, Plymouth, Minn./Robbinsdale Armstrong HS) hopes to score points in the throws.

A strong group of newcomers will supplement the Auggie lineup. Ben Rodriguez (FY, Buffalo, Minn.) and Brian Byrnes (FY, Marshall, Minn.) were both top-five runners on the Auggies cross country team this fall and will add depth to the strong contingent of Augsburg distance runners. DeAndre Dennis (FY, Minneapolis, Minn./Washburn HS) will look to score points for the Auggies in the sprinting events and Emmanuel Marcellino (FY, Rochester, Minn./Century HS) will join Ward in the jumps to give Augsburg a strong presence in the field events.

Bethel

Coach: Jim Timp (4th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 4th

Bethel Championships Preview

Head Coach Jim Timp believes the 2009 season looks to be a good opportunity to continue with the success that was experienced last year with the men's team finishing in fourth place at the conference meet. The men's squad welcomes back a very talented group of returning athletes, who will provide leadership. Included in that group are Carl Gladitsch (Sr., Bloomer, Wis.), a team captain and 2007 All-American in cross country; Taylor Ferda (Jr., Whitefish, Mont.), a NCAA All-American 55m hurdler and member of the 4 x 400 meter relay team; and Eric Rhode (Jr., Oakdale, Minn.), a 200 meter and 400 meter sprinter as well as 4 x 400 meter relay team member. Rhode has already earned a trip to the NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships hosted by the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Ind., in the 400 meter run, while the 4 x 400 meter relay team recently broke the school record and aims to take the top spot at the conference meet.

Jay Quick (So., Johnston, Iowa) is also on his way to the NCAA Championships with the conference's best high jump to date, while older brother Joel Quick (Jr., Johnson, Iowa) will be a strong competitor in the 200 meter dash, and as a member of the 4 x 400 relay team. Zach Schlegel also provides Bethel with some outstanding speed, while Josh Aakre (Fr., Dawson, Minn.) continues to improve and take top spots in meets as a triple jumper.

The coaching staff is very excited about this year's team. Depth has been the problem over the past couple of years which has prevented the Royals from being one of the top teams. Coach Timp believes the talent has been there and now the depth seems to be there as well. With this kind of talent and depth and the leadership and commitment that exist, the squad seems to be poised to move up once again in the MIAC.

Carleton

Coach: Dave Ricks (4th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 5th

Carleton Championships Preview

The Knights’ top performers this season have been Charlie Gamble, Tom Ballinger and Nick Cesarek. Gamble ran an NCAA provisional qualifying time in the mile of 4:14.95 at the University of Minnesota’s Snowshoe Open. Gamble finished fifth behind a Division I and Division II runner. Gamble was named the MIAC runner of the week on January 27th. Gamble earned the award after his record setting 3000-meter race at the St. Olaf Triangular, when he ran 8:25.44, which was the fastest MIAC time since 1985. At the Iowa State Classic, Gamble finished the 5000 meter run with a time of 14:38.40, which is the 10th best time in Division III this year.

Last year, Tom Ballinger was named MIAC Outstanding Track Athlete of the Year. Balling won MIAC titles in the 400 and 600-meter dashes and was All-Conference Honorable Mention in the 55-meter hurdles and the 200-meter dash. Ballinger ran the 400 in 50.53 at the Snowshoe Open, the second-fastest time in the MIAC this year. Ballinger has wins this year in the 600 meter dash at the Meet of Hearts and 55-meter hurdles at the St. Olaf Triangular.

Nick Cesarek looks to add more honors to his indoor season. Cesarek was named MIAC Men’s Indoor Track and Field Athlete of the Week for his stellar performance the at St. Olaf Invitational. Cesarek won the 55-meter dash in just 6.67 seconds and came in second in the 200-meter dash with a time of 23.22 seconds both were personal bests.

Other Knights who are looking to make noise at this year’s MIAC Championships are Jack Delehanty, Michael Sanders and Evan Franco. Delehanty has top-ten honor roll times in the 600 and 800-meter races. Sanders won the 800-meter event at the Meet of Hearts. Franco has multiple pole vault wins this season. He won to start the season at the Bethel Open. Franco set a new personal best and won the pole vault at the Pre-MIAC Meet reaching 4.30 meters.

Concordia

Coach: Garrick Larson (16th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 8th

Concordia Championships Preview

Concordia enters the 2008-09 MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championship Meet with a pair of athletes that have already provisionally qualified for the NCAA National Indoor Meet and with a young team that is ready to climb the ladder in the conference standings.

Seniors Billy Oehlers (North Branch, Minn.) and Paul Westmark (Appleton, Wis.) have already provisionally qualified for nationals. Oehlers posted a distance of 51-06.50 in the shot put and is 12th in the nation in the event. He is also second in the MIAC heading into the conference meet. Westmark recorded his provisional mark in the pentathlon. He totaled 3,433 points and is currently eighth in the nation. Westmark is also in the top 10 in the conference in the pole vault. His season-best height of 13-10.50 is the eighth best mark in the MIAC this season. He is also ranked fifth in the league in the 55-meter hurdles.

The Cobber field athletes will be looking to score the majority of the team points for CC. Besides Oehlers and Westmark, the only other Concordia athletes ranked in the top 10 of the conference come from the field. Luke Hvidston and David Beery are fourth and fifth in the long jump. Felix Okoth is eighth in the triple jump. The Cobbers have three players in the top nine in the shot put. Joining Oehlers is Nick Bircherm (5th) and Giles Henry (9th).

Tom Sederquist is the top track athlete for the Cobbers. He is currently ranked sixth in the 5000 meters.

Gustavus

Coach: Tom Thorkelson (10th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 7th

Gustavus Championships Preview

The Gustavus men's indoor track and field team will arrive at 2009 MIAC Indoor Track and Field Championships with a veteran group that will be looking to improve on their seventh place finish a year ago.

Gustavus has six different athletes ranked among the top eight of the MIAC Performance lists. Leading the way for the Gusties is two-time all-conference performer senior Tyler Geyen (Watertown, Minn.). Geyen has emerged as one of the top hurdlers in Division III this season as he holds the ninth fastest time in the country in the 55-meter hurdles at 7.63 seconds, and has yet to lose the race in 2009.

Senior Dan Foley (Minneapolis, Minn.) has carried over a successful cross-country season into a successful indoor track season as he is seeded fourth in the 5,000 meters (15:24.92). Returning all-conference performer junior Brian Anderson (Bloomington, Minn.) is currently ranked third in the shot put at 48-11. Others entering the meet ranked in the top eight include first-year Matt Dvorak (Burnsville, Minn.), who currently holds the seventh spot in the 55-meter dash (6.64), sophomore Max Hanson (Montrose, Minn.), who is sixth in the 600 meters (1:15.18), and junior Jordan Van Dorp (Buffalo, Minn.), who is eighth in the pole vault at a height of 13-7 3/4.

Gustavus also returns an all-conference relay team in the 4x200. Members of the team include Matt Dvorak, Tyler Geyen, Colby Citrowske (So., Canby, Minn.), and Cole Carlson (Jr., Mora, Minn.). They enter the meet with the conference's top time at 1:31.70. The 4x400 relay team of Matt Leeb (So., Kasota, Minn.), Tyler Geyen, Colby Citrowske, and Cole Carlson ranks fifth in the event with a time of 3:25.29.

Hamline

Coach: Paul Schmaedeke (8th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 3rd

Hamline Championships Preview

Paul Schmaedeke's 2009 Pipers enter the MIAC indoor track and field championships with several athletes who have posted NCAA provisional marks or school records this season, as they look to improve upon their 2008 third place finish.

Brandon Gleason (Mantorville, Minn.) returns to lead a talented corps of runners into the meet. He currently holds the sixth-fastest time in Division III in the mile with a provisional qualifying time of 4:11.03. He also returns as the reigning MIAC champion in the 3,000 meter run, and currently holds the second-fastest time (8:27.43) in the conference at that distance. Gleason also ran to a 13th place finish at the Division III cross country nationals this fall.

He is joined by fellow distance runner Ian Bauer (Jr., Roseville, Minn.), as well as an impressive group of sprinters in Clarence Suttle (So., Saint Paul, Minn.), Tyson Molitor (So., Belgrade, Minn.), Brent Nelson (Jr., New London, Minn.) and Christian Swanberg (So., Lindstrom, Minn.).

Nelson completed his comeback from an injury that kept him off the track in 2008 by tying a school record this winter in the 200 meter dash (22.52).

Complementing the runners will be a set of throwers who have consistently dominated the top spots in the shot put and weight throw all winter, led by Derall King (So., Inver Grove Heights, Minn.). King's put of 16.39 meters (53-9 1/4) ranks him second in Division III entering this weekend and is the best mark in the MIAC, as well as being an NCAA provisional mark. He is joined on the list of throwers with NCAA provisional marks by Andy Norman (So., Winona, Minn.), whose toss of 16.62 meters (54-6 1/2) in the weight throw was a provisional mark.

Aaron Wilkerson (Jr., Roseville, Minn.), Nate Bell (Jr., St. Peter, Minn.), Brennan McKeag (Fy., Lakeville, Minn.) and Josh Blaschko (So., Lakeville, Minn.) have all helped the Pipers fill in the top spots in both throws throughout the season.

With this increased depth and talent on the Hamline roster this season, Schmaedeke's Pipers hope to add to their 90 points from 2008 and challenge for second place as they look to send several athletes to nationals.

Macalester

Coach: Martin Peper (16th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 10th

Macalester Championships Preview

Macalester placed 10th last year at both the indoor and outdoor conference championships and have enough depth to make a move up in the standings.

Two finalists from last year's 55-meter dash return to lead the way for the Scots. Andrew Yokom (Sr., Arden Hills, Minn. / Mounds View), an outdoor finalist two years ago in the intermediate hurdles, placed fifth in the conference last season and teammate Kevin Williams (Sr., Kingston, Jamaica) finished eighth.

Wade Ekstrom (Jr., La Crescent, Minn.) will lead the way in the distance events and will be one of the top contenders in either the mile or the 3K. Ollie St. John (Fy., Washington, D.C. / Edmund Burke School) is also a threat in the distance races. Macalester is also looking for points from Alex Rosselli (Jr., Columbus, Ind. / North) in the hurdles and Martin Stenman Andersson (Jr., Uppsala, Sweden / IT Gymnasiet Uppsala) in the long jump.

Saint John's

Coach: Tim Miles (30th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 2nd

Saint John's Championships Preview

After finishing second in both the indoor and outdoor 2008 MIAC championships to rival St. Thomas, the Johnnies are aiming for their fifth conference championship in the last 13 years.

Saint John's ended last season on a good note, finishing seventh out of 81 teams at the NCAA Division III Outdoor Championships. The Johnnies finished third in the final NCAA Division III Coaches' Power Rankings; their best finish since 1999 when SJU finished second in the country.

The Johnnies return two All-American jumpers, seniors Eric Buss (Coon Rapids, Minn.) and Erik Diley (Prescott, Wis.). Diley has finished fifth at Nationals in the long jump two years in a row. Buss earned consecutive seventh place finishes at nationals in the triple jump outdoors, and a third-place finish in the triple jump indoors. Last season, Diley was the MIAC outdoor champion in the long jump, while Buss and Diley were 1-2 in the triple jump. Indoors, Buss won the triple jump and finished third in both the long jump and the high jump, while Diley finished third in the triple jump. Diley currently holds the best mark in the conference in the long jump this season, while Buss has the best mark in the triple jump. Buss is also sixth in the high jump.

The Johnnies also return All-MIAC athletes senior Mitch Gesell (Alexandria, Minn.), junior Patrick Lowder (Chanhassen, Minn./Chaska) and sophomore Andrew Norman (Maple Grove, Minn.). At the 2008 MIAC Indoor Championship, which Saint John's hosted, Gesell finished second in the 800 meters. Gesell currently (entering Feb. 28's meet) has the MIAC's third-best mark in the 600 meters and fourth-best time in the 800 meters.

Outdoors, Lowder finished third in the steeplechase, while Norman finished second in the pole vault. Also look for sophomore hurdler Matt Reeve (Fairmont, Minn.), sophomore runner Jimmy Backes (Lakeville, Minn./South), junior runner Ryan Noack (St. Cloud, Minn./Cathedral), and senior pole-vaulter Brayden Wagner (Englevale, N.D./Lisbon) to make strong contributions to the team this season. Wagner has the top mark in the pole vault with an NCAA provisional qualifying height of 4.80 meters. Reeve has the third-best mark in the 55-meter hurdles, while Noack has the fifth-best performance in the 5,000 meters.

Head coach Tim Miles is currently in his 30th season in Collegeville. Miles has produced a winning program that has finished among the MIAC's top two squads in 20 of the past 29 seasons, including MIAC championships in 1997, 1999, 2005 and 2007. Miles won MIAC Coach of the Year honors in 2004, 2005 and 2007. At the national level, Miles' athletes have put together 51 Division III All-America performances since 1980.

Saint Mary's

Coach: Shawn McMahon (2nd season)

2008 Championships Finish: 9th

Saint Mary's Championships Preview

It didn't matter the venue or the conditions, Saint Mary's University's Chris Fiset (Elmhurst, Ill.) enjoyed a banner track and field season a year ago.

The then-junior was a provisional national qualifier for the NCAA Division III National Indoor Championships, while earning all-conference honors in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Outdoor Championships.

And according to SMU coach Shawn McMahon, Fiset's junior campaign was good, but his senior season has the potential to be even better.

"Chris had a great year last year, and has worked incredibly hard in the off-season and looks even better this year," said McMahon, noting that Fiset has already equaled the team's school record in the long jump this spring. "Chris has national aspirations in both the long and triple jumps, and there's no doubt he has the potential to be as good as anyone in the conference and in all of Division III."

But Fiset isn't the only weapon in McMahon's arsenal.

Josiah Ryks (Austin, Minn.) and John Vallez (Eagan, Minn.) also enjoyed strong seasons a year ago, and McMahon is expecting more of the same this time around.

"The men are looking to jump past at least one more team in the conference by seasons end," McMahon said. "With strong performances from the team's leaders, we should be able to make a move into the middle of the (conference) pack."

"We'll be looking to our young distance and sprint groups to also capitalize on a lot of race experience from a year ago."

St. Olaf
Coach: Phil Lundin (1st season)
2008 Championships Finish: 6th

St. Olaf Championships Preview

The St. Olaf men's track team will lean on its long distance runners and throwers this weekend at the MIAC Championships.

Long distance runner, Dobuol Ruon, was a strong competitor this spring. Ruon claimed first place victories in the mile, the 3000 meter run, and the 1000 meter run in different meets throughout the season.

Cullen O'Neill dominated the 800 meter run during the season. He placed first in the event four different times during the season.

After winning the 800 meter run during the Coca Cola Classic O'Neill provisionally qualified for the NCAA champions meet. He earned MIAC's men's track athlete of the week after posting a personal best in the mile at Bethel University Invitational.

Other notable long distance runners include Jacob Marotz, Ben Wilson, and David Green. Marotz obtained a first place victory in a 3000 meter run, Wilson first place victory in a 1000 meter run, and Green two second place victories in a 3000 and a 1000.

Sprinters, Dan Monroe and Isaac Tut, each ran notable races during the season. Monroe claimed first place in the 55 meter dash as well as the 200 meter dash in the Tostrud Classic. Tut took first and second in two 400 meter dash races.

Zeke Heydenreich had several solid showings this season including two first place wins and one second place victory in the weight throw event. Fellow thrower, John Schantzen, also preformed well, earning one first place in shot put and one third place for weight throw.

St. Thomas

Coach: Steve Mathre (14th season)

2008 Championships Finish: 1st

St. Thomas Championships Preview

St. Thomas has won the MIAC men's indoor team championship all 24 seasons it has been held. The 24 consecutive team titles is the longest team championship streak in conference history.

The Toms have also captured the MIAC outdoor track team title 22 of the last 26 seasons.

In their 24-year indoor streak, the Toms' average winning margin is 89 points. They've won by 30 or more points and scored at least 179 points in 22 of the 24 championships. Last season, the Toms scored 235.5 points -- second most in MIAC history -- and doubled the total of runner-up St. John's.

Despite graduating three aces -- five-time All-American P.J. Theisen, hammer throw national champ Mark O'Connell, and discus NCAA runner-up Derek Marks -- the 2009 Tommies are poised to reach 200 points again in the MIAC indoor meet and will look to make it 25-for-25 in all-time team victories.

Coach Steve Mathre's team has two relays (distance medley, first, and 4x400, second) that are seeded first or second nationally with seven different athletes.

The Toms also have a conference-best seven individual NCAA provisional qualifiers, and are ranked in the top 10 nationally in Division III power rankings.

In conference indoor season bests, the Toms are ranked first in nine events, are second in eight events, are seeded third in five, and are seeded fourth in seven events.

Senior All-American sprinter-jumper James Ewer is doubtful with injuries, but St. Thomas should score well on all track races from 55 meters to the mile. Senior All-American Brian Sames has broken two official and two unofficial school records. Seniors Matt Boumeester, Kyle Brandon, Greg Dowe, Pat Jager, Phil Bastron and Joe DeFrance and freshman Mike Hutton are also looking to help in the sprint and middle-distance events. UST also will look to score well in the pentathlon, the pole vault and high jump.