

2008-09 MIAC Men's Swimming & Diving Championship Preview

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St. Paul, Minn. -- The 2008-09 MIAC Men's Swimming & Diving Championships begin this Thursday at the University of Minnesota Aquatics Center. Hosted by Gustavus Adolphus College, the 2008-09 Championships will run in conjunction with the MIAC Women's Championships this Thursday, February 19 to Saturday, February 21. The daily meet schedule will feature preliminary events in the morning sessions and finals during the evening sessions.

Gustavus enters the championships as the reigning champion and having won sixth of the last seven MIAC team titles. St. Olaf will give the Gusties their best challenge, as the Oles are ranked sixth in the nation by CollegeSwimming.com while Gustavus is 21st. Carleton, St. Thomas, and Saint John's will battle for a spot in the upper half of the conference standings while Hamline, Macalester, and Saint Mary's each have talented individual performers who will make their presence felt on the podium.

[2008-09 MIAC Swimming & Diving Championships Website](#)

Carleton

Coach: Andy Clark (16th season)

2007-08 Championship Finish: 3rd



Carleton Championship Preview

The Carleton College men's swimming and diving team placed third at last year's MIAC Championships, the program's best finish ever at the event. The Knights enter the 2009 conference meet having recorded 13 successive top-four finishes at the conference meet.

The Knights are once again led by senior Ted Marschall (Burnsville, Minn.), the 2008 MIAC Swimmer of the Year and the defending conference champion and meet-record holder in the 200 breaststroke and the 200- and 400-yard individual medley events.

He is a six-time All-American, including second-place finishes during the 2008 national meet in both the 200-yard and 400-yard individual medley races and a fourth-place showing in the 200 breaststroke. Marschall has also been twice named All-American honorable mention and figures to be a key component on Carleton's relay teams.

Diver John Knapp (Sr./Sturgeon Bay, Wis.) shared Diver of the Year honors in 2008 and is an All-MIAC performer on both the one- and three-meter boards the last three years. He has recorded NCAA qualifying score on the three-meter board. Fellow diver Eric Brenner (So./Plymouth, Minn./Robbinsdale Armstrong) earned all-conference distinction on both boards as a rookie.

Seniors Jared Plotz (Hutchinson, Minn.), Ryan Terrien (Bloomington, Minn./Kennedy) and Elliot Bartis (McLean, Va./Langley) will again be called up to score points in the backstroke and freestyle sprints, while add to the team's depth in the relays.

Sophomore Andrew Mering (Baraboo, Wis.) finished fifth in the 200 backstroke last year and advanced to the consolation finals in his other two individual events.

The Knights' performance in the relay events will be critical if they want to repeat last season's finish when they leapfrogged St. Thomas with strong showings in the weekend's final two events, the 3-meter diving competition and the 400 freestyle relay.

Gustavus

Coach: Jon Carlson (19th season)

2007-08 Championship Finish: 1st

Gustavus Championship Preview

The Gustavus men's swimming team is looking forward to the opportunity to compete for another MIAC Championship this weekend at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center in Minneapolis. The Gusties will be hoping to win their second straight title and seventh in the last eight years. It appears that once again the Gusties and Oles are the primary contenders for the title, however Gustie Head Coach Jon Carlson feels that this meet will be different than in recent years because of the depth of talent on teams throughout the conference.

Depth in the swimming events has been the strength of the Gustavus teams in its recent success at the conference meet and this year will be no different. The Gusties look to be particularly strong in the distance swims as they hold three of the top four times of the season in both the 500 free and 1650 free. Leading the way for Gustavus will be junior Skylar Davis (Palatine, Ill.), sophomore Whitaker Davis (Palatine, Ill.), and sophomore John Rice (Madison, Wis./ Middleton). Skylar Davis, the two-time defending champion in the 1650, who set the MIAC meet record last season, currently holds the top time this season at 16:09.73. Whitaker ranks second with a time of 16:39.76, and John Rice ranks fourth with a time of 17:18.98. In the 500 free, Skylar ranks second with a time of 4:40.15, while two-time defending conference champ Matt Stewart (Burnsville, Minn.) ranks third with a time of 4:41.28, and Whitaker Davis ranks fourth with a time of 4:47.81.

In addition to currently ranking third in the 500 free, Stewart also ranks second in the 200 free (1:42.64), third in the 100 free (47.40), first in the 100 butterfly (51.17), and first in the 200 butterfly (1:54.84). Stewart, one of the most prolific swimmers in the history of the Gustavus swim program, will also play a critical role in several of the Gustavus relay teams at the meet.

Other key contributors in the meet for Gustavus expect to be senior Tyler Wakefield (Hutchinson, Minn.) in the 50 and 100 free, senior Dave Pearson (Woodbury, Minn./Stillwater) in the 200 and 400 individual medley, sophomore Paul Kiriara (Bloomington, Minn./Jefferson) in the 100 and 200 backstroke, first year Billy Schultze (Mankato, Minn./East), and first year Josh Seaburg (Moorhead, Minn.) in the 200 butterfly and 400 individual medley.

The Gusties also expect to be very competitive in the relays as they enter the meet with the second fastest times this season in the 200 free relay (1:25.65), the 400 free relay (3:10.5), and the 800 free relay (7:08.95), as well as the second fastest time in the 400 medley relay.

Hamline

Coach: Frank Vaccaro (1st season)

2007-08 Championship Finish: 6th

Hamline Championship Preview

The Pipers will be expecting to receive most of their points from two swimmers who have made a tremendous impact on the Hamline record books as they take to the pool at the MIAC Championships under first year head coach Frank Vaccaro.

Senior Jake Burgess (Maple Grove, Minn.) and junior Will Khoury-Hanold (Kingsford, Mich.) will shoulder much of the Pipers' expectations this weekend at the University of Minnesota.

The pair sit at or near the top of several Hamline top ten lists. Burgess is the current school record holder in three individual events (50 freestyle, 100 freestyle, 100 backstroke) and is a member of three record-holding relay teams (400 freestyle, 200 medley, 400 medley). The sprinter is also in the Piper top ten in the 200 freestyle, 100 butterfly, and the 100 breaststroke.

Khoury-Hanold is a member of the same three relay record teams as Burgess, and is poised to put his name at the top of a Piper individual record list. He is currently second fastest all-time in the 100 butterfly, 100 backstroke, and 200 backstroke. Khoury-Hanold also has top ten times in the 100 freestyle and 200 butterfly.

Although the team will lack depth on the roster at this year's championships, the Pipers will be looking to these two key swimmers to make a splash on the podium throughout the weekend.

Macalester

Coach: Bob Pearson (20th season)

2007-08 Championship Finish: 8th

Macalester Championship Preview

Despite a small roster size, Macalester is looking to move up from last year's eighth-place conference finish, and will be looking towards Nathan Young (So., Denver, Colo. / Littleton) to earn a good share of the team's points. Young is the defending MIAC champion in both the 100-yard backstroke and 200-yard backstroke, and also reached the finals last year in the 200-yard individual medley. He placed 14th in both backstroke events at last year's national championships.

Jeff Yamashita (So., Honolulu, Hi. / Iolani) is Macalester's second most-accomplished swimmer and will be asked to score some points in the sprint freestyle and butterfly races. With three divers, Macalester should score some points on the boards, led by Jens Tameng (So., Portland, Ore. / Catlin Gabel). Swimmers Paco Venneri (Fy., Los Alamos, N.M. / Los Alamos) and Seth McIntire (Sr., Seattle, Wash. / Garfield) will also be counted on for production.

Saint John's

Coach: Bill Saxton (11th season)

2007-08 Championship Finish: 5th

Saint John's Championship Preview

The 2008-09 Saint John's University swimming and diving team looks to bounce back following a disappointing and uncharacteristic finish at the 2008 MIAC Championships.

Last year, Saint John's finished fifth out of eight teams at the MIAC Championships under Bill Saxton, who begins his 11th season as head coach of the Johnnies this winter. In the previous 10 seasons under Saxton, the Johnnies had never finished lower than third.

Leading the way for the Johnnies this season are senior captains Mike Dempsey (West Des Moines, Iowa/ Dowling Catholic), Kevin Kubat (West Des Moines, Iowa/Dowling Catholic) and Trent Novotny (Chanhassen, Minn./Chaska).

Dempsey (sprint freestyle), Kubat (butterfly/freestyle) and Novotny (breaststroke/sprint freestyle) will each provide a boost to the team in their respective events. At the 2008 MIAC Championships, Kubat finished 11th in the 200-yard butterfly, 12th in the 100-yard butterfly and 15th in the 200-yard individual medley. Novotny finished 12th in both the 100- and 200-yard breaststroke events, while Dempsey claimed 15th place in the 100-yard freestyle.

Another Johnnie to watch for is sophomore diver Marcus Rien (Richmond, Minn./Rocori), who was named the MIAC's Co-Diver of the Year after claiming the MIAC title in the one-meter dive and second in the three-meter dive last year. Rien became the first Johnnie to win the MIAC title in the one-meter dive since John Deters in 1992.

Although six seniors graduated from the 2007-08 squad, SJU welcomes 13 freshmen to the 32-man roster this year. Saxton is looking for immediate impact from freshman Ty Nimens (Crookston, Minn.), who graduated from Crookston High School but swam for Grand Forks (N.D.) High School and was the 2008 North Dakota Swimmer of the Year. Nimens will compete in the individual medley, butterfly and freestyle. Saxton will also look to freshman Jesse Otis (West Des Moines, Iowa/Dowling Catholic) to be strong in the individual medley, freestyle and breaststroke events, while Jimmy Foley (Moorhead, Minn.) will compete in the 200-yard freestyle and the one mile swim.

SJU's divers will once again be a strong suit for the Johnnies' hopes to finish strong at the conference meet. In addition to Rien, freshmen Kelley Burg (Grand Forks, N.D./Sacred Heart) and Wes Schlichting (Sauk Rapids, Minn./Sauk Rapids-Rice) will perform in both the one- and three-meter diving events this season. Schlichting finished 10th and ninth at the Minnesota State Class A Championships as a junior and senior for the Storm, respectively, while Burg claimed 10th and fifth places his final two years at the North Dakota Championships.

Saint Mary's

Coach: Eric Lindquist (10th season)

2007-08 Championship Finish: 7th

Saint Mary's Championship Preview

The Saint Mary’s University men’s swimming and diving team has been gearing up for the upcoming Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Championships all season.

Everything they have done to this point has been in preparation for this one, three-day event.

And coach Eric Lindquist is confident his teams are ready to make a big splash on the conference’s biggest stage.

“We’ve been training very, very hard and everyone is pretty geared up (for the conference championships),” said Lindquist. “I’ve been very happy with our performances in the meets that we’ve competed in, and I think everyone is ready to make the conference meet their best of the season.”

Leading the way again for the Cardinal men will be junior John Fox (Winona, Minn.), who earned all-conference honors a year ago, shattering the team’s school record en route to an NCAA B provisional mark and a second-place finish in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 58.44. Fox also set school records in the 50 freestyle and the 200 breaststroke at last year’s championships — and Lindquist figures Fox can go even faster this year.

“John had a great conference championship last year,” said Lindquist, whose men placed seventh a year ago, while the women were 10th. “He’s focused on making this year even better.”

And, Lindquist hopes, Fox won’t be the Cardinals’ lone bright spot.

Neil Heacox (San Diego, Calif.), Matt Ramey (Centennial, Colo.) and Tim Tysk (St. Paul, Minn.) have all enjoyed solid regular seasons.

“I’m excited about the potential of our men’s team,” said Lindquist. “Hopefully we can turn that potential into solid performances.”

St. Olaf
Coach: Dave Hauck (35th season) and Bob Hauck (20th season)
2007-08 Championship Finish: 2nd

St. Olaf Championship Preview

The St. Olaf men's swimming and diving team will try for its 25th conference title and second in the last three seasons at the 2009 MIAC Swimming and Diving Championships. The Oles finished second last year after winning the title in 2007. St. Olaf won 20 straight titles from 1980-1999.

St. Olaf has the league's best times in each of the five relays and owns nine of the top 16 individual bests into the championships.

Two-time 200 IM national champion Nelson Westby will lead the way for the Oles, who are ranked sixth in the latest Collegeswimming.com Top 25 poll. As of Feb. 11, Westby has the nation's best times in the 100 Breast (54.66), 200 Breast (1:58.98) and 200 IM (1:50.86). His 200 Breast time is the best in the country by over three seconds and almost ten seconds faster than anyone in the MIAC. Westby, who has twice been named the national swimmer of the week this year, will continue a heavy training regiment prior to the MIAC's in preparation for the NCAA's in March.

The Oles' Jake Koch has the league's top times in the 100 Free (45.87) and 200 Free (1:42.00), the second best 200 IM time and swims on the team's league-leading relays. Koch's 200 IM time (1:51.39) is only behind Westby in all of Division III. His Free times rank 12th and 21st in the country. The versatile Koch has been on the team's 200 Free, 400 Free, 800 Free, 200 Medley and 400 Medley Relays.

Adam Meyer, the team's Backstroke specialist, owns the MIAC's best times in the 100 Back (51.24), 200 Back (1:52.97) as those times are ninth- and 11th-best in Division III. Meyer also is a part of the team's 200 Medley, 400 Medley and 200 Free Relays.

Chris Bateman will lead the team in the 500 Free, 1000 Free and 400 IM. He has the conference's top times in each and his 400 IM time (4:03.24) ranks eighth in the nation. He also swims on the squad's 800 Free Relay.

Nate Bentley, who swims on the Oles' 200 and 400 Free Relay teams, has top six times in the MIAC in the 200 IM, 400 IM and 500 Free.

The team will also count on Kaegan Recher, Luke Money, Brock Edwards on relays and in their respective events.

Divers Ian Straehly and Ryan Trostrud have each posted top marks and are expected to score in the MIAC's.

St. Thomas
Coach: Tom Hodgson (30th season)
2007-08 Championship Finish: 4th

St. Thomas Championship Preview

Tom Hodgson's 30th season as Tommie men's swimming and diving coach has brought some pleasant surprises. Last February, Hodgson was named MIAC Men's Coach of the Year and Women's Co-Coach of the Year at the conclusion of the 2008 MIAC Championships after his male and female athletes broke 13 of a possible 38 school records at the MIAC meet. The St. Thomas men to fourth place, two spots better than in 2007, and just four points (431-427) behind third-place Carleton. The Toms finished ahead of St. John's for the first time since 1995, broke six school records, and had a second-place relay.

The Toms graduate some big guns in MIAC 50 free champ T.J. Hardy, Tim and Kevin Mullee, and Mitchell Johnson. But the addition of junior transfer Pete Mullee from the University of Minnesota and some other newcomers that include freshman Erik Huls has helped the Tommies have a strong season.

Mullee, a backstroke and sprint free standout, has already broken two UST school records and is ranked either first, second or third in six individual events. Sophomore Andrew Spratt will look to reach All-MIAC honors in the distance races. Huls is seeded fourth in the 50 free, fifth in the 100 fly and ninth in the 100 free. The Tommies are also seeded second in the 200 medley and third in both the 4000 medley and 200 free relays.