

2011 Men's Swimming & Diving Championship Preview

2/15/2011

MINNEAPOLIS -- The 2010-11 MIAC Men's Swimming & Diving Championships begin Thursday, Feb. 17 and run through Saturday, Feb. 19, at the University of Minnesota's Aquatic Center in Minneapolis. The three-day event will feature two sessions each day – one in the morning and one in the evening.

The three morning sessions will feature preliminary races and diving, followed by event finals in the daily evening sessions. Each day the morning sessions begin at 10:30 a.m., and following an afternoon break the evening sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. The MIAC Women's Swimming & Diving Championships will be held simultaneously with the women's event.

Last year's men's championship was almost as close as they come, with St. Thomas edging Gustavus for the title by just eight points (709-701). St. Olaf was a distant third with 615.5, and Saint John's (542.5) and Carleton (415) were both in the top five as well. This year, expect another close race for the title, but this time around it could be three or four teams vying for the trophy on Saturday evening.

This season, St. Olaf, Gustavus and the defending champion Tommies have all be strong through the regular season, and all expect to contend for the title this weekend. Carleton also has numerous top performers this season, and it wouldn't be a surprise to see the Knights make swim for the crown as well. Saint John's will be in the mix for another top-four or top-five finish thanks to some returning talent and solid underclassmen, and Macalester, Saint Mary's and Hamline will try to improve on their finishes a year ago with numerous talented individuals in action as well.

The top awards in the MIAC will be up-for-grabs this year. UST coach **Tom Hodgson** was named the MIAC Men's Swimming Coach-of-the-Year after his Tommies edged the Gusties for the title. However, Hodgson lost star **Peter Mullee** – the 2010 MIAC Men's Swimmer-of-the-Year to graduation. St. Olaf's **Ian Straehley** won individual championships on both the 1- and 3-meter diving boards, as well as the title of MIAC Diver-of-the-Year as a sophomore in 2010. Straehley is listed on the psych sheet for this weekend's championship, but he does not have a score recorded in either event this season.

There will be plenty of competition to replace Mullee as the league's top swimmer. Three different swimmers return in 2011 after winning multiple individual events a year ago. Mullee's former teammate, St. Thomas junior **Erik Huls**, is among those favorites after winning the 100-yard butterfly and the 100-yard freestyle as a sophomore, and he appears poised for another great showing. St. Olaf senior **Chris Bateman** is another favorite to impress in 2011 after capturing titles in the 200- and 400-yard individual medley in 2010, and Gustavus junior **Billy Schultze** is back to defend his crowns in the 100- and 200-yard breaststroke events.

Three other individual champions return with the potential to challenge for Swimmer-of-the-Year honors in 2011 as well. Gustavus' **Whitaker Davis** won the 500-yard freestyle last year, and enters the MIAC Championships following a great regular season. St. Thomas' **Sam Rauchwarter** will defend his title in the 200-yard freestyle, and St. Olaf's **Chase Liaboe** is back after winning the 200-yard butterfly in 2010. Other top swimmers to watch include the Carleton duo of **Andrew Mering** and **Mamoru Kanazawa** and Macalester's **Nathan Young**, while Saint John's **Wes Schlichting** and St. Thomas' **Ray Baltera** are the favorites to challenge for titles on the diving boards.

Between the returning talent, exciting newcomers and competitive spirit, the MIAC Men's Swimming and Diving Championships is poised to be one of the conference's marquee events again in 2011. With the U of M Aquatic Center serving as the perfect backdrop, the excitement, passion and sportsmanship between the coaches, student-athletes and fans is second to none.

For those who can't attend the championships, every session will be covered with a live video webcast provided by Webcast America ([click here](#)). Results of each event will also be posted online shortly after the conclusion of each event. In addition, the MIAC has set up an exclusive Web site for the [2010-11 MIAC Swimming & Diving Championships](#). The site features an event schedule, ticket information, venue information and a map, as well as links to the live broadcast and stats and the site will be constantly updated throughout the event with recaps, photos and more.

Macalester College and St. Olaf College are serving as this year's host institutions.

[2010-11 MIAC Swimming & Diving Championships Home Page](#)

[Webcast America's Live Broadcast](#)

[MIAC Men's Swimming & Diving Home Page](#)

Listed below are team-by-team previews for all eight MIAC teams competing in the 2011 MIAC Swimming & Diving Championships.





Carleton

Coach: Andy Clark (18th season)

2009-10 Championship Finish: 5th (415 points)

Carleton Championship Preview

After seeing its string of 14 consecutive top-four finishes at the MIAC Championships come to an end last season, the Carleton men's swimming and diving team brings perhaps one of its deepest squads to this year's conference meet in hopes of starting a new streak.

Senior diver Eric Brenner (Plymouth, Minn./Robbinsdale Armstrong) returns for the Knights after earning All-MIAC honors last year in both the one- and three-meter boards.

Youngsters Mamoru Kanazawa (So./Tokyo, Japan/St. Mary's) and Benito Ramirez (Fy./St. Louis Park, Minn./Minneapolis South) figure prominently in Carleton's plans. Both are ranked in the top five in the 500-yard freestyle. The duo are versatile as well, as Ramirez ranks fifth and Kanazawa sixth in the 100-yard butterfly. Kanazawa brings the MIAC's top time in the 200-yard freestyle while Ramirez is fourth.

Erik Klontz (So./Bethesda, Md./Bethesda-Chevy Chase) will lead Carleton's freestyle sprinters. He holds the MIAC's second-fastest 50-yard freestyle time of 21.41 and ranks fifth in the 100-yard freestyle in 47.79. Andrew Mering (Sr./Baraboo, Wis.), an All-MIAC performer a year ago in the 100-yard backstroke, should contend for the title in that event and could also score big in the 200-yard backstroke and 200-yard individual medley, as he ranks in the top five of the latter two events.

The Knights will also look to senior Brian Kilgour (Wichita, Kan./Wichita East) for big points in the backstroke events, as well as the 200-yard breaststroke.

second-place performance in the 200-yard freestyle relay, earning Erik Klontz (Fy./Bethesda, Md./Bethesda-Chevy Chase), Alan Goodyear (Sr./Cobham, United Kingdom/Epsom College), Andrew Mering (Jr./Baraboo, Wis.), and Mamoru Kanazawa (Fy./Tokyo, Japan/St. Mary's) all-conference honors.

The depth of the Knights should contribute to strong relay finishes as well and could mean the difference between finishing inside or outside the top four. The Knights are ranked in the top four in the all five relays, including the second-best MIAC times in the 200- and 800-yard freestyle relays.



Gustavus

Coach: Jon Carlson (21st season)

2009-10 Championship Finish: 2nd (701 points)

Gustavus Championship Preview

The Gustavus men's swimming and diving team is poised to challenge for the 2011 MIAC title after finishing runner-up by just eight points last season. The Gusties will attempt to claim their first MIAC Championship since 2008 after several near misses in recent years. The 2011 MIAC Swimming and Diving Championships will be held at the Aquatic Center on the campus of the University of Minnesota on Feb 17-19.

"I'm really excited about the men's team," said Head Coach Jon Carlson. "This is one of the few years that we have gone into the conference meet and not a lot of people are expecting much from us. The way things have been going I have a feeling that we are going to surprise a lot of people."

The Gusties bring back All-Conference performers Whitaker Davis, John Rice, Paul Kiriara, Billy Schultze, Matt Van Fossen, Ben Stewart, and Sam DeFranco from last year's squad. Senior Whitaker Davis and junior Billy Schultze are the top Gustavus returners. Davis is the returning champion in the 500 freestyle, and is currently ranked in the top-four in the MIAC in four freestyle races. He ranks first in the 1000 (9:33.13), second in the 1650 (16:23.47), third in the 500 (4:38.91), and fourth in the 200 (1:43.78).

Schultze will look to defend his titles in the 100 and 200 breaststroke races. He ranks second in both the 100 (59.61) and 200 breaststroke (2:09.53) entering the conference meet.

Senior Paul Kiriara will look to score points in the 100 and 200 backstroke after finishing third in both events last season. He enters ranked fourth in the 100 (53.49) and fifth in the 200 (1:58.94).

Seniors John Rice and Sam DeFranco, and junior Wes Jones will add depth in the freestyle races. Rice ranks fourth in both the 1650 (17:07.42) and 1000 (10:16.55). DeFranco ranks fourth in the 50 (21.68), while Jones ranks fifth in the 1000 (10:19.49).

Junior Matt Van Fossen is the top Gustavus butterfly swimmer, ranking fourth in the 100 (52.57) and 12th in the 200 (2:06.05). Other swimmers looking to get into the mix include senior Craig Nordquist, and junior Zach Nachtsheim. Gustavus' top diver entering the meet is freshman Sam Hanson.

The Gusties are currently ranked second in the 200-medley and 400-medley relays. Kiriara, Schultze, Van Fossen, and DeFranco have a time of 1:36.29 in the 200-medley, while Kiriara, Schultze, Van Fossen, and Davis enter with a top time of 3:34.04 in the 400-medley.

The race for a conference title is shaping up to be the closest it has been in recent years. "St. Olaf has the advantage over everybody, but between St. Thomas, Saint John's, Carleton, and Gustavus there is not a lot of separation and it is anybody's meet," said Carlson. "This could be one of the closest conference meets as far as teams one through five go, that I've seen since I have started coaching."



Hamline

Coach: Frank Vaccaro (3rd season)

2009-10 Championship Finish: 8th (129 points)

Hamline Championship Preview

The Pipers will be relying on diver Robert Hoveland (Fy., Saint Paul, Minn.) and their relay teams for points in the standings at the 2010-11 championships.

The Pipers will compete in the medley relays at the 400 and 200 distances while fielding freestyle relay teams at the 200, 400, and 800 distances.

Hoveland will pull double duty, as he will be joined on those relays by Tyler Anderson (Sr., North Mankato, Minn.), Corbin Conliffe (Robbinsdale, Minn.), and Zach Lameyer (Fy., North St. Paul, Minn.).



Macalester

Coach: Beth Whittle (1st season)

2009-10 Championship Finish: 7th (132 points)

Macalester Championship Preview

Macalester placed seventh at last year's conference championships and are seeking to move up in the standings under head coach Beth Whittle. The Scots should receive the bulk of their team points from four-year team standouts Nathan Young (Sr., Denver, Colo. / Littleton) and Jeff Yamashita (Sr., Honolulu, Hi. / Iolani School).

Young is seeded second in the 100-yard backstroke (52.60), an event he won at the MIAC championships as a frosh. He and Yamashita will swim in the 50 freestyle, while Yamashita will also swim in the 100 free and 100 butterfly. Among other potential point producers for the Scots is Ted Metz (So., Teaneck, N.J.) in the 400 IM and 1650 freestyle.



Saint John's

Coach: Bill Saxton (13th season)

2009-10 Championship Finish: 4th (542.5 points)

Saint John's Championship Preview

Freshman Armando Moss (New Providence, Bahamas/St. Augustine's) holds the best time in the 100-yard freestyle (47.11), is second in the 100-yard butterfly (52.53), third in the 50-yard freestyle (21.59), and 10th in the 200-yard freestyle (1:47.02).

Junior Josh Seaburg (Moorhead, Minn.) earned a pair of All-MIAC honors in the 200-yard butterfly and 400-yard IM last season. He has the fifth-best time in the 400-yard IM (4:20.61) this year, is seventh in the 500-yard freestyle (4:51.93) and 1,000-yard freestyle (10:25.11), eighth in the 200-yard fly (2:01.76), and 10th in the 200-yard IM (2:03.04).

Junior Ty Nimens (Crookston, Minn.) placed second in the 200-yard IM to earn All-MIAC honors last February. He is currently third in the 100-yard freestyle (47.48), sixth in the 50-yard freestyle (21.93), and seventh in the 200-yard freestyle (1:46.38). Fellow junior Jesse Otis (West Des Moines, Iowa/Dowling Catholic) earned All-MIAC honors of his own with a third-place finish in the 200-yard breaststroke at last year's conference meet. He is currently eighth in the 200-yard breast (2:17.79).

Senior Michael Williams (Maple Grove, Minn.) holds the seventh-best time in the 100-yard freestyle (48.13), is eighth in the 50-yard freestyle (22.06), and ninth in the 200-yard IM (2:02.87). Junior Jimmy Foley (Moorhead, Minn.) is eighth in the 1,650-yard freestyle (17:37.59) and ninth in the 1,000-freestyle (10:33.84).

All three SJU divers continue to be dominant in the MIAC. Junior Wes Schlichting (Sauk Rapids, Minn./Sauk Rapids-Rice) earned All-MIAC honors for his second-place finish in the 1-meter dive, and placed 18th in the 3-meter dive and 22nd in the one meter dive at the NCAA Division III Championships. He currently leads the MIAC in 11 dives at three meters (503.30 points) and is second at one meter (440.10 points). He also is first in six dives at one meter (299.90 points) and third at three meters (291.30).

Senior Marcus Rien (Richmond, Minn./Rocori) posted a fifth-place finish (378.60 points) in the 1-meter dive. He is currently second in 11 dives at three meters (443.30 points) and fourth at one meter (422.10 points). In six dives he is fourth at one meter (278.60) and ninth at three meters (238.05). Junior Kelly Burg (Grand Forks, N.D./Sacred Heart) is sixth in six dives at three meters (262.00) and in 11 dives at one meter (387.95). Burg is also seventh in six dives at one meter (254.95).



Saint Mary's

Coach: Eric Lindquist (12th season)

2009-10 Championship Finish: 6th (224 points)

Saint Mary's Championship Preview

The 2009-2010 season was a dream season for Saint Mary's University's Mark Ross (Dubuque, Iowa).

A dream season with a storybook ending.

Ross proved to be one of the Cardinals' top performers all season, and the then-freshman used the conference's biggest stage to write the picture-perfect ending.

Ross had a hand in setting seven SMU school records at the season-ending Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Championships, helping the Cardinals to a sixth-place finish.

Which leaves head coach Eric Lindquist with just one nagging question — what type of sequel can Ross and the Cardinals write at this year's MIAC Championships?

"Mark had a great freshman year and no question he turned a few heads around the conference," said Lindquist. "The expectations on Mark — and the rest of the men's and women's teams — are going to be higher this year.

"And everyone in this program is up to the challenge."

On paper, Lindquist's two teams are in stark contrast — the Cardinal men are a roster of seven, while more than twice that many (16 to be exact) make up the women's roster.

"On paper, the guys' roster might look a little small," said Lindquist, who is without three of his top performers from a year ago in John Fox, Tim Tysk and Neil Heacox. "But this is a group of hard-working guys who are going to surprise a few people this year."

Led by veterans Kristina Empanger (Chaska, Minn.), Rachel Steinkamp (Lakeville, Minn.), Liz Flynn (Mahtomedi, Minn.) and Nikki Farmer, the Cardinal women are not only deep, but talented as well.

"We graduated some very solid leaders, but we return some individuals who will be able to step right into those leadership roles," said Lindquist. "Liz and Nikki have had solid years, and I'm expecting more of the same at the conference championships. Kristina and Rachel are in the midst of solid senior seasons, and we've got a number of others poised for breakout performances this week.

"We should be in for a wild ride."



St. Olaf

Coach: Dave Hauck (37th season) and Bob Hauck (22nd season)

2009-10 Championship Finish: 3rd (615.5 points)

St. Olaf Championship Preview

The St. Olaf men's swimming and diving team will go for its 26th conference title this weekend. The Oles, who have won two of the last four titles, will ride senior Chris Bateman and a group of underclassmen in their quest. Bateman has the league's top times in the 100 back, 200 back, 200 Free, 200 IM, and 400 IM.

Fellow senior Luke Money has the conference's top time in the 200 Fly and is third in the 100 Fly.

A duo of first years -- Spencer Scarth and Colby Kubat -- will compete for titles in a number of events. Scarth has the top time in the 1,650 Free, 500 Free, the second best times in the 1,000 and 400 IM and the fifth in the 200 IM. Kubat holds the league's best times in the 200 Breast, 100 Breast, is second in 200 IM and third-best mark in the 400 IM.



St. Thomas

Coach: Tom Hodgson (32nd season)

2009-10 Championship Finish: 1st (709 points)

St. Thomas Championship Preview

The Tommie men edged Gustavus 709-701 last season to win the program's first MIAC team championship since 1954. All-American Peter Mullee has graduated but UST coach Tom Hodgson's 2010-11 athletes are preparing for another battle at the top with St. Olaf and Gustavus.

The three-day competition starts Thursday at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center.

The Tommies had gone 17 seasons without a top-two finish before last season's breakthrough. They had improved from sixth in 2007 to fourth in 2008 to third in 2009.

The UST men are again deep in the freestyle sprints, led by freshman Ben Hendrickson and junior All-American Erik Huls. They are ranked in the top 12 individually 30 times in swim events, and also have five divers ranked in the top 12 on both one- and three-meter boards.

The Tommies are seeded first in both the 200 free relay (Michael Hoelterhoff, Max Hubbard, Huls and Henrickson) and 400 free relay (Henrickson, Hoelterhoff, Hubbard, Sam Rauchwarter). St. Thomas is also seeded third in the 200 and 400 medley relays with Hoelterhoff, Grant Frost, Huls and Henrickson.

Hendrickson is seeded first in the 50 free (21.40) and second in the 100 free (47.23). Huls is seeded first in the 100 fly (52.43). Hoelterhoff is seeded fifth in the 50 free (21.80) and sixth in the 100 back (54.25). Rauchwarter is seeded third in the 200 free (1:43.60) and sixth in the 100 free (47.80). Frost is seeded third and fifth in the breaststroke races – the 100 (1:00.32) and 200 (2:13.32). Andrew Spratt is seeded third in the 1,650 (16:49.01), eighth in the 1000 free (10:31.21) and 11th in the 500 free (4:56.57).

Ethan Nimens is seeded seventh in the 100 back (54.39) and eighth in the 200 back (2:00.57), and is eighth in the 200 IM (2:01.06). Max Keenan is seeded sixth in the 100 breaststroke. Ben Ruhme is ranked sixth in the 200 fly (2:07.30) and ninth in the 200 back (2:01.33). Matt Rippentrop is seeded eighth in the 100 fly (53.95) and ninth in the 200 fly (2:01.88). Hubbard is seeded ninth in the 50 free (22.10), 10th in the 100 free (48.24) and 10th in the 100 fly.

Senior Ray Baltera is ranked first (11 dives) and third (six dives) in one-meter diving. Fellow divers Nick Johnson, Jeff Isaacson, Gus Jones and Ryan Panure are also ranked in the top 11 on both boards.