

2016 MIAC Men's Swimming and Diving Championships Preview

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2016 MIAC MEN'S SWIMMING AND DIVING CHAMPIONSHIPS PREVIEW

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. -- Since 2009, the University of St. Thomas and St. Olaf College have traded the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) men's swimming and diving championship back and forth, with the Oles winning four in that span to the Tommies' three. However, its UST that enters the 2016 championships holding the belt.

A year ago, the Tommies starred on the MIAC's biggest stage to end St. Olaf's quest for a third-straight title and reclaim the crown for the third time since 2010. The championship was the first for new St. Thomas Head Coach Scott Blanchard, who had taken over for the retired Tom Hodgson.

What started as a competitive battle for the title turned to the Tommies running away from the field, as the eventual champs amassed 808 total points en route to their victory. St. Olaf's bid for a three-peat came up short, as they settled for runner-up status with 604.5 points. The Oles' cross-town rivals, Carleton, joined them in the top three with 543.5 points.

Saint John's wasn't far behind the Knights, as the Johnnies' 510 points were good for fourth, and Gustavus racked up 487 points to round out the formidable top five. Hamline led the rest of the pack with 248 points and a sixth place finish, and Saint Mary's (120) edged Macalester (118) for eighth place.

This season, the Tommies certainly have designs on keeping the MIAC title in St. Paul, while the two Northfield schools and other contenders are hoping to raise their games and lower their times to give UST a run for their money.

However, unseating UST won't be easy based on what the team has coming back. Two-time MIAC Swimmer-of-the-Year Mike Lanz is back for his final MIAC Championships appearance, where he'll aim to win third-straight titles in the 100- and 200-yard butterfly, and also defend his 200-yard individual medley title. MIAC Diver-of-the-Year Andrew Grabowski is also back on the boards for St. Thomas after winning the 3-meter title a year ago. Tom Osmolak returns as the defending champ in the 100- and 200-yard backstroke, and Warren Melton, Brady Anderson and Chris Tri all enter with the conference's top time in their respective events.

The Oles and Knights again find themselves in position to challenge for the top three and the MIAC title with plenty of talent back in Northfield. St. Olaf's Nick Wilkerson returns to defend his 200-yard breaststroke title, and he also posts 2016's top time in the 100-breast. Diver Scott Hodgson returns as the 1-meter diving champ, and Bobby Schultze enters with 2016's top time in the mile. Carleton is led by Stephen Grinich, four-time MIAC Athlete-of-the-Week in 2016 and defending champion in the 50-yard freestyle. Fellow seniors Wilson Josephson and George McAneny give the Knights a strong, veteran nucleus as they hope to challenge the Oles and Tommies for MIAC supremacy.

Saint John's also has an experienced crew back, with junior Kenny Bergman back as the 100-yard freestyle defending champ, and the Johnnies also won the 400-yard freestyle relay a year ago. Junior Jose Alvarez and senior Paul Knaak - who has the top time in the 100-free - are also back to lead SJU. Gustavus graduated star freestyler Zac Solis, but has both experience and talented youth in the pool in 2016. Senior Jacob Stern returns with All-MIAC pedigree, and freshman Tanner Sonnek has had a breakout rookie campaign for the Gusties.

Hamline has high hopes to continue moving upward behind sophomore distance standout Hodd Gorman, who has three Piper school records, and rookie sprinter Cody Clay. Saint Mary's welcomes back two of its top swimmers in junior Joe Tonda and senior P.J. Heller, and Macalester has a pair of seniors back in the water in Ben Kromash and Walter Benson, as the Scots look to improve in 2016.

The 2016 MIAC Swimming and Diving Championships will be held Thursday, Feb. 18, through Saturday, Feb. 20, with two sessions each day. The morning sessions will begin at 10:30 a.m. (doors at 9 p.m.) and will feature preliminary races, with the evening championship sessions starting at 6:30 p.m. (doors at 5 p.m.). Saturday's championship doors will open at 2:30 p.m. for preliminary heats of the 1,650-yard freestyle and diving.

Tickets are available at either a single-session rate, or all-session passes will also be available for fans who plan to attend the entire event. Single-session passes cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for students, and all-session passes are \$50 for adults and \$25 for students. Heat sheets are included in the cost of admission. Children 5 and under are admitted free, and MIAC passes will be honored for all six session. No other passes or discounts will be accepted.

As in years past, all six sessions will be [broadcast live online](#) thanks to [Webcast America](#). Fans will also be able to watch archived video of each session following the event and purchase DVDs of the broadcasts via Webcast America's site. [MIAC Media's Mike Gallagher](#) will handle play-by-play duties for four of the six sessions. There will also be "live" results [available online](#) with results updated shortly after the conclusion of each event for fans following the action from afar.



The MIAC has an exclusive Web site for the [2016 MIAC Swimming & Diving Championships](#). The site features the complete [event schedule](#), [psych sheet](#), [ticket information](#) and venue information. The site will be constantly updated throughout the event with heat sheets, links to follow the action live, results, recaps, photos and more.

Fans can also monitor MIAC men's swimming and diving on-the-go thanks to the the [MIAC mobile app](#), which is a free download for both Apple and Android devices. Also, connect to the conference on its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) pages and use the official event hashtag #MIACSD to interact throughout the championships.

The rest of the 2016 MIAC Men's Swimming and Diving Championships Preview contains helpful links, a promotional video, and a championship preview for each team submitted by their sports information director.

MIAC MEDIA PREVIEWS S&D CHAMPIONSHIPS

MIAC Media has been busy preparing for one of the conference's biggest annual events with previews of the Championships across all platforms. Tuesday, the [MIAC Weekly podcast](#) with Host Mike Gallagher (who will be the play-by-play voice of the online broadcast for four of the six sessions) took an in-depth look ahead at the event with special guest St. Olaf Head Coach Bob Hauck. Also, the MIAC released a [video](#) to promote the event on its YouTube channel.

MIAC MEN'S SWIMMING AND DIVING LINKS

| [MIAC Men's Swimming and Diving Page](#) | [Schedule](#) | [Top Times](#) | [News](#) | [Athletes-of-the-Week](#) | [Recordbook](#) | [Archives](#) |

TEAM-BY-TEAM PREVIEWS

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CARLETON | [Knights' men's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Andy Clark (23rd season)

A Year Ago

- 3rd place | 543.5 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Stephen Grinich (Sr.) | 2015 MIAC Champion in 50 free, 200 free relay and 200 medley relay; also 3rd at 2015 MIAC Championships in 100 fly and 400 medley relay; this season ranks 1st in the MIAC in 50 free [20.84], 3rd in 100 fly [50.84] and 6th in 100 free [47.50])
- Wilson Josephson (Sr.) | 2015 MIAC champion in 200 free relay, also finished 3rd in 800 free relay; this season ranks 4th in the MIAC in 200 free [1:46.19]
- George McAneny (Sr.) | 2015 MIAC Champion in 200 free relay, also 3rd in 50m freestyle; this season ranks 6th in the MIAC in 50 free [21.41] and 7th in 100 free [47.51])
- Alex Mathson (Jr.) | 2014 MIAC runner-up in 1650 free, also 3rd in 400 IM and 800 free relay; this season ranks 5th in the MIAC in 200 breast [2:11.32] and 400 IM [4:17.97], 6th in 1650 free [17:11.75], and 9th in 500 free [4:52.15])
- Karl Schwarzkopf (Fy.) | This season ranks 3rd in MIAC in 100 back [52.54], 4th in 50 free [21.38] and 9th in 100 free [48.04])

By the Numbers

- 3: Carleton holds the top time in the MIAC this season in three relays: the 200 free [1:23.92], the 200 medley [1:35.53], and the 400 medley [3:28.71]
- 7: The Knights have won seven weekly awards this season
- 12: The Knights have athletes from 12 states on their roster. They hail from Minnesota, Ohio, California, Connecticut, Oregon, Massachusetts, Illinois, Washington, Wisconsin, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Maine.

Did You Know?

- Due to his stellar performance this season, Stephen Grinich has won 4 MIAC Athlete-of-the-Week awards this season.

Out of the Pool

- For the 23rd year in a row, the Knights were named a CSCAA All-Academic team, posting a 3.30 team GPA.



GUSTAVUS | [Gusties' men's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Jon Carlson (26th season)

A Year Ago

- Fifth place | 487 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Jacob Stern (Sr., Rosemount, Minn.) | Third place in 100 Breaststroke at 2015 MIAC Championships.
- Tanner Sonnek (Fy., North Mankato, Minn.) Ranked second in 100 and 200 Breaststroke...MIAC Athlete of the Week Nov. 24...Gustavus November Athlete of the Month.

By the Numbers

- 2: Ranking of Tanner Sonnek in 100 and 200 Breaststroke
- 3: Ranking of Jeff Nelson in 100 IM

Did You Know?

- Gustavus earned CSCAA All-America honors by accumulating a team GPA of 3.07 last season.

Out of the Pool

- The Gustavus swimming and diving teams hosted the Area 9 Special Olympics aquatics competition on Sunday, Feb. 7 in the Vic Gustafson Pool. More than 50 student-athletes were in charge of set up and take down, timing, posting results, coordinating athletes, and running the award ceremony following the competition. To go along with their meet duties, the Gustie swimmers also served as the cheer squad and rooted on the participants for the entirety of the meet. Roughly 50 Special Olympics swimmers competed in races with distances ranging from 25 yards up to 200 yards. Special Olympics aquatics covers a great variety of swimming skills, from short sprints to longer events and relays, perfect for all ages and ability levels.



HAMLIN | [Pipers' men's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Ryan Hawke (3rd season)

A Year Ago

- 6th place | 248 points

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- Skiah Garde Garcia (18th place NCAA D-III Region 1 event – 3 meter board)

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Hodd Gorman, So., Distance, School record holder in 500, 100 and 1,500 Free
- Cody Clay, Fr., Sprints (22.19, 9th best time in school history in 50 Free)
- Victor Lara, Sr., Sprints (9th all time in HU history in 50 and 100 Free)
- Adam Berg, Fr., Distance

By the Numbers

- 3: school records held by Hodd Gorman
- 6: freshmen on the HU team
- 16: members on HU roster, largest in years

Did You Know?

- In 2015, Hamline jumped two places and improved by 150 points from their 2014 score.

Out of the Pool

- With a combined 3.09 GPA, the HU men's team was named to the CSCAA Scholar All-America unit.

MACALESTER | [Scots' men's swimming and diving home page](#) |



Head coach

- Beth Whittle (6th season)

A Year Ago

- 8th place | 118 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Walter Benson (Sr. | MIAC qualifying times in four events)
- Calvin Dretske (Fy. | MIAC qualifying times in three events)
- Taylor Durbin (Fy. | MIAC qualifying times in seven events)
- Sam Gleason (So. | MIAC qualifying times in three events)
- Ben Kromash (Sr. | MIAC qualifying times in eight events)

By the Numbers

- 54: MIAC Championships qualifying times and scores
- 9: Underclassmen with MIAC qualifying times and scores
- 13: States represented on Macalester's roster

Out of the Pool

- The Scots' grade-point average of 3.37 for the fall semester ranked 15th among all Division III programs, earning the team Scholar All-America honors from the CSCAA.

SAINT JOHN'S | [Johnnies' men's swimming and diving home page](#)



Head coach

- Bill Saxton (18th season)

A Year Ago

- Fourth place | 510 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Jose Alvarez (Jr. | Has the second-fastest time in the MIAC in the 200-yard individual medley...is fifth in both backstrokes, and sixth (100) and seventh (200) in the butterflies...earned All-MIAC honors in both 100- (second) and 200-yard (third) backstrokes at the 2015 MIAC Championships by placing third and second, respectively...recorded three fifth-place finishes as a freshman at the 2014 conference meet)
- Kenny Bergman (Jr. | Won the MIAC title in the 100-yard freestyle at the 2015 MIAC Championships...was also a member of SJU's MIAC-champion 400-yard freestyle relay team last spring)
- Paul Knaak (Sr. | Has the second-fastest times in the MIAC in the 50- and 100-yard freestyles...was a member of SJU's MIAC-champion 400-yard freestyle relay team last spring...missed All-MIAC honors in the 100-yard freestyle by 0.01 seconds at the 2015 MIAC Championships)
- Braden McCormack (Sr. | Is the school's record-holder in the 100-yard backstroke (51.28)...earned All-MIAC honors with a third-place finish in the 100-yard backstroke at the 2014 MIAC Championships...studied abroad in Ireland last spring and missed the conference meet)
- Justin Wollin (Jr. | Finished fourth in both the 1- and 3-meter dives at the MIAC Championships each of the past two seasons)

By the Numbers

- 8: The Johnnies currently boast eight top-10, individual times in the MIAC (through Feb. 6).
- 5: Junior Jose Alvarez (North Bay Village, Fla./Belen Jesuit) has five of the eight top-10 time, including the second-fastest time in the 200-yard individual medley (1:58.19).
- 4th: SJU has finished fourth or fifth at the MIAC Championships each of the past eight seasons, a streak that snapped a 12-year streak in which the program finished second or third.

Did You Know?

- Each of the three Johnnie swimmers (Alvarez, Bergman and Knaak) that earned individual All-MIAC honors a year ago return for the 2016 MIAC Championships.

Out of the Pool

- Saint John's received College Swimming Coaches Association of America (CSCAA) Scholar All-America honors in June. To be selected as a CSCAA Scholar All-America Team, programs must have achieved a grade point average of 3.00 or higher over the spring semester. A record 406 collegiate swimming and diving programs earned the recognition in 2015. Twenty-eight Johnnies combined for a 3.32 GPA this spring, which was good for a tie with Johns Hopkins (Md.) for 22nd in NCAA Division III.

SAINT MARY'S | [Cardinals' men's swimming and diving home page](#) |



Head coach

- Amber Bartholomew (1st season)

A Year Ago

- 7th place | 120 points

Top Performers

- Joe Tonda (6-3, 185, Jr., IM/Backstroke | Reached consolation final in 200 IM and 200 backstroke at the 2015 MIAC Championships. ... Posted his best time of the season in the 200 IM (2:06.41) and 200 backstroke (2:06.11) at MIAC Championships)
- P.J. Heller (6-6, 200, Sr., Freestyle | Posted team's fastest time in 200 freestyle, clocking a 1:56.62 at the 2015 MIAC Championships)
- Brian Mockler (6-2, 190, So., Freestyle/Breaststroke | Reached the consolation final in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:03.07)

By The Numbers

- 2: Joe Tonda (St. Paul, Minn.) reached the MIAC Championships consolation final in two events, touching the wall in 2:06.41 in the 200 IM and 2:06.11 in the 200 backstroke.
- 11: Joe Tonda (St. Paul, Minn.) and Zac Finkelstein (Naperville, Ill.) combined to post 11 individual top times a year ago—Tonda in the 500 freestyle, 50 backstroke, 200 backstroke, 50 breaststroke, 100 IM, and 200 IM; and Finkelstein in the 50 freestyle, 100 freestyle, 100 backstroke, 50 butterfly, and 100 butterfly.

Did You Know?

- In his first MIAC Championships appearance, Brian Mockler (Dubuque, Iowa) swam into the consolation final in the 100 breaststroke, touching the wall in 1:03.07, while also knocking two seconds off his collegiate-best 50 freestyle time, stopping the clock in 23.48.



ST. OLAF | [Oles' men's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Bob Hauck (27th season)

A Year Ago

- 2nd place | 604.5 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Scott Hodgson (2016 | Placed 1st in the 1 meter dive at the 2015 MIAC Championships)
- Bobby Schultze (2017| Won both the 500 and 1650 free earlier this season at the Meet of the Saints)
- Graham Downing (2017 | Placed 6th in the 400 IM at the 2015 MIAC Championships)
- Nathan France (2017 | Placed 3rd in the 200 breast at the 2015 MIAC Championships)
- Jack Welsh (2019 | Won both the 200 butterfly and the 500 freestyle at a home meet earlier this season)

By the Numbers

- 16: The number of men's MIAC championships the Oles have won under head coach Bob Hauck
- 11: The number of freshman on the team
- 10: The number of states represented by the team



ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' men's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Scott Blanchard (2nd season)

A Year Ago

- 1st place | 808 points

In the 2015 NCAA Championships

- 25th at NCAA Championships with 37 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Mike Lanz (SR, 3X NCAA qualifier, 2X MIAC Swimmer-of-the Year, 2X All-America and 1 HM All-America performance in 2015)
- Tom Osmolak (SR, 2 wins in backstroke at 2015 MIACs)
- Chris Tri (SR, 6 first-place finishes this season)
- Bailey Biwer (SO, 6 first-place finishes this season)
- Andrew Grabowski (SO, 2015 MIAC Diver-of-the-Year)

By the Numbers

- 13, 11: Number of first- and second-seed times/scores for UST in the conference season-best list
- 4: Individual events where Mike Lanz is seeded first in the MIAC (100 free, 200 IM, 100, 200 fly)
- 14: Number of Tommies seeded 1-2-3 in MIAC individual swim or diving events

Did You Know?

- St. Thomas is attempting to win the MIAC team title for the fourth time in seven seasons after going 55 years without winning a crown from 1955-2009.

Out of the Pool

- St. Thomas Swim-Dive has 17 men's athletes with cumulative gpas of 3.50 or higher, including nine at 3.80 or better.