

2010 Men's Soccer Preview and Coaches' Poll

8/31/2010

ST. PAUL, Minn. – While there is promise for an exciting fall season across the board in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC), it appears the most intriguing title pursuit will take place in the men's soccer league. While three favorites exist at the top, as many eight teams could legitimately compete for title consideration and playoff berths.

 MSoccer Preview 10

The first-place votes in the 2010 MIAC Men's Soccer Preseason Coaches' Poll were split almost evenly among three teams, with Macalester College receiving a slight nod as the favorite to claim the regular season crown. However, only 38 points separate the Scots and eight-place Concordia College, which points towards a season of incredible parity in the MIAC.

Macalester received five first-place votes, while the University of St. Thomas and Carleton College split the other six down the middle, with the Tommies taking second in the poll by a single point over the Knights. Sticking with that theme, just three points separated fourth-place St. Olaf College, fifth-place Bethel University and No. 6 Augsburg College, with No. 7 Gustavus and the Cobbers following close behind. Saint John's University, Hamline University and Saint Mary's University filled out the last three spots, respectively.

The Scots are the coaches' pick to finish atop the standings for several reasons. Ian Barker, the 2009 MIAC Coach-of-the-Year, returns a deep, veteran team that finished 13-8-1 overall, 7-3-0 in the MIAC and won the conference Playoff Championship a season ago. Two-time All-MIAC defender Nate Juergens and All-MIAC midfielder Stephen Murphy-Logue are both back for their senior seasons, and All-MIAC Honorable mention defender Jesse Geary (Jr.) is another key returner for a Macalester team that showed steady improvement during the 2009 season.

St. Thomas is another senior-laden squad that figures to be in title contention. The Tommies, who were 10-7-2 overall and 6-3-1 in the MIAC in 2009, return eight seniors and 24 total players. Three All-Region selections – Reid Moser-Bleil (Sr., D), Mike Hutton (Jr., F) and Angel Riera (Jr., F) – are back for coach Aaron Macke, as well as All-MIAC forward Elliot Amundson (Sr.) and Honorable Mention defender Colin White (Sr.). With that talent and leadership back, St. Thomas will try to make it five consecutive top-four finishes in the conference standings.

Carleton – the three-time defending MIAC champ – should also figure prominently into the title race as the Knights aim for an amazing fourth-straight regular season crown. Offense again figures to be Carleton's strength after going 15-5-0 overall and 8-2 in the MIAC last season and leading the league in scoring each of the last two seasons. All-Region offensive players Tim Wills (Jr., F) and Wes Elfman (Sr., MF) will again lead the attack, and though the defense took a hit from graduation, All-MIAC Honorable Mention goalkeeper Pete Semmer (Sr.) is back in net to keep Carleton in contention.

St. Olaf tied for second a year ago with a 7-3 MIAC record to go with a 13-5-2 overall mark, and the Oles figure to be in the mix again in 2010. Though St. Olaf graduated three players that were either All-MIAC or Honorable Mention a season ago, All-MIAC midfielder John Zietlow returns for his senior season to lead another talented Oles squad.

Bethel's head coach changed, but expectations have not following one of the program's strongest showings in recent memory. The 2009 Royals were 10-6-2 overall and 4-4-2 in the MIAC, and the 2010 squad hopes to challenge for a spot in the MIAC Playoffs. A pair of senior forwards – Andreas Scott and Brandon Peplinski – will lead a Bethel team that has a great mix of experience and youthful talent. Scott was an All-MIAC pick a year ago, and Peplinski is a two-time Honorable Mention selection.

If Augsburg can simply change its fortunes in one-goal games this season it could find itself back in the MIAC Playoffs, and in the hunt for the title as well. Coach Greg Holker's team was 8-8-1 overall last season (3-7-0 MIAC), but seven of the eight losses were by a single goal. All-MIAC junior Peter Loyd and Honorable Mention sophomore Chad Gilmer are among the Auggies' seven returning starters that drive the optimism for 2010.

Gustavus and Concordia also figure to be in the mix for playoff spots in 2010. The Gusties were 9-6-3 overall in 2009 and 6-3-1 in league play, and All-MIAC selection Mark Adams (Jr., F) and Honorable Mention senior midfielders Ben Ikeda will help ease the transition following the retirement of coach Larry Zelenz, who won 289 games over 25 seasons at Gustavus. Mike Middleton takes over as the new Gusties' coach, and hopes to continue the winning tradition.

The Cobbers enter 2010 hoping for more consistency. Concordia started slow in each of the last two seasons before coming on strong and just missing its first-ever MIAC Playoff berth each year. All-MIAC forward Riley McGlynn (Jr.) and Honorable Mention midfielder Marco Riboli (Sr.) are among the 10 returning starters, but the Cobbers must replace graduated All-Region goalkeeper Mads Schmidt, who didn't allow a goal in the final eight games of 2009.

Saint John's, Hamline and Saint Mary's all hope they'll be the surprise story in the MIAC in 2010. The Johnnies are a team in transition, but it should be a smooth one as John Haws takes over as head coach after his father, Pat, won 341 games over 32 seasons at Saint John's. The Johnnies return seven of their top nine scorers, including leading scorer Colin Hall (Sr., MF), and the younger Haws' first recruiting class features numerous promising talents.

Hamline hopes to take a step forward in coach Jon Lowery's second season behind All-MIAC Honorable Mention goalkeeper Zach Nelson (Jr.). Lowery has a nice mix of experienced returners and talented newcomers as the Pipers try to jump into Playoff contention. Hamline was 6-11-1 overall in 2009 and 2-7-1 in conference play.

Saint Mary's has to replace four-year starter Jon Szafranski in the net, but all three of its top scorers – Steve Boussie, Jumaine Venter and Ryan Rademacher – return to lead an otherwise experienced team. Though the Cardinals were just 1-8-1 in MIAC play in 2009, coach Chris Dembiec's squad was great outside conference play, putting together a 5-2-1 nonconference mark to prove the MIAC's strength.

The 2010 season officially opens Wednesday, Sept. 1, with seven of the 11 teams in action against nonconference opponents. The first big day of MIAC action will come on Sept. 14, when eight of the teams meet head-to-head in their conference openers. The final day of the regular season, which will feature three crucial MIAC matchups, will be Saturday, Oct. 30.

The 2010 MIAC Men's Soccer Playoffs will again be a four-team affair determined by the regular season league standings. The semifinals will be held Tuesday, Nov. 2, with the Championship scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 6. The high seed will host throughout the playoffs.

Listed below are the complete results from the 2010 MIAC Preseason Women's Soccer Coaches' Poll, as well as complete team-by-team previews submitted by each institution's sports information director.

2010 MIAC Men's Soccer Preseason Coaches' Poll

Coaches voted for every team in the conference except their own team. Points were assigned for each vote (10 for first, nine for second, etc.) Teams are ranked in order of highest point total to lowest with vote totals listed and first-place votes shown in parentheses.

| 2010 MIAC Men's Soccer Preseason Coaches' Poll | | |
|---|----------------|-------|
| Rank | Institution | Total |
| 1 | Macalester (5) | 91 |
| 2 | St. Thomas (3) | 86 |
| 3 | Carleton (3) | 85 |
| 4 | St. Olaf | 67 |
| 5 | Bethel | 65 |
| 6 | Augsburg | 64 |
| 7 | Gustavus | 57 |
| 8 | Concordia | 53 |
| 9 | Saint John's | 35 |
| 10 | Hamline | 27 |
| 11 | Saint Mary's | 11 |

2010 MIAC Playoff Dates: Semifinals (Tuesday, Nov. 2), Finals (Saturday, Nov. 6).

| [2010 MIAC Schedule](#) | [2009 MIAC Statistics](#) | [MIAC Recordbook](#) | [MIAC Archives](#) |



Augsburg

Coach: Greg Holker

Career Record: 56-42-15 (6 seasons)

2009 Finish: 8th (3-7-0 MIAC, 8-8-1 overall)

Augsburg Season Preview

Turning a negative into a positive could be a key for the Augsburg College men's soccer program to have success in the 2010 season.

Last season, the Auggies suffered through an uncharacteristic losing streak that ended up knocking the Auggies out of contention for the four-team Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference postseason playoffs. Augsburg ended up 8-8-1 overall, 3-7-0 in MIAC play -- with seven losses during the season by just one goal.

But the losing stretch allowed the Auggie coaching staff to give younger players a chance to play and earn key experience in one of the top NCAA Division III men's soccer conferences in the country. And that experience may be a key for the Auggies to return to the upper echelon of the MIAC this season.

"Once we were eliminated from the MIAC playoffs, our upperclassmen came in and said that we had to play the young guys, because this program is more important than us as individuals, and we're willing personally to concede time to make sure that the (young) players are improving and getting experiences that will help them in the future," said Augsburg head coach Greg Holker. "I think this offseason was unique in the fact that you have a motivated group of talented players who want to erase a bad taste (from last year)."

Returning to the MIAC playoffs is a definite goal for Holker, whose teams reached the conference postseason twice in the last four years. He said that there are at least eight MIAC teams that could contend for postseason berths.

"This is an incredibly challenging conference that does very well annually in the NCAA tournament," Holker said. "It's a testament to how strong this conference is."

Key Contributors Return

The 2010 Auggies will be an intriguing mix of both youth and experience. Seven starters and 18 letterwinners return from last year's club, including two all-conference honorees -- All-MIAC recipient Peter Loyd (JR, Plymouth, Minn./Robbinsdale Armstrong HS) and All-MIAC honorable-mention recipient Chad Gilmer (SO, Bloomington, Minn./Jefferson HS).

Loyd, who earned All-MIAC honorable-mention honors in 2008, anchored an Augsburg defense that allowed just 15 goals on the season (0.86 team goals-against-average), while starting all 17 games. Joe Keller (SR, Wayzata, Minn.) and Sherif Soud (SO, Inver Grove Heights, Minn./Eagan HS) will also be expected to contribute on defense, along with Kevin Butcher (SO, Fort Collins, Colo.) and Operolim Marcellino (SO, Rochester, Minn./Century HS).

Holker describes Gilmer as "a dangerous player and a fantastic player," and with a shift to a forward role this season, he will be expected to utilize his scoring talents, along with players like Ahmed Gobana (JR, Burnsville, Minn.), who led the Auggies in scoring with five goals last season, and David Scheller (JR, Maple Grove, Minn.), who contributed three assists. Jeff Butler (SO, Prior Lake, Minn.) and Gottlieb Uahengo (SO, Winhoek, Namibia/St. George's College) have also shown promise at the forward position, Holker noted.

In the middle, Van Hong (SR, St. Louis Park, Minn.) returns for his third season as an Auggie. Hong "really is the heart of this team. When he speaks, the heart beats louder," Holker said. Hong scored two goals with an assist last season.

Joining Hong in the middle should be three experienced players in Matt Bowman (JR, Maple Grove, Minn.), T.J. Haag (SR, Apple Valley, Minn./Burnsville HS) and Peter Osborn (JR, Eagan, Minn./Eastview HS). Bowman scored a goal with three assists in 17 games last year, while Haag bounced back from a midseason injury to contribute an assist in 12 games. Osborn, who contributed three assists in 15 games last year, looks to be the anchor in the midfield, as Holker has high praise for him.

Other returners for the Auggies include midfielder Max Macemon (JR, St. Anthony Village, Minn./AFCA HS) and defender Jake Wolf (JR, Elk River, Minn.).

Youth will be served

Finding a replacement for four-year goalkeeper starter Pascaul Venter will require Holker to look to two first-year players as primary candidates to fill the spot -- Will Morlock (FY, Grand Haven, Mich.) and Clayton Lynch (FY, Cedar Rapids, Iowa/Xavier HS). Morlock was an all-state honorable-mention honoree in Michigan his junior season, while earning multiple all-conference and all-region honors. Lynch earned first-team all-state honors in Iowa his senior year, along with all-conference and all-metro honors.

"They're both disciplined and hard-working kids," Holker said. "Pair that up with the fact that they chose to be roommates, we've got some good things going on, chemistry-wise, that I think will help us."

Returners Joel Lacine (JR, Rochester, Minn./Mayo HS) and Jeb Bates (SO, Parker, Colo./Chaparral HS) will also back up the two first-year players in goal.

Augsburg will benefit from the addition of three transfers -- forward Benjamin Wexler (SR, Minnetonka, Minn./Benilde-St. Margaret HS), defender Tyler Heaps (SO, St. Paul, Minn./DeLaSalle HS) and midfielder Josh Sweeney (SO, Bloomington, Minn./Jefferson HS). Wexler played three seasons at Division I Providence (R.I.), while Heaps had a goal and two assists in 17 games last season for North Park (Ill.) and Sweeney had a goal in five games last year at Wisconsin-Oshkosh.

Midfielder Edi Becerra (FY, Inver Grove Heights, Minn./Minneapolis Southwest HS) and forward Mohamed Sankoh (FY, St. Paul, Minn./Como Park HS) are expected to provide key contributions this season, Holker noted.

Forward Nate Peltonen (FY, Fond du Lac, Wis.) also joins the team this year, along with midfielders Owen Byrnes (FY, Minneapolis, Minn./Southwest HS) and Mackenzie Dykstra (SO, Delano, Minn.) and defenders Victor Enriquez (FY, Eagan, Minn./Minneapolis Southwest HS), Danny Osip (FY, Minneapolis, Minn./South HS) and Aaron Espy (FY, Rochester, Minn./Century HS).



Bethel

Coach: Ryan Servaty

Career Record: 0-0 (first season)

2009 Finish: 7th (4-4-2 MIAC, 10-6-2 overall)

Bethel Season Preview

Bethel's men's soccer team takes to the field in 2010 under new leadership, but the goal of a MIAC playoff berth remains the same. Last season, the Royals showed the conference that there was new blood and new life in the program by posting a 10-6-2 overall and 4-4-2 conference record. The Royals turned heads and earned their highest MIAC finish in five seasons in 2009. Expectations have now been raised, and the Royals have taken aim at reaching new heights.

With the largest senior class in more than a decade, the Royals are mixture of strong young talent and seasoned veterans. Key returners include All-MIAC forward Andreas Scott (Sr., Cedar, Minn.), two-time All-MIAC Honorable Mention forward Brandon Peplinski (Sr., Maple Grove, Minn.), as well as Kirk Darling (Sr., Portage, Mich.), Christopher Dirks (Sr., Excelsior, Minn.), Zach Hurd (Sr., Portage, Mich.), and Greg "Twiggy" LeVere (Sr., Forth Worth, Texas).

OFFENSE

The Royals return a majority of their offensive firepower from a year ago, including Scott and Peplinski who accounted for nearly a third of Bethel's total goals last season. Scott put together his best season to date with eight goals and 11 assists for 27 points. Meanwhile, Peplinski scored six goals and had three assists for 15 points. Joining them in the attack are LeVere, David Swenson (Sr., Blaine, Minn.), and Brian Holm (So., Champlin, Minn.).

DEFENSE

Darling, Dirks, and Hurd make up a potent backfield for the Royals, and the three have helped Bethel cut the number of goals scored by the opposition in half from the 2007 season. The Royals defense has been able to not only minimize scoring opportunities, but also return the ball to the offense to establish ball control and create shots on the other end of the field. David Kim (So., Blaine, Minn.) and Nate Manthey (Jr., Rochester, Minn.) look to bolster the defense with their speed and athleticism.

GOALIE

Two familiar faces that have put in their time will battle it out for the starting position between the pipes. Leif Sundberg (Jr., Mahtomedi, Minn.) and Erik Sorensen (Jr., Park Ridge, Ill.) will be responsible for guarding the back of the net after two years of providing backup for All-MIAC Honorable Mention goalkeeper Nick Kantor.



Carleton

Coach: Bob Carlson

Career Record: 136-83-21 (13 seasons)

2009 Finish: 1st (8-2-0 MIAC, 15-5-0 overall)

Carleton Season Preview

The Knights are expected to again feature a dynamic offensive attack, having lead the conference in scoring in 2008 and 2009. The team's nearly impenetrable defense has been the foundation for Carleton's back-to-back-to-back MIAC Championships, ranking among NCAA leaders in shutouts and goals against average. It is the defense, however, that presents the biggest question mark this fall.

Graduation claimed four starters, three off the backline. Gone from the defense are two-time All-American center back Robert Carlton, All-Region performer Ross Hamilton, and All-MIAC honorable mention outside back Lyndon DeSalvo.

Courtney Morris (Sr./Lafayette, N.J./Taft School), the lone returning starter at the position, slides inside and will captain the backline in 2010. Determining which other players can fill the void is the top priority for Bob Carlson and his staff.

Any opponent able to infiltrate the re-vamped Carleton defense must still find a way to get the ball past goalkeeper Pete Semmer (Sr./Del Mar, Calif./Bishop's School). A three-year starter and an All-MIAC honorable mention pick in 2009, he ranked among NCAA leaders in goals against average and save percentage the last two seasons.

While the defense may be a work in progress early in the season, the Knights know they have solid options on offense as the top four point scorers from last year's conference championship squad return.

Leading the way is a pair of All-Region performers: forward Tim Wills (Jr./Portland, Ore./Central Catholic) and midfielder Wes Elfman (Sr./Madison, Wis./Edgewood). Wills ranked sixth in the NCAA with 0.7 assists per game and paced the MIAC with 28 points (7 goals, 14 assists). Elfman's speed helped him lead the squad with 8 goals—three of them game winners—and add 6 assists.

Carleton will again rely on the deft footwork of Ryan Cammarota (Jr./Neenah, Wis.) to ignite the attack. The midfielder finished 2009 with 9 assists and 4 goals. There was no drop off in scoring when the Knights went to the bench as junior forward Miles Silbert (St. Louis Park, Minn.) tallied 7 goals and 17 points in 20 games (2 starts).

Carlson has always focused on putting his top lineup on the pitch, so the program's nine rookies will have their chance to earn playing time with strong performances during practice sessions.

Only time will tell how the season will play out. By year's end Carleton could become just the second men's soccer program to win four straight MIAC crowns (Gustavus, 1969-72 and 2004-07).



Concordia

Coach: Dan Weiler

Career Record: 102-45-12 (8 seasons)

2009 Finish: T-4th (6-3-1 MIAC, 11-6-1 overall)

Concordia Season Preview

The Concordia men's soccer team has had almost 10 months to get over the disappointment of narrowly missing their first-ever conference playoff berth. The Cobbers went unbeaten in their final 10 games of the 2009 season and ended up in a tie for the fourth, and final, MIAC playoff spot. Concordia fell short in the tie-breaking procedure and was left to ponder what might have happened and wanting to start anew for one more chance at the postseason.

For the past two seasons early season losing skids have spelled doom for the Cobbers' playoff hopes. Last season Concordia lost their first three league games and tumbled down a six-game losing hill before righting the ship and rattling off nine wins in their last 10 games. In 2008, the Cobbers also lost their first three MIAC contests before ending the year by winning five of their last six. The key for this year's squad will be to get off to a fast start and then repeat their past two epic finishes.

The season goal of making the conference playoffs for the first time in program history is a distinct possibility due to the return of 10 of the team's starting 11 players from a year ago. That is the good news. The bad news is that the one player that needs to be replaced is All-Region goalkeeper Mads Schmidt. Schmidt led a resurgence of the Cobber defense which ended the year by not allowing a goal in the final eight games. That streak currently stands at 758:38 - the third longest streak in MIAC history.

Schmidt's replacement will be bolstered by a defense that will only get better in 2010 as all four starting defenders return for another year. Central defenders Drew Glogoza (Jr., Fargo, N.D./Fargo Shanley HS) and Felix Okoth (Sr., Mombasa, Kenya) will anchor a unit that has developed into the strength of the team. Okoth is an intimidating defender whose size and strength in the air allow Concordia to defend any dead ball situations from around the penalty area.

The midfield will be dominated by seniors and will serve as the engine for the Cobbers' offense. All four starting players return for a second straight season. Kyle Quimby (Sr., Mahtomedi, Minn.), Marco Riboli (Sr., Bergamo, Italy), Alex Dahl (Fargo, N.D./Fargo South HS) and Philip Bruckbauer (Sr, Fargo, N.D./Fargo Shanley) have grown together and are now a proven commodity in the MIAC. Riboli was named to the MIAC All-Conference Honorable Mention Team for the second straight season last year. He led the team with 10 assists and was tied for second in the conference in assists in overall games.

The biggest revelation of 2009 was the team's offense. After finishing seventh in the league in goals scored in 2008, Concordia jumped all the way to fourth in 2009. The increase in point production was due in large part to Riley McGlynn (Jr., Hampstead, N.C./Bozeman HS) who had a breakout season and was named to the MIAC All-Conference Team. McGlynn exploded for 11 goals last year. He led the team in goals and points as he finished with 11 goals and three assists for 25 points. In conference play he had six goals and one assist for 13 points. He was tied for second in the MIAC in goals per game and tied for fifth in points per game. McGlynn also led the conference in total shots (42) and shots per game (4.20).

Joining McGlynn up front will be sophomore Jared Rice (Kalispell, Mont./Glacier HS). Rice started last season as a defender but was then moved up top in the middle of the season and immediately infused the CC offense with high-octane energy. His speed and tenacity were a perfect complement to McGlynn and the two will be a tough stop for any defense this season.

All signs point to the Cobbers continuing to improve and making a run for their first-ever MIAC playoff berth. With a little luck, Concordia will also be in the hunt for their first conference championship since 1996.



Gustavus

Coach: Larry Zelenz

Career Record: 280-114-44 (24 seasons)

2009 Finish: T-4th (6-3-1 MIAC, 9-6-3 overall)

Gustavus Season Preview

The Gustavus men's soccer program will take on a new look in 2010 as Mike Middleton takes over as the head coach and ushers in a new era of Golden Gustie Soccer. Middleton will build his squad around 11 returning letterwinners including returning starters Luke Strom (goalkeeper), Ben Ceder (defense), Justin Egleseder (defense), Lucas Thompson (defense), and midfielders Kyle Sadler (midfield) and Ben Ikeda. Gustavus opens regular season play on Saturday, September 4 with a match against Northland College, which will be played at St. Scholastica in Duluth beginning at 2:30 pm.

Coach Middleton will build the team around the defensive four starters return including Strom (Sr., Plymouth, Minn.) in the nets, Egleseder (Jr., Eden Prairie, Minn.) and Thompson (So., Sioux Falls, S.D.) as central defenders, and Ceder (Oregon, Wis.) at right outside back. A two-year starter, Strom compiled a record of 5-5-3 in the nets last season and posted a 1.04 goals against average. Egleseder and Ceder have been key elements of the Gustie defense for the past two seasons and will give Coach Middleton a much needed veteran presence in the back, while an inexperienced group in the midfield and up front grow together and become a cohesive unit on the attack. Thompson gives the Gusties good speed and size in front of Strom. Sophomore Evan Odean (So., Duluth, Minn.) will likely step into the opening at the left outside back position, while senior Steve Lundberg (Sr., Apple Valley, Minn.) will also contribute in goal.

Sadler (Jr., Sioux Falls, S.D.) and Ikeda (Sr., Maple Grove, Minn.) will anchor the midfield after gaining valuable experience a year ago. Middleton likes the competitiveness and leadership that Ikeda brings to the squad and feels Sadler has shown excellent technical skill in practice while also scoring two goals in the Gusties preseason scrimmage. Others expected to contribute in the midfield include senior Chris Adams (White Bear Lake, Minn.), who is recovering from a knee injury, Doug Frey (Sr., Duluth, Minn.), Grant Steine (So, Chaska, Minn.), Jackson Zoellner (So., Sioux Falls, S.D.), Gabe Steinborn (So., Sioux Falls, S.D.), and Alberto Guerra (So, Woodbury, Minn.).

Up front, the squad returns all-conference performer Mark Adams (Jr., Waukeg, Iowa) who led the team in scoring with 10 goals and four assists as well as Dan Jarrett (Sr., Edina, Minn.). Middleton will likely also move several players around early in the season to see who might be effective in the attack, which is an area where the Gusties lack experience and depth.

Coach Middleton is excited to get started and he has been impressed with how willing the squad has been to accept a new approach and philosophy. He stated, "We are introducing some different ways of playing as well as some different formations and the players have been very willing to do whatever we ask of them." Middleton added, "We are going to be moving some people around early trying to make the most of the talent that we have and that can be unsettling. They have shown the appropriate desire and it is my job to get everything we can out of them so this team can reach its full potential."



Hamline

Coach: Jon Lowery

Career Record: 6-11-1 (1 season)

2009 Finish: 9th (2-7-1 MIAC, 6-11-1 overall)

Hamline Season Preview

In his second year at the helm of the Hamline University men's soccer program, head coach Jon Lowery looks to lead a young, but determined, squad into MIAC playoff contention this fall.

Four Pipers graduated from the 2009 team, including the top scorer in school history with Drew Lukas and a career leader in assists in Matt Warhol. Lowery also lost two steady defenders – Ian Davy and Evan Falon – but has a quality class of returners and a deep class of athletic newcomers.

Back for his third season, and leading the keeper staff, is 2009 All-MIAC honorable mention honoree Zach Nelson (Jr., Eagan, Minn.). Nelson was the sole Piper to see time in net last season, posting a save percentage of .806 and a goals against average of 1.35. He also recorded four shutouts. "Zach proved himself in goal last season as he provided us with strong, consistent play," said Lowery. "He will be an important leader in our young defense." A pair of sophomores, Eric Feil (Eagan, Minn.) and Justin Krasky (Cottage Grove, Minn.), return to add depth to the goalkeeper position.

Heading up the familiar faces on the field is Dave Donner (Sr., Stillwater, Minn.). Donner served mainly as a midfielder in 2009, scoring five points (one goal, three assists), but will add more responsibility as an attacker in his senior campaign.

Another returner who will be serving more in an attacking role this year is Moe Tageldin (Sr., Rochester, Minn.). Tageldin was third on the team in scoring last season with six points (two goals, two assists), and with strong power and pace, he will make the transition from center back to forward.

"Dave will help lead us in our goal scoring efforts this year after proving that he can take on the role of forward," says Lowery. "We know at anytime we can add Moe to our back line but see him in more of an attacking role this year."

The Pipers also return a trio of sophomores who gained valuable experience in Lowery's system last season. Sam Slagle (Appleton, Wis.), DJ Weil (Chaska, Minn.), and Sam Studer (Northfield, Minn.) all had solid first-year campaigns and bring strength to a trio of positions.

Lowery will look to Slagle to help anchor the midfield and link the Piper attack and defense. A player with a strong work ethic, Slagle proved that he has the ability to be a solid player in the MIAC last season. "Sam's versatility will be useful as we build this team."

He will be joined on the attack by Studer, who will be one of the Pipers' most powerful players on the forward line. Lowery expects to use Studer, who battled injuries but led the team's rookies with two goals in his first-year campaign, as a target that can add danger to Hamline's offensive strike. "Sam's athleticism will pose problem to our opponents and he has a genuine hunger to score goals."

On defense, Weil can fill in at central or wide left as he brings good pace and athleticism to the back row. "These three players all have the ability to make a valuable impact on the field for us in their second year with the program," said Lowery. "They now have a familiarity with what it takes to be successful in the MIAC after last season."

Also adding depth will be returners Jesse Hawker (So., Wausau, Wis.) and Javier Rios (Sr., Chihuahua, Mexico). "These two players have the potential to play multiple positions, have also gained valuable experience, and I expect them to be contributing factors on the field this season," adds Lowery.

Joining the returners are several athletic newcomers who comprise a deep recruiting class that should see significant playing time early in the season.

Midfielder Stephen Johnson (Fy., Apple Valley, Minn.) is comfortable on the ball and is a tremendous competitor. He was a strong leader on the 2009 Apple Valley team that won the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) Class AA championship and will have a significant influence on a young team. "It was important for us to add Stephen as he has the passion and work rate to make an immediate contribution to our midfield."

Joining him is a transfer from Century Community College who was second in the nation in scoring and was an all-region honoree as a junior college player. Ibou Wone (Jr., Dakar, Senegal) tallied 63 points on 21 goals and 21 assists in 18 games last fall. He can play out wide or up top on the attack and is a dynamic, exciting player on the ball.

Michael Murphy (Fy., Mahtomedi, Minn.) and Brian Stout (Fy., Lake Villa, Ill.) are a pair of players from strong club backgrounds who will contend for time at the vacant center back position. Murphy also comes in with a 2009 MSHSL state championship to his credit, as Mahtomedi captured the Class A title last fall. Stout is a versatile and hardy competitor, having played every minute available in his high school career.

Another junior college transfer, defender Moses Kabogoza (Jr., Kampala, Uganda), joins the team after an all-region honorable mention season with Dakota County Technical College. He is a reliable defender who will bring a maturity and calmness to the backfield for the Pipers.

A pair of first-year midfielders round out Lowery's recruiting class. Nate Miller (Prior Lake, Minn.) and Greg Northrop (Fy., Arden Hills, Minn.) will add depth and athleticism to the field. Northrop's name is also found on the Piper football roster as he contends for a role on the kicking staff. "The new players we have added have bought into the vision of this program and have the ability to serve as important pieces to our program."

The 2010 edition of the Pipers have improved in three main areas as the team aims to contend for a top spot in conference – athleticism, size, and depth.

"Overall our team is a young, ambitious group of athletes who will be more balanced in the attack and on defense," Lowery summarizes. "Our key players bring in valuable experience from many levels of the game and will provide strong leadership on the field."



Macalester

Coach: Ian Barker

Career Record: 73-48-13 (7 seasons)

2009 Finish: T-2nd (7-3-0 MIAC, 13-8-1 overall)

Macalester Season Preview

The Scots lose All-North Region forward Carson Gorecki and his 25 career goals to graduation, but most of the starting lineup returns, including all-region defender Nate Juergens (Sr., St. Paul, Minn. / Como Park) and All-MIAC midfielder Stephen Murphy-Logue (Sr., Anchorage, Ak. / West). Juergens is a two-time All-MIAC selection and three-year team captain.

"This could be a good season for the Scots." coach Barker said. "We have a large and talented squad. We return many players who have NCAA championship experience, a lot who played on our excellent Second team in 2009, and first-years who represent a deep and talented class."

Up front, Macalester strikers are very capable of pressuring the back line of defense, led by Taylor Rasmussen (So., Eagan, Minn. / Eastview), who provided spark off the bench with six goals, including the game-winning overtime score in the MIAC playoffs over St. Olaf. Murphy-Logue, one of the league's top threats on headers off free kicks and corners, netted five goals in '09 to rank third on the team. The Scots also have a couple more dangerous veteran scoring threats in Ryan Marshall (Jr., Plymouth, Minn. / Robbinsdale Armstrong) and Eric Tettegah (Sr., Brooklyn Park, Minn. / The Breck School).

All-MIAC honorable mention pick Jesse Geary (Jr., Duluth, Minn. / Marshall), Reid Usedom (Jr., Asheville, N.C. / A.C. Reynolds) and Murphy-Logue team up to give Macalester a very capable midfield, while Jeremy Carp (Jr., Portland, Ore. / Oregon Episcopal School) and Erik Johnson (Sr., Bethesda, Md. / Landon) provide excellent attacking width for the Scots.

Juergens anchors the back row which surrendered just 11 goals in 10 MIAC regular-season matches and none in the conference playoffs. Mac also returns starting defenders Andrew Lund (Jr., Madison, Wis. / West) and Jake Duscha (St. Paul, Minn. / Highland Park). The Scots return both goalkeepers from last year's platoon tandem of Matt Weyer (Jr., Cedarburg, Wis.) (0.78 GAA) and Mark Mullaney (Sr., Plymouth, Minn. / Robbinsdale Armstrong). Jansen Smith (Jr., La Crosse, Wis. / Central) adds depth to the goalkeeping corps.



Coach: John Haws

Career Record: 0-0 (first season)

2009 Finish: T-10th (1-8-1 MIAC, 5-11-2 overall)

Saint John's Season Preview

COLLEGEVILLE, Minn. – The 2010 soccer season begins a new era at Saint John’s University, though the head coach’s name may be a bit familiar. John Haws was named the seventh head coach in the 44-year history of Johnnie soccer, replacing his father, Pat, following 32 seasons at the helm.

A 1999 graduate of Saint John’s, Haws was named All-MIAC honorable mention as a senior in ‘99. He also served as head boys’ soccer coach at Saint John’s Preparatory School while playing his senior season with SJU that fall. Haws graduated that December and has served as an assistant coach for the past 10 seasons in Collegeville.

The Johnnies ended the 2009 season with a 5-11-2 overall record and a 1-8-1 record in the MIAC. Six of the 11 losses, including four conference losses, were decided by one goal. SJU loses five seniors and returns seven of its top nine scorers this season.

Here’s a look at the Johnnies, by position:

Forwards

Senior A.J. Sollom (Roberts, Wis./River Falls) is expected to lead the way for the Johnnie forwards after tallying two goals, including one game-winner, and three assists for a total of seven points last fall. Fellow seniors Clash Lo (St. Paul, Minn./Tartan) and Kevin Saunders (Hastings, Minn.) are also expected to return. Saunders posted four points (1g/2a) in 11 matches, while Lo netted one goal in 10 contests.

Midfielders

Senior Colin Hall (Maple Grove, Minn.) returns to lead an experienced group of midfielders. Hall led the team in points (13), goals (6), game-winning goals (2), shots (34) and shots on goal (17) last season. Joining him will be returning senior starters J.C. Artavia (White Bear Lake, Minn.) and Andre Blaine (Andover, Minn./Meadow Creek Christian). Artavia tied for the team-lead in assists (3) and Saunders was fifth on the team in scoring with five points. Sophomore Andrew Johnson (St. Louis Park, Minn.) will also vie for time after seeing action in five matches last fall.

Haws needs to replace Eric Bell and Paul Keane, who both graduated last spring. Bell finished third on the team with six points (2g/2a) and one game-winning goal, while Keane ended the season close behind with five points (2g/1a).

Defense

On the defensive end of the pitch, the Johnnies will rely on the experience of seniors Andrew Lilly (Maple Grove, Minn.) and Austin Neuburger (Millstone, N.J./Allentown), who started 13 and 16 games respectively last season. Neuburger also took 19 shots, including seven on goal, while Lilly added 13 of his own en route to two goals. Junior Chris Hagen (Blacksburg, Va.), the only Johnnie to start all 18 games last fall, returns after posting two assists. Sophomore Ryan Fuchs (St. Michael, Minn./Rogers) should expect to see significant playing time in 2010 after totaling two assists in all but one match at the back line last season.

SJU needs to replace just one starter on defense, Jake Archbold. He started 17 games and recorded three assists.

Goalkeepers

Senior Matt Anderson (Eden Prairie, Minn.) returns for the Johnnies after posting a 1-2 record in seven appearances as a backup last season. He allowed eight goals and made 27 saves in 415:55 minutes of play. Junior Mike Sikich (Apple Valley, Minn.) is also expected to contend for minutes in net.

The Johnnies need to replace a two-year starter in goal, Luke Nelson, who posted a 4-9-2 record in 13 starts, including 96 saves and a 1.99 goals-against average last year.

Overall, the 2010 Johnnies will be bolstered by an impressive recruiting class that includes seven Association Press All-State selections, six from Minnesota and one from Wisconsin, as well as one Minnesota State High School All-Tournament pick.

SJU begins the season Sept. 1 at Minnesota-Morris, followed by its home opener Sept. 4-5 against Wartburg (Iowa) and Cornell (Iowa), respectively. The Johnnies begin their MIAC season at home against Augsburg Sept. 15 and host five more matches this fall, including three-time defending MIAC regular-season champion Carleton (Oct. 2) and 2009 MIAC playoff champion Macalester (Oct. 26).

SMUweb Saint Mary's

Coach: Chris Dembiec

Career Record: 18-48-4 (4 seasons)

2009 Finish: T-10th (1-8-1 MIAC, 6-10-2 overall)

Saint Mary's Season Preview

Like every other year, Saint Mary's University men's soccer coach Chris Dembiec finds himself trying to fit all the pieces together as he gets his Cardinals set for their Sept. 1 season opener against Marian.

Unlike the past three seasons, however, Dembiec's puzzle is missing one major piece. For the first time since 2006, when the Cardinals take to the field for that 7 p.m. opener against the Sabres at Ochrymowycz Field, Jon Szafranski will no longer be between the pipes.

Szafranski closed out a stellar four-year career with the Cardinals with his best season ever in 2009, compiling a 1.77 goals-against-average and an .804 save percentage. Szafranski, who stopped a school record-tying 152 shots in 2008, finished with 135 saves a year ago, pushing his school-record career saves total to 442. He stopped 10 or more shots five times last season and, after recording four shutouts in his first three seasons combined, picked up five shutouts a year ago.

In other words, for heir aperients Chris Williams (Chicago, Ill.) and Phill Rendell (Denver, Colo.), those are going to be tough cleats to fill.

"Jon's been the guys we've relied on year-in and year-out, and there's no question we are going to miss him back there this year," said Dembiec. "But we are also confident in the people we've got coming in to battle for that (No. 1 goalkeeper position).

"Jon had a phenomenal career here at Saint Mary's, and we're going to miss his presence."

Yet, while there will be a new face in goal, there will be plenty of familiar faces — including their top three goal scorers in Steve Boussie (Troy, Mich.), Juamaine Venter (Rochester, Minn.) and Ryan Rademacher (La Crosse, Wis.) — when the Cardinals kick off their fifth season under Dembiec.

"We are going to be a very experienced team this year," said Dembiec. "Our upperclassmen have seen a ton of playing time the past couple of years, and they are already stepping into that leadership role — both on the field and off."

While Boussie, Venter, Rademacher and Bobby Gas (Lake Zurich, Ill.) will be back to spearhead the Cardinals' offensive attack, Andy Adair (Woodbury, Minn.), Bryan Neu (Hoffman Estates, Ill.) and Tony Olson (South St. Paul, Minn.) are among a stable of defender who helped the Cardinals hold their opponents to less than two goals a game a year ago.

"Coming into this year, we have so many positives — offensively we are going to be much better, defensively we are a much more cohesive group," said Dembiec, who also gets back forward #Adam Lindsay# (Fremont, Wis.), who missed all of last year with an injury. "Everyone has worked very hard over the summer and come into the year ready to go.

"It's an exciting time right now."



St. Olaf

Coach: Kurt Anderson

Career Record: 210-147-23 (21 seasons)

2009 Finish: T-2nd (7-3-0 MIAC, 13-5-2 overall)

St. Olaf Season Preview

NORTHFIELD, Minn. - The 2010 St. Olaf men's soccer team, armed with a core of returners and explosive first years, aims to compete for a top spot in the MIAC on the heels of a solid 2009 season.

Midfielders

Leading the way in 2010 will be senior John Zietlow (Rochester, Minn./Mayo), a three-time All-MIAC pick with 29 career goals and 29 career assists. After a 13-goal, 13-assist sophomore season, Zietlow had five tallies and a team-best nine assists last year.

Joining Zietlow will be one of the team's other two returning starters, Tommy Van Wylen. Van Wylen was one of three to start each of the team's 20 games last season.

The outside mids will likely be Mohamed Haji (Soph., Owatonna, Minn.) and Doboul Ruon (Sr., Northfield, Minn.) to start the season. Ruon played his first year at St. Olaf before running cross country for the next two.

Austin Dressen (Soph., Wayzata, Minn./The Blake School), Max Lund (Jr., Hudson, Wis.) and first year Paul Benz (Superior, Colo./Fairview) could also see time.

Forwards

Isaac Tut (Jr., Northfield, Minn.) and first year David Rosenthal (Burnsville, Minn./Apple Valley), the Star Tribune and Pioneer Press Metro Player of the Year in 2009, will patrol the forward spots. Tut played limited minutes in 13 appearances last year, collecting an assist.

The Oles will also get contributions from Ryan Johnsrud (Sr., Plymouth, Minn./Armstrong) and Logan Rathjen (Sr., Waupaca, Wis.).

Defenders

St. Olaf will look to seniors Jeff Stamp (Sr., Casper, Wyo.) and Tyler Pieper (Fond Du Lac, Wis.) to secure the backfield. Pieper played in 12 games last season, drawing four starts. Junior Tyler Wadsworth saw action last season as did sophomore Will Totimeh (Coon Rapids, Minn./Fridley) and each could play more in 2010. First years Jake Stark (Edina, Minn.) and Adam Hadro (Northfield, Minn.) should also see the field early and often. Byron Eckert (Sr., Pocatello, Idaho) may also see some time.

Goalkeepers

Alex Kuehl (Sr., Rochester, Minn./John Marshall), who worked 18 of the team's 20 games last year, is back in goal. Kuehl went 11-5-2 and posted a 0.95 goals against average and .769 save percentage. Harry Ullman (Soph., St. Louis Park, Minn.) returns as well after earning shutouts in his only two appearances.

Schedule

St. Olaf opens the season on Sept. 1 with a non-conference home game against Northwestern College. The Oles open MIAC play on Sept. 15 at home against Hamline University.



St. Thomas

Coach: Aaron Macke

Career Record: 88-42-16 (8 seasons)

2009 Finish: T-4th (6-3-1 MIAC, 10-7-2 overall)

St. Thomas Season Preview

St. Thomas men's soccer has never had a losing season under ninth-year head coach Aaron Macke. The Tommies, who finished 10-7-2 last season, have a veteran team in 2010 and will look to post its fifth consecutive top-four conference finish.

Macke returns 24 players from his 2009 varsity and JV squads, including eight seniors. One of the three graduates from last season's squad was two-year starting goalie Carlos Castelan (23-12-1 record, 0.95 GAA in 38 career games).

The UST returners are led by three All-Region honorees (senior defender Reid Moser-Bleil and junior forwards Mike Hutton and Angel Riera); a CoSIDA Academic All-American and first-team All-MIAC forward (senior forward Elliot Amundson); and an honorable mention all-conference defender (senior Colin White).

Moser-Bleil, a two-time All-MIAC honoree, has played in 56 career games and has scored five goals and an assist. The Tommies are 5-0 when he's scored a goal.

Hutton is also a school-record holder at 800 meters and a two-time All-American in track and field, where he's helped the Tommies go 4-for-4 in his era in MIAC indoor/outdoor team crowns. In 32 career soccer games, Hutton has tallied 22 goals and 10 assists. UST is 12-5-2 in MIAC play when he's been in uniform, and 17-2 overall when he's scored a point.

Riera had just one assist in 17 games as a freshman in 2008, but broke through in 2009 to score four goals and three assists. He scored the game-winning goal in overtime as UST beat Gustavus for the first time this decade, and assisted on the overtime goal that beat nationally-ranked Augsburg. UST is 4-0 when he's scored a goal.

Amundson had eight goals and four assists for 20 points last season, including eight goals in his last 14 games. Amundson had a goal and an assist in the 7-0 win over St. Mary's on Halloween Saturday that secured a conference playoff berth. He scored the game-winning goal on the road in the second OT to beat 15th-ranked Augsburg, and scored a winning goal in the 84th minute at St. John's. He also assisted on a game-winning goal in OT in 2008 to beat St. John's, and assisted on game-winning goal in second half of a 1-0 win over Northwestern in September. The Tommies are 11-1 in the last two seasons when he's scored a goal or an assist.

White has played in 34 games in two seasons with the Tommies and has one assist.

St. Thomas opens its season with six non-conference games in a 13-day stretch of early September. The Toms open MIAC play at home Sept. 18 against Augsburg. That begins a stretch of seven games in a row held in St. Paul.