



2004 MIAC MEN'S TENNIS PREVIEW

2004 marks the 84th Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Men's Tennis season. Teams will be attempting to challenge Gustavus Adolphus College for the top spot in the MIAC. Gustavus was perfect in the 2003 MIAC regular season, finishing 9-0. Carleton, St. Thomas, and Saint John's finished close behind GAC and have talented returning seniors looking to try and improve on their 2003 finishes.


The MIAC Championships are scheduled for April 23 and 24 in St. Peter, Minn, hosted by Gustavus. The Gusties have strung together 15 consecutive conference championships and finished third in last seasons NCAA Team Championships.

Bethel College		
Head Coach:	Dan Morton (5th season)	
2003:	10th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	Anthony Branitski, Senior Aaron Freer, Senior Nick Scheevel, Senior	
Season Preview:	After finishing the 2003 season with just one MIAC victory, the Royals have already matched that early in the 2004 season with a win over Macalester. Seniors Anthony Branitski (Maple Grove, Minn.), Aaron Freer (Lake Elmo, Minn.), and Nick Scheevel (St. Cloud, Minn.) have considerable experience and hope to lead the Royals to a number of quality MIAC wins in the remaining schedule.	

Carleton College		
Head Coach:	Stephan Zweifel	
2003:	2nd in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	Aleks Diamond-Stanic, Sr., Athens, Ga. (Cedar Shoals) William Holmes, So., Edinburgh, Scotland Jake Hoppe, Jr., Lincoln, Neb. (Lincoln East) Mike Ottum, Sr., Green Bay, Wis. (Southwest) Drew Piston, Jr., Spokane, Wash. (Lewis and Clark), 2002 All-MIAC	
Season Preview:	<p>The Carleton men's tennis team figures to continue their amazing upward trajectory that has marked the last three seasons by gunning for a spot in the NCAA Championships in 2004.</p> <p>The Knights enter the spring season ranked eighth in the Central Region, according to the preseason rankings released by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA). The Knights return their entire starting line-up from last year's squad, which finished 15-7 overall, and 8-1 in the MIAC. The recognition marks the Knights' first top-10 ranking in nearly a decade. The Knights have made notable jumps in each of the past three seasons, moving from eighth in the MIAC three years ago to third last year. They finished last year ranked #14 in the Central Region.</p> <p>Carleton enjoyed a successful fall season, winning five of nine flights at the inaugural Carleton Fall Invitational and advancing three singles players to the round of 16 at the ITA Regional.</p> <p>Senior Mike Ottum and sophomore sensation William Holmes lead Carleton at the top of the line-up. Holmes was awarded a preseason singles ranking of #20. Holmes is coming off a first-year campaign that saw him compile a 13-6 record. The middle of the line-up is solid with rookie Pat Maloney and juniors Jake Hoppe and Drew Piston. Stephan Zweifel, last year's MIAC Coach of the Year, coaches the Knights.</p>	

Concordia College		


Head Coach: Associate Coach	Bob Nick (37th season) Dave Lester	
2003:	7th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	<p>- Jake Thomas, Jr., Indian Hills, Colo./Conifer HS - Played all last season as the team's number one singles player and compiled a record of 10-4. Thomas only lost one match at last year's MIAC Championship Tournament.</p> <p>- Eric Giga, Sr., Owatonna, Minn., - Compiled an 8-6 record at the number four singles spot last year; teamed with Thomas at the number doubles team and posted a 9-5 mark.</p>	
Season Preview:	<p>The 37th season for Bob Nick will feature several new aspects. Nick will be aided by Dave Lester, who has been appointed as an associate head coach, and will enjoy having several promising first-year players on the team. Lester has been with the team since the 1996 season but recently was given more control of the team after Nick was appointed interim athletic director.</p> <p>The team will feature two returning seasoned veterans and a trio of top-flight newcomers. Jake Thomas returns as the team's number one singles player. Last year Thomas blossomed at the conference tournament, only losing one match at the two-day affair. Joining Thomas as the team's experienced performer is Eric Giga. Giga is a three-year varsity player for the Cobbers. He also offers the team expertise in the doubles competition.</p> <p>The three newcomers that will make a big splash for Lester's crew will be Jordy Kammerling (Almere, The Netherlands, Moorhead HS), Paul Tuchscherer (Baxter, Minn., Brainerd HS) and (Grand Forks, N.Dak./Red River). Kammerling will be the team's number two singles player and Tuchscherer and Smith will fight for the number four and five singles positions. They will also combine to form the number two doubles team, while Kammerling will partner with Thomas as the team's top doubles tandem.</p> <p>If the team can overcome the early season growing pains, then a repeat performance at the conference tournament where they upset Carleton in the quarterfinals before finally losing to St. Thomas in the semi's, is definitely within reach.</p> <p><u>For complete Cobber men's tennis coverage</u></p>	

<u>Gustavus Adolphus College</u>			
Head Coach:	Steve Wilkinson (34th season)		
2003:	1st in MIAC Regular Season		
Key Returners:	N/A		
Season Preview:	N/A		


<u>Hamline University</u>		
Head Coach:	Dan Haertl (6th season)	
2003:	5th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	John Schollmeier, Sr., Blue Earth, Minn. – 6-13 in No. 1 singles, 10-10 in No. 1 doubles last season Ben Watkins, So., Eau Claire, Wis. – 9-5 in No. 4 singles, 13-8 in overall singles last season Mark Jacobson, Sr., Mitchell, S.D. – 8-7 in No. 6 singles, 9-8 in No. 3 doubles last season	


Season Preview:	Entering his sixth year as head men's tennis coach, Dan Haertl has high hopes for a 2004 squad that finished in third place at the MIAC Championships last season - the highest finish the team has had in more than 30 years.
	After taking fifth in the conference regular season, Hamline beat fourth-seeded St. John's in an exciting 5-4 win, avenging a 6-3 loss earlier in the season. The Pipers lost to eventual champion Gustavus before smashing Concordia 8-1 to earn third place in the tournament.
	The fifth-place finish in the head-to-head competition and the third place finish in the MIAC tournament secured the Pipers a fourth place finish in the conference, an accomplishment that the team would like to repeat. "Our fourth place finish gave the team a good feeling that they want to experience again. We hope to finish in towards the top of the MIAC again this year," Haertl added.
	The Pipers lost two seniors to graduation in No. 2 singles player Troy Kleven and doubles specialist Brian Niemczyk, but return six strong players and add five newcomers with lots of potential.
	Two veteran seniors Mark Jacobson (Sr, Mitchell, S.D.) and captain John Schollmeier (Sr., Blue Earth, Minn.) will be expected to continue their leadership roles.
	Schollmeier returns as the Pipers' No. 1 singles player, finishing last season with a 6-13 record. He also played No. 1 doubles for Hamline, posting a record of 10-10. Jacobson was 9-12 playing mostly No. 6 singles.
	No. 4 singles player Ben Watkins (Eau Claire, Wis.) returns for his sophomore season after finish 13-8 in his first-year campaign - the best record of any Hamline singles player.
	Returners Willie Richards (Jr, Blue Earth, Minn.), Andy Hueller (Jr, Stillwater, Minn.) and Jon Henning (So, New Prague, Minn.) have also all felt the success of last year's team and will help carry that forward into this season.

Macalester College		
Head Coach:	Eric Eberhardt (6th season)	
2003:	9th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	Jake Depue (Sr., Springfield, Mo.) Alex Hiller (Sr., Madras, Ore.) Eric Brandt (Jr., Menlo Park, Calif.)	
Season Preview:	Macalester finished out the season on a positive note last year, going 2-2 at the MIAC tournament and beating St. Olaf in the seventh-place match. The Scots were 6-19 overall and 1-8 in regular-season conference matches, and are looking to move up with a young team. The Scots return No. 1 singles player Jake Depue (Sr., Springfield, MO / Glendale), who went 9-16 in singles play in '03 while going 7-12 in doubles competition. Macalester, however, must replace the No. 2-3-4-5 singles positions in the lineup. Eric Brandt (Jr., Menlo Park, CA) is back after going 11-14 near the bottom part of the lineup. Brandt will be moving up and is joined in the singles lineup by prospects like Chris Yost (Fr., Colorado Springs, CO / Rampart), Alex Hiller (Sr., Madras, Ore.) and Tobin Kaufman-Osborn (Fr., Walla Walla, WA).	


<u>Saint John's University</u>		
Head Coach:	Jack Bowe (7th season)	
2003:	4th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	Mike Solum, Senior, Edina, No. 1 singles and doubles Sean Borg, Senior, Edina, No. 2 singles and No. 1 doubles Ryan Orwoll, Senior, Lindstrom, No. 3 singles	

Season Preview:	<p>For the 2004 season, the Saint John's University tennis team looks to break into the top of the MIAC standings with the help of solid senior leadership. The Johnnies finished its 2003 season with a fifth-place finish at the MIAC Championships, a 12-9 overall record and a 6-3 record in the MIAC.</p> <p>This season, SJU will be led by the senior captains Mike Solum, Edina, Sean Borg, Edina, and Ryan Orwoll, Lindstrom. Solum returns to play at No. 1 singles and doubles for the Johnnies, and in the region, Solum entered the spring ranked No. 15 in singles and No. 14 in doubles. Borg and Orwoll step up this year to play No. 2 and 3 singles respectively, while Borg joins Solum at No. 1 doubles.</p> <p>For the complete season preview go to http://gojohnnies.com/tennis/04preview.htm</p>
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Saint Mary's University		
Head Coach:	Jeff Halberg (6th season)	
2003:	8th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	Tyler Stevenson (So., Neenah, Wis.; 12-8 at No. 1 singles, 12-7 at No. 1 doubles) Mark Leeder (Jr., Greenfield, Wis., 11-9 at No. 2 singles, 12-7 at No. 1 doubles) Bryan Haville (Jr., Onalaska, Wis., 9-10 at No. 3-4 singles, 10-8 at 1-2-3 doubles)	
Season Preview:	Saint Mary's University tennis coach Jeff Halberg could hardly wait for the season to get underway. In fact, February 7, 2004, had probably been circled on his calendar for quite some time now. For Halberg and the Cardinal men's tennis team, Feb. 7 — and their season-opening match against Macalester — was the start of what they are hoping is SMU's steady climb up the conference ladder. The Cardinals are tired of being the understudy — it's time for them to take their turn in the spotlight. "They've done all the (preseason) preparation — they have worked harder (in the off season) than any team I've had," said Halberg, whose teams opened with a pair of wins vs. the Scots in that season-opener. "They are ready to make that next step." Are the Cardinals going to be battling perennial Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference powerhouse Gustavus for the conference crown? Probably not. But don't be surprised to see the Cardinals right in that group of teams in the middle-to-upper half of the MIAC. "Right now (the men's team's) goal is to move into that top half of the conference," said Halberg, whose men's squad managed only a pair of conference wins a year ago — but did close out the season with a 6-2 victory over Bethel at the MIAC Tournament, and do return all but one starter off last year's squad. "It's going to be a battle, no question about that, but I really think that if we can get a few breaks, and win the close matches, we're definitely have the potential to make an impact this year." Halberg isn't quite as optimistic on the women's side, although he does foresee a repeat of a year ago, when the SMU women went 9-13, including conference wins over Macalester, Hamline and Bethel (twice). "We're not as deep, and we don't have quite as much experience on the women's side as we do on the men's," admitted Halberg, who not only graduated two regulars from a year ago, but also lost three underclassmen who are studying overseas this semester. "I've honestly been pleasantly surprised with how far along we are." "It's nice that we do return some experience, but we are also going to be putting some of our freshmen to the test right away," continued Halberg. "Right now, I think that skill-wise, we are every bit as good as we were a year ago — if not maybe even a little better. But we aren't as experienced, and that will be the key. "If we can put together a repeat of last year, I'd say that was a successful season." Complete Saint Mary's preview	

St. Olaf College		
Head Coach:	Scott Nesbit (16th season)	

2003:	6th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	N/A	
Season Preview:	<p>The men's tennis team at St. Olaf is looking forward to a great year in 2004. This optimism is based on several things. The Oles have a strong group of players returning from last year's team. These include seniors Tom and Ted Nagle(Oglesby, Ill.) and Dan Cohen(St. Paul, Minn.), junior Tom Wampler(Green Bay, Wis.), and sophomore Mike Matsuura(St. Cloud, Minn.). In addition, the Oles add some talented and hard working new players including Wes Block(Bayside, Wis.), Chase Donaldson(Kildeer, Ill.), David Harris(Eagan, Minn.), and Bryon McDonald(Hudson, Wis.).</p> <p>The St. Olaf men are looking for a good year with the competition they will be facing. The good teams will help them to develop as players and improve the overall quality of play. In addition to the excellent competition found in the M.I.A.C. conference, the Oles will also be playing St. Scholastica, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, and Luther.</p> <p>The Oles will be taking a spring break tennis trip this year to Orlando, Florida. They will play some excellent teams including Palm Beach Atlantic, Webber International, and Ouachita Baptist. Furthermore, they will get plenty of opportunities to work on playing outdoors.</p>	

University of St. Thomas		
Head Coach:	Terry Peck (13th season)	
2003:	3rd in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Returners:	Brian Thomas, JR Tom Loper, JR John Thomas, SO Tut Fuller, JR Blair Madsen, JR Grant Campbell, SO	
Season Preview:	<p>The Tommies return six of their top seven players from a 2003 team that placed second in the MIAC for the second year in a row. The main graduation loss was No. 1 singles player Matt Kramer.</p> <p>Over the last four seasons, St. Thomas is 57-17 in duals (30-6 MIAC). Four of those conference losses have come against Gustavus.</p> <p>The 2004 Tommies, who have no seniors in their top six, started the season 7-1 with their lone defeat vs. Division II St. Cloud State. They have key April matches vs. Gustavus, Carleton and St. John's.</p> <p>Coach Terry Peck starts his 13th season as Tommie head coach after six seasons as an assistant coach. His 12 St. Thomas men's teams and nine Tommie women's teams have a combined record of 308-107 entering 2004.</p>	