

2007 MIAC MEN'S TENNIS PREVIEW

Perennial conference power Gustavus is once again favored to win the MIAC title. The Gusties enter the 2007 campaign having won every MIAC title since 1989. Carleton has put together a strong team and will likely be the top competition for Gustavus. Saint John's, St. Thomas, and St. Olaf will all have younger teams in 2007, but should be contenders for a MIAC Playoff berth. Concordia and Hamline will rely on their experience to help them challenge for a spot in the playoffs. Bethel, Saint Mary's and Macalester have some talented individual players and hope to find the depth needed to make a move up in the conference in 2007.


The 2007 MIAC Men's Tennis Playoffs will be held on April 27-28 at Gustavus with the top six regular season teams earning a spot in the event.

2007 MIAC Preseason Men's Tennis Coaches Poll


(First Place Votes in Parentheses)

1. Gustavus (9)
2. Carleton (1)
3. Saint John's
4. Concordia
5. St. Thomas
6. St. Olaf
7. Hamline
8. (tie) Bethel
8. (tie) Saint Mary's
10. Macalester


Bethel University		
Head Coach:	Dan Morton , 8th Season	
2006 Finish:	Tied - 8th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:		
	Chris Scheevel (Jr., St. Cloud, Minn./Cathedral) Alex Zabel (So., Edina, Minn.) Steve Torres (Sr., Arden Hills, Minn./Mounds View) David Torres (So., Arden Hills, Minn./Mounds View) Joel Cassens (Fr., Owatanna, Minn.) Jordan LeFebvre (Fr., Maplewood, Minn./Roseville)	
Preview:	<p>Last season the Royals finished 9th place in the MIAC for the second year in a row after a 2-7 record in conference play while boasting a much improved 9-10 overall record. Coach Morton believes that this season's young team is one of the strongest teams he's had throughout his career at Bethel.</p> <p>Captain Chris Scheevel (St. Cloud Minn.) will look to have another successful season in singles play as he finished with a team best 11-8 record in leading the Royals last year. Bethel will also field three very good doubles teams this season consisting of Scheevel and Alex Zabel (Edina, Minn.), Steve and David Torres (Arden Hills Minn.), and Joel Cassens (Owatanna Minn.) and Jordan LeFebvre (Maplewood Minn.). With Steve Torres (Arden Hills Minn.) being the Royals only senior on the roster Bethel will have a chance to gain experience as well as have strong talent for years to come.</p> <p>Over the past couple season's the team has learned that consistency is the key to on court success, and has matured the team's play and improved their results. The Royals hope to play to their full potential this season as they work to the MIAC tournament the last weekend of April.</p>	


<u>Carleton College</u>		
Head Coach:	Stephan Zweifel, 10th Season	
2006 Finish:	2nd in MIAC Regular Season	


Key Athletes:	<p>Kartheek Koneru (Jr., Naperville, Ill./Nequa Valley)</p> <p>Brendan Cooper (Jr., San Anselmo, Calif./Sir Francis Drake)</p> <p>Julian Tokarev (So., Shoreview, Minn./Mounds View)</p> <p>Eirik Thoen (So., Kolsaas, Norway/Nesbru)</p> <p>Peter Varnum (So., Lake Quivira, Kan./Shawnee Mission Northwest)</p>
Preview:	<p>With four of their top six singles players back and two of their three doubles combinations returning from a highly successful 2005-06 campaign, the Carleton College men's tennis team figures to be a very strong side again in 2006-07.</p> <p>The Knights, which opened last season with 11 straight victories to match a school record and posted wins over five regionally-ranked squads, returns junior Kartheek Koneru, a two-time All-MIAC performer. Also back in the fold for 10th-year head coach Stephan Zweifel, a three-time MIAC Coach of the Year in 2002, 2003 and 2004, are All-MIAC doubles combinations Brendan Cooper/Julian Tokarev and Koneru/Eirik Thoen captured all-conference honors at the second and third doubles positions, respectively.</p> <p>Carleton begins its 2007 campaign ranked 12th in the Central Region, according to preseason rankings released by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA). Carleton finished the 2006 season 21-4, 8-1 in MIAC play. The overall win total set a new school record and the Knights finished second in the MIAC for the fourth consecutive season.</p> <p>Zweifel adds a trio of players that will have an immediate impact on Carleton's lineup in 2007. Sophomore Peter Varnum, an All-MIAC selection in 2005, returns to the fold after a year's hiatus, and rookies Colin Russell and Winston Park should also make a huge impact in their first season. Russell starts the season regionally ranked in singles play and the doubles tandem of sophomores Julian Tokarev (Shoreview, Minn./Mounds View) and Peter Varnum (Lake Quivira, Kan./Shawnee Mission Northwest). Ranked ninth regionally following a trip to the quarterfinals at the ITA regional doubles tournament.</p> <p>Having established itself as one of the conference and region powers, Carleton will look to continue their success and return to the NCAA Championships in 2007.</p>


<u>Concordia College</u>		
Head Coach:	Troy Hanestad, 1st Season	
2006 Finish:	6th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:	Jordy Kamerling (Sr., Almere, The Netherlands/Moorhead) Paul Tuchscherer (Sr., Brainerd, Minn./Baxter) William Wischer (Jr., Grand Forks, N.D./Red River) Ryan Smith (Sr., Grand Forks, N.D./Red River)	


Preview:	<p>The 2006-07 Concordia men's tennis team will have plenty of familiar faces in 2007. The Cobber return all four of their top players from last season. The quartet has also been part of the top five Concordia players for the past two years. The Cobbers will need to use all that acquired experience if they want to better last year's third-place finish at the MIAC Championship Meet.</p> <p>Leading the way for Troy Hanestad's crew will be Jordy Kamerling (Sr., Almere, The Netherlands/Moorhead). Kamerling is ranked 14th in the Central Region heading into the spring season. He will once again be the team's No.1 singles player and will team with Paul Tuchscherer (Sr., Brainerd, Minn./Baxter) to form the No.1 doubles team. Kamerling was 7-3 last season and won all three matches at the conference meet last year and advanced to the fourth round at the ITA Midwest Region Tournament held at Gustavus in the fall.</p> <p>Tuchscherer will be placed into the No.3 singles spot to start the year. Tuchscherer was tied for the team lead in wins last year after playing a shortened season due to an injury. Tuchscherer has also been a top team player in doubles and will give the Cobbers a tough No.1 doubles team. In his three-year career at Concordia, Tuchscherer has posted 25 victories in singles play in his first three seasons of play.</p> <p>The third senior on the team will also be a key component to Concordia's success in 2007. Ryan Smith (Sr., Grand Forks, N.D./Red River) won 11 singles matches in his sophomore season and spent last year as the team's No.3 singles player and came away with seven victories. Smith, the former North Dakota state champion, has recorded 27 singles wins in his collegiate career. He will also be a part of the team's No.2 doubles partnership.</p> <p>William Wischer (Jr., Grand Forks, N.D./Red River) will team with Smith for the No.2 doubles team and will also be slotted into the No. 2 singles spot for the second straight year. The lanky Wischer has great court coverage and has won 17 singles matches in his first two years of play. He won a pair of matches at last year's conference meet.</p> <p>The No.5 and No.6 singles players will hold the key for Concordia in 2007. If the Cobbers can find two players that come up with an occasional win against some of the better teams in the conference, then CC could be able to duplicate their conference meet success from 2006.</p>
-----------------	--

Gustavus Adolphus College		
Head Coach:	Steve Wilkinson, 37th Season	
2006 Finish:	1st in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:	Jesse Brauer (Sr., Mankato, Minn.) Andy Bryan (Jr., Edina, Minn.) Mike Burdakin (So., Bettendorf, Iowa) Charlie Paukert (So., Grand Forks, N.D.)	
Preview:	<p>The Gustavus Adolphus men's tennis team enters the 2007 spring season as somewhat of an unknown quantity. The team returns only two players off last season's NCAA Tournament lineup, but if last fall's Wilson/ITA Midwest Regional is any indication of how the Gustavus men's tennis team will rebound, the outlook for Spring 2007 looks favorable.</p> <p>Junior Andy Bryan (Edina, Minn.) and senior Jesse Brauer (Mankato, Minn./West), the only holdovers from last year's NCAA third-place team, are projected to hold down the top two spots in the singles lineup and are currently the team's top doubles tandem. Brauer defeated Bryan for the Wilson/ITA Midwest Region singles title in the fall.</p> <p>Although the rest of the lineup may lack big-time national tournament experience, they are not without varsity experience. According to Gustavus Head Men's Tennis Coach Steve Wilkinson, the team has displayed a high level of intensity in practice and is working on building team cohesiveness.</p> <p>Sophomores Mike Burdakin (Bettendorf, Iowa) and Charlie Paukert (Grand Forks, N.D.) paired to take the Midwest Region doubles title in the fall over Bryan and Brauer and finished fourth in Division III at October's ITA Small College Championships. They will hold down the No. 2 doubles spot this spring.</p> <p>Sophomore Nick Hansen (Duluth, Minn./East) will make up part of Gustavus' No. 3 doubles team, pairing with either John Kauss (St. Paul, Minn./Harding) or Ben Tomasek (Oakdale, Minn./North St. Paul), both fellow sophomores. All three are part of a talented group of young players that Wilkinson expects to step forward.</p> <p>Kauss will step in at No. 3 singles behind Bryan and Brauer, with Burdakin and Paukert falling in at No. 4 and No. 5 singles, respectively. Senior Danny Suchy (La Crosse, Wis./Central) and junior Chad Olson (Shoreview, Minn./Mounds View) have been battling with Tomasek and Hansen for the final singles position for the Gusties, who look for their 42nd title overall and their 36th in the last 39 years.</p>	


Hamline University		
Head Coach:	Nathan Klonecki, 1st Season	
2006 Finish:	3rd in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:	Jon Breimhorst (Sr., New Prague, Minn.) Andy Carlson (Sr., Virginia, Minn.) Patrick Hueller (Sr., Stillwater, Minn.) Casey O'Donnell (Sr., Pine City, Minn.) Andrew VandeLinde (Sr., Eau Claire, Wis./Memorial)	
Preview:	<p>With a 2006 third place conference finish under their belt and a senior oriented team, the 2007 men's tennis team will look to contend for a top spot in the MIAC.</p> <p>Despite the loss of all-MIAC players Ben Watkins and Jon Henning, new head coach Nathan Klonecki has high expectations for his squad. "Watkins and Henning were our number one and two singles and also our number one doubles, so their graduation is a huge loss for the team. However, their loss gives everyone an opportunity to step up a position, and we just need everyone to pick up and make those changes coming into the season," Klonecki remarked.</p> <p>While Klonecki is still working on the lineups for the team and noted that they might change throughout the season, one thing that won't change is the talent and versatility of the team's six seniors.</p> <p>"We are more flexible and equal in level this season and everyone can beat everyone to play any position needed, which is nice to have," Klonecki commented on the versatility of his roster.</p> <p>Jon Briemhorst (New Prague, Minn.), Andy Carlson (Virginia, Minn.), Patrick Hueller (Stillwater, Minn.), Andrew VandeLinde (Eau Claire, Wis.), Casey O'Donnell (Pine City, Minn.), and Jon Thorson (St. Paul, Minn.) are those talented and experienced seniors that will guide the team's success this season.</p> <p>Last season, Briemhorst played the number three singles position for the Pipers, but he saw time at the number two spot as well. He went 17-7 overall and won three of his four singles matches at the number two position.</p> <p>Carlson went 14-4 at the number four spot, VandeLinde finished 13-5 at number five, and Hueller ended the season 9-8 at number six.</p>	


Macalester College		
Head Coach:	Jason Muhl, 3rd Season	
2006 Finish:	10th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:	Aaron Heerboth (Jr., Tucson, Ariz./Catalina Foothills) Charlie Edelman (So., Tucson, Ariz./University) Tobin Kaufman-Osborn (Sr., Walla Walla, Wash.) Andy Kessel (Sr., Hinesburg, Vt./Champlain Valley Union)	
Preview:	After winning just one MIAC regular-season match over the last three years, the Macalester Scots are eager to show great improvement this season and all indications indicate the program is on the rise. The Scots were 9-3 in non-conference matches in '06 and would like to see that success carry over into the MIAC events this spring. Five singles players posted winning or .500 records last year and four return to the lineup, including last year's No. 1 player Aaron Heerboth (Jr., Tucson, Ariz. / Catalina Foothills). Heerboth went 10-10 at first singles in '06. Charlie Edelman (So., Tucson, Ariz. / University) also returns to the top of the singles lineup after posting a 14-6 record at No. 3. Andy Kessel (Sr., Hinesburg, Vt. / Champlain Valley Union) should move up after going 15-5 at sixth singles. Tobin Kaufman-Osborn (Sr., Walla Walla, Wash.) and Reed Larson (So., Coon Rapids, Minn.) also return to the singles roster, while Macalester is also expecting big things from transfer Brad Goldstein (Jr., Tucson, Ariz.) and Pawan Dhir (Sr., Singapore).	

Saint John's University		
Head Coach:	Jack Bowe, 10th Season	
2006 Finish:	Tied - 4th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:	Mark Steelman (So., St. Paul, Minn./Holy Angels) Ted Lauer (Jr., St. Paul, Minn./Central) Luke Odegaard (Fr., Forest Lake, Minn.)	
Preview:	<p>The Saint John's University tennis team will look to improve upon its fourth place finish from last season's performance in the MIAC. Of the 19 players on the 2007 squad, nearly half of the athletes are new to the squad. With just 10 returners from last year's team, the Johnnies will look for leadership from the upperclassmen.</p> <p>SJU will be led by junior captains Trevor Beach (Grand Rapids, Mich.) and Dan Ruehl (Excelsior, Minn./Minnetonka) in 2007. Beach, who tallied an overall record of 6-11 last season, received six wins at No. 2 singles. Beach and doubles partner Ruehl worked together to finish 5-4 in MIAC action, picking up seven wins at No. 2 doubles.</p> <p>The team will also be getting some help from junior Ted Lauer (St. Paul, Minn./Central). Lauer finished last season with a 10-2 overall record and was undefeated (8-0) in the MIAC to earn All-Conference honors.</p> <p>The Johnnies will welcome a handful of freshmen as well, including Luke Odegaard (Forest Lake, Minn./Forest Lake) and Dutch Hansen (Dawson, Minn./Dawson-Boyd). "They should see plenty of action this year," said Jack Bowe, head coach.</p> <p>SJU will look to replace a talented group of graduating seniors. Last season, Steve Tacl and Curtis Horton were named All-Conference after exceptional performances at No. 1 doubles. Adam Putschoegl, another 2006 graduate, picked up six wins in MIAC competition at No. 3 singles competition.</p> <p>Saint John's will have its normal nine-match MIAC schedule, as well as other tough nonconference competition.</p> <p>The Johnnies will call three different locations home in 2007 (Gold's Gym in Sartell and the SJU Tennis Courts and Donald McNeely Spectrum in Collegeville). During their annual spring break trip, the Johnnies are scheduled to play matches in South Carolina.</p> <p>The MIAC Championship will take place on April 27-28 in St. Peter. Head coach Jack Bowe will begin his 10th season at Saint John's in 2007, and during this time he has posted a 91-89 career record in dual meets. Bowe was named the MIAC Coach of the Year in 2003.</p>	

Saint Mary's University		
Head Coach:	Jeff Halberg, 9th Season	
2006 Finish:	Tied - 8th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:	<p>Adam Solseth (Sr., Shakopee, Minn.)</p> <p>Tony Miller (Sr., Rochester, Minn.)</p> <p>Steve Clements (Sr., La Crosse, Wis.)</p> <p>Tom Vollman (Jr., Chicago, Ill.)</p>	

Preview:	<p>When the Saint Mary's University men's tennis team opened its season, there will be plenty of familiar faces.</p> <p>Cardinal regulars Tony Miller (Rochester, Minn.), Adam Solseth (Shakopee, Minn.), Steve Clements (La Crosse, Wis.), and Thomas Vollman (Oak Park, Ill.) will all be in the lineup when SMU squares off against the Knights.</p> <p>For the first time in four years, however, SMU coach Jeff Halberg won't be penciling in Tyler Stevenson as his No. 1 singles player. Stevenson, an All-MIAC performer at No. 1 singles in each of the last three years, while also earning all-conference honors at No. 1 doubles twice, graduated in May, leaving Halberg with one huge pair of shoes to fill.</p> <p>"Losing a player of Tyler's caliber is tough," Halberg said. "He was an exceptional player and it's going to be very difficult to replace him in the lineup."</p> <p>But Halberg is confident he will be able to do just that.</p> <p>"The best part of this year is our depth," Halberg said. "This may be the deepest team I've every had. We've got six or seven guys who can step in and give us a solid starting lineup. We've got a lot of experience coming back, but we've also got a couple of very talented freshmen who should step in and contribute</p> <p>"Our roster is a bit of an 'old-and-new' look to it."</p>
-----------------	---

St. Olaf College		
Head Coach:	Scott Nesbit, 17th Season	
2006 Finish:	7th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:	Drew Erie (Jr., Rochester, Minn./Mayo) Ian Pray (So., Madison, Wis.) Brian Tolly (Fy., Neenah, Wis.)	
Preview:	<p>After an eighth-place conference finish a season ago, the St. Olaf men's tennis team looks to a deep lineup to contend in a traditionally tough MIAC conference.</p> <p>After losing captain Mike Matsuura to graduation, the Oles return virtually their entire lineup from top to bottom. The key, however, will be to remain healthy, as last year's conference finish may have been plagued by a consistent injury bug.</p> <p>It is unclear who will retain the number one singles spot in 2007. Drew Erie (Jr., Rochester, Minn./Mayo) played much of the 2006 campaign at the top spot. But, upon Ian Pray's return from an injury, Erie jumped to the second spot. Pray went 1-2 at no. 1 and Erie found a rhythm, going 3-2. Whether Erie or Pray play the top spot this year, each will have had one season of top-level MIAC experience under their belt, a promising notion for head coach Scott Nesbit, now in his 17th season at St. Olaf.</p> <p>The Oles also welcome former high school standout Brian Tolly (Fy., Neenah, Wis.) who should also add an option to the top of the singles lineup. It seems that Pray, Tolly and Erie will occupy the top three spots. Doubles-wise, depth will be a strength. Pray and David Narvaez (Soph., Northfield, Minn.) played all three doubles positions a year ago, proving the Oles' versatility. In addition, Pat Curran is expected to be fully recovered from an injury that hampered his doubles play last year. Erie played most of the 2006 season at no. 1, and he will likely retain that position this year. Nick Crnkovic (Soph., Vadnais Heights), a former high school state doubles champion, will add another option to the doubles lineup.</p> <p>The Oles also have strong senior leadership of David Harris, Chase Donaldson, and Bryon McDonald and have added first years Brian Tolly and Joe McDevitt (Quincy, Ill.).</p> <p>Earlier this fall, St. Olaf participated in the annual men's ITA Midwest Regional, hosted by Division III and conference power Gustavus. Pray went 2-1 in singles play and doubles duos of Crnkovic and Pray and Eric Brandenburg (Jr., Orono, Minn.) and Curran each won one match before being eliminated in the second round.</p>	

University of St. Thomas		
Head Coach:	Terry Peck, 17th Season	
2006 Finish:	Tied - 4th in MIAC Regular Season	
Key Athletes:		
Preview:		

Ben Harding (Jr., Hastings, Minn.)

Key Athletes:

- Ben Herding** (Jr., Hastings, Minn.)
- Kevin Manzel** (Jr., Dubuque, Iowa/Wahlert)
- Joshua Tomashek** (Jr., Rochester, Minn.)
- Drew Carlson** (Fr., Minnetonka, Minn.)

Preview:

Terry Peck is beginning his 17th season at St. Thomas and also starts his 12th as women's head coach. His teams are consistent top-five MIAC finishers. Peck coached his 450th match with the Tommies in 2006. He has a combined men's and women's dual record of 344-111 (.756 win%).

Over the last nine seasons, UST had five seconds and three thirds in the men's conference standings and an overall dual record of 127-43. Peck's men's teams are 178-69 since 1994.

St. Thomas finished with a 16-4 dual-meet record in 2005 and 15-6 in 2004 but slipped to 9-11 in a sixth-place finish last season. The Toms have only two seniors on their 14-man roster. Juniors Ben Herding, Kevin Manzel and Joshua Tomashek lead the returners. Freshman Drew Carlson of Minnetonka has a chance to break into the lineup.