

# 2010 MIAC Men's Tennis Season Preview

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St. Paul, Minn. -- For the first time in recent history, Gustavus will not enter the men's tennis season as the conference favorite. Carleton topped the 2010 preseason coaches' poll and received six first-place votes. Gustavus, winners of every MIAC title since 1989, followed close behind in the poll and had four first-place votes.



Carleton is ranked #18 in the nation and have finished second in the conference standings the last season years. The Knights are led by regionally-ranked sophomore Peter Dunn and senior Winston Park. Gustavus, ranked #25 nationally, enters a new era as Tommy Valentini takes over as head coach replacing Steve Wilkinson. Sophomore Patrick Clark is the lone returning singles player from a Gustie team that finished fifth at last season's NCAA Championships.

St. Thomas is picked to finish in the third sport and return four All-MIAC players including Andy Michels and Tyler Rice. Bethel has finished third the last three years and also return four All-MIAC players including #1 singles player Tom Ronning. St. Olaf had one of their best seasons in program history last year and return senior captain Brian Tolly. Seniors Dutch Hansen and Luke Odegard will lead a Saint John's team hoping to improve on last year's finish.

Junior Michael Coleman and sophomore Chris Fowler will look to lead the continued improvement the Macalester program has seen under head coach Jason Muhl. Concordia is looking to get back into the MIAC Playoffs and will return their top four singles players including #1 Matt Edin. A young Hamline team returns their entire 2009 roster and are led by juniors Dan Cromwell and Kyle Helgemoe. Seniors David Weigman and David Reckase will anchor a Saint Mary's team that is hoping to make a move up the MIAC standings.

The 2010 MIAC Playoffs will take place May 7-8, 2010 at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn. The top six teams in the MIAC regular season standings will qualify for the conference playoffs.

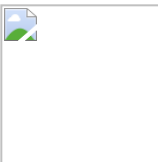
### 2010 MIAC Preseason Coaches' Poll

Coaches voted for every team in the conference except their own team. Points were assigned for each vote (1 for first, 2 for second, etc.) Teams are ranked in order of lowest point total to highest with first place votes shown in parentheses.

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

**2010 MIAC Playoffs:** Top Six Teams, May 7-8, Gustavus Adolphus College - St. Peter, Minn.

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



### Bethel

**Coach:** Dan Morton (10 seasons)

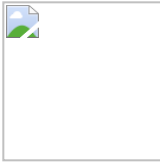
**2009 Finish:** 3rd (7-2 MIAC, 10-6 overall)

Bethel Season Preview

For the past three seasons, the Royals have by finished the MIAC race in third place behind perennially tough Gustavus and Carleton. At 7-2 in conference play and 10-6 overall, Bethel matched the school record for conference wins set in 2008 and enjoyed a streak of five straight wins over conference opponents before falling to St. Thomas in the first round of the MIAC playoffs.

Very little has changed from last year's team, but the biggest loss will no doubt be that of three-time All-MIAC player David Torres who was Bethel's #2 singles player and was a strong doubles player as well. However, with an additional year of experience under their belts, the Royals return four players who earned All-MIAC awards, including Tom Ronning (Sr., Alexandria, Minn.), who was an impressive 13-3 as the #1 singles player and Kent Nichols (So., Milaca, Minn.). Two-time All-MIAC fourth singles player Joel Cassens (Jr., Owatonna, Minn.) will be a factor and Jordan LeFebvre (Sr., Roseville, Minn.) also looks to be a positive contributor to the 2010 team. Last season, he finished the regular season with a six-match winning streak to help Bethel reach their third straight playoff appearance. Tucker Morris (Fr., Arden Hills, Minn.) won the Midwest Invitational in the fall and looks to make an impact in his freshman season.

Coach Morton is encouraged by both the youth and experience his team possesses. The team is a veteran crew who knows what it takes to compete in a very tough MIAC conference. Morton says his team is disciplined, mature, and eager to return to the court to build upon the success of the past three seasons to make their run at another playoff berth.



#### **Carleton**

**Coach:** Stephan Zweifel (12 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 2nd (8-1 MIAC, 14-10 overall)

#### **Carleton Season Preview**

Head coach Stephan Zweifel has built the Carleton College men's tennis program into one of the best in the MIAC. The Knights have finished second in the MIAC for seven straight years and are consistently nationally ranked. Carleton is currently ranked 18th in the nation.

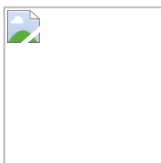
It was a bit of a down year for the Knights last season. Carleton still finished second in the MIAC, but with only a 14-10 overall record and was upset by St. Olaf in the first round of the conference playoffs.

The Knights currently have two players ranked in the Central Region. Sophomore Peter Dunn (Winnetka, Ill./North Shore Country Day) and senior Winston Park (Encino, Calif./Harvard-Westlake) were both All-MIAC selections a year ago and are currently ranked 12th and 23rd in the region. Dunn is expected to play near the top of the lineup and looks to build upon his 12-4 rookie campaign. Park is a force in doubles matches where he has racked up a 24-6 record with a variety of partners in his time at Carleton.

Carleton should be better in the winter and spring than it was during the fall thanks to the return of Dan Vollman (So./Oak Park, Ill./Oak Park River Forest) and Colin Russell (Sr./The Woodlands, Texas/Oak Ridge). Vollman—an All-MIAC pick in both singles and doubles a year ago—was studying in Berlin, while Russell is fully recovered from an injury that sidelined him most of his junior year. Vollman was 15-7 at the second singles position in his rookie season with the Knights. Russell looks to move back into one of the top two singles spots where he played during his sophomore campaign.

The Knights will also look for contributions from their first-year players Alexander Chin (Hingham, Mass.), Paul Cooper (Burr Ridge, Ill./ Hinsdale Central), Austin Jiang (Green Bay, Wisc./Bay Port) and Krishna Vege (Rochester, Minn./Mayo).

The Knights are once again loaded with talent and depth and should be among the conference's best teams.



### **Concordia**

**Coach:** Troy Hanestad (3 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 8th (2-7 MIAC, 6-9 overall)

#### **Concordia Season Preview**

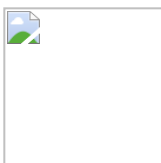
The Concordia-Moorhead men's tennis team returns all four of their top singles from last year and a year of experience should help the Cobbers improve on their 6-9 overall record from a year ago. Concordia will be looking to make a run at the MIAC playoffs as they try and get back to the conference postseason for the first time since the 2007 campaign. The even better news for head coach Troy Hanestad, who is starting his fourth season at the helm of the Cobbers, is that all but one player from this year's team will return next season. The Concordia roster only has one senior on the squad, and with the majority of players being either sophomores or freshmen, Hanestad will be able to help the team grow for years to come.

Concordia returns their No.1, 2, 3 and 4 singles players from 2009. Topping the list is two-time All-MIAC player Matt Edin (Staples, Minn./Staples-Motley HS). Edin stepped into the No.1 singles spot last season and went 8-5 in all matches and 5-4 in conference play. He has worked hard in the off season to improve his game and he should be ready to break into the top tier of players in the MIAC in 2010.

Another player who will benefit from a year of experience is sophomore Chad Smith (Grand Forks, N.D./Red River HS). Smith was inserted into the No.2 singles spot at the start of his collegiate year and went through the ups-and-downs of learning the college game as a freshman. Smith is poised to have a breakout year and will help the Cobbers have a potent 1-2 punch at the top of the lineup. Kirby Johnson (Crookston, Minn.), the lone senior on this year's team, will once again be the No. 3 singles player. Johnson tied for second on the team in wins last year. The final member of the returning top 4 is junior Jordan Swanson (Thief River Falls, Minn./Lincoln HS). Swanson tied with Johnson for second in overall wins and finished the season strong by winning two of his final three matches.

A pair of newcomers could factor heavily into the Concordia lineup in 2010. Devin Larson (Baxter, Minn./Brainerd HS) and Bryan Olson (West Fargo, N.D.) both have a chance to crack the top six in singles and be part of the doubles action for CC.

In doubles play, Edin and Johnson will return as the team's top tandem. The pair led the team in doubles wins in 2009 and at one point during the season had won four straight matches. The No.2 and No.3 doubles teams will be up in the air to start the season. Hanestad could partner both of the returning top singles players and put the freshmen together, or he could mix and match the group and give each doubles team a player with collegiate experience.



### **Gustavus**

**Coach:** Tommy Valentini (1st season)

**2009 Finish:** 1st (9-0 MIAC, 27-9 overall)

#### **Gustavus Season Preview**

The 2010 season will be the beginning of a new era for the Gustavus men's tennis program as Tommy Valentini takes over as head coach replacing Steve Wilkinson. In addition, there will be many new faces on the roster after the graduation of six of the top seven players from last year's squad that won the MIAC Championship and finished fifth at the NCAA Championships.

Sophomore Patrick Clark (Glen Ellyn, Ill.) is the lone returner from the singles line-up. Clark posted a mark of 18-12 playing at the #5 and #6 positions last season. With so many new faces on the roster, Coach Valentini is uncertain of what his exact line-up will be and it might change several times early in the season, but one thing is certain, Clark will be at the #1 or #2 position in the singles line-up as he gained valuable experience on a very good Gustie squad last season and has worked hard in the off-season to be one of the leaders of a young Gustavus team this season.

Joining Clark at the top of the singles line-up will be sophomore transfer Amrik Donkena (Rochester, Minn.). Donkena, a former Minnesota State High School doubles champion, attended the University of Washington last year, but did not play tennis. Valentini is excited about Donkena's future at Gustavus, but realizes it may take a while for him to get back to the top of his game. Others expected to compete for spots in the singles lineup include senior Krishan Jethwa (Minot, No. Dak.), senior Kyle Olson (Shoreview, Minn.), sophomore Daniel Pomeranc (Sao Paulo, Brazil) and freshman Tyler Johnson (West Bend, Wis.). Jethwa compiled a singles mark of 13-3 last season primarily playing in the #5 position, while Pomeranc posted a mark of 12-2.

Several first year players will also be given an opportunity to compete for spots in the singles line-up. That group includes Conner Illies (Brandon, Minn.), Michael Lieberman (Long Grove, Ill.), and Rodrigo Otero (Fargo, No. Dak.). This trio and Tyler Johnson mentioned above showed excellent potential at the ITA Midwest Regional in the fall, however it may take some time for them to completely adjust to the dual match format at the collegiate level. As a result, the Gusties may go through some growing pains early in the season.

In doubles play, the Gusties will have an entirely new line-up with all three doubles teams from last year having graduated. Amrik Donkena and Tyler Johnson established themselves as the top doubles tandem after advancing to the quarterfinal round of the ITA Midwest Regional hosted by Gustavus last October. Coach Valentini is still uncertain as to the other two doubles teams at this time, however he is confident that the eventual lineup will provide the team with the strong doubles play that is the tradition of the Gustavus men's tennis program.

The Gusties begin the 2010 season ranked #25 in the ITA Division III poll. The team will also host the 2010 ITA Division III Indoor Championships at the Swanson Tennis Center on February 19-21 as well as the MIAC Post-Season Tournament, May 7-8.



### Hamline

**Coach:** Jon Henning (2 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 10th (0-9 MIAC, 1-16 overall)

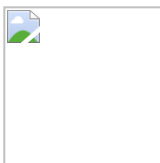
#### **Hamline Season Preview**

There are high expectations for the very young and talented 2010 Hamline men's tennis team. The talent, dedication, and leadership are all very present and this team is working hard towards achieving their goals both on and off the court.

The 2010 team didn't lose any player to graduation this year and with a couple of key additions, should be ready to compete in our tough conference. Dan Cromwell (Jr., Forest Lake, Minn.) and Kyle Helgemoe (Jr., Lakeville, Minn.) have been mainstays in the Hamline lineup and have really been stepping up their game in the last two seasons. The sophomore class at Hamline is back and looking solid. Leading the way this year are our very competitive first and second singles players from last year: Robert Becker (So., Minnetonka, Minn.) and Bernard Mitambo (So., Minneapolis, Minn.). Sam Teitelbaum (So., Afton, Minn.), Andrew Lutz (So., Pine City, Minn.), and Brendan FitzPatrick (So., White Bear Lake, Minn.) look to build off of invaluable experience in the lineup last year to get to the next level.

The freshman class is led by David Croonquist (North Oaks, Minn.), who is a state doubles champion and was ranked as a top 500 junior in the nation. He had a great showing at the ITA Tournament this past fall and will be one of the top players for the Pipers. Mickey Witt (Lakeville, Minn.) is a very first-year strong player and looks to add depth to the team.

The young Piper team realizes the high level of talent and skill as well as the attitude and dedication it takes to be successful in the MIAC. This year they will be poised to improve every day both physically and mentally to be successful in the conference and beyond.



### **Macalester**

**Coach:** Jason Muhl (5 seasons)

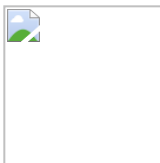
**2009 Finish:** 7th (3-6 MIAC, 10-11 overall)

#### **Macalester Season Preview**

Macalester has been making consistent progress the past few years under coach Jason Muhl and after going 10-11 last spring with a seventh-place 3-6 MIAC mark, is ready to continue its climb up the ladder.

With the graduation of No. 1 singles player Charlie Edelman, all the other returners will be moving up a position in the lineup. Leading the way at the top of the lineup will be Michael Coleman (Jr., Westlake Village, Calif. / Agoura) and Chris Fowler (So., Toronto, Ont. / Royal St. Georges). Coleman earned both singles and doubles All-MIAC status last season and went 12-9 on the season, primarily at second singles. Fowler played mostly No. 3 singles as a frosh and finished at 12-8 overall and 4-5 in the MIAC.

Titus Levy (Sr., New York, N.Y. / Fieldston School) and Max Edwards (Fy., Rochester, Minn. / Mayo) are top contenders for spots in the middle of the lineup. Other key Mac players include Evan Elderbrock (So., Madison, Wis. / West) and Justin Margolies (Jr., Madison, Wis. / West).



### **Saint John's**

**Coach:** Jack Bowe (12 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 5th (5-4 MIAC, 9-9 overall)

#### **Saint John's Season Preview**

The 2010 Saint John's University tennis team will look to improve upon its 9-9 record (5-4 MIAC) in 2009 as it returns a handful of players that made considerable contributions last year.

Seniors Dutch Hansen (Dawson, Minn./Dawson-Boyd) and Luke Odegaard (Forest Lake, Minn.), as well as sophomore Ian Hansen (Dawson, Minn./Dawson-Boyd) are expected to lead the way for the Johnnies in 2010.

Last season, Dutch Hansen earned All-MIAC honors in singles competition with a 10-10 (5-4 MIAC) record and also finished the year 8-10 (5-4 MIAC) in doubles, while Odegaard posted an 8-11 (5-4 MIAC) singles record and an 8-13 (3-6 MIAC) mark in doubles competition. Both players have a career winning percentage over .500 as Hansen is 15-11 in singles competition and 18-14 in doubles, while Odegaard is 28-20 in career singles competition and 30-24 in doubles.

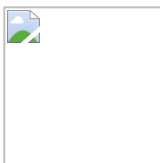
Ian Hansen led the Johnnies last spring as a freshman with a 12-8 (5-4 MIAC) singles record. He finished 7-11 (5-3 MIAC) in doubles competition.

Senior Tyler McKay (Rochester, Minn./John Marshall) also had a good 2009 season for the Johnnies. McKay finished last spring season with a singles record of 4-1 and 3-1 mark in doubles competition. McKay has a career record of 6-2 in both singles and doubles competition.

Sophomores Matt Peckskamp (Sartell, Minn./Sartell-St. Stephen) and Chris Voigt (Plymouth, Minn./Wayzata) also contributed as freshmen last spring. Peckskamp was 4-4 (1-1 MIAC) in singles competition, while Voigt posted a 5-7 (1-2 MIAC) mark individually and a 1-2 record in doubles competition.

The Johnnies will again call three different locations home in 2010 - Gold's Gym in Sartell, the SJU tennis courts and The Donald McNeely Spectrum in Collegeville.

Saint John's tennis coach Jack Bowe begins his 13<sup>th</sup> season with the Johnnies. Bowe enters the 2010 campaign with a 121-116 career record (60-49 MIAC).

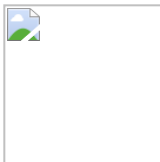


### **Saint Mary's**

**Coach:** Jeff Halberg (11 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 9th (1-8 MIAC, 5-10 overall)

Saint Mary's Season Preview
<p>Saint Mary's University men's and women's tennis coach Jeff Halberg didn't have to think long when asked about his expectations for the upcoming seasons.</p> <p>In fact, the veteran head coach summed things up in one word: Consistency.</p> <p>"We have a lot of potential this season, both on the men's and the women's side," said Halberg, whose teams kick off their season on Jan. 30, playing host to Carleton in a Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference match at the Winona Tennis Center. "But if we are going to get the results we are capable of, we are going to have to be much more consistent in our intensity level and in our desire to play hard — and up to our abilities — each and every match.</p> <p>"The conference is probably the deepest it's been in my 15 years," Halberg added. "And if I've learned anything in this conference, it's that there are no givens — there are no given wins and there are no assumed losses.</p> <p>"We need to make sure we come out and are ready to go. If we can maintain that consistency level, we could surprise some people."</p> <p>Leading the charge for the SMU men will be seniors David Weigman (Maple Plain, Minn.) and David Reckase (La Crosse, Wis.), and juniors Pawel Szczepkowski (Opolskie, Poland) and Justin Loeffler (Winona, Minn.)</p> <p>"Our goal is pretty simple — we want to take a step forward this year," said Halberg, whose men finished with a 5-10 overall record a year ago. "We've got a lot better depth on the team this year than we've had in the past. That depth — which includes a good mix of returners and talented freshmen — leave us feeling confident we can make a little noise this year.</p> <p>"It should be an exciting season."</p>

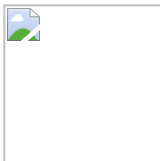


### **St. Olaf**

**Coach:** Scott Nesbit (19 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 4th (6-3 MIAC, 10-6 overall)

St. Olaf Season Preview
<p>The St. Olaf men's tennis team is coming off one of its best seasons in recent history with a run to the MIAC Playoffs finale last spring.</p> <p>The team will be led by senior captain Brian Tolly, who went 5-4 in league play at the fourth singles spot. The team will also have back John Wight, Nick Hubbards-Peters and Nick Gunderson back. Gunderson went 6-9 from his second singles position and Wight a combined 13-3 from the fourth (2-0) and fifth spots (11-3). St. Olaf added a trio of underclassmen -- Jon Foss, Charlie Reinertsen, and Andy Catania -- who will contribute.</p>



### **St. Thomas**

**Coach:** Terry Peck (19 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 6th (4-5 MIAC, 13-8 overall)

St. Thomas Season Preview

Head coach Terry Peck, who is beginning his 20th season at St. Thomas, surpassed 400 career victories (men and women) in 2009. He starts 2010 with a combined men's and women's dual record of 421-152 (.735 win%). Over the last 12 seasons, UST has had five seconds and three thirds in the men's conference standings, and an overall dual record of 159-68. Peck's men's teams are 210-94 since 1994.

Last season, the Tommies won nine of its last 12 matches despite having two key players out with injuries. Four Tommie men's tennis players received All-MIAC honors for 2009. -- Andy Michels and Tyler Rice were honored in singles and doubles, and Kevin Walker and senior Phil Hanke were recognized for doubles. Rice was 13-2 and Michels was 13-3 at second and third singles, and the pair went 12-5 at first doubles. Walker and Hanke went 11-4 at second doubles. On their two-year careers, Rice is 24-10 in singles and 26-8 in doubles, and Michels is 23-10 in singles and 24-13 in doubles.

The top newcomer is freshman Brendan O'Connell.

The Tommies are without a main practice facility in winter 2010 but are excited for the \$54 million Anderson Athletics and Recreation Center set to open in August 2010.