

# 2009 MIAC Men's Cross Country Championship Preview

St. Paul, Minn. -- The 2009 MIAC Men's Cross Country Championship will take place this Saturday, October 31 at Como Park Golf Course in St. Paul, with the race starting at 3:15 p.m. The men's championship race will follow the women's race which will start at 2:15 p.m. The 2009 Championships are hosted by the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University.



In 2008, the MIAC women's team title was decided by one of the smallest margins of all time. In 2009, it could be the men's turn for an extremely close team race. Of the five MIAC men's teams ranked in the Central Region, none has set themselves apart from the pack. St. Thomas has the highest ranking (3rd in the region and 22nd in the nation), but will face fierce competition for the top spot in the conference. St. Olaf (5th), Saint John's (6th), Augsburg (7th), and Hamline (8th) are all close behind the Tommies in the regional rankings. Last season, St. Olaf, Hamline, and St. Thomas were the top three finishers in the MIAC team race.

Seven MIAC All-Conference runners return from 2008, including St. Olaf junior Duboul Ruon, last year's individual champion. Bethel senior Dan Greeno (fourth in 2008) has had a strong fall campaign and will compete with Ruon for the title. Augsburg's Brent Haglund, Hamline's Ian Bauer, Carleton's Charlie Gamble, and Macalester's Wade Ekstrom finished seventh through tenth last year and all four seniors should contend for first place at their final MIAC Championship. St. Thomas sophomore Ben Sathre, the Tommies' top runner, is the final All-Conference returnee after he placed 14th in 2008.

[2009 MIAC Cross Country Championships Website](#)



**Augsburg**

**Coach:** Dennis Barker (16th season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 9th (205 points)

## Augsburg Championship Preview

The Augsburg men's cross country team heads into the 2009 MIAC Championships with confidence this season, having run competitively with the rest of the conference all season long.

The Auggies finished as the top MIAC team at the Jim Drews Invitational, and are peaking at the right time. Augsburg runners collected 11 personal bests during that race, including from six of its top seven runners, leaving coach Dennis Barker pleased with his team's prospects.

"This has been our best season so far," he said. "The top teams in the conference are very close. We could run really well and have a shot at first, or we could end up somewhere in the top five."

Captain Brent Haglund (SR, Fridley, Minn.) leads the Auggies this year, and returns as one of the top runners in the MIAC. Haglund ran a 25:05.6 in the 8,000 meter race at the Jim Drews Invitational, and has finished in the top 15 of every race this season.

Haglund is joined by veterans Victor Sanchez (Minneapolis, Minn./Southwest HS) and Shane Wyborny (SR, Detroit Lakes, Minn.), who have both been in Augsburg's top five all season. Sanchez has continued to be one of the Auggies most improved runners, cutting 1:06 off of his first race of the year, while Wyborny has dropped 49 seconds. This has been especially important for the team, Barker said, because of losing Augsburg's third runner from last year.

"Not having Brian Byrnes is a big loss," Barker said. "But there has been great leadership on this team, and we've had some younger guys really step up. They have pushed the younger guys and helped get them to where they are at."

Complimenting the three seniors are Ben Rodriguez (SO, Buffalo, Minn.) and newcomer Matt Shafer (FY, New Brighton, Minn./Irondale HS), who have both knocked off over a minute and a half on their best times this season.

"Matt has really done well, and has been able to move up into that top five, and Ben's upped his game as well," Barker said. "Those two combined with our senior leadership is what has put this team in the position it's in now."

And while the team may be embracing an underdog role, their position is one to make a run at an MIAC title. Of course, for that to happen, certain things would have to go right.

"Just like poker, you need five good ones," Barker said. "It's going to come down to who can have their top five guys come through for them on that day. If one doesn't, it's going to make a big difference."



**Bethel**

**Coach:** Jim Timp (13th season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 4th (96 points)

## Bethel Championship Preview

The 2009 cross country season looks to build upon the success they achieved last year. The men's team placed 4th in conference, but only 9 points out of second place in one of the tightest team competitions in MIAC history. The Royals are again led by NCAA All-American distance runner Dan Greeno (Sr., St. Michael, Minn.), who most recently came in first place out of 551 runners at the Brooks Invitational, hosted by UW-Oshkosh. Greeno has also placed very high in the Griak Invitational, as well as the Les Duke Invitational, making him a runner to watch in the conference meet.

Despite losing a couple of good runners from last year's team to graduation, there is good depth and talent returning along with outstanding leadership. Other runners that will be important team contributors this year include: Brian Anderson (Sr., Andover, Minn.), Austin Hinrichs (Jr., Clara City, Minn.), Denny Meints (Jr., Pine Island, Minn.), Sam Greeno (So, St. Michael, Minn.), J.P. Cartier (So, Mora, Minn.) and Joel McDougall (So, Minneapolis, Minn.).

There are also a number of outstanding newcomers on board to round out the team. With this talent and depth, the men's squad is again seeking a top finish at the MIAC Championship meet.



### Carleton

**Coach:** David Ricks (3rd season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 7th (156 points)

## Carleton Championship Preview

The Carleton men's cross country team heads into the MIAC Championships ready to continue their recent performances. The most recent performances have seen the Knights finish fourth at the Dan Huston Invitational and second at the Running of the Cows.

The Knights will be led by senior All-MIAC runner Charlie Gamble (Sr./San Diego, Calif./La Jolla). Gamble finished second at the Running of the Cows in his last competition and fourth at the Dan Huston Invitational. In last year's MIAC Championship, Gamble led Carleton and finished ninth overall.

John Davis (Jr./Eden Prairie, Minn.) looks poised to earn All-MIAC honors after finishing fifth at the Running of the Cows and finishing 29th at last year's conference meet.

The younger brother of John, Bobby Davis (Fy./Eden Prairie, Minn.) has been the third runner across the line this year for Carleton. He looks to have a good showing in his first MIAC championship.

Helping round out the Knights line-up could be Colin Sinclair (Jr./Madison, Wis./Madison West), Chris Marshall (Sr./Plymouth, Minn./ Robbinsdale Armstrong), and Dylan Cheever (Fy./Minneapolis, Minn./Southwest).

The Knights will face stiff competition in University of St. Thomas, St. Olaf College, Saint John's University, Augsburg College, and Hamline University. All the schools mentioned are ranked in the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association regional poll.



### Concordia

**Coach:** Garrick Larson (13th season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 11th (301 points)

## Concordia Championship Preview

The Concordia men's cross country team will enter the 2009 MIAC Championship Meet on the heels of their first season win. The Cobbers claimed the overall team championship at the Cobber Invite on Oct. 16. Concordia has also recorded two other top 5 team finishes in 2009. CC placed third at the NDSU Bison Invite in the opening outing of the year. They then finished fourth at the Jimmie Invitational on Oct. 2.

Individually Concordia will be led by freshman Brad McConn (Fargo, N.D./Fargo South HS) who has led the team in all but one meet this season. McConn's top finish came at the Jimmie Invite where he ran a personal best time of 27:25 and finished in sixth place. It was his fourth straight PR of the season. Following closely behind McConn will be Paul Lillehaugen (Jr., Moorhead, Minn.) who is coming off the best meet of his career. Lillehaugen clocked a 28:22.3 at the Cobber Invite and placed fourth.

Rounding out the top five at the conference meet for the Cobbers should be the trio Mike Reponen (Sr., Baxter, Minn./Brainerd HS), Brandon Huether (Lisbon, N.D.) and Adam Mousel (Fr., Northfield, Minn.). Reponen and Huether were two of only four CC runners to compete at the Roy Griak Invite and Mousel has been in the team's top five in the last two meets and at the Cobber Invite he was the second-highest finisher on the team with a time of 28:37.8.



#### Gustavus

**Coach:** Dale Bahr (1st season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 6th (145 points)

#### **Gustavus Championship Preview**

The Gustavus Adolphus men's cross country team will look to five key returners to help the squad improve on its sixth place finish from a year ago. Dale Bahr has taken over as the head coach after being an assistant coach for the previous nine seasons.



#### Hamline

**Coach:** Paul Schmaedeke (22nd season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 2nd (87 points)

#### **Hamline Championship Preview**

Head cross country coach Paul Schmaedeke heads into this season looking to keep the Pipers at the top of the MIAC and competing for slots at the NCAA meet, but he'll have to do it this year without an All-American from the 2008 campaign.

Last fall Brandon Gleason delighted distance running fans with his comeback from a devastating training accident by placing 13<sup>th</sup> at the NCAA Division III cross country national meet, earning All-American status for the first time in his career. With his graduation, and that of Kevin Groh, who also provided strong leadership and a consistent Piper top-seven performance, Schmaedeke will be relying on several key returners to lead the charge.

A returning all-conference runner from last year's team that placed second at the MIAC meet is Ian Bauer (Sr., Roseville, Minn.). Bauer placed eighth at the race at Como Golf Course and was consistently one of the top two Pipers across the line all season. He will have to keep up that pace and continue to improve, as he has over the past three years, to keep Hamline at the front of the pack.

Bauer's classmates Jamison Hull (Forest Lake, Minn.) and Jon Murphy (North St. Paul, Minn.) will also be counted upon to finish at the top for the Pipers this season. Hull has been a top seven runner the last two years for Hamline and with the progress he has shown in his training, Schmaedeke anticipates him being a consistent top five or seven runner for Hamline.

Murphy was an All-MIAC runner in his sophomore season before losing a year to medical difficulties. Coming back for his fifth fall at Hamline, he will provide strong senior leadership and has shown that he can return to the form that took him to the top in previous seasons.

Another Ian, Ian Campbell (Jr., Blooming Prairie, Minn.), is returning to racing after missing the spring track schedule with a stress fracture. He has bounced back well from the injury and Schmaedeke will be looking to Campbell to be in the top three Hamline runners as the season heads into the conference meet.

Junior Andy Johnson (Andover, Minn.) fought for a top spot in the Piper finishers last season, and now has his opportunity to battle into the top five.

Schmaedeke also returns a pair of sophomores who battled into the Piper top five as first-years a season ago in Devin Monson (Thompson, N.D.) and Ellis Richardson (Shoreview, Minn.). A third sophomore, Jack Deichert (Golden Valley, Minn.) worked his way into the top seven runners a year ago, while Nate Walker (So., River Falls, Wis.) has trained well despite missing the spring track season and will also add depth to the team.

Four incoming first-years with high school state meet experience will look to make a run at placing for the Pipers this fall. Colin Rogers (River Falls, Wis.), Charles Schweitzer (Queen Creek, Ariz.), Nate Dobbins (Rochester, Minn.) and Chris Reisdorfer (Adrian, Minn.) have all competed in their respective state meets. Reisdorfer was a member of the state championship team in his junior season, and returned to the state meet in his senior year. All four are hard working runners who want to make a mark on the Piper top seven in their first season with the team.

With so many strong runners competing to cross the line in the top seven for the Pipers, Schmaedeke expects his team to continue to meet their annual goal of racing to the top three in the MIAC and then making a run at the NCAA meet.

Macalester



**Coach:** Matt Haugen (7th season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 8th (193 points)

## Macalester Championship Preview

Macalester boasted last year's conference runner-up, Martin Mudry, and this year features another leading contender for a top MIAC spot in Wade Ekstrom (Sr., La Crescent, Minn.). Ekstrom, who placed 10<sup>th</sup> at last year's MIAC championships, has shown great progress since then in track last spring and in cross country this fall. He was 10<sup>th</sup> with a personal-best 25:00 time, and first among MIAC runners, at the Wisconsin-La Crosse Jim Drews Invitational, and before that ran to a first-place finish at the UW-Eau Claire Blugold Invitational to earn MIAC runner of the week honors. He was 21<sup>st</sup> at the Roy Griak Invite. Only one runner in the history of the program was run a faster time than Ekstrom's 25:00 at La Crosse.

Carl Biggers (So., Verona, Wis.) has been the team's No. 2 runner all season and will be asked to pace Macalester's second-through-fifth runners. If the Scots show solid depth, they have a chance to move up from last year's eighth-place finish.

Among those expected to closely follow Biggers include Ollie St. John (So., Washington, D.C. / Edmund Burke School), Adrian St. Francis (Fy., Sonoma, Calif. / Marin Academy), Jon Bassen (Jr., Shorewood, Wis.) and Nick Mangigian (Sr., Ann Arbor, Mich. / Greenhill).



Saint John's

**Coach:** Tim Miles (31st season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 5th (116 points)

### **Saint John's Championship Preview**

Saint John's began the 2009 season by finishing second out of 17 teams at the St. Olaf Invitational on Saturday, Sept. 19. The Johnnies were led by senior Andrew Stevens (Stillwater, Minn.) who placed 23<sup>rd</sup> (26:30) at the 2008 MIAC Championship and 123<sup>rd</sup> (25:44) at nationals. Stevens finished with a 12th-place finish (26:47), followed by junior David Forster (Minnetonka, Minn./Hopkins) and senior Patrick Lowder (Chanhausen, Minn./Chaska) in 13th (26:52) and 19th (27:05), respectively.

Following the St. Olaf Invitational, senior Dustin Franta (La Crescent, Minn.), who finished 21<sup>st</sup> (26:29) at the 2008 MIAC Championship and 177<sup>th</sup> (26:02.18) at the 2008 national meet, has led the Johnnies two out of three past meets. Franta led the Johnnies (262 points) with a 40th-place finish (25:27) at the Willamette Invitational on Saturday, Oct. 3 in Salem, Oregon. Stevens finished 51st (25:37), while Lowder took 64th (25:44). Junior Tom Hoffman (Mahtomedi, Minn.) and Ryan Noack (St. Cloud, Minn./Cathedral) claimed 66th (25:46) and 70th (25:49), respectively. Lowder finished 24<sup>th</sup> (26:31) at the 2008 MIAC Championship and 194<sup>th</sup> (26:10.30) at the NCAA Championship, while Noack finished 23<sup>rd</sup> (26:30) at the 2008 MIAC Championship and had a 111<sup>th</sup>-place finish (25:40.03) in the NCAA Championship.

SJU tied for 15<sup>th</sup> out of 29 teams at the Wis.-La Crosse Invitational on Saturday, Oct. 17. Franta led the Johnnies with a time of 26:01, which was good for 41<sup>st</sup> overall. Lowder and Ruiari followed in 82nd (26:32) and 86th (26:35), respectively. Noack and Stevens also finished in the top seven with a 106<sup>th</sup> place finish (26:50) and a 111<sup>th</sup> place finish (26:55).

The Johnnies are led by Tim Miles, who is currently in his 30<sup>th</sup> season as head coach. Miles has produced a winning program that has finished among the MIAC's top two squads in 22 of the past 30 seasons, including nine MIAC titles (1981, 1982, 1983, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2006 and 2007). He has had 22 cross country teams qualify for the national meet, with 17 recording top-15 finishes.



Saint Mary's

**Coach:** Ward Berndt (5th season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 10th (298 points)

### **Saint Mary's Championship Preview**

Saint Mary's University cross country coach Ward Berndt will be the first to admit that last year was a learning experience for both his Cardinal men's squad.

And from what he's already seen in 2009, his Cardinals are quick study.

"I'm really excited for this team, I really feel like we are able to step up our expectations a couple of notches for both teams," he said. "I'm confident that we have the talent and the personalities to become among the best teams in SMU cross country history."

The reason for Berndt's confidence? The lessons the Cardinals learned a year ago.

"On the guys side, last year didn't end the way we had hoped. We certainly didn't perform up to our capabilities in the two most important meets of the season, the conference championships and the regional meet," said Berndt, whose men placed 10th at the MIAC Championships and 21st at the NCAA Central Regional. "But the guys learned some valuable lessons from those two meets, and I can already see a major shift in attitudes and expectations."

Senior John Vallez (Eagan, Minn.) and junior Quentin Moore (Minneapolis, Minn.) are back after solid seasons a year ago, while David Feather (Oak Creek, Wis.), Robby McGuire (Rochester, Minn.) and Michael Mockler (Dubuque, Iowa) are also returning after stellar freshman campaigns. Add to that a stable of one of the most talented and deepest freshman classes in Berndt's tenure, and it's no wonder the Cardinal head coach is so excited.

"This team is determined to make some noise this year," added Berndt.

"Obviously, we realize that we are in one of the premier cross country conferences in the nation, but they aren't about to back down from anyone."

"The change in attitude has been huge, and if they can sustain it, I'm expecting big things from the team this season."



St. Olaf

**Coach:** Phil Lundin (2nd season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 1st (75 points)

### St. Olaf Championship Preview

The Ole men look to build on coach Phil Lundin's successful first season, which included a first-place finish at the 2008 MIAC championships and a 15th-place finish at the NCAA's. The pre-championship season has included seventh-place finishes at the Roy Griak and Les Duke Invitationals, as well as a fifth-place finish at their own St. Olaf Invitational.

St. Olaf lost two members of the 2008 championship team to graduation, but first year talent and experienced upperclassmen have been working to fill their shoes. The team does return 2008 MIAC individual champion Dobuol Ruon (Jr./Northfield, Minn./Northfield), who earned All-America honors at last year's national meet. The Oles also return senior Jacob Marotz (Appleton, Wis./East), the 2009 MIAC 10k champion.

Marotz has had a strong season, placing first or second for the team in each of his races, and most recently leading them to a 14th-place finish at the Jim Drews Invitational. In filling out the rest of their scoring squad, the team will likely look to a combination of Andrew Nussbaum (Sr./Colorado Springs, Colo./Palmer), Ben Wilson (Jr./Alexandria, Minn./Jefferson), Chris Massey (Fy./Rosemount, Minn./Rosemount), and Jon Lambert (Jr./Plymouth, Minn./Wayzata). Both Lambert and Nussbaum were members of last year's NCAA team, and Lambert was fifth for the conference championship team.

The St. Olaf College Oles have won the MIAC cross country championships three times, including twice since 2004.



St. Thomas

**Coach:** Pete Wareham (17th season)

**2008 Championship Finish:** 3rd (93 points)

### **St. Thomas Championship Preview**

The St. Thomas men's cross country team, currently ranked 22nd nationally, will look to improve on a third-place conference finish of 2008 and chase the school's first MIAC crown since 2003.

Five different MIAC schools have won the men's conference CC team title over the last seven years -- parity seen in few other MIAC sports.

Coach Pete Wareham' graduated All-MIAC runner Matt Boumeester, but returned six experienced runners.

Ben Sathre earned All-MIAC honors last fall with a 14th-place conference finish. He took 23rd in the NCAA regional last November and was the lone freshman to place in the top 40. He placed seventh in the 5,000 meters in last March's conference indoor track and field meet. Sathre's sophomore season has been excellent as he's been in the top five in three races with a best of 25:03

Three seniors – Brian Sames, Mike Connell and Greg Dowe – could play important roles. Sames, a four-time track and field All-American and four-time MIAC outdoor champ at 800 meters, broke four school track records in 2009, including a 1:51.02 clocking for 800 meters. Last cross country season, he placed 19th in the MIAC and 41st in the region race. He ran a career-best 8K time of 25:19 in mid-October.

Connell was perhaps the MIAC's most improved runner in 2008. After taking 92nd in the 2007 conference race, Connell missed All-MIAC by one place last fall with the 16th-place finish. He also placed 41st in the NCAA regional. In 2009 track and field, he had the conference's fifth-best steeplechase time at 9:36, and was sixth in the MIAC indoor 5,000 last March. He has all top-20 finishes this fall.

Dowe, who ran on a 4x400 indoor relay that qualified for nationals last March, placed 53rd in the MIAC and 67th in the region in the 2007 cross country season. He was injured much of this fall but ran 27:13 Oct. 17 at UW-LaCrosse and could be a wild card for the Toms at the MIAC meet.

Soph Tyler Iverson was 47th in the MIAC and 69th in the region last fall. Junior Nick Michalak took 65th in the MIAC as a freshman in 2007. Sophomore Jim Leschke (67th MIAC) and senior George Williams (75th MIAC) also return. Williams was a top-7 runner his freshman season for the Tommies.