

2000 MIAC VOLLEYBALL PREVIEW

The 2000 MIAC volleyball season gets underway with non-conference games

beginning on September 1. Look for the top teams of 1999 to repeat their success, as they all return several key players. Last season, Bethel and St. Thomas tied for the MIAC Championship, based on a combined regular-season and tournament record. St. Thomas finished the 1999 season with the best MIAC record, finishing with a 10-1 mark in conference play. However, Bethel came out on top at the MIAC Tournament and earned the automatic bid, advancing to the NCAA Division III Championships.

Watch for St. Benedict, last season's third-place finisher, to be in the mix for the MIAC title in 2000. The Blazers return a solid core and have added several quality first-year athletes to their roster. St. Olaf, the fourth-place finisher in 1999, has been an NCAA participant in six of the last seven years, and hopes make another appearance this year.

The 2000 MIAC Tournament will be held November 3-4 at St. Mary's University. The tournament winner will automatically qualify for the NCAA Division III Championships.

Augsburg College

Co-Head Coaches: Thanh Pham / Ryan Dehnel (2nd / 1st seasons)

1999 Record: 11-17 (5-6 MIAC / 7th)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Angie Rieger (Sr., OH, 5-10), All-MIAC 1999, 273 kills, .328 attack percentage, 58 blocks (26 solo)

Cassi Van Ausdall (Sr., OH, 5-8), 133 kills, .209 attack percentage, 333 digs

Emily Walen (Sr., S/DS, 5-8), 1,062 assists (10.3 per game)

Tiffany Lynch (Sr., S/DS, 5-3), 271 digs, 42 assists

Paula Pogatchnik (So., OH, 5-10), 83 kills in 22 matches

Season Preview:

The 2000 version of the Augsburg College volleyball team should be an interesting blend of experience and youth. Four senior starters return, combined with a solid recruiting class for co-coaches Thanh Pham and Ryan Dehnel. The pair enters their first season as co-head coaches; last year, Pham guided the team as an interim head coach, with Dehnel as an assistant. A group of four seniors will lead the Auggies this season. Angie Rieger (Sr., Courtland, Minn./New Ulm Public HS) and Cassi Van Ausdall (Sr., White Bear Lake, Minn.) return to lead the Auggie hitters. Rieger earned first-team All-MIAC honors last season. Van Ausdall battled an arm injury last season that forced her to miss six matches and limited her presence to only back-row duties in several more. Despite the injury, she had a strong season both in the back and front rows. Emily Walen (Sr., Stillwater, Minn./Hastings HS) transferred to Augsburg from Division III volleyball power California Lutheran last season and made an immediate impact for the Auggies in the setting role. Tiffany Lynch (Sr., Isanti, Minn./Cambridge-Isanti HS) became a solid back-row presence for the Auggies last season. In addition to the four seniors, Augsburg returns a solid corps of sophomore hitters who gained valuable playing time on the varsity and on Augsburg's JV team, and Dehnel and Pham will also benefit from a solid recruiting class in 2000.

Bethel College

Head Coach: Andrew Palileo (4th season)

1999 Record: 25-12 (9-2 MIAC / 1st-tie)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Beth Nowachek, JR, MB, 5-10, 110 kills, 41 blocks

Staci Vreeman, JR, OH, 5-8, 356 kills, 479 digs

Janelle Nelson, JR, RS, 5-10, 95 kills, 65 digs

Julia Feltmann, SR, S, 5-10, 138 kills, 1,470 assists, 280, digs, 84 blocks, All-MIAC

Season Preview:

Coming off of their first MIAC championship and NCAA Tournament appearance, the 2000 Bethel Royals will again look to be a top team in the conference. With the loss of four valuable seniors including the MIAC Player-of-the-Year and first-team All-America Carrie Ritland, the development that the young players went through last season will prove to be valuable to the success of the 2000 squad. With only one senior, the Royals will rely on intense defense and a balanced attack on offense. First-team All-MIAC setter Julie Feltmann will lead a young squad in the MIAC conference race that will feature not any stars, but a talented group of young players.

Coach Andrew Palileo, the MIAC Coach-of-the-Year is excited about the prospects for the new season, "The experience of winning the MIAC Tournament and a NCAA Championships appearance will motivate the 2000 squad to prepare hard and play hard throughout the upcoming season."

Complete preview at: www.bethel.edu/Athletics/Volleyball/00preview.html

Carleton College

Head Coach: Heidi Luehmann-Jaynes (2nd season)

1999 Record: 4-25 (1-10 MIAC / 11th)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Emily Gottlieb, 5-7 So., OH, 195 kills last season, 1.95 pg, 249 digs

Brittany Stephens, 5-6 Jr., OH, 35 service aces, 307 digs
Melissa Jensen, 5-4 Sr., S, 613 assists last season, 221 digs
Melissa Cannaday, 5-7 Jr., OH/MH, 156 kills last season, 25 service aces

Season Preview:

With no graduating seniors from last year's team, the Knights will still be young, but with more experience. The squad is definitely looking to improve over last season. They're building a strong foundation with young returners from the '99 campaign and a solid base of newcomers. Several new faces that will contribute this year include first-year players Katie Haldy, an All-State setter from Broomfield, Colo., who also set for the Boulder Volleyball Club 18-1 team; Lizzy Erickson, a 6-1 middle hitter from Bethlehem Academy in Faribault, Minn.; Sunny Choh, an outside hitter who played for Apple Valley HS and the Northern Lights 18-2 club team; and Alyssa Honnette, an outside hitter from the Minnesota State Champion Jackson County Central team.

Concordia College

Head Coach: Tim Mosser (7th season / 124-107)

1999 Record: 13-21 (4-7 MIAC / 9th-tie)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Kristy Anderson Jr. S 5-9 Willmar MN/Willmar

Stacy Davis Sr. H 5-10 Wadena MN/Wadena

Leah Sanden Jr. S 5-6 Sioux Falls SD/Luverne

Sam Scariano Sr. H 6-0 Billings MT/Billings Senior - (1999 All-MIAC second team)

Katrina Wilberts So. M 5-11 Breckenridge, MN

Season Preview:

The 2000 volleyball season will be an exciting and new experience for the Cobber volleyball team. For the first time in four years Concordia will be without their mainstay in the middle, three-time All-MIAC player Anne Larson. They will need the experience and patience of several returning players if the Cobbers are going to make a run at the top of the MIAC. Coach Tim Mosser, who is in his eighth season with Concordia, will count on Sam Scariano (Sr., Billings MT, Billings Senior H.S.) who was a second team All-MIAC selection last year to lead the team. Also coming back to add depth to the Cobber lineup will be Stacy Davis (Sr., Wadena MN, Wadena H.S.), Kristy Anderson (Jr., Willmar MN, Willmar H.S.) and Leah Sanden (Jr., Sioux Falls SD, Luverne H.S.). The team will also have a pool of athletic and talented sophomores and first year students to dip into that will help infuse the team with enthusiasm and energy. Concordia is hoping to rebound from last year's ninth place finish in the MIAC, and put together a season of improvement that will help them get back into the top half of the conference. The Cobbers have a great schedule in 2000 which includes tournaments at the University of Dallas, the College of St. Benedict and UW-River Falls. Rounding out the non-conference schedule is a match with cross-town rival MSU-Moorhead.

Gustavus Adolphus College

Head Coach: Kari Eckheart (4th season / 50-47)

1999 Record: 15-19 (3-8 MIAC / 9th-tie)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Linnea Arvidson, SR, middle hitter, New Brighton, MN (248 kills, .171 kill %, 134 total blocks)

Laura Burley, SR, outside hitter, Libby, Montana (102 kills, 267 digs, 36 total blocks)

Chrissy Homeier, JR, setter, Kenyon, MN (687 assists, .316 set %, 59 service aces, 214 digs)

Courtney Lovejoy, SR, Chatfield, MN (185 kills, .130 attack %, 84 total blocks)

Jane Loosbrock, SO, Byron, MN (488 assists, .306 set %, 98 digs)

Season Preview:

The Gustavus women's volleyball team will take on a much different look this year after graduating five seniors from a squad that finished with a mark of 15-19 overall and 3-8 in the MIAC. Coach Kari Eckheart will need to replace all-conference middle hitter Jill Redebaugh who finished her career with over 1,000 career kills, however she returns a trio of veteran players who have been playing regularly on the varsity for the past two seasons including senior middle hitter Linnea Arvidson, and senior outside hitters Laura Burley and Courtney Lovejoy. Junior setter Chrissy Homeier will give the squad a quality leader on the attack. Coach Eckheart felt that blocking was the squad's strength a year ago and is confident that this year's team will be as good or better. Linnea Arvidson led the team in blocking with 134 total blocks and Courtney Lovejoy added 84 total blocks. Other returning letterwinners expected to contribute include sophomore setter Jane Loosbrock, and junior hitter Betsy Starz. Key newcomers include outside hitter Jessica Schaetzke, a freshman from New Ulm, Minn. and middle hitter Tona Schmidtko, a freshman from Waterville, Minn. Coach Eckheart has put together a challenging schedule for her young squad that includes matches against national powerhouses Washington University and Central College, strong regional squads from Wartburg and Wheaton as well as the always challenging MIAC schedule.

Hamline University

Head Coach: Katharine Romme (11th season / 18th overall)

1999 Record: 13-20 (4-7 MIAC / 8th)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Erin Louks

Sara Jane Angevine

Jenny Smith

Kelly Leatherberry

Season Preview:

As Head coach Katharine Romme and her recruiting class of 11 first-year athletes head into the 2000 season, all will be looking intently upon 4 returners from the '99 season for great leadership and poise. The Pipes will look to carry much of the defensive intensity from last year's squad (2nd place overall defensive efficiency in the MIAC) into the millennium season. And, if they can mesh the knowledge of experience with the intensity of their younger players early on, they will make a strong push to improve upon last season's 7th place finish in the MIAC Tournament.

Some youngsters that will be expected to contribute early will be Kjersti Hamlin, Laura Fleischman, Amanda Kopischke, Amy Hill, Emily Peterson, Alyssa Larson and Briana Tenold. The Pipers are excited to get their brand new season underway and will tip off their season at the University of Wisconsin-Superior on Sept. 1st

Macalester College

Head Coach: Steph Schleuder (3rd season at MAC / 36-25) (597-310 in 24 seasons overall)

1999 Record: 17-15 (6-5 MIAC / 6th)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Erika Lilley (Sr., S, Saugus, CA) 11.1 assists/game

Megan Blom (So., MB, Bricelyn, MN / Blue Earth) 53 blocks, 1.1 k/g/

Abby Dos Santos (Sr., OH, Washington, DC / Sidwell Friends) 2.1 d/g

Hilary Mead (Sr., OH, Evanston, IL / Evanston Twp.) 52 blocks, 62 aces

TiAnna Jones (Sr., OH, Woodlawn, WA) 2.3 digs/g.

Season Preview:

The 2000 season promises at least one thing for the Scots volleyball team?lots of new faces. Nine first-year players will be joining a solid returning group of players. In order to make any move upward in the conference standing, Macalester will have to fill the huge void left by graduating seniors Jennifer Hodges (OH), Courtenay Penwell (OH) and Melanie Blom (RS), the three leading hitters for the Scots in 1999. Hodges set a new team record with 616 kills and was fifth in the nation in kills per game.

Anchoring this year's team are five seniors who have seen extensive playing time. Setter Erika Lilley (Sr., Saugus, CA) averaged 11.1 assists per game last year and figures to run the Mac offense, with outside hitters TiAnna Jones (Sr., Woodlawn, WA), Abby Dos Santos (Sr., Washington, DC / Sidwell Friends) and Hilary Mead (Sr., Evanston, IL / Evanston Township) giving the team some offensive punch. The Scots also return middle hitter Megan Blom (So., Bricelyn, MN / Blue Earth).

College of St. Benedict

Head Coach: Michelle Blaeser (1st season)

1999 Record: 24-8 (9-2 MIAC / 3rd)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Carrie Otis, Sr, Middle Blocker, holds CSB records for Total Season Blocks (192) and

Blocks/game (1.714), 2nd in NCAA Div III for blocks, All-MIAC 2nd-team in '99.

Kelly Anderson, Jr, Middle Hitter, Adds depth to the middle blocker position, smart attacker.

Gina O'Neill, Jr, Middle Blocker, Quick footwork, adjusts to opponent's offensive style, tough blocking skills.

Jess Slattery, Jr, Defensive Specialist, sound footwork, smart server, 9th in the MIAC with Ace serves in '99.

Season Preview:

Michelle Swanson-Blaeser takes over as head coach after former coach Carol Howe-Veenstra retired at the end of last season. Blaeser is excited for the start of the season and plans to keep up with the quality of the program. St. Ben's will enjoy great balance in 2000, with a healthy mix of veteran upper-class returners and extremely talented First Years coming in to contribute right away. Returning players include Carrie Otis, Jody Barrett, Gina O'Neill, Kelly Anderson, Jess Slattery and Jessica Paulsen. They will be great leaders this season and will be exciting to watch.

College of St. Catherine

Head Coach: Richelle Wahi Reiff (2nd season)

1999 Record: 3-27 (0-11 MIAC / 12th)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Erica Reynolds - So, Captain, Kettle River, MN, led the team last year in passing and defense. Denise Foster - So, Captain, Roseville, MN, main outside hitter for CSC

Marty Northwick - So, Captain, St. Paul, MN, dominant middle hitter for CSC

Season Preview:

The Wildcats are gearing up for an exciting 2000 season. The team will be young and somewhat unpredictable, but will challenge conference leaders because of the right combination of returning athletes and first year recruits. Look for impressive performances from first year Patty Bredemus, Kelli Doschadis and Leah Reinhardt.

Saint Mary's University

Head Coach: Mike Lester (3rd season / 39-31)

1999 Record: 22-13 (7-4 MIAC / 5th)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Amanda Edmond (Sr., OH, 3-time All-MIAC, 289 kills, 25 assists, 61 aces, 25 blocks)

Shelley Haake (Sr., MH, 2-time All-MIAC, team-high 393 kills, 239 digs, team-high 92 blocks)

Diane Wood (Sr., RS, 369 blocks, team-high 99 aces, 82 blocks)

Rhonda Thibault (Jr., MH, 2nd-team All-MIAC, 356 kills, 87 blocks)

Amber Rajtora (Sr., S, 1302 assists, 244 digs)

Season Preview:

Four years ago, they came to Saint Mary's as perhaps the most highly touted recruiting class the Cardinal volleyball program had ever had. How good?

Amanda Edmond (Sandstone, Minn.), Diane Wood (Los Alamos, N.M.) and Shelley Haake (Carroll, Iowa) held down the teams top three spots in kills and blocks, while fellow freshmen Amber Rajtora (Cedar Rapids, Iowa) and Aimee Taillefer (Bloomington, Minn.) were the team leaders in assists and digs, respectively. Those five also appeared in more matches than any other players on the Cardinals' roster, as freshmen.

Last season SMU finished a much-improved 13-18 overall, and that was just a hint of things to come. 1999 proved to be the real coming-out party for the Cardinal junior class as SMU posted its highest finish ever the MIAC conference tournament (fifth) en route to a 22-13 record, the team's first 20-win season since 1990. Edmond and Haake were again first-team All-MIAC selections and the statistical leaders were again dominated by the names Edmond, Haake, Wood, Rajtora and Taillefer.

Yet, despite all of their impressive accomplishments, their continued improvement as a team and their steady climb up the conference ladder, something is still missing, win the conference title and earn an NCAA tournament berth.

It doesn't hurt that Lester returns his entire starting lineup for a fourth straight year, either.

"This senior class has had an outstanding run" said Lester, noting that Edmond, Haake, Wood, Rajtora and Taillefer have enjoyed much of the limelight over the last three seasons, but the Cardinals could not have enjoyed the success they have without the play of fellow seniors Lisa Grunewald (Austin, Minn.), Theresa Doheny (Cottage Grove, Minn.) and Teresa Sampson (St. Michael, Minn.). "This group has been through a lot over the past three years, but they've always stuck together and I'm looking forward to seeing them make their final season their most memorable one."

Complete SMU volleyball preview: www.smumn.edu/sports/volleyball/newsletter/vbpreview.html

St. Olaf College

Head Coach: Cindy Book (10th season / 20th overall)

1999 Record: 20-15 (8-3 MIAC / 4th)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Nicole Trnka, Jr, Power Hitter, All-MIAC and All-Region, #1 in MIAC for Attack%, Captain

Molly Swenson, Sr, Captain, Right Side

Christina Moses, Sr, Captain, Outside Hitter, #1 in MIAC in Digs

Jen Knudson, Sr, Captain, Defensive Specialist

Brie Mattson, So, Setter, All-MIAC, All-Region, #1 Setter in MIAC, Central Region Player of the Year

Season Preview:

The highly successful Ole volleyball team is ready to embark on another exciting season. The Ole program has been an NCAA participant the last six out of seven years, with its highest ranking in 1996 at third in the nation. The Oles hold four conference titles (93-94-95-96) and Coach Cindy Book is closing in on the 500 victories milestone. Book's overall record is 498-226 and 232-86 at St. Olaf. The Oles will open up their season on Sept. 1 at the Central College Invitational in Pella, Iowa.

University of St. Thomas

Head Coach: Cole Tallman (2nd season / 21-11)

1999 Record: 21-11 (10-1 MIAC / 1st-tie)

Key Returners: (Name, Yr, Pos, Highlight)

Steph Blanda, SR, OH, 5-8,

Sara Diercks, JR, Opp., 5-8

Katie Reynolds, SO, OH, 6-2

Season Preview:

Cole Tallman made an immediate impact in 1999, his debut season as UST head coach. He guided the Tommies to a 21-11 record, including a 10-1 MIAC regular-season dual record and tie for the MIAC championship. Eight losses came to top-20 teams in NAIA or Division III. Tallman, (496-152 (.772) in 15 seasons), the former head coach at Division I Furman, will reach 500 career coaching wins this fall. The Toms must replace four accomplished seniors -- Jenny Schmitt, Jill Kraus, Kirsten Johnson and Rachel Myskevitz. Schmitt set career records in assists (4,304) and digs (1,627); Johnson holds the career record in blocks (271, with 132 solos); and Myskevitz is the career record holder in service aces (283). St. Thomas' 24-player roster includes 14 newcomers -- nine of whom stand 5-10 or taller. Leading the returners are 5-9 senior OH Steph Blanda (246 kills, 357 digs); 6-2 sophomore OH Katie Reynolds (228 kills, school-record 122 blocks); and 5-9 opposite Sara Diercks (129 kills, 166 digs). Tallman's first recruiting class includes two upperclass players -- 6-2 junior Jenn Ulstad, who made the all-tournament team in basketball for UST at last March's NCAA Final Four; and 5-10 sophomore Erin Keating, who attended Northern Colorado last year. Leading the freshmen class is 5-10 setter Jane Gibbs of Lakeville.

1999 - [Standings](#), [Results](#), [Awards](#)

1999 Final Standings

	MIAC	Overall	Tourn.	Final
Bethel * ^	9-2	25-12	1st	1st-t
St. Thomas *	10-1	21-11	2nd	1st-t
St. Benedict	9-2	24-8	3rd	3rd
St. Olaf	8-3	20-15	4th	4th
St. Mary's	7-4	22-13	5th	5th

Macalester	6-5	17-15	6th	6th
Augsburg	5-6	11-17	7th-t	7th
Hamline	4-7	13-20	7th-t	8th
Concordia	4-7	13-21	10th	9th-t
Gustavus	3-8	15-19	9th	9th-t
Carleton	1-10	4-25	11th-t	11th
St. Catherine	0-11	3-27	11th-t	12th
* MIAC Co-Champions				
^ Advanced to NCAA Tournament				