

2003 MIAC VOLLEYBALL PREVIEW

The 2003 MIAC volleyball season gets underway with non-conference games beginning August 29. Conference play begins September 19, with teams competing against each other once in MIAC play.

St. Thomas, last season's MIAC Champion, is ranked 22nd in the Division III AVCA preseason poll. The Tommies will be the team to beat as they return second team All-American Jane Gibbs for her senior season and several key players from last year's squad. Bethel, ranked #24 in the nation in the preseason poll, returns what possibly could be the most talented and experienced team in the MIAC.

MIAC Volleyball will see many new faces on coaching staffs around the conference. New at Augsburg is Cathy Skinner. Skinner was the head coach at Division I Fordham University for four years. Hamline hired Gina Rollie to lead the Pipers to new heights. St. Catherine brings in UST assistant from last season Nicole Hess. Hess was a MIAC All-Conference player at St. Olaf. St. Thomas brings Thanh Pham back into the MIAC. Pham was a co-head coach at Augsburg for three seasons.

The MIAC Volleyball Playoffs take a slightly different look in 2003. The top six teams from the MIAC regular season again qualify for the playoffs. Quarterfinals will take place on Tuesday, November 4. New this year, the #1 and #2 seeds will host semifinal matches on Thursday, Nov. 6 and the highest remaining seed will host the championship match Saturday, Nov. 8. The winner of the playoff will receive the MIAC's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

MIAC Volleyball Preseason Coaches Poll

First place votes in () / 1 point was assigned for every first place vote, 2 for second, etc.

- 1. St Thomas (5) 26
- 2. St Mary's (2) 39
- 3. Bethel (3) 43
- 4. St Olaf 44
- 5. Concordia (1) 45
- 6. St Benedict's (1) 78
- 7. Carleton 85
- 8. Gustavus 89
- 9. Macalester 93
- 10. Hamline 122
- 11. St. Catherine's 135
- 12. Augsburg 137

2003 MIAC Volleyball Playoffs		
Quarterfinals November 4 #6 @ #3 - 7:30pm #5 @ #4 - 7:30pm Byes: #1, #2	Semifinals November 6 Winner #3/6 @ #2 - 7:30pm Winner #4/5 @ #1 - 7:30pm	Championship November 8 Championship - 7:30pm

<u>Augsburg College</u>		
Head Coach:	Cathy Skinner (1st - AUG (5th overall) / 0-0 at AUG)	
2002 Record:	3-25 (1-10 MIAC / 10th-tie)	
Key Returners:	Kristy Larson (MB, 5-11, Jr, Pine Island, Minn.), 2nd in kills (177, 2.13 kpg), .187 attack %, 37 blocks (10 solo) in '02. Anna Piermantier (S, 5-6, Sr, Afton, Minn.), team highs in assists (649, 7.46 apg) and digs (184, 2.11 dpd) in 2002. Alli Burgess (DS/S, 5-1, Sr, Sudan, Minn./Tower-Sudan HS), primary Libero on squad, 120 digs (2.14 dpd) in 2002. Linnea Evans (OH/RSH, So., 5-10, Kenyon, Minn.), 63 kills (1.07 kpg), 14 blocks (2 solo) in 2002. Billie Painschab (MB, So., 5-11, Howard Lake, Minn.), 23 kills (0.82 kpg), 13 blocks (2 solo) in 2002.	

Season Preview:	<p>For the Augsburg College volleyball team, a fresh start is in order. A new coaching staff and a new attitude is in place for the Auggies this season, with the hopes of bringing the program back to respectability in the MIAC.</p> <p>After a 3-25 finish (1-10 MIAC) last season, Augsburg hired former NCAA Division I head coach Cathy Skinner to direct the program. With her two new assistant coaches -- Michelle Grice and Juley Viger -- Skinner hopes to instill a new attitude in the Auggie program.</p> <p>"It's time to take strides in improving our record," Skinner said. "It's important to have a program where players enjoy the team and the amount of work and effort they're putting into it, and that they find success not only in the results of team, while seeing success in their own personal development as players and as people.</p> <p>"Everything we do in practice and in games will be to build consistency in our play, not only in our skills, but also consistency in expectations and consistency in training philosophy. In the midst of rally scoring, the team that is the most consistent and has the fewest number of errors is the team that's going to be the most successful. It's not brain surgery, it's not being flashy or the biggest or the fastest or the strongest. It's just not making mistakes, and you can win a lot of games that way."</p> <p>Skinner comes to Augsburg with 15 years of volleyball coaching experience, including eight years at the Division I level. From 1995-98, Skinner served as head coach at Fordham University (Bronx, N.Y.), where she led the Rams in a transition from the non-scholarship Patriot League to the highly-competitive Atlantic 10 Conference. During her four-season tenure, Fordham went 40-84, improving its position in three of her four years in the Atlantic 10 with a team that had won just seven matches in the two seasons prior to her arrival.</p> <p>Nine letterwinners and three starters return from last year's Auggie squad, a group that's eager to show improvement through their willingness to work hard, Skinner noted.</p> <p>Anna Piermantier (Sr., Afton, Minn./Stillwater HS) returns for her second season as the Auggies' starting setter. She compiled 649 assists (7.46 per game) last season, while also leading the team in digs (184, 2.11 per game). Alexis Johnson (So., Oakdale, Minn./North St. Paul HS) will back up Piermantier in the setting role.</p> <p>Kristy Larson (Jr., Pine Island, Minn.), the only Auggie to see action in every match the last two seasons (58), returns for her third season as the Auggies' primary middle blocker. Tops among returners in kills (177, 2.13 per game) and blocks (37, 0.45 per game), Larson's experience will be key to Augsburg's offensive attack. Billie Painschab (So., Howard Lake, Minn./Howard Lake-Waverly HS), who saw action in 15 matches last year, will join Larson in the middle.</p> <p>On the left side, Linnea Evans (So., Kenyon, Minn./Kenyon-Wanamingo HS) returns, after seeing action in 24 matches last season. She averaged 1.07 kills per game last year. Joining her will be Britt Bogner (So., Burnsville, Minn./Apple Valley HS). Liz Youngman (Sr., Minneapolis, Minn./Holy Angels HS) and transfer Bri Simon (Jr., Mankato, Minn.) will also compete for playing time as outside hitters.</p> <p>On the right side, Skinner is encouraged by the arrival of recruit Elsie Ginsberg (Fr., St. Paul, Minn./Central HS), a 6-foot-2 hitter who may bring a different dimension to the Auggie attack, a power hitter from the right side. Kirstie Zitzow (So., Dover, Minn./Dover-Eyota HS), who saw action in 17 matches last year, will join Ginsberg on the right side.</p> <p>Two senior leaders will occupy the libero (back-row specialist) position. Alli Burgess (Sr., Soudan, Minn./Tower-Sudan HS) saw most of the action in the libero role last year, with 120 digs (2.14 per game). Mandy Good (Sr., Bridgewater, N.J./Bridgewater-Raritan HS) saw action in 20 matches, averaging 2.80 digs per game.</p> <p>"Our senior leadership is key this year," Skinner said. "They have postured themselves as being available to help the team and to help me as a new coach. They're available to help me and have a role in making the team a better place to be. They're helpful, open, responsible and engaged in the program."</p> <p>Complete preview online at: http://www.augsburg.edu/athletics/volleyball/0203preview.html</p>
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Bethel College	
Head Coach:	Gretchen Hunt (3rd season / 49-19 overall)
2002 Record:	24-9 (9-2 MIAC / 2nd-tie)

Key Returners:	<p>Angie Frenell, Sr., MB, 5-10, Barstow, Ill. (AVCA All-Central Region 1st-team, All-MIAC 1st-team)</p> <p>Krstin Stoneberg, Sr., Libero, 5-7, Marshall, Minn.</p> <p>Jill Thorvig, Jr., OH, 5-8, Stacy, Minn. (AVCA All-Central Region Honorable Mention, All-MIAC 1st-team)</p> <p>Katie Snyder, So., Setter, 5-7, Alexandria, Minn.</p> <p>Kimmie Moehring, So., OH, 5-10, Minnetonka, Minn.</p>
Season Preview:	<p>With a wealth of experience and talent, the Royals look to challenge again for the MIAC crown and to return to the NCAA tournament in 2003. With the return of five starters and a total of fourteen players from last year</p> <p>Entering her third year as Head Coach, Gretchen Hunt is excited about the fall campaign after great spring practices and an off-season that included a lot of growth.</p> <p>Individually, outside hitter Jill Thorvig (Jr., Stacy, MN.) and middle blocker Angie Frenell (Sr., Co-captain, Barstow, IL.) look to pick-up right where they left off after a season full of accolades. As first-team All-MIAC picks and All-Central Region selections in 2002, they will be looking to help raise the level of play in the rest of their teammates this season. Along with senior co-captain, Kristin Stoneberg (Libero, Marshall, MN.), Thorvig and Frenell will anchor the team both offensively and defensively.</p> <p>This season should also be the one where the sophomore class gets the opportunity to demonstrate their talent. Katie Snyder (S, Alexandria, MN.) and Kimmie Moehring (OH, Minnetonka, MN.) were full-time starters for the Royals as freshmen, but experienced a lot of growing pains, and now will be ready to take the floor with more confidence.</p> <p>Complete preview can be seen online at: http://www.bethel.edu/Athletics/Volleyball/2003/preview.html</p>

Carleton College		
Head Coach:	Heidi Luehmann-Jaynes (5th season / 43-66 overall)	
2002 Record:	15-11 (4-7 MIAC / 8th-tie)	
Key Returners:	Katie Haldy, Sr., S, Broomfield, Colo., All-MIAC second team in 2000 and 2002, broke her own school record with 10.36 assists per game in 2002 , Carleton's career leader in total assists (2,248) and assists per game (8.85). Lizzy Erickson, Sr., MH, Faribault, Minn., All-MIAC 2nd team in 2000, led team with 2.64 K/Game and 1.15 B/Game. Katie Freeman, Jr., OH, Richfield, Minn. (Richfield HS), 2.48 K/Game. Sarah Barrow, Jr., MH, Englewood, Colo. (Cherry Creek), 2.41 K/Game, 1.02 B/Game in 2002.	

Season Preview:	<p>Experience, talent and expectations are three words that haven't been association with Carleton volleyball in nearly a decade. But under fifth-year head coach Heidi Luehmann Jaynes, those three elements definitely exist.</p> <p>The experience comes in the form of five returning starters and 11 returning letterwinners that posted a 15-11 mark last year, 4-7 in the MIAC. It marked the first time in 15 years that the Knights have posted consecutive winning seasons, as the team was 15-10 in 2001. The talent comes in the form of a solid group of sophomore and first-year players who figures to push the returning starters and gives Jaynes a solid nucleus on which to build the future of the program. The expectations are the result of the first two elements, which the Knights hope lead to a top conference finish and the MIAC Tournament berth that comes with that finish.</p> <p>Spearheading this group of starters are returning seniors Katie Haldy (Broomfield, Colo.) and Lizzy Erickson (Faribault, Minn./Bethlehem Academy). Erickson has paced the club in kills and blocks in each of the past two seasons and was All-MIAC second team as a sophomore. Last season the middle hitter tallied 2.64 kills per game and 1.15 blocks per game while pacing the team with 325.5 points. Haldy, meanwhile, broke her own school record with 10.36 assists per game in 2002 and also became Carleton's career leader in total assists (2,248) and assists per game (8.85). She was an All-MIAC second team selection in 2000 and 2002.</p> <p>Joining Haldy and Erickson as returning starters are outside hitter Katie Freeman (Jr./Richfield, Minn.) and right-side hitter Sarah Barrow (Englewood, Colo./Cherry Creek). Barrow posted a break-out campaign last year, tallying 2.41 kills per game and 1.02 blocks per game, ranking second on the team with 306.5 points. Katie Freeman ranked second on the team with 2.49 kills per game. Part-time starter Alivia Bryan (So./Eugene, Ore./Winston Churchill) tallied 0.97 blocks per game, third most on the team, and posted a solid .260 hitting percentage. Classmate Jessica Black (Greenwood Village, Colo./Cherry Creek) will figure prominently in Carleton's 2003 success as she tallied 2.19 kills per game and 2.60 digs per game in limited action last year.</p> <p>Erickson, Bryan and Barrow lead Carleton's defensive effort at the net, as the Knights were second in the MIAC in blocks per game in 2002. The trio ranked seventh, eighth and ninth, respectively, in blocks in the final conference rankings. Barrow ranked second in aces (0.72/game) and Erickson seventh (0.56/game), as the Knights led the league in aces per game (2.50/game)</p> <p>With all that experience returning, it would normally be hard for any newcomer to crack the starting line-up or gain significant playing time. The trio of rookies is all very talented and exceptional players, according to Jaynes, and could be a major factor this year.</p> <p>Danielle Hargreaves (Fy./Brandon, Manitoba/Vincent Massey) earned the Province Player of Year Award for top graduating female player and was named player of the year by the Winnipeg Sun newspaper. Her athleticism and power on the outside will be a welcome addition to the squad. Vanessa Brown (Fy./Lakeville, Minn.) brings a lot of athleticism to the team; she led the Panthers to the Minnesota State Tournament last fall, earning all-tournament team honors along the way. Kelsey Holmes (Fy./Brownsburg, Ind.), was the all-time assists leader at her high school and will likely compete for the libero position.</p> <p>If the Knights are to make a push into the four-team MIAC Tournament for the first time in school history, they'll need to avoid the inconsistent play that has plagued them at times the past two years. But if the Knights can become mentally tougher, improve their hitting percentage and defense, look for Carleton to make a push towards a possible post-season berth.</p> <p>Full preview at www.carleton.edu/athletics/volleyball</p>
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Concordia College	
Head Coach:	Tim Mosser (11th season / 173-151 overall)
2002 Record:	21-10 (7-4 MIAC / 4th-tie)
Key Returners:	<p>Jessica Walden - Jr, S, Hawley, MN - All-MIAC in 2002; Set a school record for assists in 2002 (1,174); 2nd in the MIAC in assists in 2002 with 492</p> <p>Jackelyn Barten - Jr, H, Melrose, MN - 2-Time All-MIAC; 2nd in the MIAC in hitting pct (.334), 3rd in blocks (47) and 6th in kills (154) in 2002</p> <p>Kris Sather - Jr, H, Fosston, MN</p> <p>Amy Fitzner - Jr, H, Valley City, ND - All-MIAC in 2002; 7th in the MIAC in kills in 2002</p> <p>Danielle Schmiesing - Jr, H, Sauk Centre, MN</p> <p>Rhiannon Grimm - Jr, DS, Hazen, ND</p>

Season Preview:	<p>Like a lidded pot on the stove that has been left too long, the 2003 Concordia volleyball team is starting to feel the pressure build from within. All six starters for the Cobbers are returning this season and five of the six have been starters since their first year in the program in 2001. Now the returning sextet will be called to make the final push into the top three of the MIAC. Last year the Cobbers made the league playoffs by finishing in a tie for fourth place. After dispatching St. Ben's in the first round of the playoffs, Concordia fell to regular season champion St. Thomas in the semifinals.</p> <p>Now that head coach Tim Mosser and his well-developed Cobber squad have had a taste of the postseason, the expectation to improve on last year's finish is starting to build. Two-time All-MIAC hitter Jacki Barten (Jr., Melrose, Minn./Melrose HS) is on track to become one of the school's all-time leaders in kills. In her first two seasons she has amassed 588 winners to go along with 223 blocks. Last year she finished the regular season with a team-high 358 kills and 112 blocks. Her 112 blocks was the tenth most on the school's all-time single season block list. She was second in the MIAC in hitting percentage (.334), third in blocks (47) and sixth in kills (154). She was named the MIAC Hitter of the Week on September 24 for her performance in wins over St. Catherine and Mayville State.</p> <p>The other half of Concordia's dynamic duo is all-conference setter Jessica Walden (Jr., Hawley, Minn./Hawley HS). Like Barten, she is on pace to leave her mark in the Cobber record book. In her first two seasons she has totaled 2109 assists. She needs 931 more assists to surpass Marsha Suko as the school's all-time leader in that category. In 2002 she set the school's single season record for assists in a single season. She finished the regular season with 1,174. She was second in the league in that category with 492 assists in the 11-match MIAC season. She was named the MIAC Setter/Defensive Player of the Week twice during the year. On September 9 she was given the award for helping the Cobbers win the St. Mary's Sugarloaf Classic. For her efforts she was named the tournament MVP. Over the course of the four-match tournament Walden played in 13 games, committed no errors and had 131 assists. She also had 10 service aces and 9 kills. She was also honored on November 4 for helping the Cobbers clinch a spot in the MIAC playoffs.</p> <p>Amy Fitzner (Jr., Valley City, N.Dak./Valley City HS) rounds out the Cobber contingent that earned MIAC postseason honors in 2002. She started slowly last season but gained momentum at the end of the year. She finished just behind Barten in almost every offensive category, and gave the Cobbers a fierce 1-2 attacking tandem at the net. She finished the regular season with 338 kills and 42 blocks. She was seventh in the MIAC in kills (153) and actually had a higher kills-to-games-played ratio than Barten. Like her teammates, Fitzner was honored with the player of the week award during the season. She won the MIAC Hitter of the Week on November 4th for her role in Concordia's win over St. Ben's in the final match of the regular season.</p> <p>The other three unsung Concordia players include Rhiannon Grimm (Jr., Hazen, N.Dak./Hazen HS), Kris Sather (Jr., Fosston, Minn./Fosston HS), and Danielle Schmiesing (Sauk Centre, Minn./Sauk Centre HS). All three players helped carry the team during key times last season and all will be called upon for the same in 2003.</p> <p>Concordia will take an extended trip at the beginning of the season. They will take their act to New York to compete in the Ithaca Tournament. That weekend will go a long way in helping Mosser judge just how the junior-laden Cobbers are progressing. Other key matches include home dates with Bethel (Oct. 9) and St. Thomas (Oct. 22) and an away battle with St. Olaf (Sept. 27). All three of those teams have finished in the top three of the league the past two seasons, and all three will hold the key to turning the building pressure into the steam that will drive the Cobbers engine towards the top of the MIAC in 2003.</p>
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<u>Gustavus Adolphus College</u>		
Head Coach:	Kari Eckheart (7th season/ 82-96 overall)	
2002 Record:	13-13 (6-5 MIAC / 7th)	
Key Returners:	Rachel Batladen, JR, S, Lamberton, MN (All-Conference, 3rd-year starter as junior, 919 assists) Tara Houlihan, SO, OH, Sioux Falls, SD (319 digs, 211 kills, 39 service aces) Nicole Nesseseth, SR, MH, Windom, MN (216 kills, 60 blocks) Anne Osthus, SO, MH, Olivia, MN (178 kills, 41 service aces, .232 attack percentage) Jessica Schaetzke, SR, OH, New Ulm, MN (All-Conference, 346 kills, 29 blocks) Jennifer Tischer, JR, OH, Lakeville, MN (191 digs)	

Season Preview:	<p>After missing the 2002 MIAC Playoffs by the narrowest of margins on the final day of the regular season, the Gustavus volleyball team returns with its sets sight clearly on qualifying for postseason play in 2003. The Gusties return all six starters including second team all-conference setter Rachel Batalden (junior), second team all-conference outside hitter Jessica Schaetzke (senior), middle hitters Anne Osthus (sophomore) and Nicole Nesseth (senior), rightside hitter Tara Houlihan (sophomore) and defensive specialist Jennifer Tischer (junior). Schaetzke led the Gusties in kills with 346. She finished the season ranked eighth in the MIAC in kills per game with an average of 3.36. Batalden led the team in set assists with 919 and games played with 87. She finished the season ranked fourth in the MIAC in assists per game at 11.0 and 42nd in Division III at 10.56 per game.</p> <p>In addition, the team returns veteran defensive specialist Pat Lawton (senior), outside hitter Sheila Rodel (junior) and defensive specialist Sue Dailey (junior). All three played regularly last season and will provide excellent depth this year. Sophomore Kristi Forsythe, who played on the junior varsity squad last season, has looked very good in the preseason and looks ready to contribute regularly as an outside hitter. Two newcomers also appear ready to contribute including first year setter Rachelle Jakobs (Montevideo, Minn.) and first year middle hitter Jami Moseng (Montevideo, Minn.).</p> <p>Consistency will be the key to how far this year's squad will go. Last season, the Gusties started the year 6-9 before winning seven of their next eight matches to finish with a mark of 13-13 overall and 6-5 in the MIAC (Seventh). One more victory would have put the team in the six-team MIAC Playoffs. Head coach Kari Eckheart commented, "This group was really disappointed by missing the playoffs last year and it has motivated them to get better in the off-season. " Eckheart feels that this team has a good mix of veterans and youth with several of the newcomers pushing the veterans for playing time. She added, "Our offense should be solid with the return of the majority of our front line as well as all-conference setter Rachel Batalden. My concern is our passing and defense. We will need several of our veteran back row players to step up and fill the spot vacated by Steph Siekman if we expect to reach our goals of finishing in the top four in the league and qualifying for the playoffs."</p>
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Hamline University		
Head Coach:	Gina Rollie (1st season / 0-0 overall)	
2002 Record:	8-16 (1-10 MIAC / 10th-tie)	
Key Returners:	<p>Laura Fleischman, Sr., OH, 6-0, Lester Prairie, Minn. - Led team in kills (293), and hitting percentage (.268) last season. Second on the team with 43 aces. Named MIAC All-Conference second team and Academic All-Conference in 2002.</p> <p>Emily Peterson, Sr., S, 5-10, Copper Center, Alaska - Three-year starter at setter. Dished out 706 assists in 2002. Named Academic All-Conference last season. Second on Hamline all-time assists list with 2,069.</p> <p>Leah Erickson, Jr., DS, 5-6, Anoka, Minn. - 116 digs in 2002.</p> <p>Alyssa Larson, Jr., DS, 5-4, Lino Lakes, Minn. - 120 digs and 14 aces in 2002.</p>	

Season Preview:	<p>It is a year of new beginnings for the 2003 Hamline volleyball team. There is a new sense of enthusiasm and excitement as new head coach Gina Rollie takes over the reigns of a Piper program that last season finished with a record of 8-16, 1-10 in the MIAC.</p> <p>Rollie, the former head coach at Champlin Park High School and standout setter at St. Olaf, will instill a new attitude centered on team defense.</p> <p>"Our primary focus to start the season is on defense," Rollie said. "Regardless of size or experience, you can teach your players how to play tough defense. Hopefully, that defensive mentality will pay off with more wins this season."</p> <p>Rollie will be teaching that defense to a very young squad. Hamline returns just seven players from last year's team along with 16 incoming freshmen. Among the returners are senior tri-captains Laura Fleischman (Lester Prairie, Minn.), Emily Peterson (Copper Center, Alaska), and Alyssa Larson (Lino Lake, Minn.).</p> <p>Fleischman has been the Pipers' best player for the last two seasons. The senior was named MIAC All-Conference second team last season while compiling 293 kills and a .268 hitting percentage. She also served up 43 aces and made 45 blocks. She was the only Piper to play in every game last season.</p> <p>This year the lefthander will move away from the middle hitter position to the outside to give her more opportunities at putting balls away.</p> <p>Peterson enters her fourth season as the Pipers starting setter. In her three previous seasons, Peterson has dished out 2,069 assists – second on the Pipers' all-time list. She had 706 assists in 2002.</p> <p>Larson and junior Leah Erickson (Anoka, Minn.) will be a stabilizing force in the back row. In 2002, Larson was fourth on the team with 120 digs to go along with 14 aces. Erickson is a great athlete who is a quick defensive player.</p> <p>Full Season Preview is at: http://www.hamline.edu/cla/athletics/volleyball/outlook.html</p>
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Macalester College		
Head Coach:	Steph Schleuder (6th year at MAC / 78-65 overall at MAC) (28th season overall / 639-350)	
2002 Record:	12-16 (4-7 MIAC / 8th-tie)	
Key Returners:	<p>Carley Bomstad (Sr., Apple Valley, Minn.) MB / 3-time All-MIAC, .320 hitting pct., 0.95 blk/g.</p> <p>May Lin Kessenich (Jr., Milford, Conn.) Libero / MIAC Defensive Player of the Year</p> <p>Bethany Tate (Jr., Charlotte, N.C.) OH / 3.55 kills/g., .2653 hitting pct.</p> <p>Sarah Graves (Sr., Lawrence, Kan.) OH / 32 aces, 0.69 blocks/g.</p>	
Season Preview:	<p>The reinforcements have arrived on the Macalester campus as the Scots will field the largest and one of the most versatile teams in Coach Stephanie Schleuder</p> <p>Anchoring the Scots are the team</p> <p>MIAC Defensive Player of the Year May Lin Kessenich also returns to the libero position after a sparkling season where she led the conference in digs per game (5.33). She was one of the Scots most proficient passers. Sarah Jacoby was converted to outside hitter last year after Tate</p> <p>Full Season Preview is at: www.macalester.edu/~vball/news/062403_prev.html</p>	

College of Saint Benedict		
Head Coach:	Michelle Swanson-Blaeser (4th season / 41-46 overall)	
2002 Record:	15-13 (7-4 MIAC / 4th-tie)	

Key Returners:	<p>Beth Schiller, SO, Detroit Lakes, Setter (968 set assist, 22 service aces), team leading setter</p> <p>Joquel Rudningen, SR, Sunberg, Right Side Hitter (268 kills, 36 service aces)</p> <p>Claire Loesch, JR, Kimball, Middle Blocker (191 kills, 26 blocks)</p> <p>Shantelle Needham, SO, Graceville, Outside Hitter</p> <p>Heidi Anderson, SR, South St. Paul, Middle Blocker</p> <p>Kristin Wolford, SR, Albany, Outside Hitter</p>
Season Preview:	<p>After starting the 2002 season 7-0 in the MIAC, the College of Saint Benedict Blazers will look to do the same thing again this year. Eight returning varsity players in combinations with a strong first-year class will have the Blazer back in the hunt for the MIAC Championship.</p> <p>Returning their leading setter, sophomore Beth Schiller, in combination with the hard hitting senior Joquel Rudningen, CSB will have a good core of talent back. Junior Claire Loesch will be standing tall against the net, blocking anything that comes from the opposing side.</p> <p>The Blazers will be participating in four tournaments this season and have scheduled two non-conference games against Division II Institutions.</p>

College of St. Catherine		
Head Coach:	Nicole Hess (1st season / 0-0 overall)	
2002 Record:	3-16 (1-10 MIAC / 10th-tie)	
Key Returners:	Amy Lipetsky JR, Springfiled, MN 2nd Team All-MIAC in 2002	
	Stacy Burns, JR, LeSeuer, MN Led team with 7.23 assists per game in 2002	
Season Preview:	First year head coach Nicole Hess looks to turn around the struggling Wildcat volleyball program. She comes to St. Kate's after spending a year as an assistant coach at the University of St. Thomas. Hess brings a strong work ethic and will push this young team to perform at a higher level than they have in previous years. The Wildcats will be tested early as they compete in three tough tournaments early in September. Amy Lipetsky (JR, Springfield, MN) is coming off a 2002 All-MIAC second team selection and will again lead St.Kate's. Stacy Burns (JR, LeSeuer, MN) returns after leading the team in assists per game with a 7.23 average.	

<u>Saint Mary's University</u>		
Head Coach:	Mike Lester (6th season / 97-67 overall)	
2002 Record:	15-14 overall (7-4 MIAC / 4th-tie)	
Key Returners:	Ashley Dingels (Jr, MH, Gibbon, Minn. / All-MIAC first team / 394 kills, 44 aces, 96 digs, 100 blocks) Tracy Koertgen (Jr, RS, Crystal Lake, Ill. / 354 kills, 75 aces, 183 digs, 41 blocks) Kirstan Rouzer (Jr, OH, Comstock, Wis. / 352 kills, 38 aces, 417 digs, 43 blocks) Katie Christensen (Jr, MH, Crystal Lake, Ill. / 117 kills, 43 ces, 103 digs, 47 blocks)	

Season Preview:	<p>The Saint Mary's University volleyball team needed a later surge to reach the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference post-season tournament a year ago.</p> <p>In fact, the Cardinals were forced to put together a key, five-match winning streak to close out the regular season just to earn the sixth and final spot in the tournament.</p> <p>And, unfortunately for SMU, the Cardinals couldn't carry that late-season magic into the post-season, as Bethel sent SMU packing in the tournament's first round, 3-2.</p> <p>This time around, the Cardinals aren't about to sneak into the conference tournament via the back door — they have every intention of using the front door.</p> <p>And they don't plan on knocking.</p> <p>But then, with virtually their entire starting lineup back — including All-MIAC first-teamer Ashley Dingels (394 kills, 44 aces, 96 digs, 100 blocks) — who's to argue?</p> <p>Complete SMU volleyball preview: http://sports.smumn.edu/volleyball/2003/newsletter/vbpreview.html</p>
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<u>St. Olaf College</u>		
Head Coach:	Traci Cook (2nd season / 20-15 overall)	
2002 Record:	20-15 (9-2 MIAC / 2nd-tie)	
Key Returners:	Andrea Cuff - Senior, Captain Andrea Drapcho - Senior, Captain	
Season Preview:	The Oles return this season with high hopes not only to repeat as MIAC Conference tournament champs, but also to claim the overall conference title. Last season the Oles, finished the season 20-15 overall and 9-2 in the MIAC conference, earning an automatic National berth after sweeping St. Thomas 3-0 in the MIAC tournament. The 2003 season promises to be equally exciting with many new faces joining the team, as well as the coaching staff. After one year away from coaching volleyball, Cindy Book will be returning to assist the Oles, along with new comer Tim Torstensen. Their experience will be a welcome help to second year head coach Traci Cook and long time assistant Lori Cooling. The returning squad, lead by senior captains Andrea Cuff and Andrea Drapcho, have been wondering what's in a name? With top new comers Andrea Donahue and Andrea Otteman joining the squad this season. With the talent level continuing to rise in the MIAC, the Oles are expecting a very competitive and exciting year. "This is a very talented, dedicated, and truly enjoyable group of young athletes to watch," explained Coach Cook. The Oles home opener will be a match versus Macalester College at 7:30 on September 17th in Skoglund Gymnasium.	

University of St. Thomas		
Head Coach:	Thanh Pham (1st season / co-head coach AUG '98-'00)	
2002 Record:	30-7 (10-1 MIAC / 1st)	

Key Returners:	<p>Jane Gibbs, SR, Lakeville, Minn., 5-9, Setter - 2nd-team All-American, 3X first-team All-MIAC, Career: 307 games, 4,210 assists, 978 digs, 103 aces, 182 blocks</p> <p>Amie Lee Aschenbeck, JR, Long Lake, Minn./Orono HS, 6-1, MB - 2002: 24 of 37 matches, 80 games, hit .349, 210 kills, 43 digs, 131 blocks</p> <p>Kristin Pins, SR, Dubuque, Iowa, 5-11, MB - 2002: Team 20-2 before she missed last 15 matches with a thumb injury; in 83 games hit .337 and averaged 2.17 kills, 1.24 blocks</p> <p>Jen Smith, SR, Apple Valley/Eastview HS, 5-11 MB - Sat out 2002; team MVP and all-conference for Hamline in 2000; in 2001 for UST, was second-team All-MIAC; 18th nationally in bpg (1.56); broke school season records for total blocks (158) and bpg (1.56); also had 266 kills)</p> <p>Emily Buehler, SR, Mazeppa, Minn., Zumbrota-Mazeppa HS, 5-11, OH - 2002: 36 of 37 matches, 124 games, averaged 2.69 kills, 3.69 digs and 0.68 blocks; team-best 80 aces; .228 hitting percentage.)</p> <p>Erika Wetzel, SO, Brooklyn Park/Champlin Park HS, 5-8, OH - 2002 MIAC First-Year Player of the Year; team 20-2 before she missed last 15 matches with an ankle injury; in 75 games, hit .318, had 252 kills, 289 digs, 36 blocks, 28 aces</p>
Season Preview:	<p>St. Thomas is ranked 16th in the 2003 Division III preseason top-25 poll by the American Volleyball Coaches' Association (AVCA) .</p> <p>The Tommies, who start their season Aug. 29-30 at the Puget Sound tournament in Tacoma, Wash., are directed by first-year coach Thanh Pham (pronounced TANG FAMM). He replaced four-year coach Cole Tallman, who's now head coach at Division I Gardner-Webb (N.C.). Pham returns at least 10 players from a 30-7, nationally-ranked team. Last year's Tommies won the conference championship but saw three key injuries dash their postseason hopes.</p> <p>Pham inherited one of the toughest Division III schedules in the nation. The Tommies will play 14 of the other 36 teams which received votes in the preseason poll, including No. 1 Washington (Mo)., No. 4 UW-Whitewater, No. 5 Cal State-Hayward, No. 9 Mt. St. Joseph, No. 10 Elmhurst, No. 13 Central, No. 14 Puget Sound, No. 15 Wartburg, No. 18 Nebraska Wesleyan, No. 21 Baldwin-Wallace and No. 24 Bethel.</p> <p>The Tommies graduated first-team All-American and conference MVP hitter Katie Reynolds, who ranks second in MIAC history in career kills (1,922). But second-team All-American and three-time All-MIAC setter Jane Gibbs (4,210 career assists), returns for her fourth and final season as a starter and needs just 95 assists to set the school career record. The Tommies are 73-25 in her era.</p> <p>Other returners include junior MB Amie Lee Aschenbeck; senior MB Kristin Pins; senior MB Jen Smith (sat out in 2002); senior OH Emily Buehler; and sophomore hitters Erika Wetzel, Lisa Yonke and Ann Eibensteiner. Freshmen hitters Rachelle Dosch of Anoka and Megan Mueller of St. Cloud Cathedral will look to contribute immediately. Wetzel was chosen the MIAC's First-Year Player of the Year. She missed the last 15 matches with an ankle injury incurred in October. Before her injury, she helped UST to a 20-2 start with 252 kills in 75 games, a .318 hitting percentage, 289 digs, 36 blocks and 28 service aces.</p> <p>In 2002 NCAA Division III statistics, Gibbs finished third nationally in assists per game (14.64) after leading the nation in 2001; and Reynolds was fourth in kills per game (5.77), 14th in digs per game (5.40) and 15th in attack percentage (.397).</p>

2002 - [Standings](#), [Results](#), [Awards](#), [Final Stats](#), [Players of the Week](#), [Season Preview](#)

2001 - [Standings](#), [Results](#), [Awards](#), [Final Stats](#), [Players of the Week](#), [Season Preview](#)