

2015 MIAC Volleyball Preview and Preseason Coaches' Poll

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2015 MIAC Conference Preview

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. -- In recent years, the state of Minnesota has emerged as one of the nation's volleyball hotbeds, and the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) is no exception. The 2014 season featured unparalleled strength and balance, and the upcoming 2015 season is expected to provide an equally-entertaining sequel.

Last season, three-fourths of the conference - nine out of 12 teams - finished tied for sixth or better, with all nine in the MIAC Playoff picture on the season's final day.

Four teams finished with 20 or more wins, eight were .500 or better overall and all 12 teams won at least eight matches during the 2014 season. To say the league was competitive in 2014 is a massive understatement.

Last season, St. Thomas (24-7) and Augsburg (23-6) shared the conference title for the second season in a row as both finished MIAC play with identical 10-1 records. It marked the eighth-straight season that UST won or shared the regular-season title, and it was the Auggies' second-straight share of the title, their first two in school history. Augsburg won the head-to-head meeting during the regular season and was the top seed in the MIAC Playoffs, but the second-seeded Tommies got their revenge on the road in the championship match to claim a third-straight conference postseason title.

Saint Benedict (21-10, 9-2 MIAC) just a game back in third place. Saint Mary's (20-13) and Bethel (18-10) each went 7-4 in conference play to share fourth place, and Gustavus (11-15) emerged from a four-team tie at 5-6 to claim the sixth and final spot in the MIAC Playoffs. Carleton (18-8), Hamline (13-10) and Concordia (12-12) all were 5-6 in league play also, and just missed out on a trip to the postseason due to tiebreaker criteria.

St. Olaf (9-19) finished 10th in the conference standings with a record of 2-9. St. Catherine won 10 matches (10-17) overall and came in 11th a 1-10 MIAC mark, and Macalester finished 8-20 overall and 0-11 in conference play to round out the 2014 standings.

This season, the MIAC could be even more competitive and wide-open from top-to-bottom, if it's possible. Both St. Thomas and Saint Benedict graduated decorated senior classes, but both teams always seem to reload and remain in the hunt. Meanwhile, Augsburg brings most of its starting lineup back, and Bethel and Saint Mary's are both loaded with talented returners, so the race for the MIAC title - and the six Playoff bids - could be a furious multiple-team fight to the finish.

All 12 teams enter the new season with aspirations of championships, postseason play or upward mobility, and on each campus in the MIAC, that optimism is well-founded.

THE POLLS ARE IN

The 2015 MIAC Volleyball Preseason Coaches' Poll is yet another example of the balance and parity throughout the league, as two teams tied atop the ranking with identical point totals. Augsburg and Bethel each received 112 points to share the title of MIAC preseason favorite, with the Royals receiving seven first-place votes to four for the Auggies. St. Thomas received the other first-place vote and 103 points to finish third in the poll.

Saint Benedict checked in at No. 4 with 92 points, with Saint Mary's (84 points) and Gustavus (70 points) rounding out the top six, with the coaches predicting that the same six teams will qualify for the MIAC Playoffs again in 2015. Carleton (58 points) edged Concordia (57 points) by the slimmest of margins for seventh, as coaches expect those two teams to again be in the postseason race as well.

Hamline had 35 points and finished ninth in the poll, and St. Catherine received 29 points to grab the final spot in the top 10. St. Olaf came in 11th with 25 points, and Macalester (15 points) rounded out the final spot in the 2015 coaches' predictions.

The MIAC is typically one of the strongest volleyball conferences in the nation, and it was no surprise to see a trio of teams receive votes in the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) Division III Coaches Top 25 Preseason Poll, which was released on Aug. 20. St. Thomas is the highest-ranked MIAC squad at No. 17 with 464 points. Augsburg received 353 points in the poll and is ranked 20th to start the season, and Saint Benedict (12 points) also appeared in the "Others receiving votes and listed on two or more ballots" section.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

Prior to 2013, Augsburg had never won the MIAC championship. Two seasons later, the Auggies have now shared it twice with St. Thomas, and Head Coach Jane Becker's team returns five starters to eye a three-peat. Two-time All-American Ashley Peper returns as one of the MIAC's top hitters and one of Augsburg's most decorated players in school history. All-Region setter Courtney Lemke is back as well, along with senior middle hitter Jessica Lilquist to give the Auggies a strong, veteran nucleus.



Bethel was fifth a year ago, but has higher expectations in 2015 thanks to all its key players coming back and, with most of them being either juniors or sophomores, the Royals could still be ascending. Junior outside hitter Carlee Hoppe, junior setter Katie Lubben and sophomore middle Kristin Stern all return with All-Conference accolades, and Hoppe (2013) and Stern (2014) were each named MIAC Rookie-of-the-Year in their first seasons.

St. Thomas graduated three-time MIAC Player-of-the-Year Kelly Foley and several other decorated seniors that helped the team win the 2012 National Championship, but Head Coach Thanh Pham is ready to reload. Juniors Whitney Lloyd and Taylor Lewis and senior Kelly Biermann are ready to step in on the front line and keep UST in contention. Saint Benedict also graduated seven seniors, including All-American setter Taya Kockelman, but has All-MIAC hitter Laura Schmitt back, along with senior middle Mary Franz and sophomore defensive specialist Gabi Navarez.

Saint Mary's has most of its nucleus back, led by senior libero Lex Krogstad - an All-MIAC pick a year ago - and senior Macki Fadness and junior Kenzie Lind also return to give the Cardinals a pair of talented outside hitters. Gustavus also lost just one key contributor, with All-MIAC honorees Alyssa Taylor (middle) and Marisa Morgan (setter) both back, along with senior outside hitter Becca Woodstra.

Carleton will be looking to fill some holes on the right side and at setter, but having MIAC Defensive Player-of-the-Year Camille Benson back is a great start for the Knights. Carleton also welcomes back sophomore hitter Lucy Stevens and junior hitter Caroline Duke in 2015. Concordia graduated three key contributors, but has two senior hitters back who have both won All-MIAC accolades in Anna Skow-Anderson and Olivia Wangenstein, and junior setter Mandy Mercial also returns to direct the Cobber offense in 2015.

Hamline graduated defensive star Lynsey Reimer, but brings back top hitter Michelle Mattke, defensive specialist Miquel Green and versatile defender/setter Amelia Jensen as the Pipers try to return to the MIAC Playoffs after a one-year absence. St. Catherine will be looking for a new setter to direct the Wildcat offense in 2015, but that person will have the benefit of a trio of talented hitters to set up. Senior middles Alyssa Besch and Amber Zeiher are both back, and sophomore outside hitter Megan Lindenfelser returns to build on her strong rookie campaign.

St. Olaf will look a little different this season with Head Coach Cindy Book on sabbatical. Walt Weaver takes over for book with Reid Vernon assisting, and the Oles have high hopes in the absence of their longtime coach with senior setter Kersten Bork, junior middle Sophie Schwartz and sophomore hitter Abby Carpenter all back in the fold. Macalester also brings back most of its nucleus in senior defensive specialist Cora Trout and sophomore hitters Clara Baumann and Regan Fruh as the Scots work to improve in 2015.

CIRCLE THESE DATES

Fans don't have much longer to wait - a week, to be exact - as the 2015 will officially serve up its first matches on Tuesday, Sept. 1. After two weeks of nonconference play, MIAC matches will begin on Wednesday, Sept. 1, and the regular season will conclude with a tremendous Halloween schedule on Saturday, Oct. 31. The [MIAC Playoffs](#) will follow with quarterfinals on Nov. 3, semifinals on Nov. 5 and the championship set for Saturday, Nov. 7.

Two of the MIAC biggest matchups of the season will bookend conference play, starting with a marquee matchup between No. 17 St. Thomas and (RV) Saint Benedict on the Tommies' home court in St. Paul on the opening day of conference play (Sept. 16) at 7 p.m. The two preseason favorites will save their matchup for last, as No. 20 Augsburg travels to Arden Hills, Minn., to face Bethel in the final match of the season on Oct. 31 at 6 p.m. in a showdown that could have a lot on the line.

The league's other two 2014 Playoff teams will also collide on the season's final in a match that could very well carry postseason implications once again, as Gustavus will host Saint Mary's on Oct. 31 at 3 p.m. The two Northfield, Minn. rivals - Carleton and St. Olaf - will also meet on the season's final weekend with the Oles hosting the Knights on Friday, Oct. 30, at 7 p.m.

Last season, Concordia and Hamline both just missed out on a trip to the postseason, so their head-to-head meeting could be a make-or-break match for both teams. The Pipers will head to Moorhead, Minn., to face the Cobbers on Sept. 26 at 3 p.m. On Oct. 21, St. Paul, Minn., rivals St. Catherine and Macalester will square off on the Scots' home court at 7 p.m. with both teams hoping to score a big victory for local pride and upward mobility in the 2015 standings.

A CLOSER LOOK

The rest of the 2015 MIAC Volleyball Preview contains complete results from the 2015 Preseason Coaches' Poll, a video from MIAC Media, helpful links and a preview for each team submitted by their sports information director. The MIAC web site - www.miacathletics.com - will be an outstanding source for MIAC volleyball news, schedules, scores, stats and more throughout the 2015 season.

Visit the [MIAC scoreboard](#) on game days to follow all the action, and download the [MIAC mobile app](#) to have all the information with you anywhere you travel. Also, connect to the conference on its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) pages for updates and interaction all season long.

2015 MIAC Volleyball Preseason Coaches' Poll

Coaches voted for every team in the conference except their own team. Points were assigned for each vote (11 for first, 10 for second, etc.) Teams are ranked in order of highest point total to lowest with vote totals listed and first-place votes shown in parentheses.

2015 MIAC Volleyball Preseason Coaches' Poll

Rank	Institution	Total
T1.	Augsburg (4)	112
T1.	Bethel (7)	112
3.	St. Thomas (1)	103
4.	Saint Benedict	92
5.	Saint Mary's	84
6.	Gustavus	70
7.	Carleton	58
8.	Concordia	57
9.	Hamline	35
10.	St. Catherine	29
11.	St. Olaf	25
12.	Macalester	15

2015 MIAC Volleyball Camp Tour

MIAC Media is embarking on a tour around the MIAC to get a behind-the-scenes look as many of the conference's volleyball teams as they prepare for the start of the 2015 season. The [tour home page](#) has the tour schedule, blog posts and videos with interviews and highlights from each stop on the tour. The tour has already visited Macalester, Saint Mary's and Bethel, with visits to Augsburg, Saint Benedict, Carleton and more still to come. Follow the tour on social mediaL on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) using the hashtag [#MIACcamp tour](#).

| [MIAC Volleyball Camp Tour Home Page](#) |

2015 MIAC Volleyball Playoffs

The [2015 MIAC Playoffs](#) will feature the top six teams in the conference standings playing in a high-seed-host, single-elimination postseason tournament. The two top seeds will receive a bye to the semifinal round, while the No. 3 seed will host the No. 6 seed, and the No. 4 seed will host the No. 5 seeds during the quarterfinals, which will be held Tuesday, Nov. 3. The No. 3/6 winner will play at the No. 2 seed and the No. 4/5 winner will play at the No. 1 seed during the semifinals, which are scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 5. The championship match is set for Saturday, Nov. 7, with the two semifinal winners meeting on home court of the top remaining seed. All MIAC Volleyball Playoff matches will start at 7 p.m. The winner will receive the MIAC's automatic bid to the 2015 NCAA Division III Volleyball Tournament.

| [MIAC Volleyball Playoffs Websites](#) | [2014](#) | [2015](#) |

MIAC Volleyball Links

| [2015 MIAC Schedule](#) | [2014 MIAC Statistics](#) | [MIAC Recordbook](#) | [MIAC Archives](#) |

Team-by-Team Previews

| [AUG](#) | [BU](#) | [CAR](#) | [CON](#) | [GAC](#) | [HU](#) | [MAC](#) | [CSB](#) | [SCU](#) | [SMU](#) | [STO](#) | [UST](#) |



AUGSBURG | [Auggies' volleyball home page](#) |

Head Coach

- Jane Becker (6th season)

A Year Ago

- 23-6 MIAC (T-1st place) | 10-1 Overall

In the 2014 Postseason

- MIAC postseason runner-up: Augsburg 3, Saint Mary's 0 in semifinals, St. Thomas 3, Augsburg 0 in finals.
- NCAA playoff first round (Cornell 3, Augsburg 1)

Top Returners

- Ashley Peper (RS, SR | AVCA All-America 1st team in 2013 and 2014, AVCA All-Central Region 2013 and 2014, All-MIAC 2012, 2013 and 2014; led MIAC in kills (437) and kills per-set (4.05), along with 483.5 points and 4.50 points per-set; 1,284 career kills (2nd in school history) and 3.94 career kills per-set (tops in school history).)
- Courtney Lemke (S, JR | AVCA All-America honorable mention in 2014, AVCA All-Central Region 2014, All-MIAC 2014; led MIAC with 11.11 assists per-set, 3rd-best nationally; 1,089 total assists in 2014.)
- Jessica Lillquist (MH, SR | Third on the team in kills and blocks with 215 kills (1.99 per-set) and 67 blocks (0.62 per-set).)

Key Losses

- Colleen Ourada (OH | AVCA All-America 3rd team in 2013 and 2014, AVCA All-Central Region 2013 and 2014, All-MIAC 2013 and 2014; 1st in Augsburg history in career kills (1,547), attack attempts (4,534) and total blocks (329), while 2nd in kills per-set (3.33), 2nd in solo blocks (89) and 2nd in block assists (240).)
- Mackensie Menke (Libero | 544 digs in 2014, 5.04 digs-per-set (seventh in MIAC), All-MIAC Sportsmanship Team in 2014.)
- Kyle Everett (DS | Appeared in 76 sets with 48 digs and 9 service aces.)

By the Numbers

- 39: Career kill-dig double-doubles for right-side hitter Ashley Peper, including 14 in 2014. Peper led the MIAC for the second straight year in both kills (437) and kills per-set (4.05).
- 3: Spot in the NCAA Division III national rankings in assists per-set for setter Courtney Lemke (11.11 per-set). She recorded 13 assist-dig double-doubles in 2014.
- 5: Augsburg returns five starters from last year's MIAC regular-season championship team.

Did You Know?

- Augsburg Head Coach Jane Becker has earned both MIAC and AVCA Central Region Coach of the Year honors each of the past two seasons. Entering her ninth season as a collegiate head coach and sixth at Augsburg, Becker has a 160-91 career coaching record, including a 100-49 mark at Augsburg.

Off the Court

- The Augsburg volleyball team received the AVCA Academic Award in both 2013 and 2014. The Auggies had a 3.41 team grade-point average in 2014.



BETHEL | [Royals' volleyball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Gretchen Hunt (15th season)

A Year Ago

- 7-4 MIAC (Fifth place) | 18-10 Overall

In the 2014 Postseason

- 1-3 loss at Saint Mary's in MIAC quarterfinal

Top Returners

- Carlee Hoppe (OH, Jr. | Two-time All-MIAC, 2013 MIAC Rookie of the Year, 3.56 kills/set, 131 digs)
- Kristin Stern (MB, So. | 2014 All-MIAC, 2014 MIAC Rookie of the Year, 3.23 kills/set, .332 attacking percentage, 0.70 blocks/set)
- Katie Lubben (S, Jr. | 2014 All-MIAC, 100 sets played, 1,093 assists, 10.93 assists/set, 231 digs)

Key Losses

- Maddison Messner (DS | 221 digs, 3.45 digs/set)

By the Numbers

- 2.06: The Royals 2.06 blocks per set during conference play led the league at the conclusion of the 2014 season. Leading Bethel was Tegan LaBerge and Kristin Stern, who posted 1.17 and 0.83 blocks per set respectively against MIAC opponents.
- 18: Following the 2014 campaign Katie Lubben ranked No. 10 nationwide in assists per set, averaging 10.9 assists. Lubben helped the Royals finish No. 18 as a team, posting 12.6 assists per set.
- 10: The Royals received their 10th consecutive AVCA Team Academic Award at the conclusion of the 2014-15 school year. To receive this honor, teams must maintain a cumulative 3.30 grade-point average

Did you know?

- Bethel's .226 hitting percentage last year was the highest team average since the beginning of rally scoring (2001). The Royals collected 1,341 kills and just 501 errors in 3,713 total attempts.

Off the court

- Junior middle blocker Tegan LaBerge was an events intern for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital this summer. Unlike other hospitals, St. Jude families never receive a bill for treatment, travel, housing or food. In fact, the hospital is funded almost entirely by generous donors. As an intern, LaBerge assisted many events in Minneapolis that raised money for the hospital in Memphis. Moreover, she attended the St. Jude Collegiate Leadership Seminar in Memphis with three other Bethel students. As a result of her summer experience, LaBerge and others are launching a St. Jude club on campus that will focus on networking and fundraising in order to contribute to the mission of treating children with life-threatening illnesses.

CARLETON | [Knights' volleyball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Heidi Jaynes (17th season)

**A Year Ago**

- 5-6 MIAC (sixth place place) | 18-8 Overall

Top Returners

- Camille Benson (Libero, senior | AVCA All-Region Honorable Mention; MIAC Defensive Player-of-the-Year; led MIAC with 6.29 digs per set and 57 service aces)
- Lucy Stevens (Middle Hitter, sophomore | hit a MIAC-best .358 with 3.24 kills per set as a rookie; finished second on the team with 44 blocks)
- Caroline Duke (Outside Hitter, junior | second on 2014 team in kills, assists; fourth on squad in digs, aces, and

blocks)

Key Losses

- Karen Halls (Right Side | All-MIAC in 2014; finished second in MIAC with 170 kills and 3.95 kills per set; ranked fifth in MIAC with 34 blocks)
- Alicia Flatt (Setter | finished third in program history with 2,947 assists; ranked fourth in the MIAC last year with 8.78 assists per set)
- Claire Willeck (Outside Hitter | third on team with 1.98 kills per set)

By the Numbers

- 1,704: Camille Benson accumulated 1,704 digs over her first three seasons. That figure ranks third in program history. She owns a career average of 5.92 digs per set, which is on pace to smash the previous team standard.
- 211: Carleton led all MIAC teams with 211 services aces in 2014, a marked improvement from the year before when the Knights were 10th with 136 aces.
- 14: Carleton played 14 matches last season that lasted only three sets. The Knights went 12-2 in those contests.

Did You Know?

- Lucy Stevens posted a .358 hitting percentage last season, becoming the first rookie to pace the MIAC in that statistic since 1992.

Off the Court

- Carleton earned another AVCA Team Academic award for the 2014-15 academic year. Since 2002, Carleton has picked up the honor 13 times, most among MIAC programs.

**CONCORDIA** | [Cobbers' volleyball home page](#) |**Head coach**

- Tim Mosser (23rd season)

A Year Ago

- 5-6 MIAC (T6th place) | 12-12 Overall

Top Returners

- Anna Skow-Anderson (RSH, Sr. | 2014 MIAC All-Conference; second on the team in kills & third in hitting percentage in 2014)
- Mandy Mercil (S, Jr. | Led the team in assists in 2014)
- Olivia Wangenstein (OH, Sr. | All-MIAC in 2012; 598 career kills & 618 career digs)

Key Losses

- Kelly Reed (MH | 2014 MIAC All-Conference; led the team in kills and hitting percentage in 2014)
- Kynndyl Ross (RSH | 3rd on the team in kills in 2014)
- Alyssa Schmidt (L | Led the team in digs in 2014)

By the Numbers

- 9: The Cobbers return nine letter-winners from last season
- 13: Concordia had their streak of 13 consecutive postseason appearances come to an end in 2014
- 23: Cobber head coach Tim Mosser enters his 23rd season at Concordia – the longest tenured active coach in the MIAC.

Did You Know?

- Concordia senior Heather Beaner is planning on being a registered nurse in a medical surgery unit after graduation

**GUSTAVUS** | [Gusties' volleyball home page](#) |**Head coach**

- Rachelle Sherden (6th season)

A Year Ago

- 5-6 MIAC (6th place) | 11-15 Overall

In the 2014 Postseason

- Gustavus last year made its first MIAC Playoff appearance since 2011, but lost 3-0 to Saint Benedict in the first round.

Top Returners

- Alyssa Taylor (MH, Sr. | 2014 All-MIAC, played in all 26 matches and all 98 sets last year, 284 kills (10.1 per match), .324 attack percentage, 92 blocks (1st/MIAC))
- Marisa Morgan (S, So. | 2014 All-MIAC, 824 assists, 210 digs, 65 kills)
- Becca Woodstra (OH, Sr. | Played in all 26 matches last year, 212 kills, 84 digs and 28 blocks)

Key Losses

- Paige Breneman (Libero | led the Gusties with 365 digs and 368 serve attempts)

By the Numbers

- .324: Alyssa Taylor's attack percentage last year, which ranks third in program history for a season
- 6: starters returning this season
- 11.8: Team kills per set last season, including four players with a kill per set average higher than 2.15.

Did You Know?

- The Gusties will host their home games on a brand new floor in Lund Arena. The new floor was installed this past spring.

Off the Court

- The Gustavus volleyball program does everything it can to help those in need. This past May, the team hosted its alumnae match along with a benefit dinner supporting Karen Gilman, mother of former player Emily Gilman, who is battling stage three lung cancer. The benefit provided moral support and financial assistance to the Gilman family.



HAMLINE | [Pipers' volleyball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Becky Egan (3rd season)

A Year Ago

- 5-6 MIAC (T-6th place) | 13-10 Overall

Top Returners

- Michelle Mattke (Sr., OH, Only HU player who was in Triple Digits in Digs [180] and Kills [115] last year.)
- Amelia Jensen (Jr., DS/S, Led HU with 435 assists last year)
- Miquel Green (Sr., DS, 3.24 Digs per set last year, second on team)

Key Losses

- Lynsey Reimer (DS MIAC Co-Defensive Player of Year in 2013, School career record holder for Digs Per Game, 5.10)
- Caitlyn Gottwald (RS, 1.92 Kills Per Set)
- Paige Walters (OF, Four year letter winner, Co-Captain last year)

By the Numbers

- 2: number of consecutive winning seasons under head coach Becky Egan
- 5: new faces on 2015 team
- 8: Consecutive wins Pipers had to start last season (second best win streak in school history)

Did You Know?

- When HU defeated St. Thomas, 25-8, in the third set of their match, it was their first such win over the Tommies since 2006.

Off the Court

- Four players made the MIAC Academic All-Conference team last fall. Three of those players – Michelle Mattke, Jamie Rubbelke and Jena Meyer – return for 2015.

MACALESTER | [Scots' volleyball home page](#) |



Head coach

- Annie Doman (6th season)

A Year Ago

- 0-11 MIAC (12th place) | 8-20 Overall

Top Returners

- Clara Baumann (OH, So. | Led team with 212 season kills and 2.30 K/Set)
- Cora Trout (DS, Sr. | Led team with 455 season digs and 5.29 digs/set – 9th in MIAC for season digs and 5th in digs/set)
- Regan Fruh (MH, So. | Led team with 62 season blocks and .67 blocks/set)

Key Losses

- Hannah Rehak (MH | Played in all 28 matches in 2014, finished with 50 kills and 24 blocks)

By the Numbers

- 3: Three Macalester volleyball players studied abroad during the Spring semester. Junior Katherine Meier studied abroad in Fort Dapuphin, Madagascar. Senior Kasey McMaster studied at IAU College in the Marchutz School of Art on the southern coast of France. Senior Cora Trout studied in Paris, France.
- 9: Macalester volleyball and the Macalester Student Athlete Advisory Committee joined forces to put on the ninth annual Dig Pink event last season on Friday, Oct. 10. Over \$900 was raised that went toward the SideOut Foundation, helping to fund cancer research.

Did You Know?

- Macalester's 19 players come from 13 different states, with the largest number of student-athletes (four) coming from California.

Off the Court

- Three Macalester volleyball players participated in foreign tours over the summer. Sophomore players Regan Fruh and Clara Baumann both competed in Italy. Senior Arianna Hesterberg traveled to Costa Rica and competed against the Costa Rica national team. She also helped put on sports clinics for Costa Rican youth and partnered with the Special Olympics of Costa Rica.

SAINT BENEDICT | [Blazers volleyball home page](#) |



Head coach

- Nicole Hess (6th season)

A Year Ago

- 9-2 MIAC (3rd place) | 21-10 Overall

In the 2014 Postseason

- Beat Gustavus 3-0 in quarters; lost 3-1 to St. Thomas in semis
- Lost 3-0 to No. 6 UW-Stevens Point in first round of NCAA Tournament

Top Returners

- Laura Schmitt (OH, Sr | All-MIAC, eighth in MIAC in kills/set (3.08))
- Mary Franz (MB, Sr | Third in MIAC in total blocks (91))
- Gabi Narvaez (DS, So | Fifth on team with 234 digs)

Key Losses

- Taya Kockelman (S | Three-time All-MIAC, All-Region and All-American; finished fifth in DIII in assists/set in 2014)
- Lexi Rinde (Right-side hitter | Four-time All-MIAC, two-time All-Region and All-American)
- Victoria Nass (L | Third in MIAC with 566 digs; holds school record for digs in a game)

By the Numbers

- 7: Seven seniors graduated from CSB's 2014 roster; head coach Nicole Hess' largest class
- 4: The Blazers have earned a berth in the NCAA Division III National Tournament each of the past four seasons
- 20+ : CSB has won 20 or more games in each of the last three seasons

Did You Know?

- The Blazer volleyball team enters 2015 just seven wins away from its 300th MIAC win. CSB is currently 293-84 in MIAC play since joining the league in 1985.

Off the Court

- The Blazers earned AVCA Team Academic honors for the third straight year in 2014. CSB has been honored for its academic success in five of the past six seasons.

ST. CATHERINE | [Wildcats' volleyball home page](#) |



Head coach

- Corey Phelps (6th season)

A Year Ago

- 1-10 MIAC (11th place) | 10-17 Overall

Top Returners

- Alyssa Besch (MB, Sr. | Led Wildcats in multiple hitting categories; ranked top-20 in MIAC for kills, k/s, hitting %)
- Megan Lindenfelser (OH, So. | Led Wildcats in kills per set; ranked top-10 in MIAC for kills, k/s)
- Amber Zeiher (MB, Sr. | Led Wildcats in blocking; ranked top-15 in MIAC for blocks, b/s)

Key Losses

- Karsee Knutson (S | Fourth in St. Kate's history for career assists)
- Ashley Kahlow (S | Second in St. Kate's history for career aces, third for assists)

By the Numbers

- 4: In the MIAC, the Wildcats ranked fourth among all teams for service aces per set with 1.56.

- 7: The Wildcats won seven matches in straight sets against their opponents in 2014.
- 15: The Wildcats won the third set of matches more often (15-12) than their opponents in 2014.

Did You Know?

- Alyssa Besch participated in track and field for the first time last spring and finished as MIAC champion in the javelin. Her winning mark of 41.17 meters (135-1) ranked 27th in all of Division III – narrowly missing qualifying for nationals.

Off the Court

- The St. Catherine volleyball team earned the AVCA Team Academic award for the seventh year in a row for outstanding academic achievement.



SAINT MARY'S | [Cardinals' volleyball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Mike Lester (18th season)

A Year Ago

- 7-4 MIAC (4th place) | 20-13 Overall

In The 2014 Postseason

- MIAC Tournament: Bethel (W, 3-1), at Augsburg (W, 3-0)

Top Returners

- Lex Krogstad (Sr., Libero | 31 MP, 123 Assists, 24 Aces, 542 Digs ... 542 digs rank 5th all-time; 1,603 digs in 3 years—2nd all-time ... First-Team All-MIAC)
- Macki Fadness (Sr., OH | 30 MP, 261 Kills, .242 Attack %, 55 Digs, 55 Blocks ... Led team in kills with career-high 261)
- Kenzie Lind (Jr., OH | 27 MP, 204 Kills, .170 Attack %, 16 Aces, 177 Digs, 12 Blocks)

Key Losses

- Mary Nordick (33 MP, 237 Kills, .321 Attack %, 9 Aces, 43 Digs, 93 Blocks ... 2014 First-Team All-MIAC)
- Molly Grover (30 MP, 220 Kills, .237 Attack %, 50 Digs, 44 Blocks)

By The Numbers

- **20:** The Cardinals' 20 wins in 2014 marked the second straight year—and eighth time under Lester—than Saint Mary's has posted 20 or more wins in a season.
- **313:** With their seventh win of the season a year ago—a 3-0 victory over UW-Superior on Sept. 19—Mike Lester earned his 300th collegiate coaching win. The Cardinal head coach owns 313 coaching wins in 17 seasons at Saint Mary's.
- **542:** Lex Krogstad (Chicago, Ill.) boasted a team-leading 542 digs—marking the third straight season she has recorded 500 or more digs in a season. Krogstad, who tallied a season-high 28 digs three times a year ago, posted 20 or more digs in a match 12 times last season.

Did You Know?

- Mary Nordick became the 12th player in program history to eclipse the 1,000 career-kills mark—closing out her career with 1,001. Nordick also ranks No. 2 all-time in total blocks with 421 (7 shy of record-holder Vicki Wilson) and block assists with 322 (9 back of Wilson).

Off The Court

- Along with Molly Grover (Zumbrota, Minn.) being named to the Academic All-MIAC Team, the Cardinals also earned the 2014-2015 AVCA Team Academic Award.



ST. OLAF | [Oles' volleyball home page](#) |

Head coach

- Walt Weaver (1st season)

A Year Ago

- 2-9 MIAC (10th place) | 9-19 Overall

Top Returners

- Kersten Bork (S, Sr. | Led team with 534 assists in 2014.)
- Sophie Schwartz (MB, Jr. | Led team with 82 blocks.)
- Abby Carpenter (OH, Soph. | 189 kills, 104 digs in 2014.)

Key Losses

- Maggie Prunty (MB | Had 194 kills, 60 blocks)

ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' volleyball home page](#) |

Head coach



- Thanh Pham (13th season)

A Year Ago

- 10-1 MIAC (Co-Champions) | 24-7 Overall

In the 2014 Postseason

- MIAC postseason results (2-0, 1st place, def. St. Ben's, def. Augsburg)
- NCAA postseason results (0-1, lost to Coe)

Top Returners

- Whitney Lloyd (MB, Jr., | 2014: 89 sets, 44 blocks, 106 kills)
- Taylor Lewis (OH, Jr., | 2014: 93 sets, 232 kills, 288 digs)
- Kelly Biermann (MB, Sr., | 2014: 92 sets, 76 kills, 28 blocks)

Key Losses

- Kelly Foley (MB, Grad | 3X All-America, Academic All-America 3X MIAC POY; Career: .354 attack%, 1,656 kills, 425 blocks.)
- Jill Greenfield (OH, Grad | All-America, Academic All-America; Career: 1,870 digs, 1,446 kills, 176 aces, 225 blocks; 68 double-doubles)
- Sara Atkinson (OH, Grad, | All-MIAC; 521 kills, 158 total blocks last three seasons)

By the Numbers

- 4: Freshmen expected to compete for varsity minutes
- 8: 2014 NCAA Playoff teams on Tommies' 2015 schedule, including four in October at UW-Oshkosh tourney
- 18: Consecutive road wins over MIAC opponents

Did You Know?

- St. Thomas has been included in the top AVCA top-25 rankings for 120 of the last 121 polls, including 59 in a row, and starts this season at No. 17.

Off the Court

- St. Thomas received the American Volleyball Coaches Association's Team Academic Award with a 3.43 grade-point average for the past academic year. It's the Tommies' ninth AVCA honor in the last 14 seasons.

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