

Langer repeats as Player-of-the-Year to headline MIAC Women's Basketball Awards

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Photos by Matt Higgins, MIAC, and Mike Ekern, University of St. Thomas

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. – The University of St. Thomas women's basketball team will enter the NCAA Division III Tournament this week with a No. 2 national ranking and a perfect 27-0 record. Therefore, it was surprising Thursday when the Tommies took home each of the top three individual honors when the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) announced its 2016-17 Women's Basketball Awards.

UST senior center Kaitlin Langer repeated as the MIAC Women's Basketball Player-of-the-Year following another dominant season. Her coach, Ruth Sinn, was voted the MIAC Coach-of-the-Year by her peers and sophomore center Hannah Spaulding received the MIAC Women's Basketball Sixth Player-of-the-Year award. The MIAC All-Conference, Honorable Mention, All-Defensive and All-MIAC Sportsmanship Teams were also announced.

Langer's dominance en route to her second-straight MIAC Player-of-the-Year honor was evident throughout the season. The returning All-American led the MIAC in scoring with an average of 19.7 points per game (ppg) in overall games, and also led the league in field goals (182) and free throws (168) made and points (532). She ranked third in the league in blocked shots (36) and offensive rebounds (92), and ranked fifth in total rebounds (222), sixth in rebounds per game (8.2) and field goal percentage (.552) and eighth in free throw percentage (.785).

She was just as important in the Tommies' 18-0 run through conference play. Langer led the league in scoring (19.4 ppg) in MIAC games and ranked third in offensive rebounds (63), sixth in rebounds per game (8.4), seventh in blocked shots (17) and eighth in both field goal (.521) and free throw (.784) percentage. This season Langer was named MIAC Athlete-of-the-Week three times, and National Player-of-the-Week once. She also headlined the All-Conference team with her second-straight selection as well as a second-straight All-Defensive Team nod.

Sinn's Coach-of-the-year honor is the fourth of her 12-year career at UST, and her third since 2012. She also received the award in 2007-08, 2011-12, 2014-15 and this season. This season she's led the Tommies to a perfect 27-0 record, with a 25-0 regular-season mark and an 18-0 MIAC record to win a third-straight conference title and fifth MIAC championship in the last seven years. Sinn's team also captured a sixth-straight MIAC Playoff title Sunday and is ranked No. 2 in the nation. Sinn's career record is 268-75 (.781) and 163-18 (.901) over the last six seasons. This year she coached Langer and Spaulding to their individual honors, as well as three All-Conference selections, two All-Defensive Team picks and two All-MIAC Honorable Mention honorees.

Spaulding was recognized as the MIAC's top reserve thanks to her impact off the bench for the Tommies. She formed quite the 1-2 punch with Langer at center, leading the MIAC in field goal percentage in both overall (.656) and conference (.659) games. In just 12.2 minutes per game Spaulding averaged 7.4 points and 3.9 rebounds per game while blocking the fifth-most shots (31) in the league in overall games. In MIAC play she averaged 7.1 points and 3.8 rebounds per game and ranked fourth in the league in blocked shots (25).

In addition to Langer's second-straight All-Conference selection, there were a trio of players who earned All-MIAC honors for the third-straight season: St. Olaf senior Betsey Daly, St. Catherine senior LaShay Holt and Gustavus junior Mikayla Miller. Saint Mary's Brandi Blattner, St. Thomas' Lauren Fischer and Saint Benedict's Niki Fokken all earned a second-straight All-Conference nod, and Saint Mary's Emma Schaefer earned her second career All-MIAC honor after also receiving the distinction in 2014-15. Langer and teammate Paige Gernes headlined the All-Defensive Team with their second-straight selections to that squad.

The MIAC All-Conference team was loaded with veteran players, as seven seniors and seven juniors populated most of the spots on the 18-player team, with two sophomores and two first-year players also selected. St. Thomas and Gustavus led the way with three All-MIAC selections each, Bethel, Saint Benedict, St. Catherine and Saint Mary's each had two, and Augsburg, St. Olaf, Concordia and Macalester had one player honored each.

As part of a conference-wide sportsmanship initiative, the MIAC also announced the 11th annual All-MIAC Sportsmanship team for women's basketball. Members of the All-MIAC Sportsmanship team are selected by their coaches and teammates as individuals who demonstrate ideals of positive sportsmanship both on and off the field of competition.



2016-17 MIAC Women's Basketball Awards

Player-of-the-Year - Kaitlin Langer, St. Thomas (Sr., Center, Stillwater, Minn. / Hill-Murray)

Sixth Player-of-the-Year - Hannah Spaulding, St. Thomas (So., Center, Annandale, Minn.)

Coach-of-the-Year - Ruth Sinn, St. Thomas (12th season)

2016-17 MIAC Women's Basketball All-Conference Team

<u>Name</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Hometown/High School</u>
Taite Anderson	Bethel	Fy.	Forward	White Bear Lake, Minn.
Brandi Blattner	Saint Mary's	So.	Forward	Eyota, Minn. / Dover-Eyota
Audra Clark	St. Catherine	Jr.	Guard	Kenyon, Minn. / Kenyon-Wanamingo
Betsey Daly	St. Olaf	Sr.	Forward	Rochester, Minn. / Lourdes
Lauren Fischer	St. Thomas	Jr.	Guard/Forward	Oshkosh, Wis. / Lourdes Academy
Regan Fruh	Macalester	Jr.	Center	Helena, Mont.
Niki Fokken	Saint Benedict	Jr.	Post/Forward	Oronoco, Minn. / Pine Island
Chelsey Guetter	Saint Benedict	Jr.	Forward	Wabasso, Minn.
LaShay Holt	St. Catherine	Sr.	Guard	Minneapolis, Minn. / Humboldt
Hannah Howard	Gustavus	Sr.	Forward	St. Paul, Minn. / Cretin-Derham Hall
Hannah Johnson	Bethel	So.	Center	Duluth, Minn. / East
Kaitlin Langer	St. Thomas	Sr.	Center	Stillwater, Minn. / Hill-Murray
Tamira McLemore	Augsburg	Fy.	Guard	Eagan, Minn.
Mikayla Miller	Gustavus	Jr.	Guard	Goodhue, Minn.
Miranda Rice	Gustavus	Jr.	Forward	Forest Lake, Minn.
Emma Schaefer	Saint Mary's	Sr.	Guard	Roseville, Minn.
Greta Walsh	Concordia	Sr.	Guard	Litchfield, Minn.
Gabby Zehrer	St. Thomas	Sr.	Guard	Rogers, Minn. / Totino-Grace

2016-17 MIAC Women's Basketball All-Defensive Team

<u>Name</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Hometown/High School</u>
Betsy Daly	St. Olaf	Sr.	Forward	Rochester, Minn. / Lourdes
Paige Gernes	St. Thomas	Sr.	Guard	Winona, Minn. / Cotter
Hannah Johnson	Bethel	So.	Center	Duluth, Minn. / East
Kaitlin Langer	St. Thomas	Sr.	Center	Stillwater, Minn. / Hill-Murray
Shanni Moorse	Bethel	Sr.	Guard	Burnsville, Minn. / Apple Valley

2016-17 MIAC Women's Basketball All-First-Year Team

<u>Name</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Hometown/High School</u>
Taite Anderson	Bethel	Fy.	Forward	White Bear Lake, Minn.
Danica Cambrice	St. Catherine	Fy.	Guard	Minneapolis, Minn. / St. Croix Lutheran
Samantha Cooke	Carleton	Fy.	Forward	Chesterfield, Mo. / Incarnate Word Academy
Tamira McLemore	Augsburg	Fy.	Guard	Eagan, Minn.
Ella Skrien	St. Olaf	Fy.	Guard	St. Paul, Minn. / St. Croix Lutheran

2016-17 MIAC Women's Basketball All-Conference Honorable Mention

<u>Name</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Hometown/High School</u>
Makenna Ash	St. Olaf	So.	Forward	Ellison Bay, Wis. / Gibraltar
Samantha Cooke	Carleton	Fy.	Forward	Chesterfield, Mo. / Incarnate Word Academy
Paige Gernes	St. Thomas	Sr.	Guard	Winona, Minn. / Cotter
Chloe Graves	Hamline	Sr.	Guard	Denver, Colo. / Kent
Jenna Januschka	Concordia	Sr.	Forward	St. Cloud, Minn. / St. Cloud Cathedral
Cece Leone	Carleton	So.	Forward	Fairfax, Va. / Bishop Ireton
Abby Miller	Bethel	Jr.	Guard	Howard Lake, Minn. / Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted

Shanni Moorse	Bethel	Sr.	Guard	Burnsville, Minn. / Apple Valley
Alison Newton	Saint Benedict	Sr.	Guard	Oronoco, Minn. / Pine Island
Lucia Renikoff	St. Thomas	So.	Guard	Minneapolis, Minn. / Washburn

2016-17 Women's Basketball All-MIAC Sportsmanship Team

- Augsburg – Bridget Bednar (Jr., Pierz, Minn.)
- Bethel – Shanni Moorse (Sr., Burnsville, Minn.)
- Carleton – Maddie Talamantes (So., Chatfield, Minn.)
- Concordia – Cassidy Rahman (Jr., Moorhead, Minn.)
- Gustavus – Hannah Howard (Sr., St. Paul, Minn.)
- Hamline – Ivannie Robertson (Jr., Keenesburg, Colo.)
- Macalester – Karen Rathjens (Sr., Sudbury, Mass.)
- Saint Benedict – Annie Dittberner (Sr., New Prague, Minn.)
- St. Catherine – Kennedy Jennings (Sr., Grimes, Iowa)
- Saint Mary's – Sam Jones (Sr., White Bear Lake, Minn.)
- St. Olaf – Makenna Ash So., Ellison Bay, Wis.)
- St. Thomas – Paige Gernes (Sr., Winona, Minn.)