

2009 MIAC Women's Golf Championship Preview

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St. Paul, Minn. – The 2009 MIAC Golf Championships will take place this Saturday-Monday, October 3-5, at Bunker Hills Golf Course in Coon Rapids, Minn. The 54-hole event will feature ten men's and ten women's teams competing for the MIAC team title, individual medalist honors, and an automatic qualification into this spring's NCAA Championships for the team champions.

For the first time ever, the **MIAC Golf Championships Website** will feature unofficial live scoring for both the men's and women's championships throughout the event. Tee times for the first pairings begin at 11:28 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday and 9 a.m. on Monday with scores updated online after every six holes.

The Gustavus women broke St. Thomas' seven year title streak last year and the Gusties, ranked #3 in the nation, will enter the weekend as the favorite once again. Gustavus leads the conference in stroke average this fall at 318.4. Saint Benedict, St. Olaf, Carleton, and St. Thomas all have played well thus far in 2009 and should be compete for top spots in the conference.

Individually, two-time MIAC medalist Laura Heck of St. Thomas will miss the championships due to a back injury. Three of the top competitors to take over the individual crown will hail from Gustavus. Senior Kali Griggs, junior Katie Schenfeld, and sophomore Taylor Drenttel are all returning all-conference performers and each have been named a MIAC Athlete of the Week this fall. St. Thomas senior Amy Anderson has twice been named MIAC Athlete of the Week this year and should help carry the Tommies in Heck's absence. Laura Knutson, a junior from Carleton, tied for second at last year's championships and will look for a repeat performance in 2009.

[2009 MIAC Golf Championships Website](#)

[2009 Women's Championship Unofficial Live Results](#)

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Augsburg

Coach: Ted Vickerman (1st season)

2008 Championship Finish: 10th (54-Hole Total: 1185 - +321)

Augsburg Championship Preview

The Augsburg College women's golf team has had one of its best seasons in school history so far, entering this weekend's MIAC championships with a 378.1 stroke average, a 15-stroke improvement from last year's 393.1 scoring average. The 378.1 average is currently the third-best team average in the 16-year history of Augsburg women's golf.

Augsburg is in its first season under head coach Ted Vickerman, who took over head coaching duties of both the men's and women's golf programs this season. Laura Patrick, who spent four seasons as Augsburg's women's golf coach, remains as an assistant coach for both the men's and women's golf teams.

Each of the Auggies' last two competitions have produced the team's best 36-hole scores since the 2004-05 season, and the Auggies enter this weekend's conference meet with hopes of improving from last year's 10th-place finish. In fact, in the Auggies' last competition, the Division III Midwest Classic, Augsburg finished ahead of three conference foes -- the seventh-best score among the 10 conference schools competing.

Juniors Stefani Zappa (JR, Minneapolis, Minn./Patrick Henry HS) and Johanna Frykmark (JR, Taby, Sweden/Rollingby Gymnasium HS) have led the Auggies throughout their career, and both have chances to earn All-MIAC honors with top-10 conference-meet finishes this year. Zappa has improved her stroke average by six strokes during her three seasons, and enters the conference meet with an 86.5 stroke average, with eight of the top 13 rounds shot by Auggies this season. Her last three multi-day events have produced the top three 36-hole scores of her collegiate career. Zappa finished 25th at last year's conference meet.

Frykmark, who became the second women's golfer in Augsburg history to earn All-MIAC honors with a 10th-place finish at the 2007 meet, enters this weekend with a 90.9 stroke average. Frykmark finished 32nd at last year's league meet. Kelsey Corrick (JR, Glencoe, Minn./Glencoe-Silver Lake HS) also returns from last year's squad, and has improved her stroke average by nearly two strokes to her 100.5 average. Miranda Maxwell (FY, Delano, Minn.), Jill Ferguson (FY, Batavia, Ill.) and Megan Dale (SR, Northfield, Minn.) have also competed consistently for the Auggies this season, and each has produced career-best scores this fall.

Bethel

Coach: Joel Johnson (2nd season)

2008 Championship Finish: 9th (54-Hole Total: 1132 - +268)

Bethel Championship Preview

The Royals will be making just their second appearance at the MIAC Championships this season and look to improve on last season's ninth place finish. With much of the team back from last year, Coach Joel Johnson is confident his team will have a stronger outing in 2009. "Our players learned a lot last season and have a much better idea of what the competition is like, and that's important. We've matured as a team - we're being much more deliberate about course management and staying within ourselves, and I really believe it will show."

Paige Lemieux (So., Fargo, N.D.) was Bethel's top golfer last season, and has established herself in the same role through the first three rounds of 2009 as she is averaging an 83.7, with a low of 80 in the D-III Midwest Classic where the Royals finished 12th out of 18 teams. Hannah Hunstad (Sr., Medina, Minn.) and Ellie Wood (Fr., Shoreview, Minn.) will also be a factor in Bethel's scoring as the two are averaging 89 and 90, respectively.

Carleton

Coach: Eric Sieger (9th season)

2008 Championship Finish: 3rd (54-Hole Total: 1028 - +164)

Carleton Championship Preview

Carleton College enters the 2009 MIAC Championships in the midst of its most successful fall campaign in program history. The Knights have notched a trio of top-five finishes this fall and posted a 335.0 team average, more than 15 shots fewer than last season's school-record team average.

The Knights have been led this season by the consistent play of first-year player Hope Keaney (San Anselmo, Calif./Marin Catholic), who ranks fifth in the conference with an 81.5 stroke average. She's been Carleton's top finisher in each of the first three events this fall. Her performance has helped offset the loss of two-time All-MIAC performer Katrina Wood '09, who tied for second at last year's conference championships.

Laura Knutson (Jr./Edina, Minn.) also tied for second at last year's conference tournament to earn All-MIAC honors, and the Knights will need her to step up if they are to repeat last year's top-three finish. She ranks in the conference's top 20 in stroke average at 84.5.

The surprise for the Knights this fall has been the play of junior Louise Buckler (Blaine, Minn./St. Paul Academy) and sophomore Traci Johnson (Lakeville, Minn./North). Buckler has shaved almost nine full shots off her stroke average from a year ago and enters the final weeks of the season second on the team with an 84.0 stroke average. Traci Johnson, meanwhile, has trimmed nearly 10 full shots off her rookie season average and stands at 85.0 for the season. She's fired six straight rounds under 90 after doing it only twice in 22 rounds a season ago.

"We've had an extremely rewarding fall," Carleton head coach Eric Sieger said. "We've outpaced my expectations, and hopefully we can continue that trend at the MIAC Championships."

Sieger says defending champion Gustavus Adolphus is the team to beat, but four other teams are waiting right behind the Gusties.

"I think Gustavus is the cream of the crop, but it's a strong crop behind them," he said. Sieger notes that no less than five MIAC teams rank in the top 32 in the first NCAA/Golfstat ratings. The next-best conference has only three teams in the top 32.

"Gustavus is going to be hard to beat, but to finish in the top three we'll have to play really smart, solid golf all three days."

Concordia

Coach: Duane Siverson (26th season)

2008 Championship Finish: 6th (54-Hole Total: 1062 - +198)

Concordia Championship Preview

The Concordia-Moorhead women's golf team enters the MIAC Championship Meet on the heels of one of their busiest, and most competitive, schedules in recent history. The Cobbers competed in six different multiple-team invitationals including several that featured the top teams from the MIAC and the region. Concordia has tasted success in a pair of meets this season. The Cobbers won the UM-Morris Invite and finished second at the Jamestown Invitational.

Concordia is led by junior Hilary Vokovan (Coon Rapids, Minn.) who has an 86.1 average over her nine rounds of play this year. She is coming off her best round of the season when she fired an 80 in the opening round of the Southwest Minnesota State Invitational last weekend. Vokovan has seven of the team's lowest rounds of the year and will be looking to put three low scores together to get in the hunt for all-conference honors.

The Cobbers have four other players that are all averaging in the 90's and that group will round out the top five for Concordia. Other than Vokovan, look for Jeanna Kratzke (Jr., Perham, Minn.), Amy Hintzen (Sr., Sauk Centre, Minn.), Suzi Maanum (Hancock, Minn./Benson HS) and Laura Ayers (Cottage Grove, Minn./Park of Cottage Grove HS) to fill out the top spots at the conference meet. Kratzke leads the quartet heading into the meet with a 93.6 average. The other three are all grouped less than one stroke behind.

Gustavus

Coach: Scott Moe (7th season)

2008 Championship Finish: 1st (54-Hole Total: 980 - +116)

Gustavus Championship Preview

The Gustavus women's golf team has high expectations for the 2009-10 school year as the Gusties return four of their top five players from a group that claimed the program's first ever league title last fall. MIAC Coach of the Year Scott Moe will look to All-Americans Kali Griggs (Sr., Burnsville, Minn.) and Katie Schenfeld (Jr., Indianola, Iowa) and MIAC Rookie of the Year Taylor Drenttel (So., Eagan, Minn.) to lead the squad.

Coach Moe and the Gusties return a deep roster that includes five golfers who recorded a top 10 finish from a season ago. Captain Griggs (80.0 avg./ per round) leads the way for the squad, followed by Schenfeld (81.1 avg. per round), Drenttel (83.5 avg. per round), Amanda Johnson (Sr., Bemidji, Minn.) (88.1 avg. per round) and Ann Jackson (So., Fargo, North Dakota) (85.3 avg. per round). The loss of last year's MIAC Senior of the Year Kimbra Kosak will hurt, but the Gusties possess great depth and have the talent in place to remain one of the top programs in the conference and nationally.

The team is off to a great start this fall having won the UW-Eau Claire Invitational, and the Midwest Classic, while finishing fourth at the O'Brien National Invitational, a tournament featuring the top nine teams at last year's NCAA Championships. Griggs is leading the way with a 77.4 stroke average in six rounds. She has finished first at the Midwest Classic, fourth at the UW-Eau Claire Invite, and ninth at the O'Brien National Invitational. Katie Schenfeld is right behind Griggs with a 79.7 stroke average, while Ann Jackson is third with a stroke average of 81.7.

Macalester

Coach: Martha Nause (9th season)

2008 Championship Finish: 4th (54-Hole Total: 1038 - +174)

Macalester Championship Preview

For the first time in four years, the Scots will no longer have the services at the MIAC championships of either Jordan Matheson or Karla Leon, a pair of All-America performers and the two most accomplished players in the program's history. Matheson was fourth at last Spring's national championships.

A matching of last year's fourth-place conference finish is unlikely for the rebuilding Scots, but a couple of players appear capable of strong individual showings: Senior Ellen Bubak (Sioux Falls, S.D. / Lincoln) and first-year Grace Caird (Fy., Shorewood, Wis.). Bubak leads the team with an 88.5 average through six rounds this fall campaign, while Caird is right behind with a 90.2.

Macalester' top team score this fall is a 378 posted at the Wartburg Invitational.

Saint Benedict

Coach: Patrick Michaud (4th season)

2008 Championship Finish: 5th (54-Hole Total: 1043 - +179)

Saint Benedict Championship Preview

The College of Saint Benedict golf teams heads to Bunker with perhaps their deepest lineup to date, looking to improve on their fifth place finish the year before.

Currently ranked 16th in the nation by Golfstat, the Blazers have recorded three top-three finishes on the season, boasting a 331.43 team average.

Saint Benedict opened the season in Eau Claire at the Doug Georgianni Memorial where the team rode sophomore Kathryn Hauff's stellar play to a third place finish. The team shot back to back rounds of 335, 330 while Hauff finished in third place individually firing a school record 75 on the first day of competition. The next weekend the team continued their strong play with two second place finishes in Detroit Lakes; both times losing to Division One North Dakota State and North Dakota. Junior Sarah Hupperts finished the tournament in second place with a two day total 160.

In perhaps their best showcase for the potential the Blazers have, the team rallied for a third place finish at the Division III Midwest Classic the weekend of Sep. 20th. Stuck in seventh after an uneventful first day, the team shot a school record 315, lead by Hupperts's medalist finish, in passing four schools before settling in fourth. Hupperts's two round total 154, the second lowest in team history, tied her in first place.

Saint Benedict comes to the MIAC Championships in peak form, having counted on all five players at least once during the season. Hauff, Hupperts, and Senior April Dammann are the veterans for the team and all three have no trouble going low on Bunkers Course. Hauff brings with her an 81.57 average and precision around the greens. Hupperts boasts fantastic ball striking ability and an 81.86 average. Dammann has been the Blazers rock all year, boasting an 83.86 average. A major threat with her ability to birdie or eagle every hole, Dammann's all around game should boast the Blazers. First-year Molly Knutson has stepped up and over every expectation in her fantastic rookie season. An 84.86 average that includes a round in the 70s, look for Knutson to use her shot-shaping ability to tame Bunker's course. Junior Nadia Christensen brings with her an 88.00 average and a knack for getting par around the green.

A veteran team riding a wave of confident and with talent to match; the Blazers head into the MIAC Championship ready to make some noise and move up from their fifth place finishes a year ago.

Saint Mary's

Coach: Jeff Stangl (2nd season)

2008 Championship Finish: 8th (54-Hole Total: 1118 - +254)

Saint Mary's Championship Preview

The first season under Jeff Stangl was good for the Saint Mary's University women's golf team.

Stangl is confident the second will be even better.

"There's no question we would have liked to have finished higher than eighth (at the MIAC Championships)," admitted Stangl prior to the start of the season. "But we moved up one place in the standings (from 2007) and lowered our score by 96 strokes, so I'd say we closed out the season on a pretty high note.

"Hopefully we can pick up right where we left off this season."

Which is exactly what they've done.

Led by Katelyn Rizzi (Austin, Minn.) and Gia Puch (Des Plaines, Ill.) the Cardinals have continued to make improvements to their games and appear to be peaking at just the right time.

"We have the potential to continue our climb up the conference ladder," said Stangl. "But golf it's a sprint — it's more like a marathon and we're going to have to just keep grinding no matter what."

St. Olaf

Coach: Luke Benoit (4th season)

2008 Championship Finish: 7th (54-Hole Total: 1071 - +207)

St. Olaf Championship Preview

The St. Olaf women's golf team is riding the best falls in school history into the MIAC Championships under head coach Luke Benoit. In three events, the Oles have recorded the fourth, second and best 36-hole scores in school history this fall. The team has collected the top five and six of the top seven 18-hole scores on record at St. Olaf.

Lizzy Zahn has been the best statistical player this fall, shooting an average of 81.7 strokes/round. Britta Hendrickson is close behind, with only two rounds to report, at 82.5. First year Molly Erickson and Rachel Wieme aren't far back either, each averaging 84.8 strokes over six rounds this fall.

St. Thomas

Coach: Sara Evens (6th season)

2008 Championship Finish: 2nd (54-Hole Total: 989 - +125)

St. Thomas Championship Preview

St. Thomas will try to record the school's 10th consecutive top-two team placing when the 2009 MIAC Championships take place Oct. 3-5 at Bunker Hills Golf Course in Coon Rapids.

UST had a seven-year team title streak snapped last fall when it finished second by nine strokes to champion Gustavus.

Two of the Tommies' seven players on their fall roster have been sidelined with injuries, including senior Laura Heck, a two-time All-American. Heck is recovering from a serious back injury and will not compete this fall. In her absence, UST has finished 10th, fifth, sixth and second in four fall multi-team competitions.

Seniors Amy Anderson, Katie Mich and Kelly Westerham, sophomore Shannon Richter, and freshman Cassy Norton competed last weekend at the St. Ben's Fall Classic. That quintet led the Tommies to second place in the six-team field behind St. Cloud State.

Anderson has had three top-five finishes in four fall tournaments and has an 80.1 stroke average for eight rounds. She tied for fifth in the 2007 MIAC meet and was 13th last season. At the May 2009 NCAA meet, Anderson (80-78-84-84/326) tied for 24th overall in a field of 111 players.

Mich was on study abroad in fall 2008 and missed the MIAC tournament. She's averaging 83.5 on eight rounds this fall. Norton is averaging 87.7 and Richter has a, 88.1 average this fall.

At last May's NCAA meet, the Tommies competed without the injured Heck and took 17th out of 21 teams. Coach Sara Evens' team was in the national tournament for the fifth time in the last eight seasons. UST also placed fifth nationally in 2007 and seventh in 2008.

Heck, the conference meet medalist in both 2007 and 2008, was named MIAC Player of the Year in 2008-09 after posting a conference-low 78.7 stroke average.