

2010-11 MIAC Women's Hockey Season Preview

Posted: Nov 05, 2010

St. Paul, Minn. --- Based on the results of the MIAC Women's Hockey Preseason Coaches' Poll, the 2010-11 women's hockey season appears to be headed in the same direction as the last six in which Gustavus won the MIAC regular-season title and the MIAC playoff title. The Gusties received nine first-place votes to finish atop the poll as the overwhelming favorite to win the MIAC title for a seventh-straight season. However, the rest of the league returns 15 MIAC All-Conference players and welcomes a new class of freshman that look to challenge the Gusties' reign at number one.

Gustavus – which advanced to the NCAA semi-finals last year – has developed a tradition of winning and is picked to continue its winning ways as it received nine first place votes for a total of 81 points, the most possible points a team can receive. St. Catherine received one first-place vote for a total of 68 points, finishing in second place, just as they did a year ago in MIAC play. St. Thomas followed closely behind the Wildcats with 66 points in the poll for a third place finish.

St. Olaf and Saint Mary's rounded out the top five, just as they did in last season's final week, that came down to a series with serious playoff implications. The Oles received 54 votes to finish fourth, while Saint Mary's trailed just behind with 52 to finish fifth. Concordia finished in sixth place with 42 points, followed by Bethel in seventh with 36 points, Saint Benedict in eighth with 20 points and Hamline in ninth with 17 points. Augsburg finished in tenth just behind Hamline with 14 points. The poll was voted on by all nine MIAC coaches who could not vote for their own team, and a system was used where nine points were awarded for a first place vote, eight points for a second and so on.

In his 14 winning seasons at Gustavus, coach **Mike Carroll** has relied on a balanced base of talented players to carry his team to eight regular-season titles and eight NCAA National Tournament appearances. The Gusties look to add another MIAC title to their resume and earn another national berth behind the strong play of senior defender **Kristin Peterson (St. Paul, Minn. / Hill Murray)** who netted three goals and 13 assists to earn MIAC All-Conference and All-American honors. Carroll also returns All-Conference pick **Allie Schwab (Jr., Stillwater, Minn. / Stillwater)** who finished third in the league last year with 22 points (12 goals, 10 assists). **Lindsey Hjelm (So., North Oaks, Minn. / Mounds View)** and **Kelsey Kennedy (So., Eagan, Minn. / Eagan)**, who were both MIAC All-Conference and All-Rookie team picks, also return to try to lead Gustavus to another title. The Gusties finished 14-3-1 in MIAC play a year ago and 22-6-2 overall.

St. Catherine had a breakout season last year, finishing just one point behind Gustavus and advancing to the MIAC Playoff Championship game in which they fell to the Gusties 5-1. The Wildcats return the 2009-10 MIAC Player-of-the-Year and an All-American, senior forward **Michaela Michaelson (Sr., Inver Grove Heights, Minn. / Simley)**, who finished second in the MIAC with 12 goals and 12 assists for 24 points a year ago. **Brad Marshall**, who was named the MIAC Coach-of-the-Year last season, will not only rely on Michaelson for offense but also MIAC All-Conference pick **Kelsey Abrahamson (Jr., Inver Grove Heights, Minn. / Simley)**, who finished tied for seventh in the MIAC for goals last year with nine. All-Conference picks **Katie Lawler (Cottage Grove, Minn. / Hill Murray)** and **Meghan Lange (West St. Paul, Minn. / Henry Sibley)** also return for a defense that helped the Wildcats to a 13-3-2 MIAC record and 18-5-2 overall record last year.

St. Thomas has proven to be one of the strongest teams in the MIAC over the last few seasons and hopes to finally unseat Gustavus from their throne this year. The Tommies return two MIAC All-Conference winners in **Taylor Schluter (Jr., Minnetonka, Minn. / Benilde-St. Margaret)** and **Korinne O'Connor (New Ulm, Minn.)**, who finished fourth in the MIAC in points with 21 (seven goals, 14 assists). Schluter finished eighth with ten goals and eight assists for 18 points. St. Thomas will also rely on the play of honorable mention winners **Meghan Parker (Jr., West St. Paul, Minn. / Henry Sibley)** on defense and **Kaylee Keys (Jr., St. Paul, Minn. / Cretin-Derham Hall)** on offense to carry the Tommies to a MIAC championship.

St. Olaf, which defeated Saint Mary's in the play-in round of the 2009-10 playoffs to advance to the MAIC semi-finals, looks to return to the MIAC playoffs in convincing fashion with strong play from All-Conference goaltender **Jessica Ptachick (Jr., Burnsville, Minn. / Apple Valley)**. Ptachick finished first in the MIAC play in save percentage (.959) and second in goals against average (1.17). The Oles will also rely on All-Conference team selections, senior forward **Katie Iraci (Park Ridge, Ill. / Loyola)** and sophomore forward Nicole **Stumpf (Oakdale, Minn. / Hill Murray)**, to produce on offense.

After Saint Mary's took three out of four points from St. Olaf in the final weekend of conference play last season, the Cardinals fell 3-1 to the Oles in the opening round of the playoffs on home ice. The Cardinals look to return to the playoffs again this season behind sophomore goaltender Kaye Collier (Hibbing, Minn. / Hibbing) who was a MIAC All-Conference and All-Rookie team selection. The Cardinals also return experience All-Conference winners **Dy-Anna Stewart (Sr., Eden Prairie, Minn. / Eden Prairie)** and **Stevie Fiek (Jr., Rochester, Minn. / Rochester Mayo)** who will lead a team that boasts 16 freshmen.

Concordia, which just finished outside the playoffs last year, looks to make a push toward a playoff spot under new head coach **Brett Bruininks**. He will look to junior forward **Katelyn Dold (St. Cloud, Minn. / St. Cloud Tech)** to lead the team's offense. Dold lead the MAIC in points last year with 26 points, netting 12 goals and 16 assists in conference play. The Cobbers return six of their seven leading scorers from the 2009-10 season, including honorable mention winner forward **Emily Sell (Sr., Williston, N.D.)** who racked up 20 points in the MIAC last year.

Bethel also looks to a new leadership under **Brian Carlson**, who will lead the Royals on their quest to return to the playoffs after barely missing the final spot during the final week of conference play in February. The Royals will look to strong play in net from returning



goaltender **Jess Newstrom (So., Cambridge, Minn. / Cambridge-Isanti)** and All-Conference selection **Anna Carlson (Jr. Roseville, Minn. / Roseville)** to get a young Bethel team back in the playoff hunt.

After a disappointing finish last season, Saint Benedict returns its ten top scorers and welcomes a healthy class of six freshmen to get back on the winning track. The Blazers return honorable mention pick **Kerri Graske (Jr., Stillwater, Minn. / Stillwater Area)**, who finished tied for 38th with nine points in MIAC play last year. **Gretchen Leyendecker (Sr., Rochester, Minn. / Lourdes)** finished with six goals in the MIAC last year and will also help lead the Blazer offense in 2010-11.

After losing graduated senior leaders Alli Miller and All-Conference selection Melanie Leveille, new head coach **Steve DeBus** will look to juniors **Erin Kastner (Faribault, Minn. / Faribault)** and **Seanna Robinson (Winnipeg, Manitoba / Oak Park)**, to lead the Piper team this year. Kastner and Robinson recorded 12 and 11 points respectively in MIAC play last year.

First year coach **Michelle McAteer** will look to a core group of seven seniors to lead a young Auggie team. Among those seniors are **Erin Leyden (Glen Ellyn, Ill. / Glenbard South)**, who recorded four MIAC points last season, and goaltender **Grace Edgar (Plano, Texas / Plano West)**, who will replace honorable mention pick Toni Menth in net.

Augsburg, Bethel, Concordia, Saint Mary’s and St. Olaf kicked off their seasons last weekend in non-conference play, while St. Catherine and Saint Benedict faced off Thursday in St. Cloud. The rest of the MIAC teams kick off their seasons Friday in non conference play.

The MIAC opens conference play Thursday, Nov. 11, as Saint Benedict squares off against Bethel in St. Cloud. The rest of the teams begin MIAC play Friday, Nov. 12. Matchups include Augsburg vs. St. Thomas, Concordia vs. Saint Mary’s, Gustavus vs. St. Olaf and Hamline vs. St. Catherine.

2010-11 MIAC Preseason Coaches' Poll

2010-11 MIAC Women's Hockey Coaches' Poll		
Rank	Institution	Total
1	Gustavus (9)	81
2	St. Catherine (1)	68
3	St Thomas	66
4	St. Olaf	54
5	Saint Mary's	52
6	Concordia	42
7	Bethel	36
8	Saint Benedict	20
9	Hamline	17
10	Augsburg	14

2010-11 MIAC Playoff Dates

First Round: (Tuesday, March 1); Semifinals (Thursday, March 3); Finals (Saturday, March 5)

| [2010-11 MIAC Schedule](#) | [2009-10 MIAC Statistics](#) | [MIAC Recordbook](#) | [MIAC Archives](#) |

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Coach: Michelle McAteer

Career Record: 0-0-0 (1st season)

2009-10 Finish: 10th (2-15-1 MIAC, 5-19-1 overall)

Augsburg Season Preview

There will be a new face on the bench for the Augsburg College women's hockey team for the first time since the program was founded in 1995.

Michelle McAteer, who earned three NCAA national titles as a women's hockey player at the University of Minnesota-Duluth and another as an assistant coach with the Bulldogs, was named as the Auggies' new head coach in April, replacing **Jill Pochtilla**, who announced her resignation in March after guiding the team through the first 15 seasons of its history.

Along with McAteer, two more former Division I players will join her as assistant coaches -- former St. Cloud State (2002-05) and Providence (R.I., 2001-02) player **Carrie Holidorf** and former Minnesota (2001-05) goalie **Jody Horak**.

And with the new leaders on the bench, the Auggies are aiming for continued improvement on the ice this season. Augsburg returns 20 letterwinners from last year's squad, and is looking to improve from last year's 2-20-3 finish.

"I'm extremely excited about this team and my first year as head coach," said McAteer, who served as an assistant coach at Harvard (2005-07) and at Minnesota-Duluth (2003-05 as graduate assistant, 2008-10 as assistant coach) prior to coming to Augsburg. "The team is incredibly hard working, very coachable and eager to improve. We are working towards being more competitive, starting with sound defensive coverage and the penalty kill."

Augsburg returns seven seniors who have contributed to the program throughout their careers -- forwards **Jenna Knudtson (Sr., Austin, Minn.)**, **Hillary Volkman (Sr., Robbinsdale, Minn./Cooper)**, **Elise Hedlund (Sr., Robbinsdale, Minn./Cooper)**, **Whitney Pratt (Sr., Mitchell, S.D.)**, **Carly Facchini (Sr., Livonia, Mich./Stevenson)**, **Erin Leyden (Sr., Glen Ellyn, Ill./Glenbard South)**, and goalie **Grace Edgar (Sr., Plano, Texas/Plano West)**. Juniors **Jenna Marquardt (Jr., New Prague, Minn.)** and **Jess Geisinger (Jr., Lakeville, Minn./Lakeville South)** also return.

Youth will be a strong part of the Auggies' future, as 11 sophomores and three first-year players make up an important part of the roster. Among them will be newcomer **Alex Hall (Fr., Burnsville, Minn.)**, who will join Edgar in goal.

"We are fortunate to have two solid goaltenders," McAteer said. "Grace Edgar is a senior and is looking to contribute significantly in her final year. Alex Hall is a first-year and shows a strong competitive spirit. Both will be impact players for the Auggies."



Bethel

Coach: Brian Carlson

Career Record: 0-0-0 (1st season)

2009-10 Finish: 6th (9-9 MIAC, 9-15 overall)

Bethel Season Preview

The Bethel Women's Hockey team is looking to improve this season as they are under new leadership from first year head coach **Brian Carlson**. Carlson had been an assistant coach in the program under Charlie Burggraf who is now the head men's coach at Bethel. Carlson is joined by assistants **Michelle Maunu**, **Mark Eagles**, **Mitch Baker**, and **Neal Carlson**.

The Royals are a very young team with lots of upside to grow together over the next couple of year. The young team has 7 freshman and 8 sophomore. The group is lead by captains **Rachael Geng (South St. Paul, Minn. / South St. Paul)**, **Kassy Sullivan (Roseville, Minn. / Roseville)**, **Allison Papko (Winnipeg, Manitoba / Dakota Collegiate)**, and **Anna Carlson (Jr. Roseville, Minn. / Roseville)**. Sophomore **Jess Newstrom (Cambridge, Minn. / Cambridge-Isanti)** will also continue to be a key asset, providing strong goaltending for the Royals.

The Women look to be faster this year and thus improve their offensive production.



Concordia

Coach: Brett Bruininks

Career Record: 0-0-0 (1st season)

2009-10 Finish: 7th (7-9-2 MIAC, 12-11-2 overall)

Concordia Season Preview

The Concordia women's hockey team will have some old and some new as the team hits the ice in 2010-11. The old will come from All-Conference award winners **Katelyn Dold (Jr., St. Cloud, Minn. / St. Cloud Tech)**, **Macey Leland (So., Brooklyn Park, Minn. / Park Center)** and **Emily Sell (Sr., Williston, N.D.)** and the new will be found in head coach **Brett Bruininks**.

Bruininks starts his first season as head coach of the Cobbers with a solid core of returning players from a team that missed the playoffs by four points. He also adds a group of nine newcomers that have the potential to added needed depth to the team.

Bruininks brings a wealth of experience – both playing and playing – to the Cobber bench. He is a former standout player at Notre Dame who went on to play professional hockey in the Philadelphia Flyers, Chicago Blackhawks and Carolina Hurricanes organizations. He has also had coaching experience in the MIAC, having been an assistant for the Augsburg women's team from 2008-09. His knowledge of the conference will help him in his first full year as a head coach.

Bruininks will be able to rely on the leading scorer in the conference from last year. Dold had a breakout season in 2009-10 as she had 15 goals and 21 assists for 36 points in all games and 12 goals and 16 assists for 28 points in conference play. She led the league in scoring and assists in overall games and MIAC contests. She was first in the league in goals in conference games but second in overall games. Dold had at least one point in 13 of the team's 16 conference games and tallied multiple points in eight of the league games. Dold will be on the No.1 line for the Cobbers and asked to keep her consistent play in 2010-11.

Joining Dold on the offensive end will be senior Sell who was named to the MIAC All-Conference Honorable Mention Team. She was third in the league in overall games with 15 goals and 14 assists for 29 points. In conference games she finished with eight goals and 12 assists for 20 points.

The Cobbers return six of their top seven scorers from last year and should be able to score in bunches in 2010-11. **Kayla Hendrickson (Jr., Sartell, Minn. / Sartell)** and **Jenna Westerham (So., Wayzata, Minn./Hopkins HS)** will give CC a scoring punch that can go at least two lines deep.

Defensively, Concordia will have all six of their top blueliners back. Leland earned All-Conference Honorable Mention honors as a freshman. She was one of the team's top defensemen in 2009-10 and finished the year with three goals and five assists for eight points. She was third on the team in +/- with a +7 mark in the 16 MIAC games.

Allie Bondy (Jr., Moorhead, Minn. / Moorhead), **Melissa Neeb (So., Minneapolis, Minn./Totino Grace HS)**, **Ali Nelson (So., Maple Grove, Minn. / Maple Grove)**, **Sara Sonnenberg (Sr., Minneapolis, Minn. / St. Paul United)** and **Abby Vig (So., St. Louis Park, Minn. / St. Louis Park)** return to give Bruininks a group of defenseman that has seen significant playing time in MIAC play.

The biggest question mark for Concordia in 2009-10 will be between the pipes. The Cobbers lost **Maddie Haroldson** who was the top netminder last year. Bruininks will need **Desiree Goret (So., Rosemount, Minn.)** or **Tracy Skluzacek (So., Cold Spring, Minn. / Rocori HS)** step up as the only two returning goalies on the team. Goret had a 2.73 GAA in nine games last year and Skluzacek appeared in eight games and had a 3.29 GAA. A pair of newcomers will push for playing time. **Tamara Twite (Fr., East Grand Forks, Minn. / East Grand Forks)** and **Casey Fiore (Jr., Baltimore, Md. / Finlandia)** are slated to see action in the first stretch of games. Fiore has the most experience of the crew as she played at Finlandia (Mich.) last season.

Only time will tell if Bruininks can use his knowledge and experience to get the Cobbers into the playoffs for the first time since the 2008-09 season.



Gustavus

Coach: Mike Carroll

Career Record: 241-59-17 (14 seasons)

2009-10 Finish: 1st (14-3-1 MIAC, 22-6-2 overall)

Gustavus Season Preview

The Gustavus women's hockey team has high hopes for the 2010-11 season as 16 letterwinners return from a squad that posted a mark of 22-6-2 overall and 14-3-1 in MIAC play last year and claimed MIAC Regular Season and Playoff Titles before finishing fourth at the NCAA Championship. Head Coach **Mike Carroll** will rely on forwards **Allie Schwab (Jr., Stillwater, Minn. / Stillwater)** and **Lindsey Hjelm (So., North Oaks, Minn. / Mounds View)** to lead the offense, while All-America defender **Kirstin Peterson (Sr., St. Paul, Minn. / Hill Murray)** will join with senior defender **Sara Yungner (Sr., Maple Grove, Minn. / Wayzata)** and junior goaltender **Danielle Justice (Alexandria, Minn. / Jefferson)** to anchor the defense.

All-Conference forwards Schwab (18g, 13a – 31 points) and Hjelm (11g, 13a – 24 points) will join a group of seven other returning forwards to give the Gusties a very strong skating unit that scored 62 goals a year ago. That group includes **Meagan Wanecke (So., Delafield, Wis. / Kettle Mouraine)**, **Jenna Christensen (So., Albert Lea, Minn. / Albert Lea)**, **Whitney Schaff (Jr., Cambridge, Minn. / Cambridge)**, **Tam Meuwissen (So., Chanhassen, Minn. / Chaska)**, **Mollie Carroll (Jr., Eagan, Minn. / Eagan)**, **Alyssa Gaulrapp (Jr., Maple Grove, Minn. / Maple Grove)** and **Kayla Ingbreton (So., Mound, Minn. / Mound-Westonka)**.

Junior goaltender Danielle Justice, who has compiled a record of 22-6-1 with a goals against average of 0.84 over the past two seasons, will give the Gusties a veteran presence in the net. Justice will rely on All-America defender Kirstin Peterson and Sara Yungner to control the blue line along with four other veterans including **Gina DeNucci (Jr., Chanhassen, Minn. / Minnetonka)**, **Kelsey Johnson (Sr., Stillwater, Minn. / Stillwater)**, **Gracie Olson (Jr., Apple Valley, Minn. / Holy Angels)**, and **Kelsey Kennedy (So., Eagan, Minn. / Eagan)**.



Hamline

Coach: Steve DeBus

Career Record: 0-0-0 (1st season)

2009-10 Finish: 8th (4-12-2 MIAC, 7-15-3 overall)

Hamline Season Preview

Hamline preview will be available at a future date.



Saint Benedict

Coach: Patrick Michaud

Career Record: 17-59-15 (4 seasons)

2009-10 Finish: 10th (1-13-4 MIAC, 3-18-4 overall)

Saint Benedict Season Preview

Returning all top ten scorers from a year ago, expectations are being raised for the College of Saint Benedict ice hockey team which finished tenth in conference play last season. Under the direction of fifth year head coach **Pat Michaud** the Blazers welcome six first-years who should provide immediate depth on the team.

All-MIAC Honorable Mention junior forward **Kerri Graske (Jr., Stillwater, MN / Stillwater Area)** and sophomore defender **Catherine Pollock (So., Tonka Bay, MN / Hopkins High School)** return for Saint Benedict and both will be instrumental in leading the team to a playoff berth. Graske, who has consistently finished in the top three on the team in points, goals, and assists, is explosive on the ice with a knack for scoring when the game is on the line. Pollock appeared in all 25 games last season as a first-year, contributing six points for the Blazers. Quick with tremendous footwork, Pollock likes to push the play up the ice.

Expect the trio of senior forward **Gretchen Leyendecker (Sr., Rochester, MN / Lourdes)**, junior forward **Amie Ernst (Jr., North Mankato, MN / Mankato Loyola)**, and junior center **Jenn Yelle (Jr., Coon Rapids, MN / Coon Rapids)** to create havoc for opposing teams on a nightly basis. All three were in the top five for Saint Benedict in points, goals, and assists last season. Leyendecker, team captain for the third year in a row, ended last season first on the team with 13 points. Ernst is a constant threat on offense with a quick first step and a hard slap shot. Yelle possesses great vision and control with the puck directing the offense from her center position.

Senior **Abbie Helminen (Sr., Brighton, MI / Brighton (Belle Tire))** and junior **Lauren Herzog (Jr., Mendota Heights, MN / Convent of the Visitation)** will see most of the time behind the net for Saint Benedict. Helminen returns for the Blazers after missing most of last year with an injury while Herzog is coming off a season where she boasted a 2.99 GAA while being named team MVP.

Saint Benedict opens conference play November 11th against Bethel. Their schedule includes the MIAC's first outdoor game January 15th against Concordia.



St. Catherine

Coach: Brad Marshall

Career Record: 38-70-10 (5 seasons)

2009-10 Finish: 2nd (13-3-2 MIAC, 18-5-2 overall)

St. Catherine Season Preview

Now in his sixth season, Coach **Brad Marshall's** team will be full of upper classmen. The Wildcats return 19 letter winners from the 2009-2010 squad that finished second in the league and lost to perennial power Gustavus in the MIAC Championship game. Although the coach and team will rely on their experience from last year, they're well aware that it's a new season and the MIAC is a very balanced league where every week will be a challenge.

"I think every team in the league sits down in October and makes plans on how to be playing in March. We're not talking too much about last year or this coming March. We're talking about what we do each upcoming weekend. The most important game of the year is the next one you play." stated Coach Marshall who will be looking to his six seniors to lead the way throughout the year. Seniors **Michaela Michaelson (Inver Grove Heights, Minn. / Simley)**, **Meghan Lange (West St. Paul, Minn. / Henry Sibley)**, **Mel Gerten (Inver Grove Heights, Minn. / Simley)**, **Katie Lawler (Cottage Grove, Minn. / Hill Murray)**, **Jessica Feltes (Des Plaines, Ill. / Elk Grove HS)** and **Megan Boehmer (Inver Grove Heights, Minn. / Simley)** are all back and looking to finish their careers near the top again. Michaelson was last year's MIAC Player of the Year, Lange and Lawler were also all-conference players in 2009-2010.

Marshall says, "This group of seniors along with juniors **Kelsey Abrahamson (Inver Grove Heights, Minn. / Simley)** and **Cassie Rooney (Plymouth, Minn. / Wayzata)**, have really put St. Kate's hockey on the map. Each one of them brings a different aspect and personality to the rink every day. It has been great to watch them mature over the last three or four years as student-athletes. They're all just great leaders in the locker room, they know what to say, what not to say and how they represent our institution away from Ridder Arena is pretty impressive as well."

The Wildcats are anchored by their senior goalie Mel Gerten. Gerten holds nearly every statistical career record for goaltenders at St. Kate's going into her last year. In front of her will be all-conference defensemen Meghan Lange and Katie Lawler. Juniors **Bridget Braastad (Ham Lake, Minn. / Blaine)** and **Kayla Clifton (Grand Rapids, Minn. / Grand Rapids)** are expected in play in every situation as well. Sophomores **Kallie Geissler (Elk River, Minn. / Elk River)** and **Becky Clifton (Imperial, MO / Windsor)**, along with new comer **Katie Jirik (Northfield, MN / Northfield HS)** round out the defensive group. "Our top 4 defensemen are pretty solid right now. Everyone will play and contribute on a regular basis, but it's going to be hard to keep those juniors and seniors on the bench when the games get tight."

On the offensive side Michaelson, Abrahamson and Rooney have been all-conference players at some point in their careers and will be one of the top lines in the league again. The Wildcats will have depth with players like Feltes, sophomores **Ashley Tilton (Blaine, Minn. / Blaine)**, **Ashley Grell (Linwood, Minn. / Forest Lake HS)**, **Rachael Gasperetti (Milwaukee, Wis. / Pius XI)**, **Cassie Vennemann (St. Paul, Minn. / Johnson High School)** and junior **Liz Bauer (Red Wing, Minn. / Red Wing)**. First year player **Nicki Mosbeck (Emo, Ontario / Athol Murray Hounds)** has looked good in the early practices as well. Watch for goalies **Kayla Lange (Andover / Anoka)** and **Erica Pitzen (Pine City, Minn. / Chisago Lakes)** to be ready should Gerten need a night off. "I have complete confidence in both Kayla and Erica to give us a chance to win. Kayla played some key minutes for us last year and was very good against St. Ben's up there when we got into penalty trouble."

They open up MIAC play against Hamline University on November 12th and 13th at Ridder Arena and Drake Arena respectively.



Saint Mary's

Coach: Terry Mannor

Career Record: 44-67-13 (5 seasons)

2009-10 Finish: Tied 4th (9-7-2 MIAC, 12-12-2 overall)

Saint Mary's Season Preview

After returning to post-season play a year ago, the Saint Mary's University women's hockey team is hungry for more.

When asked about the goals for his team this season, coach **Terry Mannor** made it clear that his squad would be looking to head back to the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference buffet for a second serving of postseason play.

"Our goal is the playoffs, most definitely," said Mannor, who is in his sixth year as the Cardinals' head coach. "The little things are going to be what matter, however."

The Cardinals finished with a 12-12-2 record — including a 9-6-2 mark in MIAC play — and secured the fourth MIAC playoff seed with some late-season heroics.

"For our returning players, they gained knowledge of what it takes to get there," said Mannor, whose Cardinals locked up their playoff berth with a win and a tie against St. Olaf in the regular-season's final weekend, only to be ousted by St. Olaf 3-1 in the MIAC semifinals. "They learn how important every shift is. The MIAC playoff race is so tight; every point is huge."

And when the Cardinals lace up their skates, Mannor can take comfort in knowing that he boasts three of the conference's top players in returning All-MIAC performers **Stevie Fiek (Jr., Rochester, Minn. / Rochester Mayo)**, **Dy-anna Stewart (Eden Prairie, Minn. / Robert Morris University)** and **Kaye Collier (Hibbing, Minn. / Hibbing)**.

Fiek returns as the Cardinals' offensive leader, recording nine goals and eight assists for 17 points during her sophomore season a year ago. Dy-Anna Stewart (Eden Prairie, Minn.) logged more minutes than any other defenseman and Kaye Collier (Hibbing, Minn.) started all 18 MIAC games in goal. Collier also led the league in minutes played (1070:16), while ranking third in saves (462), and fourth in goals-against-average (1.74) and save percentage (.937).

Mannor also has the luxury of knowing that along with three all-conference returners, there's a strong supporting cast hiding in the wings.

Nicole Olson (New Brighton, Minn. / Irondale) and **Erin Stenseth (Eau Claire, Wis. / Eau Claire/Altoona Stars)** return as SMU's second- and third-most prolific point scorers from a year ago with 14 and nine points, respectively. **Alex Braun (Darwin, Minn. / Hutchinson)** and **Dana Kreuser (Maplewood, Minn. / Roseville)** will help anchor the defensive efforts.

With solid nucleus of returners, plus a healthy crop of newcomers, Mannor is optimistic that his squad will be able to compete at a high level from their season-opener on Oct. 29 at Marian all the way through the end of the regular season — and, ultimately, into the playoffs.

"Our goal is just to better every week," said Mannor. "It's a learning process. No matter what our won/loss record is, we'll always be competitive. We want teams to leave here saying SMU is a hard-working team."



St. Olaf

Coach: John Bazzachini

Career Record: 59-65-2 (5 seasons)

2009-10 Finish: Tied 4th (9-7-2 MIAC, 14-11-2 overall)

St. Olaf Season Preview

After graduating six seniors last year, the Oles hope their talented upperclassmen and six new additions will be able to return to the playoffs this season.

Despite a defeat in the regular-season finale, St. Olaf made the five-team MIAC playoffs as the fifth seed. Last season was the Oles' sixth playoff appearance in the last seven seasons.

St. Olaf finished the season 14-11-2. The team's 14 wins rank third best in the ten seasons of women's hockey at St. Olaf.

Forwards

Senior **Katie Iraci (Sr., Park Ridge, Ill. / Loyola)** is back to lead the forwards. Iraci, who scored ten goals and had 13 assists, led the team in points with 21 in the 2009-10 season. After scoring three game winning goals, she was named to the MIAC's all-conference team along with fellow forward **Nicole Stumpf (So., Oakdale, Minn. / Hill Murray).**

Sophomores Nicole Stumpf and **Alison Umland (So., Plymouth, Minn. / Wayzata)** both had solid rookie seasons last year. Stumpf tied for second on the team with 20 points and had ten goals, four of which were scored on the power play. She scored the game winning goal in the season opener of her rookie season. Umland collected eight goals and ten assists and was fourth on the team in points with 18.

Senior captain **Meghan Stumpf (Sr., Oakdale, Minn. / Hill Murray)** and Junior **Alex Meyer (Jr., west St. paul, Minn. / Henry Sibley)** also had good 2009-10 seasons. Stumpf played in all 27 games and scored seven goals, three on the power play. Meyer had two goals, including one on the power play and assisted on eight goals.

Defensemen

Junior **Kirsten Latta (Jr. Edina, Minn. / Edina)** had a strong 2009-10 season with two goals and a team-high 13 assists. Latta also earned a spot on the MIAC's all-conference team.

Senior captain **Carolyn Sneep (Sr., Nisswa, Minn. / Brainerd)** played in 26 games and had three assists, including one on a game winning goal. Fellow senior **Cassie Forster (Shakopee, Minn. / Shakopee)** played in 24 games and had one goal and three assists.

Sophomore **Melina Lamer (So., Middleton, Wis. / Middleton)** played in ten games and scored one goal in her rookie season.

Goaltending

Juniors **Jessica Ptachick (Sr. Burnsville, Minn. / Apple Valley)** and **Erin MacNamara (Sr. Farmington, Minn. / Farmington, Minn.)** split most of the action for St. Olaf last season. Ptachick, a senior this year, earned a record of 8-6-2 and a GAA of 1.58. Jessica Ptachick was one of six players named to the MIAC's all-conference team.

MacNamara played in 13 games and had a record of 2.85. Then junior **Corbin Ruiz (Sr. Edina, Minn. / Northfield Mount Vernon School)** appeared in one with a GAA of 2.07.

Schedule

The Oles' MIAC-opening game is at Gustavus Adolphus College on Nov. 12, followed by a home match on the 13th.



St. Thomas

Coach: Tom Palkowski

Career Record: 53-20-6 (3 seasons)

2009-10 Finish: 3rd (12-4-2 MIAC, 14-9-3 overall)

St. Thomas Season Preview

The Tommies placed third in the MIAC last season and lost a one-goal game to St. Catherine in the conference playoff semifinals. Fourth-year coach **Tom Palkowski** graduated All-American goalie Lauren Bradel and six other seniors. He returns three seniors and nine juniors, including junior All-MIAC defenseman **Meghan Parker (West St. Paul, Minn. / Henry Sibley)**, who has eight goals and 18 assists in 47 games, and sophomore forward **Korinne O'Connor (New Ulm, Minn.)**, who had eight goals and 14 assists last season.

The Toms have a 10-player freshman class which Palkowski hopes will add depth and enthusiasm.

Palkowski hired ex-South St. Paul and MSU Mankato star **Maggie Fisher**. She replaces Jessica Christopherson, a former Tommie player and four-year assistant who recently was hired as head coach at Coon Rapids High. **Dave Larson** returns for his fourth season.

Junior **Taylor Schluter (Jr. Minnetonke, Minn. / Benilde-St. Margaret)** scored seven goals as a freshman and a team-best 11 goals last season as a sophomore. Junior **Kaylee Keys (Jr., St. Paul, Minn. / Cretin-Derham Hall)** had six goals in 15 games last winter after transferring from Bemidji State. Junior **Jamie Tiede (Sioux Falls, S.D. / O'Gorman)** has 13 goals and 18 assists in 52 games. Seniors **Kelly Fallen (Sr., Plymouth, Minn. / Armstrong)** (75 games, 23 goals) and **Kristen Grossman (Sr., Golden Valley, Minn. / Armstrong)** (68 games, 13 goals and 12 assists) will make a run at 100 games played.

Recent St. Thomas teams have ranked among the national leaders at over 90% power-play kills. Last winter the Toms killed off 90% of opponent power-play tries but themselves converted just 15%.

Bradel set an MIAC record and finished in the top 10 in Division III with 49 career wins. The All-American and 3X first-team All-MIAC honoree finished with 17 shutouts, a .933 save percentage and a 1.66 GAA. St. Thomas will pick her replacement from among has three goalies -- junior **Nicole Muske (Jr., Ramsey, Minn. / Anoka)** (2009-10: 2-2-1, 0.68 GAA), sophomore **Liz Maidl (So. Rochester, Minn. / Century)**, and freshman **Alise Riedel (Fr., Hudson, Wis.)**.

Freshman **Mary-Grace Flesher (Fr., Rochester, Minn. / Rochester Mayo)** will join the squad when the Tommie soccer season ends. She is a defensive starter for the 11-6-1 and playoff-bound Toms. Her dad, the late Greg Flesher, was a four-year letterman for UST hockey in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

St. Thomas scored 102 goals in 2007-08 but managed 78 goals the next season and just 70 goals last season. The Toms will look to generate more offense while continuing their defensive emphasis in 2010-2011.

St. Thomas opens its season Nov. 5-6 with two games at UW-Stevens Point. The Tommies open their MIAC season No. 12 at Augsburg and start their home season Nov. 13 against Augsburg (2 p.m.). They catch defending conference champion Gustavus on Dec. 3-4.