

2003 MIAC Indoor Track & Field Championships Preview

St. Olaf College is proud to host the 2003 Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Indoor Track and Field Championships at the Tostrud Center. The Tostrud Center boasts an aerobics training facility, cutting-edge exercise machines, a weight-training facility, an elevated walking and jogging ring, a six-lane 200-meter track, five tennis courts and a 48-foot rock-climbing wall. The 95,000-square-foot Tostrud Center is a state-of-the-art recreation center designed to promote lifelong health, recreation, and fitness. We welcome you to take a look around our new facility.

Last year's MIAC Champion St. Thomas leads the list of favorites coming into the men's championship, as they will try to win their 19th consecutive team championship in the 19-year history of the event. The Tommies' 18 consecutive team wins is the longest current streak in any sport in the MIAC. Look for strong performances from Gustavus, as Ryan Hoag and Jerry Washington have automatically qualified for the NCAA Indoor Championships in the 55 meter dash. Host school, St. Olaf will be looking for a strong finish as they have individuals in every event. Carleton College and Saint John's both have much improved squads and will be trying for a top finish in the conference meet.

Matt Shannon from Augsburg has qualified for nationals in the 400 meter dash. He will be challenged by Robert Ware and Carson Glad, both sophomores from St. Thomas. Bryce Beckman from St. Thomas has met the automatic qualifying standard in the 800 meter run. He will be running with defending champion senior Mike Baker from Hamline. Kirk Nelson, senior from Concordia is the top seed in the 1000 meter run. Carleton College leads the top two spots in the 1500 meter run with junior Matt Hooley and senior Bryan Donald. Hamline senior Tom Kreger sits at the top of the 5000 meter run with his automatic qualifying time. He will be challenged by St. Olaf sophomore Kelly Fulton. The 4 x 400 meter relay team from St. Thomas has already qualified for nationals with an automatic time. Rounding out the running events, two young teams from Carleton and St. Olaf have qualified in the distance medley relay. St. Mary's sophomore Dwyne Smith is in the top ten for the 55 meter run and Adam Erickson, sophomore from Bethel is in the top ten for the 1500 meter run.

In the field events, Luke Speltz from Gustavus is a double NCAA qualifier in the Shot Put and Weight Throw. St. Olaf senior Marcus Hanson hopes to join Luke in the shot put in nationals. Sebbaale Sseremba, Macalester sophomore leads the way in the Triple Jump. Two juniors have qualified for nationals in the High Jump, Joe Thomas from St. Thomas and Will Sallee from Hamline. Gustavus senior pole vaulter Josh Gysbers will help Gustavus dominate in the field events.

On the women's side, the St. Thomas squad will try to win the team title for the third year in a row and 15th time in the event's 18-year history. The Tommies will be challenged by Gustavus and Concordia. The next four spots will be a battle among Saint Benedict, Carleton, St. Olaf, and Augsburg. Watch for talented, young first year student-athletes to give the senior athletes a challenge, as many events feature first year athletes up against senior defending champions.

Leading off in the 55 meter dash, will be two first year runners from Augsburg, Tonnisha Bell and Alana Carter. First year student Angie Pfeiffer from Concordia will be running against senior defending champion Heidi Vogel from St. Thomas. Pfeiffer and Bell will also be paired with Vogel and senior Elizabeth Durney from Macalester in the 200 meter dash. The top five contenders in the 400 meter dash are first year students Mollie Hupp from St. Thomas, Pfeiffer from Concordia, and Alana Carter from Augsburg, sophomore Ashley Dingels from Saint Mary's and senior Alicia Wakefield from Bethel.

St. Olaf senior Megan Daymont has qualified for nationals in the 400, 800, and 1500 meter runs. Daymont is the defending champion in the 1000 meter run and is trying to win that event as well as the 1500 meter run for a fourth consecutive year. She holds MIAC Conference records in the 600 and 1000 meter runs. St. Thomas runners, junior Teresa Smock and senior Tish Dusich have qualified for nationals in the 800 meter run. St. Olaf first year Kari Koos has also qualified for nationals in the 800 meter run with a time faster than the provisional time. Hamline junior Corrin Hoffman will be looking for a strong finish in the 800 meter run. Carleton College senior Laura Bloedorn leads the distance runners in the 3000 and 5000 meter runs. She will be challenged by Gustavus sophomore Nichole Petersen, who is the defending champion in both the 3000 and 5000 meter runs. First year runner Leah Wurm, from Saint Benedict is ranked third in both events.

For women's field events, Kelli Tranby from Concordia will look to defend her conference title in the long jump, as first years Patti Clintsman from Saint Benedict and Tonnisha Bell from Augsburg and senior Anne Sikorra from St. Catherine hope to finish strong. Gustavus dominates in field events with defending champion junior Lindsey Weis in the Triple Jump and High Jump and junior Jackie Luehmann in the Shot Put and Weight Throw. St. Thomas junior Karolien Bastiaens has qualified automatically for nationals in the Pole vault.