

2008 MIAC Women's Swimming & Diving Championships Preview

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St. Paul, Minn. -- Gustavus will enter the 2008 MIAC Championships as the team favorite after the Gusties claimed the 2007 Championship by over 150 points. The Gusties should be challenged by talented teams from St. Olaf, Carleton, and Saint Benedict. St. Thomas, Macalester, and Hamline are three teams with some talented individuals, but will need to find depth in order to crack the top four. St. Catherine, Concordia, Saint Mary's, and Augsburg will all look to improve upon last season's results and surprise some teams in 2008.



Hosted at the University Minnesota Aquatic Center, the 2008 Championships will run in conjunction with the MIAC Men's Championships this Thursday through Saturday, February 14 -16. The daily meet schedule will feature preliminary events in the morning sessions and final contests during the evening sessions.

[2008 MIAC Swimming & Diving Championships Website](#)

Augsburg

Coach: Tricia Wallace (1st season)

2007 Championships Finish: 11th

Augsburg Athletes to Watch
Kasi Clauson (Sr., Kansas, Okla./Cookson Hills Christian)
Stephanie Storlie (Jr., Moorhead, Minn.)
Natalie Sasseville (So., Bloomington, Minn./Kennedy)
Nissa Anderson (Jr., Edina, Minn.)
Steph Bly (Fy., Madison, Minn./Lac qui Parle Valley)
Sarah Valasek (Jr., Green Lake, Wis.)

Augsburg Championships Preview

The Augsburg College women's swimming team enters its fifth year of competition at the MIAC championships this weekend, with a goal of completing a season of continued improvement by its young swimmers, directed by first-year head coach Tricia Wallace. The MIAC meet will also mark the final collegiate competition for the top swimmer in the first five years of Augsburg's program, senior Kasi Clauson (SR, Kansas, Okla./Cookson Hills Christian HS). The holder of school records in 10 of 14 individual events for the Auggies, Clauson will compete individually in the 200-yard individual medley (top time of 2:24.84 this season), 400-yard individual medley (top time of 5:09.98 this season), 1,650-yard freestyle (school-record top time of 19:52.63 this season), as well as being a part of four relay squads for the Auggies. Clauson is the first four-year swimmer in the five-year history of the Auggie swimming program. Stephanie Storlie (JR, Moorhead, Minn.) and Natalie Sasseville (SO, Bloomington, Minn./Kennedy HS) will aim for improvement as MIAC championship veterans. Storlie has the team's top time of 2:41.03 in the 200-yard backstroke, while Sasseville has shown improvement all season long in both the freestyle and breaststroke events. Three Auggies will be competing in their first MIAC championships, with hopes of gaining valuable experience for the future -- Nissa Anderson (JR, Edina, Minn.), Steph Bly (FY, Madison, Minn./Lac qui Parle Valley HS) and Sarah Valasek (JR, Green Lake, Wis.).
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Carleton

Coach: Brooke Larsen (1st season)

2007 Championships Finish: 3rd

Carleton Athletes to Watch
Becky Alexander (Jr., Tigar, Ore./Tualatin) Kate Alexander (So., Tigar, Ore./Tualatin) Karin Brown (Sr., Madison, Wis./Memorial) Jen Gratz (Sr., Eden Prairie, Minn./Edina) Kaarin Taylor (Jr., Gainesville, Fla.) Kale Zicafoose (Fy., Omaha, Neb./Westside)

Carleton Championships Preview

The Knights will once again be led by the sister combination of sophomore Kate Alexander and junior Becky Alexander. Kate Alexander was named the MIAC Championships swimmer of the meet as a rookie and enters this year's competition as the defending champion in both the 200- and 400-yard individual medleys after her record-setting performances a year ago. Her credentials also include earning All-America honors in the 200-yard breaststroke last year. She owns the conferences top time this season in five different events (100 and 200 breaststroke, 200 butterfly and 200 and 400 IM), while her 100-yard breaststroke time is also an NCAA "B" standard.

Older sister Becky, the two-time defending 100-yard freestyle champion, added a title in the 100-yard backstroke last year.

Seniors Jen Gratz and Karin Brown are both experienced competitors and paired with the Alexanders to win the 400 freestyle relay a year ago. Gratz advanced to the conference finals in three events last season and won a national title in 2005 on the 400-yard freestyle relay. Brown, meanwhile, possesses the league's top time this season in the 200-yard freestyle race after capturing her first individual conference crown in the event last year. Additionally, she earned All-MIAC honors the last two seasons in the 200 IM.

Kaarin Taylor figures to play a major role on the Knights relays and in the butterfly events where she owns the third-fastest time in the 100-yard race and the second-quickest in the 200-yard competition.

Rookie Kale Zicafoose has been performing like a seasoned-veteran, breaking pool records and posting the conference's top performances and NCAA "B" cut times in the 100- and 200- yard backstroke. Proving her versatility, she possess the conference's second-best time in the 100 butterfly while ranking among the leaders in the 50-, 100- and 200-yard freestyle races.

Concordia

Coach: Julie Lucier (9th season)

2007 Championships Finish: 9th

Concordia Athletes to Watch
Amy Glubzinski (Fr., Novi, Mich.)
Lauren Trudeau (So., Stillwater, Minn./Chisago Lakes)
Chelsea Volna (So., Ham Lake, Minn./Blaine)
Aleina Weisz (Fr., Williston, N.D.)

Concordia Championships Preview

Youth will be queen for Concordia at the 2007-08 MIAC Swimming and Diving Championship Meet. The Cobbers have 19 freshmen or sophomores on their roster and their top four individuals heading into the conference meet are all first or second-year students. Concordia will once again be hoping that their top-notch diving program and overall depth will be able to carry them to an improved finish at the year-end meet.

For the second straight year, the Cobbers enter the 2008 MIAC Meet on the heels of one of their most successful dual and invitational regular seasons in recent history. The Cobbers recorded a 5-3 record in dual meets which is the most dual meet wins in a season since the 2002-03 campaign. At one point in time, CC was 4-0 which set a school record for most dual-meet wins to start a season. On top of the dual-meet success in 2007-08, Concordia also posted a three second-place finishes in their three multi-team invitationals.

Leading the way for the Concordia swimmers is freshman Aleina Weisz (Williston, N.D.). Weisz broke the school record in both the 100-yard and 200-yard backstroke and is the top Cobber swimmer heading into the championship meet. Weisz currently ranks 14th in the conference in the 200-yard backstroke, 17th in the 100-yard backstroke and 17th in the 200-yard freestyle.

A year of experience at the top conference meet will help sophomore Chelsea Volna (Fr., Ham Lake, Minn./Blaine HS). Volna is currently rated 15th in the 200-yard and 16th in the 100-yard breaststroke. Last year she set a school record at the MIAC Meet and recorded team points in three different events.

The Cobber diving crew will once again be counted on to score multiple team points. Like the swimmers, the CC diving team is led by a freshman and a sophomore. Freshman Amy Glubzinski (Novi, Mich.) has been the most consistent Concordia diver of the year. She is currently ranked sixth in the MIAC in 1-meter for six dives and second in the 3-meter for 11 dives. She has posted top finishes in several competitions during the year.

The experience for the diving squad will come from sophomore Lauren Trudeau (Stillwater, Minn./Chisago Lakes HS). Trudeau is the top CC diver in 1-meter for 11 dives. She is currently ranked first in the MIAC in 1-meter for 11 dives. Last year she finished fifth in 1-meter at the MIAC Meet and sixth in the 3-meter competition.

Gustavus

Coach: Jon Carlson (17th season)

2007 Championships Finish: 1st

Gustavus Athletes to Watch

Anika Erickson (Fy., Milaca, Minn.)

Carrie Gundersen (So., Minnetonka, Minn.)

Erica Hickey (Jr., Great Falls, Mont.)

Christi O'Connor (So., Great Falls, Mont.)

Gustavus Championships Preview

The Gustavus Adolphus women's swimming and diving team has its sites set on defending its 2007 MIAC Championship title against an extremely competitive field. Coach Jon Carlson will need each swimmer to contribute at the 2008 MIAC Championships in order for the Gusties to repeat as champions.

The Golden Gusties return three MIAC individual champions from last year's team, including Carrie Gundersen, Erica Hickey, and Christi O'Connor. Gundersen, one of the premier distance swimmers in the MIAC, will look to defend her 500 and 1650 freestyle conference titles. She currently holds the top MIAC time in the 500 and the second-fastest time in the 1650. Hickey hopes to defend her 200 butterfly title as she holds the fourth-fastest conference time in the event this season. O'Connor, the reigning MIAC champion in the 200 backstroke, holds the second fastest time in the MIAC in the event and should also contend in the 100 backstroke. Gustavus will also be bolstered by first-year standout Anika Erickson. Erickson has continually improved her times this season in the 100 and 200 breaststroke and should contend for titles in both events as her fastest times in both events rank in the top five.

Gustavus has succeeded this year with a talented roster from top to bottom as each swimmer has the ability to earn points in every event. The Gusties have turned in strong results when multiple swimmers consistently finish in the top 10. This is especially true in the butterfly events as Gustavus swimmers hold five of the top eight times in the 100 butterfly and six of the top 12 times in the 200 butterfly. Strong relay teams will also play an important role in the point standings.

Hamline

Coach: Paul Waas, Jr. (2nd season)

2007 Championships Finish: 7th

Hamline Athletes to Watch
Dana Ketcher
Renee Punyko
Tami Klenke

Hamline Championships Preview
2007 All-American Jonathan Tapia-Rodriguez (Jr., Quito, Ecuador) returns to lead the Hamline University men's swimming and diving team after competing in three events in the NCAA Championships last year. (The 200 yard IM, 100 yard butterfly, and the 200 yard butterfly – the event in which his 16 th place finish garnered him honorable mention All-American status).
Will Khoury-Hanold (So., Kingsford, Mich.) also returns to the Pipers after making the finals in multiple events in 2007, as does sprinter Jake Burgess (Jr., Oakdale, Minn.). Tapia-Rodriguez, Khoury-Hanold and Burgess also look to add to the Pipers' point total in relays, teaming up with Patrick Swartzner (Sr., Watertown, Minn.).
The Pipers also look to continue to get points from Aaron Birr (Jr., Spring Lake Park, Minn.) off the diving board.

Macalester

Coach: Bob Pearson (19th season)

2007 Championships Finish: 6th

Macalester Athletes to Watch

Annie Flanagan (Jr., Madison, Wis./East)

Anna Gajewski (So., Wausau, Wis.)

Kiersten Yeazel (Fy., Tacoma, Wash.)

Alex Cortes (Jr., Berkeley, Calif.)

Macalester Championships Preview

Macalester placed sixth at last year's conference meet and is looking to get back into the top half this season after a successful regular season which saw the Scots go 4-5 in dual meets. Leading the Scots heading into the MIAC championships are all-conference performers Annie Flanagan (Jr., Madison, Wis. / East) and Anna Gajewski (So., Wausau, Wis. / East). Flanagan placed second in the MIAC a year ago in both 1-meter and 3-meter diving and went on to compete at nationals, while Gajewski earned all-conference honors as a first-year by taking third in the 400 IM. Gajewski, who is currently ranked fourth in the 400 IM, should also be a top contender this time in the distance freestyle races.

Kiersten Yeazel (Fy., Shorewood, Wis.) has been one of the team's top point-producers this winter and should be a factor in the breaststroke races. Kristin Mathson (Sr., Verona, Wis.) in the backstroke and Angie Marvin (Jr., Warroad, Minn.) in the freestyle are also capable of making it to the finals. Alex Cortes (Jr., Berkeley, Calif. / Head-Royce) missed fall semester meets while studying abroad but has been one of the team's top swimmers since returning in January. Cortes could be placed in a variety of events.

Saint Benedict

Coach: Kathy Walker (4th season)

2007 Championships Finish: 4th

Saint Benedict Athletes to Watch

Kaelly Simpson (Sr.)

Steph Johnson (Jr.)

Kelly Matzen (Jr.)

Brooke Johnson (Jr.)

Becca Schleicher (Jr.)

Alison Pagliaccetti (Jr.)

Saint Benedict Championships Preview

Season So Far: CSB’s season has been marked with great success so far with both team and individual accomplishments. The Blazers clipped rival St. Thomas 166 to 132 in a home dual meet win on Dec. 8 and recently returned from a successful 11th place finish at the Copa Coqui Invitational in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Following a second place finish at the CSB/SJU Winter Invitational, the Blazers easily handled MIAC foes St. Catherine, Augsburg and Hamline at the CSB/SJU Super Invite on Jan. 25 creating significant momentum heading into the MIAC Championships Individually, senior captain Kaelly Simpson has notched the MIAC’s fastest times in the 1650 freestyle and broke the school record in the 1000 freestyle. Simpson also has top five times in the 200 breaststroke, 200 IM, 400 IM and 1000 freestyle. Junior Alison Pagliaccetti garnered MIAC swimmer of the week honors when she set a meet record in the 50 freestyle with a time of 25.63 and anchored the winning 200 freestyle relay at the Gustavus Adolphus Triangular. Pagliaccetti is currently tied for the second fastest time 50 yard freestyle in the MIAC. Fellow junior Kelly Matzen has scored the fifth fastest conference time in the 50 freestyle and third in the 100 freestyle. Junior Brooke Johnson scored the MIAC’s fourth fastest time in the 100 breaststroke. Sophomore Abbey Brau owns the third best time in the conference for the 500 freestyle. Junior diver Steph Johnson holds the second highest scores in the one and three meter dives. Blazer relays have been formidable all season. As of mid January, the 200 and 400 freestyle relay teams as well as the 200 IM relay have recorded the top times in the MIAC.
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St. Catherine

Coach: Nicole Hempler (6th season)

2007 Championships Finish: 8th

St. Catherine Athletes to Watch
Erica Campbell (Sr., Baxter, Minn.)
Allie Jones (Sr., Lindstrom, Minn.)
Brooke Schneider (Sr., Inver Grove Heights, Minn.)
Jen Lippitt (Jr., Madison, Wis.)

St. Catherine Championships Preview

The 2007-08 edition of the Wildcat swimming and diving team will be looking to a trio of seniors and a junior to lead them as they enter the MIAC Championships. Seniors Erica Campbell (Baxter, Minn.), Allie Jones (Lindstrom, Minn.) and Brooke Schneider (Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) have been a consistent force throughout the season and will be looked to by head coach Nicole Hempler to help the Wildcats climb the MIAC ladder. Campbell has played a big part of the Wildcat program during her career and this season was not any different, as Campbell went on to win several individual events throughout the year.

Much like Campbell, Jones has been a steady force during her Wildcat career and will play a key role for the Wildcats at the MIAC Championships. Jones won several individual events throughout the season and will look to continue that at the final meet of her career.

Schneider joined the team this season as a senior and made an immediate impact for the Wildcats as part of the Medley Relay team that took home first place in the first meet of the year. Schneider has helped the Wildcats all season as was named Wildcat Athlete of the Week in January for back-to-back performances in which she swam season best times and took home three first place finishes.

Lippitt, a Junior, has swam well during her three years with the Wildcats and continues to improve with each passing season. This season she is peaking at the right time, setting season best times in two events at the Wildcats last meet, cutting a second off in each event.

"We have a nice mix of veterans to go along with some first and second year athletes," stated Wildcat head coach Nicole Hempler. "I am looking forward to us swimming some of our best races of the year at the conference meet and I think this team has put in the work to make that a reality," added Hempler.

Saint Mary's

Coach: Eric Lindquist (9th season)

2007 Championships Finish: 10th

Saint Mary's Athletes to Watch

Danielle Braun (Sr., Cold Spring, Minn.)

Sarah Hayden (Sr., Chatfield, Minn.)

Sarah Ruether (Sr., Red Wing, Minn.)

Kasey Schultz (Sr., Cary, Ill.)

Saint Mary's Championships Preview

For Saint Mary's University women's swimming and diving coach Eric Lindquist, the MIAC Championships will be the last hurrah for his four seniors.

And the Cardinal head coach is hoping it will be a memorable farewell for a memorable group of seniors.

"These ladies have had outstanding careers, and it would be great to see them close things out with a great showing on the conference's biggest stage," said Lindquist. "We have had a great season thus far, and I'm expecting more of the same (at the conference championships).

"The field is going to be tough, but I think we are ready to make a bit of a move this year."

St. Olaf

Coach: Dave Hauck (34th season) and Bob Hauck (19th season)

2007 Championships Finish: 2nd

St. Olaf Athletes to Watch

Alyssa Germeroth

Alli Beardsley

Kjersten Grinde

Jen Marzolf

Christina Roberts

Aly Janzen

St. Olaf Championships Preview

The St. Olaf women's swimming and diving team will use its depth in chase of a top three spot at the MIAC Championships February 15-17 at the University of Minnesota Aquatics Center.

The Oles, who finished second at last year's event, have won 15 MIAC titles including three since 2003.

Sophomore Alyssa Germeroth, the defending winner on the 1- and 3-meter boards, should compete for the title on each board again this year.

In swimming events, St. Olaf has two solid first years to accent its veterans - Alli Beardsley and Kjersten Grinde. Alli Beardsley has the team's best chance at multiple top three finishes. Beardsley has top six times in the league in the 200 IM, 400 IM, 200 Free, 100 Back and 200 Back. Grinde has the second and fifth-best times in the MIAC in the 100 and 200 Breast.

Jen Marzolf and Christina Roberts should provide scores for the Oles in a variety of events. Marzolf has the third-best time in the 200 Fly and 1000 Free and is ninth on the 500 Free list. Roberts was second in the 200 Free at last season's MIAC Championships.

Fellow senior Aly Janzen swims on the Oles' league-leading 800 Free Relay team and could finish near the top of the 500 Free with sophomore teammate Jamie Freeden.

First year Amanda Rorem and sophomore Jessie Gibbons have been of the St. Olaf relay teams and could score substantial swims individually as well.

St. Thomas

Coach: Tom Hodgson (28th season)

2007 Championships Finish: 5th

St. Thomas Athletes to Watch

Kristin Jarnes (Sr.)

Becca Ney (Fy.)

Layla Clauss (So.)

Jena Root (So.)

Ali Krieger (So.)

Elise Andersen (So.)

St. Thomas Championships Preview

St. Thomas is having its best women's swimming & diving season in more than a decade, and the Tommies expect to hit their peak at the MIAC Championships. The Toms will look to battle Carleton and St. Benedict for a third-place finish out of 11 teams, and will seek their first MIAC relay and individual victories in several years.

In February 2007, newcomers Layla Clauss and Jena Root combined for five runner-up finishes at the MIAC meet, and the Tommies broke five school records and placed fifth of 11 teams. Coach Tom Hodgson was voted by his peers as the MIAC Women's Coach of the Year.

The Tommies have competed well in 2007-08. In MIAC season rankings through January, UST has 21 top-10 ranked performances and four top-three ranked relays.

Freshman Becca Ney ranks first in the 50 free (25.02) and 100 free (54.06); second on the 200 free (1:59.62); and third in the 100 back (60.24) and 200 IM (2:15.50).

Layla Clauss has seven top-10 times. She's ranked fourth in the 200 free (1:59.65), 400 free (5:21.64) and 1,650 free (18:38.47); sixth in the 1000 free (11:05.35); seventh in the 200 IM (2:18.94) and 400 IM (4:54.74); and eighth in the 100 free (55.84).

Jena Root is seeded second in the 100 back (60.24), fourth in the 200 back (2:14.65); fifth in the 100 free (55.56); and 10th in the 50 free (25.89).

Kristen Jarnes is seeded fifth in one-meter diving (216.23) and seventh in three-meter diving (205.88).

In relays, UST also is ranked second in the 400 free (3:42.56); third in the 800 free (8:13.80); second in the 200 medley (1:52.53); and second in the 400 medley (4:10.16).