

2009-10 MIAC Women's Swimming & Diving Championship Preview

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St. Paul, Minn. -- The 2009-10 MIAC Men's and Women's Swimming & Diving Championships begin this Thursday, February 18 and will run through Saturday, February 20 at the University of Minnesota's Aquatic Center in Minneapolis. The three-day event will feature preliminary races and diving during the morning seasons, starting at 10:30 a.m. each day, followed by event finals in the evening sessions, which start at 6:30 p.m. daily.

Carleton, last year's team champion, will be one of the top contenders for the team title again this year. But, Gustavus, St. Thomas, and St. Olaf all enter the championships with talented rosters and could end up on top of the standings after Saturday night. Look for Macalester, Saint Benedict, St. Catherine, and Concordia to battle for the next spots in the standings, but each team does have the potential to crack the top four. Hamline, Saint Mary's, and Augsburg will look to build off last year's performances and make a move up in the standings.

Only two individual event champions for last year graduated on the women's side which should make for some exciting races. 2008-09 Co-Swimmers of the Year Maggie Alexander, a sophomore from Carleton, and Carrie Gundersen, a senior from Gustavus, both return to defend their titles. Alexander won the 500 free, 200 backstroke, and 200 IM while Gundersen won last year's 1650 freestyle. Event champions returning with them are: St. Olaf sophomore Lauren Snyder (50 free and 200 free), St. Olaf junior Alli Beardsley (200 IM), Carleton senior Kate Alexander (400 IM), Macalester senior Karoline Hart (100 breaststroke), St. Thomas senior Jena Root (100 backstroke), St. Thomas junior Becca Ney (100 free), and Gustavus sophomore Anika Erickson (200 breaststroke).

For those who can't attend the championships, every session will be covered with a live video webcast provided by Webcast America. Results of each event will also be posted online shortly after the conclusion of each event. For the live webcast link, results links and much more, go to the [2009-10 MIAC Swimming & Diving Championships Website](#)

Saint John's University and the College of Saint Benedict will serve as this year's host institutions.

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Augsburg

Coach: Colleen Morgan (1st season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 11th (62 points)

Augsburg Championship Preview

The Augsburg College women's swimming and diving team will conclude its seventh year of competition at the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championships this weekend. Under first-year head coach Colleen Morgan, the Auggies have shown steady improvement and they will look to continue that trend throughout this weekend's competition.

Leading the way for the Auggies at the University of Minnesota Aquatics Center this weekend will be returners Julie Zollner (SO, Shoreview, Minn./Mounds View HS) and Laura Moe (SO, Clackamas, Ore.). Both swimmers are coming off season-best performances at the Macalester Mini Invite. Zollner had a pair of fourth-place finishes in the 100 and 200 backstroke, while Moe netted a sixth-place finish in the 100 breaststroke.

Also competing for the Auggies this weekend will be returners Katie Neff (JR, St. Paul, Minn./Central HS), Amy Storlie (SR, Moorhead, Minn.) and Nicole Nader (JR, Scottsdale, Ariz./Notre Dame Prep HS), as well as newcomer Denyalle Lawrence (FY, Robbinsdale, Minn./Cooper HS). Neff and Storlie both competed in the last two MIAC Swimming and Diving Championships, while Lawrence will be making her first appearance. Lawrence has been a key member of the Auggies relay teams this season and will look to make an impact at her first conference championships.



Carleton

Coach: Andy Clark (17th season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 1st (721 points)

Carleton Championship Preview

The Knights won their third MIAC Championship of the decade in 2009, and although they suffered some losses from last year's squad, most of the team returns intact. Carleton continues to be led by Kate and Maggie Alexander, and Kale Zicafoose, each of which advanced to the NCAA Championships last March.

Kate Alexander (Sr./Tigard, Ore.) is a two-time MIAC Swimmer of Year (2007 and 2008) and has earned All-American Honorable Mention seven times, with three of those honors coming in individual races (200 breaststroke, 200 and 400 IM). Last year, she earned All-MIAC honors in 200 and 400 IM plus the 200 and 400 medley relay. She has won the 400 individual medley at the MIAC Championships every year of her career. Alexander currently has the top-time in the MIAC in the 100 breaststroke, 400 IM, second-best in 200 breaststroke and third-best in 200 IM.

Sophomore Maggie Alexander (Tigard, Ore.) followed in her sister's footsteps and shared MIAC Co-Swimmer of Year distinction at last year's conference meet. In her first MIAC Championship, Alexander dominated the field, winning the 200 backstroke and 500 freestyle. She finished second in the 200 freestyle and swam a leg on a pair of All-MIAC relays. Alexander racked up five All-American Honorable mention awards in her first trip to nationals, including three individual races (200 freestyle, 500 freestyle and 200 backstroke). She ranks among the top-MIAC swimmers in several events: 500 freestyle (third), 100 backstroke (fourth), and 200 backstroke (fourth).

Zicafoose (Jr./Omaha, Neb.) is the lone current Knight to earn an All-American award, finishing seventh in the 200 backstroke at last year's NCAA Championships. At last year's conference meet, she set and then shattered her own conference record in the 200 backstroke with a time of 2:03.95 in the finals. Zicafoose was also a part of three All-MIAC relays. She currently ranks among conference leaders in the 100 backstroke (second), 200 backstroke (second) and 100 fly (fifth).

Other Knights with top times in the MIAC this season include: Erin McDuffie (Fy./Anchorage, Alaska), Molly Spence (Fy./Tacoma, Wash.), and Kelsey Ihinger (Sr./Eden Prairie, Minn.). McDuffie has swum the second and third-best times in the 100 freestyle and 50 freestyle, respectively. Spence has the top time in the 1000 freestyle by over a second. She also owns the second-best time for the 1650 freestyle. Ihinger leads the Knights in the 200 fly with the second-best time in the MIAC.

The Carleton relays should continue to be a force to be reckoned with in the MIAC Championship. The Knights have had an All-MIAC relay team in the 200 and 400 medley relay and the 400 freestyle relay for the past two years.



Concordia

Coach: Julie Lucier (11th season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 8th (223.5 points)

Concordia Championship Preview

The 2010 MIAC Women's Swimming and Diving Championship Meet should hold plenty of drama for Concordia. As a team the Cobbers will be looking to improve on their eighth-place finish at last year's conference meet and individually they will have plenty of athletes looking to post personal bests and record valuable team points.

The most dramatic part of the meet for Concordia should come in the diving events where senior Lauren Trudeau (Stillwater, Minn./Chisago Lakes HS) will try to become an MIAC champion and record her third national qualifying score of the season. Trudeau has some of the top scores in the MIAC in the 1-meter and 3-meter events this year and has posted national qualifying scores on a pair of occasions in the 1-meter. She set the Macalester pool record with a total 417.40 points at the Macalester Invite. That mark is the top 11-dive score in the conference this season. Trudeau has finished second at the conference meet in the 1-meter the past two seasons and will be trying to break on to the top step of the platform in 2010.

The Concordia diving crew should once again help out the team score by gaining numerous valuable points. Besides Trudeau, the Cobbers have several other divers that could score point. Leading the second wave of CC divers is Amy Glubzinski (So., Novi, Mich.) who finished second in the 3-meter at the MIAC Meet last year and has posted several outstanding scores this season. She has the second-best score in the conference this season with a total of 365.20 points at the St. Kate's Invite.

The swimming hopes will once again reside on the shoulders of junior Katie Coleman (Marshall, Minn.). Coleman has been the team's most consistent swimmer in 2010 and has top 30 marks in the conference in six different events.

Coleman's best events come in the distance freestyle where she is ranked 19th in the 1650-yard freestyle. She is also ranked 21st in the 200-yard freestyle and 26th in the 500-yard freestyle. Last year Coleman had top 10 finishes in two events. She had the highest swimming finish of any CC athlete as she placed seventh in the 1650-yard freestyle and 10th in the 500-yard freestyle.

The other two Concordia swimmers who have times ranked in the top 30 of the MIAC heading into the championship meet are Stacie Fossum (Sr., Minnetonka, Minn.) and Aleina Weisz (Jr., Williston, N.D.). Fossum has a season-best time of 2:42.09 in the 200-yard breaststroke and is ranked 26th. Weisz will carry the Cobber torch in the individual medleys. She is currently 27th in the 400-yard individual medley with a mark of 5:08.03.

Coleman, Fossum and Weisz will also be featured in the top Cobber relays. CC's best bet for recording multiple relay points at the conference meet will be the 400-yard freestyle relay and the 800-yard freestyle relay. Both quartets are ranked eighth in the conference heading into the MIAC Meet.



Gustavus

Coach: Jon Carlson (19th season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 2nd (619.5 points)

Gustavus Championship Preview

The Gustavus women's swimming and diving team will look to dethrone last year's MIAC Champions, Carleton, and win its third conference title in the last four years at the MIAC Championships held this weekend at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center in Minneapolis. Head Coach Jon Carlson feels that Carleton is the clear favorite, but St. Olaf, St. Thomas, and Gustavus will make the race for the championship a close one. With a weekend off before the conference meet, the Gustavus women's team is relaxed and well rested, a good sign according to Coach Carlson.

In order to compete for the title this season, Gustavus's top swimmers will need to perform at their peak, but it will be the second group of swimmers who may be the deciding factor. Senior Carrie Gundersen (Minnetonka, Minn.), the two-time defending champion in the 500 freestyle, and last season's winner of the 1650 freestyle will look to lead the Gusties once again. Gundersen currently holds the top time in the MIAC in both the 500 freestyle (5:08.45), and 1650 freestyle (17:48.65), while ranking second in the 200 freestyle (1:57.44).

Gustavus first year swimmer Carley Mosher (Great Falls, Mont.) who has performed very well in her first year of collegiate competition will look to make a splash at the conference meet. Mosher currently has the fastest MIAC time in the 200 backstroke (2:09.15), 100 butterfly (1:00.30), and 200 IM (2:12.70). Joining Gundersen and Mosher at the top of the Gustavus lineup is senior Maggie Hansvick (Litchfield, Minn). Hansvick is ranked third in both the 100 and 200 breaststroke with times of 1:08.94 and 2:30.25, respectively.

Junior Anika Erickson (Milaca, Minn.), who won the 200 breaststroke while taking second in the 100 breaststroke at the MIAC Championships last season, will add depth in the breaststroke events once again. First year Sara Hund (Willmar, Minn.) looks to score in 50 and 100 freestyle races, as she currently holds the second fastest time in the 50 freestyle (24.71). Other Gusties looking to have an impact are sophomore Stephanie Korba (Lakeville, Minn.), sophomore Dajana Vidovic (Coleraine, Minn.), junior Marnie Luke (Stillwater, Minn.), first year Tori Hubbard (Stacy, Minn.), and senior Brittani Matzke (Buffalo, Minn.). Korba in the 100 and 200 butterfly, Vidovic in the 50 and 100 freestyle, and Luke in the 100 and 200 butterfly and 400 IM. Hubbard and Matzke are the top Gustavus divers entering the meet.

Gustavus enters the conference championships as the team to beat in the relay events. Gustavus currently has the top times in the 200 freestyle relay (1:39.55), the 200 medley relay (1:50.46), the 400 freestyle relay (3:38.88), the 400 medley relay (4:05.44), and the 800 freestyle relay (8:05.23).



Hamline

Coach: Frank Vaccaro (2nd season)
2008-09 Championship Finish: 9th (159 points)

Hamline Championship Preview

Boasting the largest roster in four years, second-year head coach Frank Vaccaro is excited about a strong first-year class and a pair of seniors who already hold spots in Hamline top-ten lists. His Pipers enter the 2010 championships without losing a swimmer from last year's meet.

Renee Punyko (Sr., Duluth, Minn.) returns for her final season holding spots in six Hamline top-lists (second in 100 freestyle, third in 100 butterfly, fourth in 100 backstroke, sixth in 200 individual medley, seventh in 200 freestyle and backstroke). The versatile swimmer posted an NCAA "B" cut qualifying time at the 2009 MIAC Championships in the 100 freestyle on the final day of competition. She finished sixth in the finals.

Also at the championships last year, Punyko became just the third Piper to swim a sub-minute 100 butterfly, finishing in third place in that event at the meet.

Vaccaro expects Punyko to move up the lists in the 100 butterfly, 100 freestyle, and 200 IM this season. She also has a chance to break into the top-ten in the 50 freestyle, and looks to qualify for nationals in her senior season.

The school record-holder in the 100 breaststroke, Marreya Bailey (Sr., Brooklyn Park, Minn.), also returns to lead the Pipers in the pool. Vaccaro anticipates that she will challenge the school record in the 50 freestyle, an event in which she is currently fourth all-time at Hamline.

With four strong events in her repertoire (50 and 100 freestyle, 100 and 200 breaststroke), Bailey will also have her sights set on nationals.

Other returning swimmers who tallied points for the Pipers at the MIAC Championships include Kryslyn Kalkbrenner (So., Eden Prairie, Minn.), Erinn Moriarty (Sr., Cottage Grove, Minn.), Erin Weslander (So., St. Cloud, Minn.), and Jozie Nummi (So., Superior, Wis.). Also returning to the roster is Samantha Fisher (Sr., South St. Paul, Minn.), who sat out the 2008-09 season.

A pair of strong new swimmers will make an impact for the Pipers this winter. Angela Lesnak (Fy., Chisholm, Minn.) is a hard working breaststroker Vaccaro believes will consistently drop her times throughout the season. She will challenge Bailey in the breaststroke events, pushing the pair to do even better at the MIAC Championships. Abby Ghylin (Fy., Lakeville, Minn.) is a smart swimmer who will add depth to Hamline's sprint freestyle corps.

With a deep and strong first-year class added to a returning group that sits near the top of many Hamline all-time lists, Vaccaro expects the team to be more competitive and build upon their ninth place conference finish a year ago.



Macalester

Coach: Bob Pearson (21st season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 5th (334.5 points)

Macalester Championship Preview

Led by a talented group of first-years, Macalester placed fifth at last year's MIAC championships. Now sophomores, this core group of Scot swimmers have demonstrated continued progress this past winter as Mac looks for another upper division finish.

Defending MIAC 100-yard breaststroke champion and meet record-holder Karoline Hart (So., Rexford, N.Y. / Niskayuna) looks ready to battle Carleton's Kate Alexander and GAC's Maggie Hansvick for supremacy in this stroke. Hart, who also swam to all-conference status last winter in the 200 breast, is ranked first coming into this year's meet in the 200 breaststroke and second in the 100 breast. Teammate Grace Fleming (So., Northampton, Mass.) swam to a runner-up finish at last year's championships in the 1650-yard freestyle to go along with a third-place MIAC finish in the 500 free, and is also enjoying a stellar sophomore campaign. Fleming is ranked fourth in both these distance events.

Hillary Frey (So., Portland, Ore. / St. Mary's Academy) is ranked 11th in the 400 individual medley and teammate Clare Pillsbury (So., Baraboo, Wis.) is ranked 13th in the 400 IM. Hart is 15th in the 500 free. Pillsbury and Frey are in the top 15 in the 200 breast

The Scots graduated last season's MIAC Diver of the Year Annie Flanagan and the points she earned will be difficult to make up.



Saint Benedict

Coach: Kathy Walker (8th season) and Mike Ritchie (12th season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 6th (285.5 points)

Saint Benedict Championship Preview

The College of Saint Benedict swimming and diving team enters the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Championship meet looking to continue their success.

The Blazers have a young team this season, but their hard work has been evident throughout the year as they have seen many personal bests. The Blazers are led by senior Abbey Brau (Eden Prairie, MN/Eden Prairie), sophomore Carolyn Triggs (Edina, MN/Edina) and first-year Sam Kessler (Plymouth, MN/Providence Academy).

Brau will compete in the 500 freestyle, 200 freestyle and mile, while Triggs will compete in the 200 Individual Medley and the 100 freestyle. Kessler will participate in the 50 freestyle, 100 freestyle and the 200 freestyle.

With the talent that the Blazers possess a finish within the top four is well within reach.



St. Catherine

Coach: Nicole Hempler (8th season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 7th (259 points)

St. Catherine Championship Preview

The St. Catherine swimming and diving team enters the 2010 MIAC Championships with the goal of building on last year's success. In the 2009 Conference meet the Wildcats continued their climb up the conference standings with a seventh place team finish. At the MIAC meet they also set eight school records, had three individuals post NCAA B cut standards for nationals, and saw Coach Nicole Hempler named MIAC Women's Coach of the Year. To continue this trend, the Wildcats will rely on experienced returners and a strong first-year class of student-athletes.

Sophomores Bridget Perkins, Sarah Vrudny, and Sarah Moody will help lead St. Kate's. Perkins has the school record in the 100 Fly and has been a part of four relay school records. At last year's MIAC championships she earned all-conference honors by placing second in the 100 Fly with an NCAA "B" cut time. She heads into the meet ranked third in that event this year.

Vrudny, who holds the 50 Free, 100 Free, and 200 Free school records, along with four relay records, will also look to move up in her individual events and improve upon her existing records.

In the diving well, Moody, hopes to add to her successful season by getting into the top three spots on the board this year and earning her first MIAC conference honors. Last year Moody finished eighth in 3-Meter diving, and just missed being all-conference as she finished fourth in 1-Meter.

The Wildcats first-year class is led by Steffanie Jurusik and Alli Witt. Jurusik, who has already set school record swims in the 100 and 200 Backstroke this season, will look to have an even bigger drop in those events at this meet. Witt, who is ranked in the top 16 in various IM and Breaststroke events, will also look to make a significant contribution to team's point total.

"As with any meet, this will be a full team effort," Head Coach Nicole Hempler said. "Although not everyone may score points for the team, every swim is important and feeds the energy needed for a successful meet."



Saint Mary's

Coach: Eric Lindquist (11th season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 10th (74 points)

Saint Mary's Championship Preview

It's their last go-around, and the Saint Mary's University trio of Courtney Keyler (Shorewood, Minn.), Jennifer Salzman (Hilo, Hawaii), and Angela Lager (Stewartville, Minn.) are determined to make this year's MIAC Championships one to remember.

"I like where we are at," said SMU coach Eric Lindquist. "I think everyone here is excited about the upcoming championships — this is a group that is determined to prove that they are a force to be reckoned with."

Salzman has enjoyed a banner season for the Cardinals and Lindquist expects his senior freestyler to keep that momentum rolling at the MIAC Championships.

"We've had some excellent swims this season from a number of different individuals, and our divers have really come on strong," said Lindquist. "There's no reason we can't make a little noise for ourselves (at the conference championships)."

"This is a veteran team that knows that to expect from this weekend," said Lindquist, who returned his entire women's squad from a year ago. "Everyone's excited to get going — to start making that climb (up the conference ladder)."



St. Olaf

Coach: Dave Hauck (36th season) and Bob Hauck (21st season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 4th (479 points)

St. Olaf Championship Preview

The St. Olaf women's swimming and diving team enters this weekend's MIAC championships with a trio of Oles that have at least four swims in the top eight in the league. St. Olaf, which has 15 league titles, finished fourth at last year's league championships.

Lauren Snyder has the league's top 200 free time, is third in the 200 and seventh in both the 50 free and 500 free. Snyder won the 50 and 200 free at the 2009 MIAC's.

Alli Beardsley has the fourth-best time in the 200 breast and 200 IM, and is fifth and sixth in the 400 IM and 100 breast. Beardsley won the 200 IM at last year's MIAC's.

Jamie Fredeen is ranked second in the 400 IM, third in the 1,000 and 1,650 frees and sixth in the 500 free.

St. Olaf will also look to Anna Begin (free), Megan Laedtke (free, fly), Katie Kubat (back), Melissa Gihiglieri (breast), Maura Nicholson (breast), Lydia Feldman (fly) and Kjersent Grinde (breast).



St. Thomas

Coach: Tom Hodgson (31st season)

2008-09 Championship Finish: 3rd (496 points)

St. Thomas Championship Preview

Tommie women's swimming and diving is looking for its best MIAC score in nearly 20 years. St. Thomas has made a steady climb from ninth in 2005-06 to fifth, fifth, and third places in the last three MIAC Championship meets.

St. Thomas has a top-two MIAC seed in six individual events and two of five relays, led by senior Jena Root and junior Becca Ney and some talented freshmen.

Tommie relays have the MIAC's second-ranked times in both the 400 free (3:40.43) with Root, Layla Clauss, Jenny Bruno and Ney, and the 400 medley (4:06.40) with Root, Karly Harrod, Katie Bromback and Ney.

UST's 800 free relay is seeded third in 8:06.93 with Ney, Clauss, Root and Bruno, and seeded third in the 200 medley relay in 1:51.70 with Root, Bromback, Krieger and Ney.

Ney is seeded first in the 50 free (24.63), first in the 100 free (53.72), third in the 200 free (1:57.95) and fifth in the 200 IM (2:15.50).

Root is seeded first in the 100 back (59.50) and third in the 200 back (2:10.75).

Bromback, a freshman, is seeded first in the 200 fly (2:12.10), second in the 100 fly (1:00.55), second in the 200 and ninth in the 400 IM (IM (2:15.14), ninth in the 100 breaststroke (1:11.47) and 10th in the 200 breaststroke (2:35.16).

Bruno is seeded fifth in the 200 back (2:13.07), sixth in the 100 back (1:01.77) and eighth in the 200 IM (2:17.70).

Sam Simon is seeded fourth in the 1000 free (11:05.07), fifth in the 1650 free (18:27.10) and seventh in the 400 IM (4:53.96).

Clauss is seeded fifth in the 1000 free (11:05.16), seventh in the 1,650 free (18:35) and ninth in the 400 IM (4:56.69).

Harrod is seeded sixth in the 200 breaststroke (2:33.43).