

2016 MIAC Women's Swimming and Diving Championships Preview

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2016 MIAC WOMEN'S SWIMMING AND DIVING CHAMPIONSHIPS PREVIEW

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. -- After a fantastic finish atop the 2015 standings, the top question entering the 2016 Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) Women's Swimming and Diving Championships is whether Gustavus Adolphus College can continue its stranglehold on the conference title, or if the University of St. Thomas can finally knock the Gusties off their perch.

A year ago, Head Coach Jon Carlson's Gustavus squad captured its sixth-straight MIAC title - and seventh in eight years - by holding off a valiant effort from the runner-up Tommies. The Gusties won with a total of 858.5 points, while St. Thomas also topped 800 and finished just 41.5 back of the champs at 817. Remarkably, these two teams enter the 2016 meet with similarly loaded squads, and this year's race for the title could be even closer.

Below the top two, the two Northfield, Minn., rivals occupied the next two spots. St. Olaf was solidly in third a year ago with 514.5 points, while Carleton claimed fourth place with a total of 356. Saint Benedict had 304 points to round out the final spot in the top five.

St. Catherine (220) edged Macalester (209) for sixth place in the 2015 standings, and Hamline (128) nudged Concordia (122) by just six points for eighth place. Augsburg scored 96 points to finish just ahead of Saint Mary's (88) to complete the 2015 conference scoreboard.

The six-time defending champion Gusties graduated MIAC Swimmer-of-the-Year Jenny Strom and a few other key members of the 2015 squad, but there is still plenty of championship-caliber talent on Carlson's roster. Gustavus finished 10th at the NCAA Championships last year, and won four of the MIAC relay titles. Hayley Booher is back in search of her third-straight title in the 400-yard individual medley, and second in the 200-yard IM. Kate Reilly won the 100-yard butterfly in her first MIAC Championships appearance, and she enters with the top time in the 100-breaststroke in 2016. Newcomer Linnea Rizzo could also make a splash for Gustavus, as she holds the MIAC's top times in the 500-yard freestyle and the mile.

The Tommies certainly feel this could be their best shot yet to overtake Gustavus, starting with the return of junior star Emma Paulson. A year ago, Paulson won MIAC titles in the 50-yard freestyle and both the 100- and 200-yard backstroke, and she holds the top time in all three in 2016. Nicole Herrli has the MIAC's top time in three events (200-breast, 200-IM, 400-IM) and Katelyn Strauss is the top seed in both the 100- and 200-yard butterfly. UST also has the top time in four different relay events in 2016.

St. Olaf also has high hopes entering the 2016 Championships, starting with standout swimmer Maddie Lee. The senior is the defending 200-yard freestyle champ, and she holds the MIAC's to time in both the 100- and 200-free in 2016. Claire Walters and Megan Gaylord also bring All-Conference pedigree back to the Oles' MIAC lineup. Carleton is eyeing another top-four finish as well behind junior star Maria Wetzels, who had three runner-up swims a year ago. Rookie Caroline Mather and sophomore diver Amy Roach also bolster the Knights' hopes in 2016.

Sophomore standout Kenzie Young is back to lead Saint Benedict after a breakout rookie season, and senior Steph Bierman gives the team a huge boost after studying abroad a year ago. Diver Carissa Gaffy-Sanford will represent the Blazers on the boards. Speaking of diving, St. Catherine's hopes start with the return of two-time MIAC Diver-of-the-Year Jenna Nagy. The junior won MIAC titles on both boards a year ago after winning the 1-meter title as a rookie, and she looks poised to continue her decorated career. Rookie Alissa Ellingson and sophomore Mary Jane Voss lead the Wildcat swimmers, as the team aims to challenge for top-five status in 2016.

Macalester hopes to continue its rise behind a strong group of veteran swimmers. Senior Maggie McKenna and juniors Smaranda Georgescu and Kaila Chapman lead the Scots as they aim to work their way up the MIAC leader board. Hamline improved by two places in 2015 and also hopes to keep moving in the right direction. The Pipers have a young, talented nucleus, led by rookies Taylor Martinek and Tatianna Yepes, with senior Jennie Dwyer providing the leadership.

Concordia has a good mix of talent back in the pool in 2016, with senior Annie Herkenhoff, junior Libby Hardwick and sophomore Ann Marie O'Connell leading the Cobbers into the conference meet. Augsburg will again rely on senior Kelsey Knollmueller to lead the way, and hope talented rookies Maddie Moser and diver Cassie Lehman can lead the Auggies to new heights. Saint Mary's has school-record holder Grace VanBeest back in the breaststroke events, and sophomore Reese Galewski hopes to repeat her strong MIAC Championships debut from a year ago.

The 2016 MIAC Swimming and Diving Championships will be held Thursday, Feb. 18, through Saturday, Feb. 20, with two sessions each day. The morning sessions will begin at 10:30 a.m. (doors at 9 p.m.) and will feature preliminary races, with the evening championship sessions starting at 6:30 p.m. (doors at 5 p.m.). Saturday's championship doors will open at 2:30 p.m. for preliminary heats of the 1,650-yard freestyle and diving.



Tickets are available at either a single-session rate, or all-session passes will also be available for fans who plan to attend the entire event. Single-session passes cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for students, and all-session passes are \$50 for adults and \$25 for students. Heat sheets are included in the cost of admission. Children 5 and under are admitted free, and MIAC passes will be honored for all six sessions. No other passes or discounts will be accepted.

As in years past, all six sessions will be [broadcast live online](#) thanks to [Webcast America](#). Fans will also be able to watch archived video of each session following the event and purchase DVDs of the broadcasts via Webcast America's site. [MIAC Media's Mike Gallagher](#) will handle play-by-play duties for four of the six sessions. There will also be "live" results [available online](#) with results updated shortly after the conclusion of each event for fans following the action from afar.

The MIAC has an exclusive Web site for the [2016 MIAC Swimming & Diving Championships](#). The site features the complete [event schedule](#), [psych sheet](#), [ticket information](#) and venue information. The site will be constantly updated throughout the event with heat sheets, links to follow the action live, results, recaps, photos and more.

Fans can also monitor MIAC men's swimming and diving on-the-go thanks to the [MIAC mobile app](#), which is a free download for both Apple and Android devices. Also, connect to the conference on its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) pages and use the official event hashtag #MIACSD to interact throughout the championships.

The rest of the 2016 MIAC Women's Swimming and Diving Championships Preview contains helpful links, a promotional video, and a championship preview for each team submitted by their sports information director.

MIAC MEDIA PREVIEWS S&D CHAMPIONSHIPS

MIAC Media has been busy preparing for one of the conference's biggest annual events with previews of the Championships across all platforms. Tuesday, the [MIAC Weekly podcast](#) with Host Mike Gallagher (who will be the play-by-play voice of the online broadcast for four of the six sessions) took an in-depth look ahead at the event with special guest St. Olaf Head Coach Bob Hauck. Also, the MIAC released a [video](#) to promote the event on its YouTube channel.

MIAC WOMEN'S SWIMMING AND DIVING LINKS

| [MIAC Women's Swimming and Diving Page](#) | [Schedule](#) | [Top Times](#) | [News](#) | [Athletes-of-the-Week](#) | [Recordbook](#) | [Archives](#) |

TEAM-BY-TEAM PREVIEWS

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AUGSBURG | [Auggies' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head Coach

- Steve Webb (3rd season)

A Year Ago

- 10th place | 96 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Kelsey Knollmueller (SR | Seeded 6th in 200-yard breaststroke (2:31.51), 8th in 400-yard individual medley (4:51.02) and 18th in 100-yard breaststroke (1:11.92), holder of 9 individual and 5 relay school records)
- Maddie Moser (FY | Holder of school records in both 1-meter (222.35/6 dives) and 3-meter (210.60/6 dives) diving)
- Cassie Lehman (FY | No. 2 on school record list in 1-meter (209.25/6 dives) and No. 5 in 3-meter (173.40/6 dives) diving)
- Jordyn Robarge (FY | Seeded 18th in 1,650-yard freestyle (19:06.56) and 20th in 500-yard freestyle (5:31.05))
- Carli Kirchoff (FY | Seeded 23rd in 200-yard freestyle (2:04.71), 25th in 100-yard backstroke (1:06.32), 25th in 200-yard backstroke (2:21.80) and 31st in 100-yard freestyle (58.56))

By the Numbers

- 65: Positions on Augsburg's top-10 all-time list in 12 different individual events for Augsburg senior Kelsey Knollmueller, who holds nine

individual school records. She is also a part of 34 top-10 times in relays, including all five relay school records.

- 12: Positions on Augsburg's all-time list among the 10-best diving scores in both 1-meter and 3-meter (six dives) for first-years Maddie Moser and Cassie Lehman. Moser holds the school records in both 1-meter (222.35) and 3-meter (210.60) diving.
- 13: Years of competition for Augsburg's women's swimming and diving program.

Did You Know?

- The two best MIAC Championship finishes in Augsburg's women's swimming and diving history have come in the past two years under coach Steve Webb. Augsburg finished ninth with 115 points in 2014, and 10th with 96 points in 2015.

Out of the Pool

- Augsburg earned College Swimming Coaches Association of America (CSCAA) Scholar All-America Team honors for the 2015-16 fall semester, achieving a 3.10 team grade-point average.



CARLETON | [Knights' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Andy Clark (23rd season)

A Year Ago

- 4th place | 356 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Maria Wetzel (Jr. | 2015 All-America Honorable Mention in 200 back; 2015 MIAC runner up in 100 back, 200 back, and 200 IM as well as All-MIAC in 800 free relay; this season ranks 2nd in the MIAC in the 100 back [58.47], 200 back [2:02.89] and 200 IM [2:10.40]; 3rd in 200 free [1:56.06] and 500 free [5:13.71]; and 7th in 100 fly [59.60])
- Caroline Mather (Fy. | This season ranks 3rd in the MIAC in the 50 free [24.22] and 7th in 100 free [53.73])
- Amy Roach (So. | top diving scores this season — 201.25, 1-meter score and 182.75, 3-meter score)
- Halie Langanki (Sr. | This season ranks 4th in the MIAC in the 200 fly [2:15.81] and 7th in 400 IM [4:49.11])
- Alex Braiedy (Jr. | 2015 All-MIAC in 800 free relay; this season ranks 12th in the MIAC in 500 free [5:20.85])

By the Numbers

- 2: Maria Wetzel has won two MIAC Athlete-of-the-Week awards this season.
- 3: The Knights hold 3rd best time in the MIAC in both the 200 and 800 freestyle relays.
- 14: Maria Wetzel has won 14 races this season

Did You Know?

- Maria Wetzel was named All-America Honorable Mention after finishing 16th in the 200 backstroke at the NCAA Championships last season.

Out of the Pool

- For the 23rd year in a row, the Carleton Women's Swimming and Diving team was named as an All-Academic team by the CSCAA posting a 3.34 GPA as a team.



CONCORDIA | [Cobbers' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Talia Butery (2nd season)

A Year Ago

- 9th place | 122 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Annie Herkenhoff (Sr. | Ranked 12th in the MIAC in the 1650-yard freestyle)
- Libby Hardwick (Jr. | Ranked in the top 20 of the MIAC in both the 100 and 200-yard backstroke)
- Ann Marie O'Connell (So. | Ranked in the top 30 of the MIAC in both the 100 and 200-yard butterfly)
- Ciara White (Fr. | Ranked in the top 20 in the MIAC in both the 100 and 200-yard breaststroke)

By the Numbers

- 5: Concordia has finished ninth at the MIAC Championship Meet in five of the past 10 seasons including last season.
- 6: Of the 18 athletes on this year's roster, six are freshmen
- 7: Concordia senior Annie Herkenhoff has won seven distance events in meets this season.

Did You Know?

- Senior Annie Herkenhoff is competing in her first season as a collegiate swimmer. She played for the Cobber basketball team last season.

GUSTAVUS | [Gusties' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |

**Head coach**

- Jon Carlson (26th season)

A Year Ago

- First place | 858.5 points

In the 2014 NCAA Championships

- 10th place finish with 99.5 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Kate Reilly (So., Hastings, Minn.) | 2015 MIAC Champion in 100 Butterfly...member of last season's MIAC Championship 200 and 400 Free and 400 Medley relays...runner-up in 100 Free...two MIAC Athlete of the Week awards this season.
- Hayley Booher (Jr., Warren, Vt.) | 2015 MIAC Champion in 200 IM and 400 IM...member of last season's MIAC Championship 400 Medley and 800 Free relay teams.
- Leah Anderson (Sr., Apple Valley, Minn.) | Member of last season's MIAC Championship 200 and 400 Free relay teams...third place in 200 and 500 Free at 2015 MIAC Championships.

By the Numbers

- 6: Consecutive MIAC Championships Gustavus has won.
- 4: Members of last season's NCAA Championship team that return this season

Did You Know?

- 2015 graduate Katie Olson capped her brilliant Gustavus career by earning Capital One Academic All-American honors.

Out of the Pool

- The Gustavus swimming and diving teams hosted the Area 9 Special Olympics aquatics competition on Sunday, Feb. 7 in the Vic Gustafson Pool. More than 50 student-athletes were in charge of set up and take down, timing, posting results, coordinating athletes, and running the award ceremony following the competition. To go along with their meet duties, the Gustie swimmers also served as the cheer squad and rooted on the participants for the entirety of the meet. Roughly 50 Special Olympics swimmers competed in races with distances ranging from 25 yards up to 200 yards. Special Olympics aquatics covers a great variety of swimming skills, from short sprints to longer events and relays, perfect for all ages and ability levels.

**HAMLIN** | [Pipers' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |**Head coach**

- Ryan Hawke (3rd season)

A Year Ago

- 8th place | 128 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Taylor Martinek, Fr., Backstroke, Sprints, in HU Top Ten all-time in 100/200 Back, 50 Free
- Tatianna Yepes, Fr., Sprints, 12th fastest time this year in MIAC in 200 IM
- Jennie Dwyer, Sr., Distance
- Maya Rapp, Jr., Butterfly/Distance
- Elizabeth Gregorio, So, Backstroke/Butterfly/Distance

By the Numbers

- 1: senior on the team (Dwyer)
- 4: time Taylor Martinek is in the Top 40 times this year
- 10: Number of freshmen (6) and sophomores (4) on this year's team

Did You Know?

- In 2015, Hamline jumped two places and improved by 50 points from their 2014 finish.

Out of the Pool

- With a combined 3.13 GPA, the HU women's team was named to the CSCAA Scholar All-America unit.

MACALESTER | [Scots' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |**Head coach**

- Beth Whittle (6th season)

A Year Ago

- 7th place | 209 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Samantha Aamot (Jr. | MIAC qualifying times in six events)
- Hannah Bonestroo (Jr. | MIAC qualifying times in six events)

- Kaila Chapman (Jr. | MIAC qualifying times in eight events)
- Smaranda Georgescu (Jr. | MIAC qualifying times in seven events)
- Maggie McKenna (Sr. | MIAC qualifying times in nine events)

By the Numbers

- 76: MIAC Championships qualifying times and scores
- 3: Top 10 individual finishes at the 2015 MIAC Championships for Smaranda Georgescu
- 14: States represented on Macalester's roster

Did You Know?

- Seniors Hannah Currens and Kendall Van Sistine won the team's first annual lip sync contest this season.

Out of the Pool

- The Scots volunteered at the Second Harvest Heartland food bank in January.

SAINT BENEDICT | [Blazers women's swimming and diving home page](#) |



Head coach

- Dan Eckberg (3rd season)

A Year Ago

- 5th place | 304 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Kenzie Young (So. | All-MIAC in 1,650 free as first year; top 10 in MIAC in 1,650 and 400 IM this season)
- Steph Bierman (Sr | All-MIAC in 2013 and 2014; studied abroad in 2015, in the top 10 in the MIAC in 50, 100 and 200 free this season)
- Ashley Groebner (First Year | In the top 20 in the MIAC in the breaststroke)
- Jess Thurin (Sr | Top 25 in MIAC in 100 and 200 butterfly)
- Carissa Gaffy-Sanford (Sr | Finished top-10 in the one- and three-meter dives at the 2015 MIAC Championships)

By the Numbers

- 38: CSB recorded 38 lifetime bests at the Minnesota Challenge on Feb. 5-6
- 4: CSB has finished in the top five at the MIAC championships in each of the past four seasons

Out of the Pool

- CSB earned CSCAA Scholar All-America Team honors for the fourth straight season and seventh time in the past eight years in the fall of 2015.

ST. CATHERINE | [Wildcats' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |



Head coach

- Steve Mohs (4th season)

A Year Ago

- 6th place | 220 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Jenna Nagy (Jr. | 2014 & 2015 MIAC Diver-of-the-Year; 2014 & 2015 MIAC 1-meter champion; 2015 3-meter champion; 2015 best scored 1-meter (405.50), 3-meter (450.00); MIAC Athlete-of-the-Week)
- Alissa Ellingson (Fy. | Top 25 time in 50 Freestyle and 400 IM; Top 10 time in 100 and 200 Breaststroke and 100 and 200 Butterfly; St. Kate's record holder in 100 Butterfly)
- Mary Jane Voss (So. | 5th place 400 IM 2015 MIAC Championships; Top 25 time in 500, 1000 and 1650 Freestyle; Top 10 time in 400 IM)
- Haley French Krahn (Sr. | 9th place 400 IM 2015 MIAC Championships; Top 25 time in 1650 Freestyle and 400 IM; St. Kate's record holder in 1000 and 1650 Freestyle)
- Kelsie Olson (Sr. | 10th place 1650 freestyle 2015 MIAC Championships; Top 25 time in 500, 1000 and 1650 Freestyle)

By the Numbers

- 450.00: Diver Jenna Nagy's season best score in the 3-meter dive. The score leads the MIAC in 11-dives and is a qualifying score for the NCAA Diving Zones in February.
- 4: The Wildcats had all four seniors qualify for the MIAC Championships.

Did You Know?

- The Wildcats have finished in the top six at the MIAC Championships for six consecutive seasons.

Out of the Pool

- St. Kate's was one of six MIAC schools to receive the College Swimming Coaches Association (CSCAA) of America Fall 2015 Scholar-All America Team Award with a cumulative team GPA of 3.51. The Wildcats earned the second-highest GPA among MIAC teams to receive the honor.



SAINT MARY'S | [Cardinals' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Amber Bartholomew (1st season)

A Year Ago

- 11th place | 88 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Grace VanBeest (5-4, Jr., Freestyle/Backstroke | Reached consolation final at 2015 MIAC Championships in both the 100 and 200 breaststroke ... Set 2 school records this season in the 100 and 200 breaststroke)
- Reese Galewski (5-9, So., Butterfly | Reached consolation final in 100 butterfly in her first-ever MIAC Championships a year ago. ... Set 2 school records at 2015 MIAC Championships—breaking school marks in 100 butterfly and 200 medley relay)

By The Numbers

- 2: Grace VanBeest (Flossmoor, Ill.), who reached the consolation finals in the 200 breaststroke at the 2015 MIAC Championships with a then-school-record time of 2:33.33, shattered that mark at the Jean Freeman Invitational this season, setting a new mark of 2:32.49. VanBeest also broke the school record in the 100 breaststroke at the Jean Freeman, touching the wall in 1:09.39.
- 2: Reese Galewski (Winona, Minn.) broke the school record in the 100 butterfly twice last season—including a time of 1:01.41 to reach the consolation finals at the season-ending MIAC Championships. Galewski closed out her first conference championships by also posting collegiate-best swims in the 100 (1:06.70) and 200 backstroke (2:25.10).
- 3: The Cardinals broke three school records at the MIAC Championships a year ago—setting new marks in the 200 breaststroke, 100 butterfly and 200 medley relay.

Did You Know?

- Grace VanBeest (Flossmoor, Ill.), Reese Galewski (Winona, Minn.), Christina Weldai (London, England), and Ashling Meehan (Glenview, Ill.) broke the school's 16-year-old 200 medley relay record at the MIAC Championships, stopping the clock in 1:57.06.

Out Of The Pool

- The Cardinals earned College Swimming Coaches Association of America (CSCAA) 2015 Spring All-America Scholar honors, while Chloe Morrison (Ashkum, Ill.) was named to the 2014-15 MIAC All-Academic Team.



ST. OLAF | [Oles' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Bob Hauck (27th season)

A Year Ago

- 3rd place | 514.5 points

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Claire Walters (2017 | Placed 1st and 2nd in the 200 and 100 fly, respectively, at the 2015 MIAC Championships)
- Megan Gaylord (2016 | Placed 3rd at the 2015 MIAC championships in both the 200, and 400 medley relay)
- Marla Thamforde (2016 | Won or placed second in all 50 free races last season)
- Maddie Lee (2016 | Placed 2nd in the 500 free last year at the MIAC Championships)
- Courtney Miller (2017 | Dove 1 Meter and 3 Meter, with a collection of 1st place finishes)

By the Numbers

- 13: The number of women's MIAC championships the Oles have won
- 4: The number of freshman on the team
- 1: the number of foreign students on the team (Ye Won Esther Song, Mexico)



ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' women's swimming and diving home page](#) |

Head coach

- Scott Blanchard (2nd season)

A Year Ago

- 2nd place | 817 points

In the 2015 NCAA Championships

- 15th at NCAA Championships

Swimmers and Divers to Watch

- Casey Nightingale (SR, second in 3-meter diving at 2015 MIACs; seeded second in MIAC on both boards this season)
- Emma Paulson (JR, three All-America performances in 2015, won three individual events at 2015 MIACs)
- Nicole Herrli (SO, 6 first-place finishes this season)
- Kate Smarjesse (FR, has top-5 MIAC time in 100 back this season)

- Katelyn Strauss (FR, 7 first-place finishes this season)

By the Numbers

- 2: Current national seed for Emma Paulson in both the 50 free and 200 back
- 20: UST is seeded first or second in all 20 events in the conference season list
- 4: St. Thomas women's divers who are ranked in top 10 in the conference

Did You Know?

- St. Thomas has never won a women's team title in MIAC Swimming & Diving but has placed in the top three in the team standings for six of the last seven seasons.

Out of the Pool

- St. Thomas Swim-Dive has 19 women's athletes with cumulative gpas of 3.50 or higher, including six at 3.85 or better

[MIAC Women's Swimming and Diving Home Page](#)