

Augsburg's Fitzgerald, St. Thomas' Theilig headline 2015 MIAC Women's Soccer Awards

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BLOOMINGTON, Minn. - The 2015 Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) women's soccer season was one of the most memorable, competitive and unpredictable campaigns in recent memory and, Thursday, the top performers from a tremendous season were honored with the announcement of the 2015 MIAC Women's Soccer Awards.

This year, the MIAC individual awards received a facelift to recognize both an Offensive- and Defensive Player-of-the-Year and a Rookie-of-the-Year. Augsburg senior forward Marie Fitzgerald (Fort Atkinson, Wis.) was named Offensive Player-of-the-Year and St. Thomas junior goal keeper Tarynn Theilig (Appleton, Wis.) was named Defensive Player-of-the-Year after leading the Tommies to the MIAC title. Gustavus also took home two of the top individual honors, as first-year goalkeeper Ashley Becker was named Rookie-of-the-Year, and Laura Burnett-Kurie was voted MIAC Coach-of-the-Year by her peers in recognition of the Gusties' remarkable turnaround.



In addition to the individual awards, the conference also announced the 2015 MIAC Women's Soccer All-Conference team, as well as All-Conference Honorable Mention selections and the members of the All-MIAC Sportsmanship Team.

Fitzgerald made it two-straight Auggies to earn Player-of-the-Year honors thanks to her high-scoring senior season. She led the MIAC in overall games with 36 points and 13 goals and her 10 assists ranked second. She was just as good in conference play, as her 20 points led the league, and she was second with eight goals, seventh with four assists and her three game-winning goals ranked third. Fitzgerald was also named to the All-Conference team for the second-straight season, and she led Augsburg to a 14-6 overall record and a 8-3 conference mark, which was good for a second-place tie in the standings. She helped the Auggies reach the MIAC Playoffs and advance to the semifinals.

Theilig was the defensive backbone for the MIAC-champion Tommies which earned her Defensive Player-of-the-Year accolades. Overall, her 11 wins ranked second in the MIAC as did her six shutouts, and she was fifth in saves (72), sixth in save percentage (.791) and seventh in goals allowed (19), and goals against average (1.10). She was even better in conference play, ranking fourth in wins (seven), shutouts (three) and goals against average (0.98), fifth in goals against (nine) and ninth in both saves (31) and save percentage (.775). Theilig led St. Thomas to its fifth MIAC title and first since 2008 with a 12-6-1 overall record, an 8-2-1 record in MIAC Play, and the team reached the MIAC Playoff championship game where it fell 1-0 to Gustavus. Theilig was also named an All-Conference selection for the second-straight season.

Becker broke onto the MIAC scene in a big way in 2015, as the Gustavus rookie keeper was a huge reason for the program's resurrection, MIAC Playoff championship and NCAA Tournament bid. Becker led the MIAC in wins (13) and shutouts (11) while ranking third in saves (86) and save percentage (.811) and fifth in goals against average (0.97). Becker was just as good in conference game's only, also leading in wins (eight) and shutouts (six) while ranking fifth in goals against average (0.99), saves (42) and save percentage (.792). She helped the Gusties reach the MIAC Playoffs for the first time, where it won the title and she was one of just two first-year players named to the All-Conference team.

Burnett-Kurie received the first MIAC Coach-of-the-Year honor of her career in her fourth season, as she led the Gusties to one of the most remarkable turnarounds in recent memory. Gustavus is currently 13-6-1 overall and it finished 8-3 to share second place in the MIAC standings just a season after finishing 2-13-3 overall and 1-8-2 in the MIAC. Her team qualified for the MIAC Playoffs for the first time in program history, where it won 2-0 in the semifinals and 1-0 in the championship to capture its first-ever title and advance to the NCAA tournament, where the Gusties will play its first-round game on Friday.

Overall, Burnett-Kurie's team finished second in the MIAC in scoring with 36 goals and fourth defensively with just 0.97 goals allowed per game. The team was tied for second with 19 goals in conference play, and tied for fourth with 11 goals allowed (0.99 per game). This season, Burnett-Kurie coached four players to All-Conference honors, one more to an Honorable Mention selection and the MIAC Rookie-of-the-Year.

The two Players-of-the-Year also headlined the 20-player All-Conference team, as both Fitzgerald and Theilig earned their second-straight selection. They weren't alone, as St. Catherine's Hannah Brown, Carleton's Ava Lewis, Saint Benedict's Ellie Mullen and St. Olaf's Madison Van Wylen were also named to the All-MIAC team for the second year in a row.

This year's 20-member All-Conference team was heavy on upper-classmen with seven seniors and eight juniors selected, in addition to three sophomores and a pair of first-year players. St. Thomas and Gustavus led the way with four All-MIAC selections each. Augsburg, Macalester, St. Catherine and Concordia each had two players honored and Carleton, Saint Benedict, St. Olaf and Saint Mary's all had one All-Conference selection. Another 20 players were also recognized as All-Conference Honorable Mention.

As part of a conference-wide sportsmanship initiative, the MIAC announced the 10th-annual All-MIAC Sportsmanship team for women's soccer. Members of the All-MIAC Sportsmanship team are selected by their coaches and teammates as individuals who demonstrate ideals of positive sportsmanship both on and off the field of competition.

2015 MIAC WOMEN'S SOCCER AWARDS

Offensive Player-of-the-Year: Marie Fitzgerald, Augsburg (Sr., F, Fort Atkinson, Wis.)
Defensive Player-of-the-Year: Tarynn Theilig, St. Thomas (Jr., GK, Appleton, Wis. / St. Francis Xavier)
Rookie-of-the-Year: Ashley Becker, Gustavus (Fy., GK, Farmington, Minn.)
Coach-of-the-Year: Laura Burnett-Kurie, Gustavus (Fourth season)

2015 MIAC WOMEN'S SOCCER ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

Name	Team	Year	Pos.	Hometown/Previous School
Maddison Ackiss	Gustavus	Jr.	F	Fairbanks, Alaska / West Valley
Marta Anderson	Augsburg	Jr.	M	Mankato, Minn. / East
Ashley Becker	Gustavus	Fy.	GK	Farmington, Minn.
Hannah Brown	St. Catherine	Sr.	M	Burnsville, Minn. / Lakeville South
Lydia Chodosh	Macalester	Sr.	F/M	Los Angeles, Calif. / Culver City
Mallory DeBoom	St. Thomas	Fy.	F	Edina, Minn.
Hayley Engel	St. Thomas	Sr.	M	Minneapolis, Minn. / Shattuck St. Mary's
Marie Fitzgerald	Augsburg	Sr.	F	Fort Atkinson, Wis.
Sadie Hayes	Concordia	Sr.	D	Fargo, N.D. / Davies
Sophie Leininger	Gustavus	So.	M	Plymouth, Minn. / Wayzata
Ava Lewis	Carleton	Jr.	M	Seattle, Wash. / Garfield
Josie Mazzone	Gustavus	So.	D	Rapid City, S.D. / Central
Michaela McGonigle	Macalester	Jr.	D	Seattle, Wash. / Holy Name Academy
Ellie Mullen	Saint Benedict	Sr.	D	Portland, Ore. / Scappoose
Hannah Okerstrom	St. Catherine	Jr.	M	Bayport, Minn. / Stillwater
Emma Schaefer	Saint Mary's	Jr.	M	Falcon Heights, Minn. / Roseville
Tarynn Theilig	St. Thomas	Jr.	GK	Appleton, Wis. / St. Frances Xavier
Madison Van Wylen	St. Olaf	Sr.	M	Northfield, Minn.
Emily Wendorff	Concordia	Jr.	F	Fargo, N.D. / Fargo Davies
Paige Wilberding	St. Thomas	So.	F	Rosemount, Minn. / Eastview

2015 MIAC WOMEN'S SOCCER ALL-CONFERENCE HONORABLE MENTION

Name	School	Year	Pos.	Hometown/Previous School
Caroline Blackwood	Saint Mary's	Sr.	M	Norwalk, Ohio
Brittany Chase	Gustavus	Sr.	F	Victoria, Minn. / Chanhassen
Carter Denison	Augsburg	Jr.	F	Minneapolis, Minn. / South
Emily Gregg	Augsburg	Jr.	D	River Falls, Wis.
Jaime Hasama	Macalester	So.	M	Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif. / Palos Verdes Peninsula
Taylor Hedin	Saint Benedict	Jr.	F	Andover, Minn.
Ruth Hesse	St. Olaf	Sr.	GK	Medota Heights, Minn. / Henry Sibley
Malya Hirshkowitz	Hamline	Jr.	M	Seattle, Wash. / Bush
Maddy Horn	Carleton	Sr.	D	Hamilton, Ont. / Westdale Secondary
Megan King	Carleton	Sr.	M	Corvallis, Ore.
Ellen Kokes	St. Catherine	Sr.	D/F	Bloomington, Minn.
Elly Leyva	St. Catherine	Sr.	F	San Jacinto, Calif.
Annika Martensson	Carleton	Fy.	D/M	Wauwatosa, Wis. / Divine Savior Holy Angels
Paige McCullough	Concordia	Jr.	F	Fargo, N.D. / Fargo Davies
Julia Perkins	Bethel	Sr.	D	Tinley Park, Ill. / Victor J. Andrew
Taylor Skorik	St.Thomas	Jr.	M	Cedarburg, Wis.
Mikala Smith	Bethel	Jr.	M	Blaine, Minn. / Spring Lake Park
Aubrey Stenson	Hamline	Sr.	M	Oshkosh, Wis. / West
Grace Vaughan	Saint Benedict	Sr.	F	Shakopee, Minn.

2015 WOMEN'S SOCCER ALL-MIAC SPORTSMANSHIP TEAM

- Augsburg:** Lucy Bukowski (Sr., Two Harbors, Minn.)
Bethel: Lydia Brubaker (Sr., Eden Prairie, Minn. / St. Louis Park)
Carleton: Caroline Sheffield (Jr., Seattle, Wash. / Garfield)
Concordia: Morgan Holm (Sr., Moorhead, Minn.)
Gustavus: Kendyl Landeck (Jr., Moscow, Idaho)
Hamline: Brook Pigg (Sr., Anchorage, Alaska / Polaris)
Macalester: Lily Jilk (Sr., River Falls, Wis. / Shattuck-St. Mary's)
Saint Benedict: Val Clintsman (Sr., Maplewood, Minn./ Hill-Murray)
St. Catherine: Allie Boucher (Jr., Stillwater, Minn.)
Saint Mary's: Kelli Harstad (Sr., Hampton, Minn. / Farmington)
St. Olaf: Emily Sierakowski (Sr., Stillwater, Minn. / Mahtomedi)
St. Thomas: Brielle Bierman (So., La Crescent, Minn.)