

# 2010 MIAC Women's Tennis Season Preview

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St. Paul, Minn. -- The 2010 MIAC Women's Tennis season begins with Gustavus once again being the team to beat in the conference. The Gusties, winners of every MIAC title since 1992, topped this year's preseason coaches' poll and totaled nine first place votes. Gustavus returns five of their six players from last year's championship team including seniors Sierra Krebsbach and Ali O'Neal.



Carleton followed Gustavus in the poll and received two first place votes. The Knights, 2009 MIAC runners-up, are led by regionally-ranked sophomore Kathryn Schmidt. St. Olaf is third in the poll after finishing second in last season's conference playoffs. This year's Oles returns nine of 10 from a year ago and will be led by seniors Aimee Ny and Sarah Carlson.

St. Thomas will also be a contender for a MIAC Playoff berth led by seniors Ali Bruflodt, Hadley Syverud and Suzanne Brophy. Rachel Tiegs and Kylie Huether will be the #1 and #2 players for a Saint Benedict team that returns their entire 2009 line-up. Sophomore All-Conference player Andrea Rognlien returns to lead a Concordia team that won the most matches in program history last season. Saint Mary's will look to break into the conference playoffs anchored by star sophomores Rebecca Snyder and Bailey Edwards.

Macalester will look to make another appearance in the MIAC Playoffs, led by senior All-MIAC players Stephanie Lee and Amanda Wenzel. St. Catherine will have high expectations in 2010 and the Wildcats will follow seniors Martha Ginder, Jenna Olson, and Sam Shoberg. Hamline will feature a young roster, but the Pipers have high hopes for top player Kelsey Eatherton. Bethel is also a young squad, but will look to improve on last year's record led by newcomer Carrie Kishaba.

MIAC teams will play a ten game conference schedule from February to late April. The top six teams will advance to the MIAC Playoffs which will take place May 7-8, 2010 at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn.

## 2010 MIAC Preseason Coaches' Poll

Coaches voted for every team in the conference except their own team. Points were assigned for each vote (1 for first, 2 for second, etc.) Teams are ranked in order of lowest point total to highest with first place votes shown in parentheses.

1. Gustavus (9)
2. Carleton (2)
3. St. Olaf
4. St. Thomas
5. Saint Benedict
6. Concordia
7. Saint Mary's
8. Macalester
9. St. Catherine
10. Hamline
11. Bethel

**2010 MIAC Playoffs:** Top Six Teams, May 7-8, Gustavus Adolphus College - St. Peter, Minn.

| [2010 MIAC Schedule](#) | [2009 MIAC Statistics](#) | [MIAC Recordbook](#) | [MIAC Archives](#) |

## Bethel

**Coach:** Dan Morton (10 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 11th (0-10 MIAC, 2-14 overall)

### Bethel Season Preview

Bethel finished the 2009 season at 2-14 overall and 0-10 in the MIAC. Despite losing their #1 singles player in Kristin Kishaba, the Royals remain balanced as a blend of veteran returners as well as some new faces will take the court this year.

In her first year on the team, Carrie Kishaba (So., Eau Claire, Wis.) looks to be a key factor on the 2010 team, as will Lisa Scheevel (Fr., St. Cloud, Minn.) and Stephanie Brown (Fr., Lake City, Minn.). Returning are Heather Blair (Sr., Glenwood, Minn.), Ashley Dohlen (Sr., Morris, Minn.), and Ashley Watts (Sr., Winona, Minn.). A handful of freshmen will round out the Royals roster.

## Carleton

**Coach:** Luciano Battaglini (2 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 2nd (9-1 MIAC, 12-6 overall)

### Carleton Season Preview

Excitement is high for the 2010 edition of Carleton College women’s tennis as this year’s squad features both highly accomplished returners and promising rookies.
The Knights were ranked No. 28 nationally in the preseason Division III poll released by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA). Carleton was also listed at No. 10 in the central region, the same spot they gained at the end of last season.
Individually, four Carleton players received regional rankings, led by sophomore Kathryn Schmidt (Hopkins, Minn.), who was tabbed No. 2 in the region. The sky is the limit for Schmidt, who stepped into the first singles spot as a first-year in 2009, went 10-0 in conference play, and was selected to the NCAA singles tournament, earning all-MIAC honors in the process.
She then picked up where she left off in the fall, dominating the competition at the ITA Regional Championships, where she won the event without dropping a single set. The performance advanced her to the ITA Small College Championships, where she finished fifth, dispatching the defending NCAA singles champion in the process.
Erin Gudul (So./North Oaks, Minn./Mounds View) joined Schmidt at first doubles last year and earned All-MIAC honors in both singles and doubles. The duo went 11-0 in conference play in 2009, advanced to the semifinals of the ITA Regional Championships this fall, and entered the season ranked sixth regionally. On her own, Gudul posted an 8-3 mark at second singles as a rookie.
The Knights’ final all-conference selection from 2009 is senior co-captain Frances Leung (Oakland, Calif./Bishop O’Dowd), who compiled an 8-3 mark at both third singles and second doubles. After playing with three different doubles partners last season, Leung figures to be joined in 2010 by first-year Bridget Doyle (Mendota Heights, Minn.). The duo impressed in the fall, advancing to the semifinals of the ITA Regional Championships and started the New Year ranked eighth regionally.
On her own, Doyle will contribute from the start for the Knights, as she figures to play near the top of Carleton’s singles lineup. The rookie was honored by USTA Northern in December with the Jerry Noyce Junior Sportsmanship Award, given to the junior player who not only displays the finest qualities of sportsmanship during tournament play, but who also demonstrates exemplary conduct away from the court.
Two other impressive first-years join Doyle in Sarah Thappa (Rockford, Ill./Boylan Catholic) and Courtney Halbach (Madison, Wis./Edgewood). The Knights round out their roster with two experienced and talented players in senior co-captain Hannah Goldberg (North Oaks, Minn./Mounds View) and junior Devin Daugherty (Eugene, Ore./South Eugene).

**Concordia**

**Coach:** Troy Hanestad (4 seasons)  
**2009 Finish:** Tied 6th (5-5 MIAC, 13-7 overall)

<b>Concordia Season Preview</b>

Don't be surprised if the Concordia-Moorhead women's tennis team is back in the conference tournament in 2010. After getting their first taste of postseason action last year, the Cobbers are geared up to repeat last year's record-setting performance and even take it a step farther as they to keep their upward swing in motion in 2010.

Fifth-year head coach Troy Hanestad returns five of his top seven players from last year's squad that won a school-record five conference matches and finished 13-7 overall. After winning only one match in 2007 and continuing their streak of four straight seasons without winning a conference match, the Cobbers started their push up the mountain by winning five overall matches and a single MIAC match in 2008. That set the stage for last year's eye-opening season and a first-ever conference tournament berth.

This year's squad will have higher expectations and a group of five players that all have college experience. Leading the way will be last year's No.1 single player Andrea Rognlien (So., Fargo, N.D./Oak Grove HS). Rognlien is coming off a super freshman season where she went 12-7 in overall matches, 5-5 in league play and was named to the MIAC All-Conference Team. She started last year by winning her first seven matches and won 10 of her first 12 collegiate singles matches. Of her 12 wins in singles play in 2009, all but one came in straight sets.

Concordia will have two other players that were also newcomers last year as there No.2 and No.3 singles players. Katie Edin (So., Staples, Minn./Staples-Motley HS) slid into the No.2 singles spot last year and won nine matches including two of her last three and three of her last five. A year of experience will help her give Concordia a tough 1-2 punch at the top of the lineup. The pair also partnered as the team's No.1 doubles tandem and won a team-high 10 doubles matches. Ayah Kamel (Jr., Fargo, N.D./Fargo South) tied Rognlien for the team lead in singles wins in 2009 and led the team in MIAC victories.

A pair of experienced players will give the Cobbers a solid No.4 and No.5 singles starters. Amy Freeman (Sr., Staples, Minn./Staples-Motley HS) is a three-year starter and has 19 career collegiate victories under her belt. Like Freeman, Melanie Gail (Jr., Madison, Minn./Lac Qui Parle Valley HS) has multiple years of experience in the MIAC. Last year she went 8-4 in singles play and is 19-10 in her two previous seasons.

Kamel, Freeman and Gail will also factor in the No.2 and No.3 doubles teams. There is group of experienced players and newcomers that will factor into the final doubles spot as well as filling the No.6 singles position. Hanestad will have six matches to find the right player to fill those holes before Concordia opens up conference play in 2010.

## **Gustavus**

**Coach:** Jon Carlson (19 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 1st (10-0 MIAC, 23-10 overall)

### **Gustavus Season Preview**

The Gustavus women's tennis team has high expectations for the 2010 season as five key members of the 2009 MIAC Championship team return including seniors Sierra Krebsbach (North Oaks, Minn.) and Ali O'Neal (Stevens Point, Wis.), juniors Samantha Frank (Mahtomedi, Minn.) and Marianne Barau (Glencoe, Minn.), and sophomore Megan Gaard (Edina, Minn.). All five earned All-Conference honors in 2009 while helping the Gusties post a 23-10 record overall, 10-0 in the MIAC, including a fifth place finish at the NCAA Championships.

Krebsbach will likely maintain her #1 singles position as she posted a 15-10 record in that spot last year. Krebsbach has compiled a career record of 57-32 in singles and 79-26 in doubles. She is a three-time All-Conference honoree and a two-time All-America selection.

Although Coach Carlson is not sure on who will fill each slot in the singles line-up this year, Gaard (who played #2 last year), O'Neal (who played #3), Frank (who played #4) and Barau (who played #5) are all expected to fill in behind Krebsbach.

Gaard recorded an impressive first season as she posted a record of 16-17 in singles play and 24-10 in doubles. Barau gained valuable experience as a sophomore compiling 56 total victories including a mark of 29-6 in singles and 27-9 in doubles.

Ali O'Neal and Samantha Frank will also play key roles in both the singles and doubles line-ups. O'Neal has posted a career record of 32-14 in singles play and 43-9 in doubles. Frank, who struggled with consistency last season at the #4 position, really stepped up this past fall as she finished second in singles play at the ITA Midwest Regional and paired with Krebsbach to win the doubles title.

In doubles play, Gustavus will rely on the combination of Frank and Krebsbach to lead the way. The duo won the ITA Midwest Region title last September and went on to finish eighth at the ITA Small College Championships. Megan Gaard and Ali O'Neal, who finished second at the ITA Midwest Regional to Krebsbach and Frank, will play in the #2 position, while the #3 doubles team will likely be Barau and Katie Allen (FY, Pella, Iowa).

With a veteran line-up and solid team depth, Carlson feels this team has a legitimate chance to make another run at the conference championship, while also qualifying for the NCAA Championships.

## **Hamline**

**Coach:** Jon Henning (2 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 9th (2-8 MIAC, 3-13 overall)

### **Hamline Season Preview**

The 2010 Hamline women's tennis team is trying to embody a team image that consists of hard work and dedication. With the loss of three seniors, MIAC all-conference performers Kelly Gust and Liz Gunderson along with Sara Mitambo, there will be big shoes to fill at Hamline. With the addition of some key players and the countless hours put on the tennis court in the off-season, the Hamline women's tennis team is up for the challenge.

The Pipers were very competitive last year and played some of the best doubles in the conference. Kelsey Eatherton (Jr., White Bear Lake, Minn.) was all-conference at third singles last year and is ready to take on one of the top spots in the lineup. Kristen Kiemele (Jr., Eagan, Minn.), Nicole Krier (So., Woodbury, Minn.), and Anna Yarbrough (So., Minneapolis, Minn.) have all had some great experience and success competing in the lineup and are motivated to make some noise in the conference.

There will be some additions to the team that will be immediate impact players. Transfer Nora McGraw (Jr., Hutchinson, Minn.) and Emily Workcuff (Jr., Lakeville, Minn.) are strong players who will be immediate contributors. First-years Elizabeth Allen (Menasha, Wis.) and Allison Johnson (Becker, Minn.) are great athletes who are improving at every practice.

With the depth and talent in the MIAC, the Pipers will need to build off of their doubles success and out-work teams in order to compete for a spot in the conference championships in May.

## **Macalester**

**Coach:** Jason Muhl (3 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** Tied 6th (5-5 MIAC, 11-7 overall)

### **Macalester Season Preview**

Macalester placed in the middle of the pack last spring, going 11-7 overall and 5-5 for sixth place in the MIAC. The Scots graduated one of the most accomplished players in the history of the program in Angie Horner, who went 35-3 in two years at No. 1 singles and 31-7 at first doubles, but plenty of key performers are back.

The Scots will be led by All-MIAC players Stephanie Lee (Sr., Camarillo, Calif. / Oaks Christian) and Amanda Wenzel (Sr., Green Bay, Wis. / Southwest) at the top of the singles lineup. Lee has played No. 2 the past two seasons and in '09 went 15-5 overall and 8-2 in the MIAC. Wenzel was also 8-2 in the MIAC at third singles (13-6 overall) and comes into her senior season with a 38-17 overall and 20-10 MIAC career record.

Macalester was a combined 22-8 in conference play in the top half of the singles lineup last season and will call on several veterans to improve the success rate of the bottom half of the lineup. Kelli Crescenti (So., Los Angeles, Calif. / Hart), Lauren Dutkiewicz (Jr., St. Charles, Ill. / North) and Abby Citrin (Jr., Rye Brook, N.Y. / Blind Brook) will be called upon to play major roles this season.

### **Saint Benedict**

**Coach:** Scott Larsen (3 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** Tied 4th (6-4 MIAC, 16-9 overall)

#### **Saint Benedict Season Preview**

The College of Saint Benedict tennis team will look to improve off of their fourth place finish in the MIAC last season and make a significant impact in the postseason in 2010. Under fourth year head coach Scott Larsen, the Blazers enter the year without losing a single player from the 2009 squad. Key returning players include #1 and #2 singles players Rachel Tiegs and junior Kylie Huether, who both tallied 13-8 overall records in 2009. Tiegs, one of two seniors on the team, will look to improve her 6-7 record from last season and solidify the #1 singles slot. Huether played well in the #2 position, earning 12 of her 13 wins there.

The Blazers found success in their #3, #4, #5 and #6 singles players last year by combining for a 62-31 record as a team in those slots and will look for similar success again in 2010. Senior Katie Rudnitski earned a 6-5 record in the #3 position, while junior Elissa Husby went 7-3 at #4. Sophomores Aly Brandell, Lauren Jones and Megan Seipel all contributed positively to the #5 and #6 slots, and will look again to do so this season. Other players in line to make a splash in singles competition are sophomores Caitlin Conlon and MacKenzie Rayman.

One area the Blazers will try to improve on is doubles play. The team of Tiegs and sophomore Sarah Rossman compiled a 7-9 overall record at #1 doubles a year ago. Other teams that have the opportunity to lead the team are Brandell and Huether, Huether and Rudnitski, and Jones and Rudnitski, who finished 2009 with a 7-2 record at #3.

Two first-year athletes also have the chance to earn playing time this spring. Ashley Forstrom and Matia Twedt come into the year with collegiate experience from the fall season and hope to make an impact immediately.

Overall, the Blazer tennis team is lined up to make a strong run in 2010 with an experienced squad ready to rise up to the challenge.

### **St. Catherine**

**Coach:** Ben Hageseth (1 season)

**2009 Finish:** 10th (1-9 MIAC, 7-12 overall)

#### **St. Catherine Season Preview**

The St. Kate's tennis team is looking to improve upon what was already a very successful fall. The team has a lot of potential to be competitive within the conference, and is looking for continuous growth throughout the season.

Returning to lead the team this year are seniors Martha Ginder, Jenna Olson, and Sam Shoberg. Along side them the Wildcats expect strong play from junior Kasie Rust and sophomore Lauren Beadnell. St. Kate's also has high expectations for first year players Michaela Burroughs, Kalyn Schroeder, and Danielle Munsterman. All three of whom should have an immediate impact upon program. Coach Hageseth noted that "The players on this team bring a great energy and positiveness to every practice, and I think that will lead to an improvement in their play from this past season as well."

### **Saint Mary's**

**Coach:** Jeff Halberg (11 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 8th (3-7 MIAC, 9-9 overall)

#### **Saint Mary's Season Preview**

Saint Mary's University women's tennis coach Jeff Halberg didn't have to think long when asked about his expectations for the upcoming seasons.

In fact, the veteran head coach summed things up in one word: Consistency.

"We have a lot of potential this season, both on the men's and the women's side," said Halberg, whose teams kick off their season on Jan. 30, playing host to Carleton in a Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference match at the Winona Tennis Center. "But if we are going to get the results we are capable of, we are going to have to be much more consistent in our intensity level and in our desire to play hard — and up to our abilities — each and every match.

"The conference is probably the deepest it's been in my 15 years," Halberg added. "And if I've learned anything in this conference, it's that there are no givens — there are no given wins and there are no assumed losses.

"We need to make sure we come out and are ready to go. If we can maintain that consistency level, we could surprise some people."

Two Cardinals who won't be surprising anyone this year are sophomores Rebecca Snyder (Eden Prairie, Minn.) and Bailey Edwards (Fond du Lac, Wis.), who certainly turned a few heads during their freshmen campaigns.

Snyder returns after earned all-conference honors in both singles and doubles — going a perfect 11-0 at No. 2 singles, while also compiling a 9-3 doubles record — while Edwards enters Saturday's conference opener ranked No. 24 in the Central Region, following her stellar showing at the Wilson/ITA Women's Division III Championships this Fall.

"Rebecca and Bailey both had outstanding years last year, but like most freshmen, last year was also a learning experience for them," said Halberg. "I can already tell that both are playing with much more confidence this year — it's no longer unknown territory for them and both are looking to take another step forward."

So is the rest of the women's squad.

"We did graduate a few solid players," admitted Halberg. "But we've been able to bring in some strong freshmen, and we have some excellent players who saw limited playing time a year ago, but are ready to go this year.

"Everyone's ready to hit the ground running. It should be an exciting season."

## St. Olaf

**Coach:** Scott Nesbit (19 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** 3rd (8-2 MIAC, 14-6 overall)

### St. Olaf Season Preview

The St. Olaf women's tennis team has much to look forward to in 2010, after the 2009 team finished second at the MIAC Playoffs. This year's team returns nine of 10 from a year ago and will be led by seniors Aimee Ny and Sarah Carlson. Ny was 11-5 last season, mostly at the fifth singles position. Carlson played anywhere from the third spot to the sixth, going 8-6 overall.

The team will also have Caitlin Harper (7-9 at the second spot in 2009), Christine Muller (10-8 overall, mostly at the third spot) and Claire Carlson (team-best 15-3) back as well. Julia Ellis, a first year from Grand Rapids, Mich., joins the team and will help right away.

## St. Thomas

**Coach:** Terry Peck (14 seasons)

**2009 Finish:** Tied 4th (6-4 MIAC, 11-7 overall)

### St. Thomas Season Preview

Head coach Terry Peck, who is beginning his 20th season at St. Thomas including 15 with the Tommie women's program, surpassed 400 career victories (men and women) in 2009. He starts 2010 with a combined men's and women's dual record of 421-152 (.735 win%). Over the last 12 seasons, the Tommie women have built a 184-56 dual record.

Leading the Tommie returners are seniors Ali Bruflodt, Hadley Syverud and Suzanne Brophy, and juniors Alexandra Frank and Madeline Gail.

Bruflodt, a repeat All-MIAC honoree in 2009, finished 12-4 at No. 2 singles. Her three-year record is 44-13 in singles and 38-21 in doubles. Syverud and Gail went 14-2 at second doubles and are 23-3 over the last two seasons. In career matches, Syverud is 28-11 in singles and 45-12 in doubles, while Gail is 24-6 in singles and 24-4 in doubles.

In a 2009 season marred by illnesses and injuries, St. Thomas (11-7) lost a 5-4 decision to St. Ben's in the April 30 quarterfinal match at the MIAC tournament. The Blazers had beaten UST 8-1 four weeks earlier.

The top newcomer is freshman Mary Allen of Blake.

The Tommies are without a main practice facility in winter 2010 but are excited for the \$54 million Anderson Athletics and Recreation Center set to open in August 2010.