

2012 MIAC Women's Cross Country Championship Preview

Posted: Oct 23, 2012

SAINT PAUL, Minn. -- ST. PAUL, Minn. -- Over the past three seasons, the two Northfield schools have reigned at the MIAC Women's Cross Country Championships, with Carleton winning a year ago and in 2009, with St. Olaf capturing the 2010 title. As the 2012 conference meet looms on Saturday, the eyes of the conference look to Northfield once again to see if the two cross-town rivals can continue their run, or if a contender from elsewhere in Minnesota will emerge to take the title.

The 2012 race marks the 15th anniversary of Como Park Golf Course in St. Paul, Minn., serving as the championship host site. The event will begin with the men's 8K race at 2:15 p.m., followed by the women's 6K race and a short awards ceremony. Augsburg College is the host school for the 2012 MIAC Cross Country Championships, which features seven returning All-Conference women's runners who headline the competitive, 12-team field.



In 2011, Carleton claimed its second MIAC title in three years after the rival Oles had hoisted the trophy in 2010. This year, both expect to be in the mix again, but the 2012 edition of the MIAC Championships could be one of the most closely contested races in recent memory. The Knights won their 2011 title with 33 team points to runner-up St. Olaf's score of 52, but Carleton graduated last year's top two individual finishers - **Simone Childs-Walker** and **Alison Smyth**. Head Coach **Donna Ricks** will try to reload behind All-MIAC senior **Rachael Klehm**, who finished third to make it a top-three sweep for the Knights, as well as Honorable Mention sophomore **Becca Herd**, who was 20th a year ago.

The Oles will no doubt be in contention again as well, as **Chris Daymont's** team will look to a pair of seniors - All-MIAC runner **Emma Lee** (11th) and Honorable Mention honoree **Rachel Dean** (17th) - to bolster their hopes for a second title in three years. Gustavus joined the Northfield duo in the top three with 82 points a year ago, and the Gusties are another top team to watch in 2012. All-MIAC runners **Kate Eggers** (ninth) and **Elizabeth Hauer** (15th) lead the way, with Honorable Mention finisher **Rebecca Hare** (21st) pitching in to make Gustavus a contender again this weekend.

Another team aiming to unseat the Northfield schools is St. Thomas, which finished fourth (91 points) last year and brings back one of the most talented duos in the league. Senior **Taylor Berg** and junior **Erin Statz** finished 4-5 a year ago to both earn All-MIAC honors, and they'll both lead the Tommies and compete for the individual title again in 2012. Saint Benedict rounded out the 2011 top five (130 points), and with All-MIAC sophomore **Bailey Drews** (12th) back as one of the conference's top underclassmen, the Blazers expect to stay right with the leaders again this season. **Manon Gammon-Deering** joins classmate Drews as one of CSB's leaders.

Bethel (190 points) and Concordia (193) engaged in a close battle for sixth and seventh a year ago, and both have an All-MIAC Honorable Mention sophomore back in the lineup to lead the way this season. Concordia's **Kasey Peterson** finished 22nd as a freshman and **Mollie Gillberg** was 24th, and both hope to build on their strong MIAC debut with an event better showing in 2012. Look for Cobber **Hannah Knickerbocker** and Royal **Melody Walton** to also make an impact for their teams this weekend.

The Hamline women finished eighth a year ago with 199 points, and they'll be led by junior **Maria Theisen**, who cracked the Top 30 at last year's MIAC Championships. Macalester finished ninth at 233, and will likely be led by sophomore **Rachel Gunsalus**, who has led the Scots throughout the fall. St. Catherine rounded out the top 10 a year ago, and the Wildcats will look to junior **Kristina Poss** to lead the way again at the MIAC meet.

The host school, Augsburg, was 11th a year ago with a team total of 351, and have high expectations for star junior **Lauren Rice** at this season's MIAC Championships. Saint Mary's finished out the team standings in 12th a year ago with a team score of 357, and sophomore **Katie Stolz** has been the Cardinals top runner throughout the fall.

The MIAC Championships will conclude with a short awards ceremony to honor the team and individual champions and All-Conference runners near the clubhouse following the end of the women's race. The Top 15 runners in each race will be named All-MIAC, with finishers 16-25 receiving Honorable Mention, and all will be recognized for their accomplishment during the presentation.

The MIAC has a Web page dedicated to the event, and complete results, recaps, photos and more will be available on that site following the event. [Webcast America](#) will also be offering on-demand video highlights of both races following the event on its Web site. There will be a limited quantity of 2012 MIAC Championship T-shirts available for purchase on site, and the Como Park clubhouse concession stand will have concessions available for purchase as well.

The MIAC would like to thank Augsburg for its efforts as the host school for the event, as well as Como Park Golf Course for the outstanding accommodations for the 15th consecutive season. The MIAC also offers thanks to Twin Cities Orthopedics, which will provide on-site athletic training and medical services again in 2012.

2012 MIAC Cross Country Championships Preview Video

2012 MIAC Women's Cross Country Championship Coverage

The MIAC Web site will be the first place for results and recaps from the 2012 MIAC Cross Country Championships, with photo galleries and on-demand video from [Webcast America](#) as well. Stay tuned to the 2012 MIAC Cross Country Championship Home Page, as well as the MIAC's social media networks on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) throughout the weekend to stay connected to all the action at Como Park.

MIAC Women's Cross Country Links

| [MIAC Women's Cross Country Page](#) | [Schedule](#) | [Recordbook](#) | [Archives](#)



AUGSBURG | [Auggies' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head Coach

- Dennis Barker (19th season)

A Year Ago

- 11th place (260 points)

Top Runners

- Lauren Rice (JR | Recorded top-10 finishes in all events this year while capturing two first-place finishes)
- Kayla Roberge (SO | Third-place finish at the Bethel dual and recorded a personal best of 24:19 at the UW-La Crosse Invitational)
- Mary Klecker (FY | Earned all-state honors twice for cross country at Hopkins HS)

Key Losses

- Jennifer Pulscher (Four-time letterwinner, MIAC All-Sportsmanship Team)

By the Numbers

- 1,779: Miles the Auggies traveled (by air) to participate in the Willamette (Ore.) Invitational earlier this season
- 3: Academic All-MIAC honors last year
- 2: First-place finishes for Lauren Rice this year

Did You Know?

- Lauren Rice placed fifth at the Willamette (Ore.) Invitational earlier this season, a 39-team meet that included nine NCAA Division I and II teams. She was the fastest NCAA Division III runner at the meet.

Off the Course

- The Augsburg women's cross country team earned USTFCCCA Division III All-Academic Team recognition with a team GPA of 3.26.
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BETHEL | [Royals' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Jim Timp (Eighth season)

A Year Ago

- Sixth place (190 points)

Top Returners

- Mollie Gillberg (So., | 23:38, All-MIAC Honorable Mention)
- Melody Walton (So., | 24:56, 64th at 2011 MIAC Championship)

- Tera Hereid (Jr., | 24:02, 33rd at 2011 MIAC Championship)

Key Losses

- Laura Zwilling (24:12, 37th at 2011 MIAC Championship)

By the Numbers

- 8: Mollie Gillberg's top time in 2012 of 23:37, posted at the University of Minnesota's Roy Griak Invitational on September 29th, is good for the eighth spot in Bethel's all-time top performances.
- Four current Bethel runners have posted times in their career that has landed them on Bethel's all-time top performances chart (top 28). Mollie Gillberg (8, 11), Tera Hereid (15), Carissa Bodette (17), and Maggie Noble (21).
- 1: Each of the last two seasons the Royals have had just one senior runner finish consistently in their top seven, Laura Zwilling in 2011 and Jenna Diercks in 2012, as the lineup has been dominated by under classman.

Did You Know?

- Current assistant coach, Laura Zwilling, was a three-time letterwinner for the Royals. In addition to being a three-time letter winner, Zwilling posted a Top 15 time in BU's record book. The 2011-12 team captain was sensational in the classroom as well, as Zwilling was honored with an Academic All-Conference award.

Off the Course

- The Royals annually take a pre-season trip to Grand Marais, Minnesota on Minnesota's north shore along Lake Superior for team building and training. The women spent five days at the Cascade Lodge the week before school started in late August.



CARLETON | [Knights' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Donna Ricks (20th season)

A Year Ago

- First place (33 points)

In the 2012 NCAA Championships

- 2012 NCAA Women's Cross Country Championships – T-8th place - Team score: 341

Top Returners

- Rachel Klehm (Sr. | 3rd place at 2011 MIAC Championships, 2011 All-Region)
- Becca Herd (So. | 20th place at 2011 MIAC Championships)

Key Losses

- Simone Childs-Walker (1st place at 2011 MIAC Championships, 2011 All-Region, two-time All-American in cross country, four-time All-MIAC)
- Alison Smyth (2nd place at 2011 MIAC Championships, 2011 All-Region, two-time All-MIAC, two-time All-Region)
- Taylor Ffitch (7th place at 2011 MIAC Championships, 2011 All-Region, two-time All-MIAC)

By the Numbers

- 1,2,3: With Childs-Walker, Smyth, and Klehm placing in the top three spots a year ago, Carleton became only the second school to post a 1-2-3 finish at the MIAC Women's Cross Country Championships.
- 4: Carleton has had at least four first-years or sophomores score (finish among the team's top five racers) at every meet this season.
- 14: Carleton has posted 14 top-three time finishes over the last 17 seasons, including MIAC crowns in 2044, 2005, 2009, and 2011.

Did You Know?

- 2011 MIAC Champion Simone Childs-Walker '12 received a NCAA Post-graduate scholarship and was a top honoree for the NCAA Woman of the Year Award

Off the Course

- Carleton has earned the USTFCCCA All-Academic Team award for 19 consecutive years. Rachel Klehm '13, Taylor Ffitch'12, Alison Smyth '12, and Simone Childs-Walker '12 were USTFCCCA All-Academic individual honorees.



CONCORDIA | [Cobbers' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Marv Roeske (14th season)

A Year Ago

- Seventh place (193 points)

Top Returners

- Hannah Knickerbocker (Jr., | Has led Concordia in all five meets this season, finished 31st at 2011 MIAC Championship Meet)
- Morgan Christian (Jr., | Has been the No.2 runner for Concordia in four meets in 2012)

Key Losses

- Caroline McLaughlin (Was the team's No.3 runner at the MIAC Meet in 2011)

By the Numbers

- 2: Concordia has won two different multi-team invitationals in 2012. The Cobbers won the season-opening Valley City Invite as well as the Jimmie Invitational on Oct. 12
- 5: The Cobbers have had five different combinations of runners place in the top 5 for the team in their five meets this season
- 39: Concordia has a roster of 39 athletes this season. That is the second largest Cobber fall sports team by number of athletes

Did You Know?

- Concordia senior Kaia Lunde was born in Cameroon, Africa and lived there until she was six-years-old. She also worked at the 2010 winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada.



GUSTAVUS | [Gusties' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Dale Bahr (Fourth season)

A Year Ago

- Third place (82 points)

In the 2012 NCAA Championships

- 2012 NCAA Championships: Brooke Beskau - 119th place

Top Returners

- Caitlin Fermoye (So., Mendota Heights, Minn.) | Led the team in all four races this season... Individual champion twice at the Saint John's Invitational and the Gale Woods Invitational... MIAC Athlete of the Week for September 2-9
- Kate Eggers (Sr., Montevideo, Minn.) | 2011 All-MIAC after a ninth place finish at the MIAC Championships... Two top 20 finishes this season, including a second place finish at the Gale Woods Invitational
- Beth Hauer (Sr., Little Falls, Minn.) | 2011 All-MIAC after a 15th place finish at the MIAC Championships... Two top 20 finishes this season, including a fourth place finish at the Gale Woods Invitational

Key Losses

- Brooke Beskau (Hastings, Minn.) | 2011 All-MIAC after a 10th place finish at the MIAC Championships... Led team at NCAA Central Region Championships with 23rd place finish... Finished 119th at 2011 NCAA Championships

By the Numbers

- 17: On September 28th, Gustavus finished the Gale Woods Invitational with a total of 17 points, just two points from a perfect score. The Gusties recorded the top four finishes on their way to a first place finish as a team.
- 3: The Gusties came away from the 2011 MIAC Championships with three All-Conference performers.
- 8: It has been eight years since the Gusties last won an MIAC title in 2003.

Did You Know?

- Caitlin Fermoye has won two races in 2012, the first Gustie woman to win multiple races in the same season since Hailey Harren `07 won a total of six races in 2006.

Off the Course

- On October 10th, the Gustavus women's cross country team participated in Walk to School Day – an annual event that involves communities from more than 40 countries walking and biking to school on select days through the month of October. Walk to School Day helps raise awareness of the need to create safer routes for walking and bicycling and emphasize the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion and concern for the environment.
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Hamline | [Pipers' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Paul Schamedeke (24th season)

A Year Ago

- Eighth place (199 points)

Top Returners

- Maria Theisen (Jr., winner, St. Kate's 4K, 30th in last year's race)
- Cassie Ernst (Jr., 70th in last year's race)
- Hannah Toedter (Jr.)

Key Losses

- Sara Holland (19th in last year's race)
- Carolyne Bocovich (42nd in last year's race)

By the Numbers

- 1: number of new runner son 2012 team (unusually low number)
- 5: national qualifiers in the past six years
- 13: runners returning from 2011 team

Did You Know?

- All 14 Hamline CC runners intend to run for the track and field team in the winter and spring seasons.

Off the Course

- The Pipers worked the water stations and the finish line at the Victory Memorial 10K race in Minneapolis on Labor Day. It was the 20th consecutive year Hamline has worked at this race
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MACALESTER | [Scots' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Betsy Emerson (Third season)

A Year Ago

- Ninth place (233 points)

Top Returners

- Rachel Gunsalus (So., top runner in most meets this season; 66th at Neubauer; 32nd at St. Olaf Invite.)
- Anna French (Sr., 26th at last year's MIAC meet)
- Lucy Andrews (Jr.)

Key Losses

- Anna Schmitz (50th at MIAC meet in 2011)
- Jana Wiegand (63rd MIAC's)
- Emily Bachhuber (65th MIAC's)

By the Numbers

- 20: The number of years Betsy Emerson has been a women's cross country head coach. Emerson coached 17 years at Luther (Ia.) and is in her third season at Macalester.
- 23:39.4: The fastest clocking for the Scots this season, turned in by Rachel Gunsalus at the Wisconsin-La Crosse Tori Neubauer Invitational.

- 15: The number of states represented on this year's Macalester roster.

Did You Know?

- Macalester first-year runner Sarah Jonathon (Guilford, Conn.) is the great-great granddaughter of former U.S. President (1909-13) and Supreme Court Chief Justice William Howard Taft.

Off the Course

- The Scots earned the USTFCCCA Team Academic Award with a 3.58 combined GPA during the Fall '11 semester. That ranked 20th best overall among Division III teams.
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SAINT BENEDICT | [Blazers women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Robin Balder-Lanoue (16th season)

A Year Ago

- Fifth place (130 points)

Top Returners

- Manon Gammon-Deering (So. | 2011 All-Region, CSB Triangular Champion, three top-10's in 2012, 32nd at 2011 MIAC, 30th at NCAA Regional)
- Bailey Drewes (So. | 2011 All-Conference, 12th at 2011 MIAC, Second at CSB Triangular, three top-10's in 2012)
- Caitlin Goodman (Sr. | 39th at 2011 MIAC, Third at CSB Triangular and SJU Invite, 11th at Colorado College Invite)

Key Losses

- Kaycee Knutson (2011 All-Conference Honorable Mention, 18th at 2011 MIAC, 46th at 2011 NCAA Regional)
- Katy Torchia (41st at 2011 MIAC, 56th at 2011 NCAA Regional)

By the Numbers

- 3: Meet titles for the Blazers in 2012, the CSB Triangular, the SJU Invite and the Colorado College Invite.
- 4: Returners from the Blazers' top-five at the 2011 MIAC Championships.
- 15: Seconds separating the Blazer's top-six finishers at the Tori Neubauer Invite on Oct. 13.

Did You Know?

- The Blazers had three different athletes lead them across the finish line at the first three meets of the season. Manon Gammon-Deering won the CSB Triangular, Caitlin Goodman was third at the SJU Invite and Cathleen Gross was third (but the top point scorer) at the Colorado College Invite.

Off the Course

- Senior Kelsey Torchia spent last spring in rural India working with a solar lamp project helping bring light to students and their families. The lights allowed the students to study or the families to work after nightfall, when it otherwise would not be possible.
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ST. CATHERINE | [Wildcats' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Shannon Houlihan (First season)

A Year Ago

- 10th place (263 points)

Top Returners

- Kristina Poss (Jr. | 35th at 2011 MIAC Championships, PR 24:04 at 2011 Regional)
- Jessica Rogers (Sr. | Third Wildcat finisher at MIAC Championships, PR 24:47 at St. Olaf in 2011)
- Sarah Howe (Jr. | Fifth Wildcat finisher at MIAC Championship with PR 24:58 in 2011, new PR in 2012 with 24:40.17)

Key Losses

- Heidi Sande (Finished 2011 in top-20 all-time at St. Catherine with PR 25:15 at MIAC Championships)

By the Numbers

- 2: Both rookie runners Ailee Larson and Emily Sweet placed in the top-10 at the Seven Sisters Championships. For their performances, the two Wildcats were named to the All-Seven Sisters team.
- 7: The Wildcats nearly swept the Crown Invitational in early September, as seven Wildcats placed in the top-eight. The team took home first-place with just 16 points!
- 8: At the UW-Eau Claire Blugold Invite, eight Wildcat runners set personal records. Five of those times were good enough for the top-25 all-time at St. Catherine.

Did You Know?

- The Wildcat cross country team traveled to Boston to compete in the 33rd-annual Seven Sisters Championship, Oct. 13, which features teams from historically small, liberal arts, women's colleges. The team finished third at the meet which featured teams from Wellesley and Vassar, both teams receiving national poll votes.

Off the Course

- The St. Catherine cross country team paired up with the golf team during preseason to volunteer at Feed My Starving Children.
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SAINT MARY'S | [Cardinals' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Ward Berndt (Eighth season)

A Year Ago

- 12th place (357 points)

Top Returners

- Katie Stolz (5-5, So. | Ran team's two-fastest 6K times at the 2012 St. Olaf Invitational (24:53) and the 2012 SMU No-Limit Invitational (24:14); Collegiate-best individual finish at 2012 SMU No-Limit Invitational, placing second)
- Kristen Thelen (5-8, Jr. | Ran season-best 25:36 6K at 2012 St. Olaf Invitational)
- Katherine Mockler (5-7, Jr. | Ran season-best 25:36 6K at 2012 St. Olaf Invitational)

Key Women's Losses

- Regina Quant (4-year regular; Among SMU's top five in all seven meets — including season-best 25:05 6K at MIAC)

By The Numbers

- 2: The Cardinals — led by a second-place time by Katie Stolz — earned a second-place team finish at the 2012 SMU No-Limit Invitational
- 24:14: Katie Stolz — who posted her two fastest collegiate times at the NCAA Central Regional (24:35) and MIAC Championships (24:53) a year ago — ran a career-best 24:35 at the SMU No-Limit Invitational.

Did You Know?

- Cross country runners Regina Quandt and Michael Mockler were named Saint Mary's University's 2012 Outstanding Seniors.

Off The Course

- Along with sweeping Saint Mary's Outstanding Senior honors in 2011-2012, the Cardinal men's and women's teams each boasted five Academic All-MIAC selections, while also earned USTFCCCA All-Academic status.
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ST. OLAF | [Oles' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head Coach

- Chris Daymont (32nd season)

A Year Ago

- Second place (52 points)

In the 2011 NCAA Championships

- 2011 NCAA Women's Cross Country Championships-10th place – Team score: 386; Emma Lee: 35rd place; Christine Muller: 66th place; Maren Westby: 80th place.

Top Returners

- Jordan Johnson (Soph. first year competing. 6th at the NCAA DIII Pre-National Meet. MIAC Athlete of the week on Sept. 17.
- Emma Lee (Sr.) – All-America in 2010, 2011. All-Region 2010, 2011. 3x All-MIAC.

Key Losses

- Maren Westby: 2010 MIAC champion, All-Region 2011, 2010, 4x All-MIAC
- Christine Muller: All-Conference 2011, All-Region 2011

By the Numbers

- 15: Ranked in the top 15 NCAA teams all season, currently ranked 12th.

Did You Know?

- All-American Emma Lee holds the St. Olaf record in the cross country 6K and the outdoor track and field 10K.
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ST. THOMAS | [Tommies' women's cross country home page](#) |

Head coach

- Joe Sweeney (33rd season)

A Year Ago

- Fourth place (91 points)

In the 2011 NCAA Championships

- Team did not qualify ... Taylor Berg 49th out of 280, Erin Statz 78th

Top Returners

- Taylor Berg, SR, Eagan HS, 2011: 4th MIAC, 7th regional, 49th NCAA; T&F All-America 1,500
- Erin Statz, JR, Lincoln, Neb., 2011: 5th MIAC, 11th regional, 78th NCAA; T&F MIAC 10K runner-up
- Kayla Goeman, SO, Hopkins HS, 2011: 43rd MIAC, 85th regional; T&F MIAC 800 runner-up

Key Losses

- Larissa Peyton, T&F All-America; 2011: 16th MIAC, 29th regional

By the Numbers

- 4: Top-5 individual finishes this season, in four meets, for senior Taylor Berg
- 5: Number of UST returners who placed in top 45 at 2011 conference CC meet
- 69: MIAC team championships, out of 87 contested, in cross country (16 of 31), indoor track (25 of 28), and outdoor track (28 of 31), won by Coach Joe Sweeney's Tommie teams.

Did You Know?

- St. Thomas has nine freshmen, including three currently in its top seven: Diane Hubbell (Des Moines, Iowa), Gabrielle Pepin (Green Bay, Wis.), and Emily Gapinski (Sheboygan, Wis.).

Off the Course

- Junior Erin Statz will be a strong candidate for Academic All-America honors in 2012-13 with her 3.92 grade-point average in Criminal Justice
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