

Midwest Conference Office
300 Seward St., Ripon, WI 54971; Phone: (920) 748-8157; Fax: (920) 748-8158



Chris Graham
Commissioner
grahamc@midwestconference.org

www.midwestconference.org

Tom Miller
Interim Sports Information Director
millert@ripon.edu

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Midwest Conference Men's Tennis

Grinnell Looks To Become Only Second Team To Win Six Straight Championships

RIPON, WIS. -- The 2009 Midwest Conference Men's Tennis Championships will play out on Friday, Saturday and Sunday May, 1-3 at the Nielsen Tennis Center on the University of Wisconsin campus in Madison, Wisconsin. The MWC Team Champion will be crowned on Friday, with the individual singles and doubles tournaments following on Saturday and Sunday, respectively.

In the team tournament field, the North Division shapes out the same as last year with St. Norbert (18-8, 4-0 MWC) holding the top seed and Lawrence (9-13, 3-1) following in the second slot. Five-time defending champion Grinnell (16-9, 4-0) has won the South Division while Monmouth (12-9, 3-1) will make its third tourney appearance in the last four years as the Fighting Scots fill out as the No. 2 seed. The opening round matches will take place at 8 a.m. with Monmouth taking on St. Norbert and Lawrence slated against Grinnell. On April 9, the Green Knights edged the Fighting Scots 5-4, while the Pioneers defeated the Vikings 9-0 on April 4. Grinnell can become only the second team to win six straight league titles with another crown in 2009, joining Ripon who tallied eight straight from 1985-92.

Grinnell's **Dan LaFountaine** will look to get over the hump this season as the senior has lost in the finals of the No. 1 singles flight each year on campus. He enters as the favorite at the No. 2 flight as teammate and 2008 No. 2 champion **Juan Carlos Perez** has taken over the Pioneers' top spot. Lawrence junior **Ryan Dunn** is shooting for his second consecutive title at the No. 1 flight, but the remainder of the conference is aiming to knock off Grinnell, who swept every other flight a year ago. Senior **Nate Fox** is on pace to become only the sixth student-athlete in league history to capture four singles titles, and the first since former Pioneer teammate **Eli Best** and St. Norbert's **Aaron Sunday** accomplished the feat in 2007. Grinnell junior **Sam Raife** also returns looking to add his third singles title, while Fox and LaFountaine enter the tourney looking for their third No. 1 doubles championship ('06, '08).

Scott Schleis took over the head coaching reins from **Tim Schmiechen**'s midseason and will rely on juniors **Evan Orman**, who will play in the No. 2 slot, and **Dylan Kocinski** who competes in the No. 5 singles flight, to lead his squad. The tandem of freshman **Ben Robinson** and junior **Ricky Thorson** will pace the Bucs in the No. 2 doubles slot.

Carroll continued to improve under Head Coach **Craig Mours** as the Pioneers finished third in the North Division with a 2-2 MWC record. The young squad will look up to senior **Michael Wajda** to lead them in the No. 1 singles flight. Wajda also teams with freshman **John Silseth** to form Carroll's top doubles team while senior **John Krewer** and sophomore **Seth Pamperin** have tallied an impressive 15-2 record at the No. 2 doubles flight.

Grinnell head coach **Andy Hamilton** welcomes back a plethora of talent for the 2009 Championships. Sophomore **Juan Carlos Perez** enters the tourney as the seventh-ranked singles player in the Central region while senior **Dan LaFountaine** holds the 13th spot. LaFountaine also pairs with senior **Nate Fox** to form the region's second-ranked doubles tandem that is looking to add its third doubles title while extending its 15-match win streak. Perez, LaFountaine, and Fox will be vying for their second, first, and fourth singles titles in the top three flights, respectively. Junior **Sam Raife** will also be attempting to add his third career singles title.

Illinois College will not field a full team in **Jason Martinez**'s first season as the team's head coach. The Blueboys are expected to have four players compete in singles action and a pair of doubles tandems.

Head Coach **Amanda Barkema** has seen her Knox squad improve over the course of her first season, and she will look to No. 1 singles player **Jared Katchen** to lead the young Prairie Fire. The junior also teams with senior **Nick Craig** to form the team's top doubles team.

Chris Kane's Lake Forest squad started the season with a five-match win streak until a 9-0 loss to Grinnell derailed their momentum, winning only four matches



Friday, Saturday & Sunday, May 1-3
Nielsen Tennis Center (Madison, Wisconsin)

Team Championship - Friday, May 1

(#2S) Monmouth vs. (#1N) St. Norbert	8 a.m.
(#2N) Lawrence vs. (#1S) Grinnell	8 a.m.
Championship/Third-Place Match	TBA (follow semifinals)

Singles Championships - Saturday, May 2

Play-in matches begin at 8 a.m.

Doubles Championships - Sunday, May 3

Play-in matches begin at 8 a.m.

since. The Foresters will rely on its tandem of sophomore **Jon Flaksman** and senior **Andrew Fretter** to get them back on track as the duo has posted a 10-2 record at the No. 2 doubles flight. Junior **Alex Presman** (No. 2), Flaksman (No. 3), Fretter (No. 4), and sophomore **Chris Paterakos** (No. 6) will try to avenge 2008 title match losses from their respective flights.

Second-year head coach **Kevin Girard** looks to lead Lawrence to its first MWC title since 1968. The Vikings are once again led by **Ryan Dunn**, who will be aiming to repeat at the No. 1 singles flight. The junior has won 11 of his last 12 while also teaming with senior **Daniel Hertel** to post an 8-2 mark at the top doubles flight. Senior **Travis Fondow** has also been successful at the No. 6 singles flight, winning seven of his nine matches.

Although Monmouth graduated **Kevin Kamenjarin**, **Chad Braun** still returns senior **Kyle Korb** who formed the other half of the tandem that finished runner-up at the 2008 No. 1 doubles flight. Freshman **Chris Utterback** has posted a solid 11-7 record at No. 4 singles while senior **Eric Brandhorst** and sophomore **Sam Graf** have won four of their six matches at No. 2 doubles.

First-year Head Coach **Kevin Francis** took over a Ripon program that had won five of the last 12 MWC titles, but is now two years removed from its last tournament appearance. The 2009 Red Hawks will be led by sophomore **Alex Tande** who will likely compete in the No. 5 singles flight while junior **Jay Hardacre** and senior **Dan Weiler** compose a formidable tandem at No. 1 doubles.

In **Paul and Carrie Miller**'s first two years at the helm of the St. Norbert program, they have produced an 8-0 MWC record en route to a pair of divisional titles. The Green Knights come into the Tournament on an 11-match win streak and will rely on freshmen **Derek Harrington** (No. 2 singles) and **Matt Schmitz** (No. 6 singles) to continue that trend. Schmitz also pairs with sophomore **Eric Koppmann** to form a No. 3 doubles tandem that enters with a 14-match win streak. Harrington has seen success at the No. 2 doubles flight posting an 11-5 mark with junior **Nate Tackaberry**.



--Past MWC Men's Tennis Team Champions--

1931	Coe, Carleton *	1970	Ripon
1932	Carleton	1971	Carleton
1933	Beloit, Carleton *	1972	Carleton
1934	Carleton	1973	Carleton
1935	Beloit, Carleton *	1974	Carleton
1936	Beloit, Coe *	1975	Carleton
1937	Cornell, Lawrence *	1976	Lake Forest
1938	Monmouth, Lawrence *	1977	Lake Forest
1939	Lawrence	1978	Lake Forest
1940	Rained Out	1979	Ripon
1941	Lawrence, Grinnell *	1980	Ripon
1942	Grinnell	1981	Ripon
1943	No Competition	1982	Carleton
1944	No Competition	1983	Carleton
1945	No Competition	1984	U-Chicago
1946	Beloit, Knox *	1985	Ripon
1947	Beloit	1986	Ripon
1948	Beloit	1987	Ripon
1949	Lawrence	1988	Ripon
1950	Rained Out	1989	Ripon
1951	Beloit	1990	Ripon
1952	Grinnell	1991	Ripon
1953	Lawrence	1992	Ripon
1954	Carleton	1993	Coe
1955	Lawrence	1994	Ripon
1956	Lawrence	1995	Coe
1957	Lawrence	1996	Coe
1958	Grinnell	1997	Ripon
1959	Carleton	1998	Ripon
1960	Carleton	1999	Lake Forest
1961	Carleton, Grinnell *	2000	Ripon
1962	Carleton	2001	Ripon
1963	Carleton	2002	Grinnell
1964	Ripon	2003	Ripon
1965	Carleton	2004	Grinnell
1966	Carleton	2005	Grinnell
1967	Carleton	2006	Grinnell
1968	Lawrence	2007	Grinnell
1969	St. Olaf	2008	Grinnell

* indicates co-champions

--MWC Men's Tennis Championship Breakdown--

Carleton - 21 ('31, '32, '33, '34, '35, '54, '59, '60, '61, '62, '63, '65, '66, '67, '71, '72, '73, '74, '75, '82, '83)

Ripon - 19 ('64, '70, '79, '80, '81, '85, '86, '87, '88, '89, '90, '91, '92, '94, '97, '98, '00, '01, '03)

Grinnell - 11 ('41, '42, '52, '58, '61, '02, '04, '05, '06, '07, '08)

Lawrence - 10 ('37, '38, '39, '41, '49, '53, '55, '56, '57, '68)

Beloit - 7 ('33, '35, '36, '46, '47, '48, '51,)

Coe - 5 ('31, '36, '93, '95, '96)

Lake Forest - 4 ('76, '77, '78, '99)

Monmouth - 1 ('38)

Knox - 1 ('46)

Cornell - 1 ('37)

Uni. of Chicago - 1 ('84)

St. Olaf - 1 ('69)

italics indicate former MWC member

--Recent MWC Individual Champions--

--2008 Singles Champions--

No. 1	Ryan Dunn, Lawrence, Sophomore
No. 2	Juan Carlos Perez, Grinnell, Freshman
No. 3	Nate Fox, Grinnell, Junior
No. 4	Daniel Malarkey, Grinnell, Senior
No. 5	Sam Raife, Grinnell, Sophomore
No. 6	Jordan Lee, Grinnell, Senior

--2008 Doubles Champions--

No. 1	Nate Fox/ Dan LaFontaine, Grinnell
No. 2	Juan Carlos Perez/ D.J. Warden, Grinnell
No. 3	Jordan Lee/ Daniel Malarkey, Grinnell

--2007 Singles Champions--

No. 1	Aaron Sunday, St. Norbert
No. 2	Nate Fox, Grinnell
No. 3	Eli Best, Grinnell
No. 4	D.J. Warden, Grinnell
No. 5	Sam Raife, Grinnell
No. 6	Eric Ohrn, Grinnell

--2007 Doubles Champions--

No. 1	Aaron Sunday/ Andrew Winters, St. Norbert
No. 2	D.J. Warden/ Sam Raife, Grinnell
No. 3	Jordan Lee/ Eli Best, Grinnell

--2006 Singles Champions--

No. 1	Aaron Sunday, St. Norbert
No. 2	Nate Fox, Grinnell
No. 3	Julian West, Grinnell
No. 4	Eli Best, Grinnell
No. 5	Matt Moser, Monmouth
No. 6	Kushal Shah, Grinnell

--2006 Doubles Champions--

No. 1	Nate Fox/ Dan LaFontaine, Grinnell
No. 2	Jared Kunkle/ Kevin Kamenjarin, Monmouth
No. 3	Jordan Lee/ Eric Ohrn, Grinnell

--2005 Singles Champions--

No. 1	Aaron Sunday, St. Norbert
No. 2	Eli Best, Grinnell
No. 3	Brian Hilgeman, Lawrence
No. 4	Adam Moeser, Knox
No. 5	Kushal Shah, Grinnell
No. 6	D.J. Warden, Grinnell

--2005 Doubles Champions--

No. 1	Paul Vanden Boogaard/ Dave Czarnecki, Ripon
No. 2	Rick Fenbert/ D.J. Warden, Grinnell
No. 3	Kushal Shah/ Eric Ohrn, Grinnell