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## MWC Coaches Pick Grinnell To Repeat As League Champs

RIPON, WIS. -- If the results from the 2006 Midwest Conference Women's Soccer Preseason Coaches Poll hold true, then the 2006 MWC Champion and 2006 MWC Tournament field will both be repeats from a year ago. That may not be a good sign for Grinnell, the 2005 MWC champs who received eight of the 10 possible first-place votes to take the top spot in the poll. No women's soccer program in the conference has been able to repeat as conference champions since St. Norbert accomplished the feat with back-to-back league titles in 1994 and 1995.

Carroll received the two remaining first-place votes to finish second in the poll, edging third-place Lake Forest by five points. Monmouth and Lawrence completed the top five after finishing fourth and fifth, respectively, while sixth-place St. Norbert came in ahead of seventh-place Beloit. Illinois College and Ripon tied for eighth and Knox rounded out the poll in the final slot.

Elizabeth Bartley, a 1993 Beloit graduate, returns to her alma mater in 2006 as the Bucs new head coach after replacing the departed Katie Klugiewicz. Chris Trudell, who served as an assistant coach at Ripon last season, takes over for Jim Kloes as the Red Hawks head coach in 2006.

Carroll head coach Jason Bretzman will have the tough task of replacing both of the conference's yearly award winners, as 2005 MWC Offensive Player of the Year Julia Bell and MWC Defensive Player of the Year Maggie Pucher have both graduated. Monmouth head coach Barry McNamara, the 2005 MWC Coach of the Year, Bretzman and Lake Forest head coach T.R. Bell will all be 2006 Coach of the Year candidates if they can successfully replace their graduated stars. Carroll's Bell, Monmouth's Abby Horneck and Lake Forest's Melissa Stevenson all rank near the top of the goals, assists and points leaders in school and conference history.

### --2006 MWC Women's Soccer Preseason Coaches Poll--

Rnk	Team (1st place votes)
1.	Grinnell (8)
2.	Carroll (2)
3.	Lake Forest
4.	Monmouth
5.	Lawrence
6.	St. Norbert
7.	Beloit
t8.	Illinois College
t8.	Ripon
10.	Knox

#### 1. Grinnell Pioneers 2005 Record: 14-4-2 (8-1-0 MWC) Returning All-MWC 1st Team: 2 2nd Team: 1

Head coach Heather Benning has Grinnell primed for a run at its third consecutive NCAA Tournament berth and second straight MWC Championship. First team all-conference goalkeeper Liz Carrier (0.71 gaa) returns for her senior season after posting an MWC-best 11 shutouts last season. Forward Kathrine Ni (13 goals, 4 assist) and defender Rebecca Mackenzie (10 goals, 4 assists) finished first and second on the team in goals scored, respectively, as freshmen in 2005. Senior forward Kate Diedrick (8 goals, 12 assists), an All-MWC first teamer a year ago, and junior midfielder Sofia Skraba (2 goals, 13 assists) also return after combining for 25 assists in 2005.

#### 2. Carroll Lady Pioneers 2005 Record: 13-4-1 (8-1-0 MWC) Returning All-MWC 1st Team: 1 2nd Team: 3

Carroll head coach Jason Bretzman led the Lady Pioneers to the MWC Tournament title match last season, where the squad fell to Grinnell in penalty kicks, but a return trip will hinge on replacing the 2005 MWC Offensive and Defensive Players of the Year in Julia Bell and Maggie Pucher, respectively. Junior midfielder Megan Blenner and senior midfielder Maria Quesada will help replace Bell's goal production after each netted five goals apiece in 2005. Junior Sammi Drews (3 goals, 3 assist), an All-MWC first-team pick last year, can score from her defender position, while junior goalkeeper Sarah McLaughlin (0.54 gaa) posted nine shutouts in 2005.

#### 3. Lake Forest Foresters 2005 Record: 8-7-2 (5-2-2 MWC) Returning All-MWC 1st Team: --- 2nd Team: 1

Lake Forest head coach T.R. Bell will be forced to replace Melissa Stevenson, the school's all-time leading scorer, as the Foresters look to qualify for the MWC Tournament for the fourth consecutive season. Forward Katie Rice (8 goals, 3 assists) and midfielder Jaymie Honold (5 goals, 3 assists), both sophomores, will lead the Forester offense in 2006, while senior Allie Kabat returns to anchor the defense. Senior goaltender Kristyne Operzedek (1.84 gaa, 79 saves) and sophomore Alison Lynch (5-0, 1.40 gaa) give the Foresters one of the deepest goaltending tandems in the league.

#### 4. Monmouth Fighting Scots 2005 Record: 11-6-0 (7-2 MWC) Returning All-MWC 1st Team: --- 2nd Team: 1

Monmouth advanced to the MWC Tournament for the first time in school history last season in head coach Barry McNamara's third season at the helm. Monmouth loses record-breaking twin sisters Abby and Amy Horneck, but the Fighting Scots return several talented players and welcome 14 freshman. (continued on page 2)



Junior forward **Ashley Kensinger** (11 goals, 4 assists) was one of six players in the conference to score double-digit goals last season, while sophomore **Sarah Kisner** (8 goals, 2 assists) and senior defender **Kristin Mertel** (3 goals, 3 assist) also return. Senior midfielder **Audrey Bellefeuille** (5 points), who has started all 48 games in her career, will provide experience among the influx of young players.

**5. Lawrence Vikings**                      **2005 Record:** 5-8-1 (4-4-1 MWC)  
**Returning All-MWC 1st Team:** ---    **2nd Team:** 1

**Blake Johnson** fell just short of leading Lawrence to the MWC tourney in his first season leading the Vikings. Lawrence returns several key players from last year's team, including All-MWC senior defender **Annemarie Exarhos** (4 goals). The Vikings will look for more offense from sophomore forward **Jackie Bean** (5 goals), the team's leading scorer last year, and senior midfielder **Mindy Luber** (2 goals) in 2006. Junior goalkeeper **Candice Gangl** (1.97 gaa) played every minute in goal for the Vikings last season, recording five shutouts in 14 contests.

**6. St. Norbert Green Knights**    **2005 Record:** 4-12-0 (4-5-0 MWC)  
**Returning All-MWC 1st Team:** ---    **2nd Team:** ---

St. Norbert failed to reach the conference postseason tourney for the first time since its inception in 1991 a year ago and **Dennis Detrie's** club will need big contributions from several young players if they are going to start a new streak. Sophomore forward **Ashley Haws** and junior midfielder **Lauren Pecorella** tied for second on the team in goals last season with two scores apiece. Sophomore **Mallory Ford** (2.10 gaa), one of four Green Knight goaltenders to start at least one game in goal last season, logged a team-best 599 minutes in between the pipes and will have the inside track at the position in 2006. Senior defender **Callie Nelson** will lead the St. Norbert defense.

**7. Beloit Buccaneers**                      **2005 Record:** 8-7-1 (4-4-1 MWC)  
**Returning All-MWC 1st Team:** ---    **2nd Team:** ---

New Beloit head coach **Liz Bartley** takes over a team that returns the core of a squad that fell just short of an MWC Tournament berth a year ago. Senior midfielder **Abby Gagnon** (3 assist) and sophomore forward **Sophie Perry** both tied for the team lead in goals last season, notching six goals apiece in a balanced offensive attack. Sophomore **Amy Buechler** and senior **Andrea Reese** (2 assists) return to anchor a defense that allowed the third-fewest goals in the conference a year ago.

**t8. Illinois College Lady Blues**    **2005 Record:** 2-13-1 (2-7-0 MWC)  
**Returning All-MWC 1st Team:** ---    **2nd Team:** ---

Illinois College has notched two conference wins in each of the last two seasons, but **Bob McGuire's** squad could make strides in 2006 with the return of several key players. Senior midfielder **Susan Bergen** is back after leading the Lady Blue's offense in goals (4) and points (9) last season, while sophomore midfielder **Mandy Hays** also returns after netting three goals in 2005. Junior **Jaime Weier** gives the Lady Blues experience on defense, which will be important with the graduation of **Alicia Allen**, a four-year starter in goal.

**t8. Ripon Red Hawks**                      **2005 Record:** 2-13-0 (1-8-0 MWC)  
**Returning All-MWC 1st Team:** ---    **2nd Team:** ---

Ripon split its last four contests of the season in 2005, with both losses coming to NCAA Tournament qualifiers, and new head coach **Chris Trudell** will look to build off that momentum in 2006. The Red Hawks will be led by a trio of seniors in forward **Jill Jones** (7 goals, 2 assists), midfielder **Sally Corey** (2 goals, 3 assist) and defender **Michelle Ebert** (4 goals). Sophomore goalkeeper **Katie Krueger** (132 saves) was in the net in both Red Hawk wins last year, recording a shutout in one of the contests.

**10. Knox Prairie Fire**                      **2005 Record:** 2-14-0 (0-9-0 MWC)  
**Returning All-MWC 1st Team:** ---    **2nd Team:** ---

Knox head coach **Jim Carothers** has a solid nucleus of young players returning as the Prairie Fire look to reverse their recent struggles. Eight of the nine players who recorded    *(continued above right)*

points for Knox last season return in 2006, including junior **Leah Heister** (7 points), junior **Kim Jansen** (4 goals, 1 assist) and junior **Emma Bell Bern** (3 assists). Junior goalkeeper **Emily Jackson** (132 saves), who was in goal for both wins last season, returns after starting 13 games between the pipes a year ago.

--MWC--

--MWC Champions--

- 1986 St. Norbert
- 1987 St. Norbert
- 1988 St. Norbert
- 1989 Lake Forest
- 1990 Grinnell
- 1991 Grinnell
- 1992 Grinnell
- 1993 Grinnell
- 1994 St. Norbert
- 1995 St. Norbert
- 1996 Grinnell
- 1997 St. Norbert
- 1998 Carroll
- 1999 Grinnell
- 2000 Lawrence
- 2001 Lake Forest
- 2002 Carroll
- 2003 Grinnell
- 2004 Lake Forest
- 2005 Grinnell

--MWC Championship Breakdown--

- Grinnell - 8 ('90, '91, '92, '93, '96, '99, '03, '05)
- St. Norbert - 6 ('86, '87, '88, '94, '95, '97)
- Lake Forest - 3 ('89, '01, '04)
- Carroll - 2 ('98, '02)
- Lawrence - 1 ('00)

--MWC Tournament Champions--

- 1991 Grinnell
- 1992 St. Norbert
- 1993 Grinnell
- 1994 St. Norbert
- 1995 St. Norbert
- 1996 Grinnell
- 1997 St. Norbert
- 1998 Carroll
- 1999 Grinnell
- 2000 Lawrence
- 2001 Lawrence
- 2002 Carroll
- 2003 Lake Forest
- 2004 Grinnell
- 2005 Grinnell



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