

APR 17 FINAL	APR 20 1:30 PM	APR 20 3:30 PM	APR 21 12:00 PM
Baseball	Baseball	Baseball	Baseball
vs Bemidji State University	at Minnesota State University - Mankato	at Minnesota State University - Mankato	at Minnesota State University - Mankato

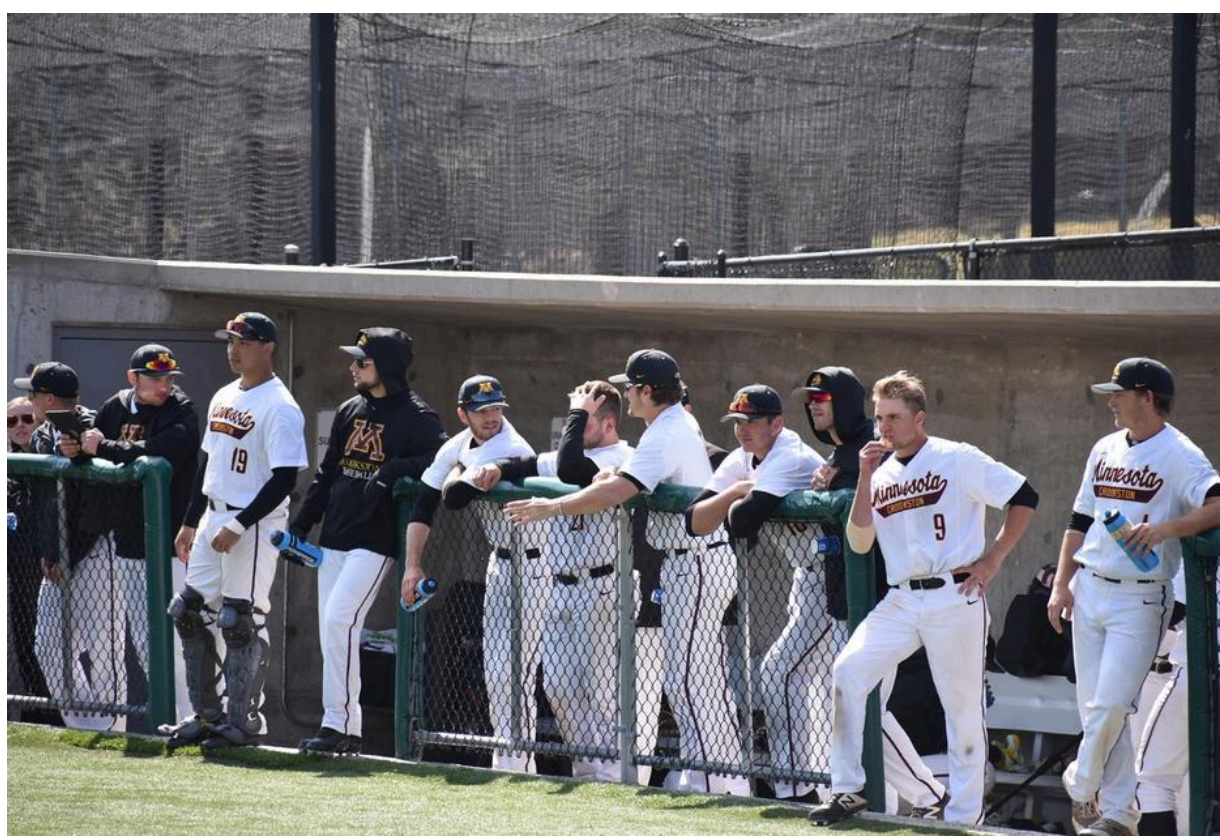
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BASEBALL

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Baseball | 3/22/2019 1:49:00 PM | Hunter Plante, Assistant Director of Marketing/Communications

Minnesota Crookston Travels to Minnetonka, Minn., for Three Game Set with Concordia-St. Paul



Crookston, Minn.—The University of Minnesota Crookston Golden Eagles baseball team is feeling pretty good about themselves after the first three game series of NSIC play.

The Golden Eagles were supposed to open conference play in Wayne, Neb., against Wayne State College, but Mother Nature had other intentions. Instead the Golden Eagles traveled two hours south of Wayne to play in Omaha, Neb., against the Wildcats.

The longer trip for the Golden Eagles was no problem, as the Golden Eagles swept Wayne State to start out conference play 3-0 for the first time since 2006.

The Golden Eagles currently sit three games over .500 at 10-7 and 3-0 in conference play, good for second in the NSIC.

This weekend, it doesn't get any easier for the Golden Eagles, who will travel to Minnetonka, Minn., for a top-five NSIC matchup with the Golden Bears of Concordia-St. Paul. The Golden Bears are coming off a weekend that saw them take the last two games against Southwest Minnesota State University after losing the first game.

Concordia-St. Paul split two games with Minot State Wednesday afternoon in St. Paul, Minn.

Minnesota Crookston at Concordia-St. Paul
Location: Minnetonka, Minn.

Veterans Field
Sun., March 24—12:30 pm
Mon., March 25—5 pm

Live Stats: <https://cspbears.com/sidearmstats/baseball/summary>

Minnesota Crookston Preview

Projected Starting Lineup

3r: OF [Erik Jorgensen](#), .304, 18 runs, 6 2B, 5 RBIs
 Jr: CF [Landon Savelle](#), .290, 11 runs, 3 2B, 5 RBIs
 Sr: 1B [Brett Helle](#), .340, 17 runs, 2 2B, 2 3B, 3 HR, 14 RBIs
 So: C [Ben Fussy](#), .310, 10 runs, 2 3B, 1 HR, 14 RBIs
 So: RF [Zach Rustad](#), .261, 10 runs, 4 2B, 1 3B, 2 HR, 14 RBIs
 Jr: DH [Jayden Grover](#), .294, 2 runs, 2 RBIs
 Jr: R: 1B [Zach Rustad](#), .263, 3 runs, 3 2B, 3 RBIs
 Jr: 3B [Scott Finberg](#), .214, 6 runs, 2 2B, 3 HR, 9 RBIs
 Jr: 2B [Mason Ruhlmann](#), .152, 7 runs, 2 HR, 5 RBIs
 Sr: SS [Ty Griffin](#), .224, 6 runs, 1 3B, 6 RBIs

Top Starters

Jr: RHP [Jayden Grover](#), 2-2 3.65 ERA, 24 1/2 IP, 12 K, 15 BB
 Sr: LHP [Nate Albrecht](#), 1-1 6.48 ERA, 16 2/3 IP, 13 K, 4 BB
 Sr: LHP [Zach Rustad](#), 2-3 6.49 ERA, 26 1/3 IP, 15 K, 11 BB

Top Relievers

R: So: LHP [Ben Benson](#), 1-0 3.09 ERA, 12 0 IP, 8 saves, 13 K, 5 BB
 RHP [Zach Rustad](#), 1-0 2.89 ERA, 9 1/3 IP, 1 K, 2 BB

Minnesota Crookston picked up the sweep over Wayne State College, who was picked to finish sixth in the NSIC preseason poll, with some timely hitting, good defense and quality pitching. As a team, Minnesota is batting .260 with 13 homers, 68 RBIs and have scored 92 runs, including 18 runs scored from [Zach Rustad](#) (Sr., LHP, Blaine, Minn.) has been the number one starter all year long and he proved why with a dominant outing against Wayne State. Rustad pitched a complete game, one-hit shutout against the Wildcats, while also striking out seven. That performance earned Rustad pitcher of the week in the conference. [Nate Albrecht](#) (Sr., LHP, Wahpeton, N.D.) and [Jayden Grover](#) (Sr., RHP, Coopersburg, N.D.) have helped solidify the starters as well. Grover leads the team in wins with two and has held opponents to hit just .207 on the season, good for seventh in the NSIC.

On the hill, the Golden Eagles have rebounded nicely after a rough start to the season, where they gave up double-digit runs in three straight games to open the season against Central Missouri. [Zach Rustad](#) (Sr., LHP, Blaine, Minn.) has been the number one starter all year long and he proved why with a dominant outing against Wayne State. Rustad pitched a complete game, one-hit shutout against the Wildcats, while also striking out seven. That performance earned Rustad pitcher of the week in the conference. [Nate Albrecht](#) (Sr., LHP, Wahpeton, N.D.) and [Jayden Grover](#) (Sr., RHP, Coopersburg, N.D.) have helped solidify the starters as well. Grover leads the team in wins with two and has held opponents to hit just .207 on the season, good for seventh in the NSIC.

The relievers have been outstanding this season. [Aaron Hollcraft](#) (Sr., LHP, Crookston, Minn.), [Dalton Grose](#) (R-So, LHP, Waterville, Minn.) and [Connor Richardson](#) (Fr., RHP, Grand Forks, N.D.) have been the trio that have locked down wins for the Golden Eagles. Hollcraft has pitched in five games this year and is 1-0 with six strikeouts with a 4.26 ERA. Richardson hasn't pitched like a true freshman, maintaining a 2.89 ERA, and picked up his first win over the weekend. Grose has been the closer this season and he has converted on four of his save attempts this season. Grose is tied with Nicolas Herald of Winona State for first in saves.

Concordia-St. Paul

Projected Starting Lineup

Sr: C [Carter Schmidt](#), .302, 11 R, 3 RBIs
 Sr: 2B [Isaac Hornmann](#), .240, 9 R, 2 HR, 9 RBIs
 Sr: 1B [Roch Wistaker](#), .354, 8 R, 8 RBIs
 So: CF [Tygan Cristopher](#), .394, 17 H, 3 2B, 16 RBIs
 Sr: OF [Cole Kercheff](#), .268, 10 R, 13, 4 RBIs
 Sr: LF [Jake Steckler](#), .390, 8 R,
 Sr: DH [Kyle Hortsmann](#), .300, 4 R
 Sr: 3B [Drew Seimes](#), .368, 18, 8 RBIs
 Fr: SS [Jarod Wanderssee](#), .364, 2 R, 3 RBIs

Top Starters

Sr: RHP [Josh Gowarski](#) 1.29 ERA, 1-0 14.0 IP, 10 SO, 4 BB
 Sr: RHP [Zach Lauzon](#), 1.17 ERA, 1-0 11.0 IP, 24 SO, 8 BB
 Sr: RHP [Keanu Mendez](#) 2.00 ERA, 2-1 18.0 IP, 17 SO
 Jr: RHP [Louie Varland](#) 3.44 ERA, 2-1 18.1 IP, 24 SO

Top Relievers

Jr: RHP [Shane Benson](#) 0.00 ERA, 6 1/3 IP, 1-0, 8 SO
 Sr: RHP [Blake Stetzer](#) 1.0, 1-0, 8.0 IP, 10 SO, 3 BB
 So: RHP [Ross Bastyr](#), 4.82 ERA, 0-1, 9 1/3 IP, 5 SO

The Golden Bears are always a favorite to be one of the top teams in the NSIC. Picked fifth in the preseason poll, the Golden Bears are living up to those expectations, albeit we are only three games into conference play. Concordia-St. Paul is coming off a series win over the Mustangs of Southwest Minnesota State. The Golden Bears fell in the first game of the series, but they were able to win the next two, including an extra inning victory in game two.

The Golden Bears have a good offense. As a team, CSP is hitting .282, and is led by Patrick Berdwick and Ryan Christopher who are hitting .396 and .395, respectively. The .282 average for the Golden Bears has them in seventh in the NSIC. CSP has only four homers on the year as a team and Isaac Hornmann has two of them.

The Golden Bears arguably have one of the best pitching staffs in the entire conference. Their team ERA of 4.06 has them in second in the conference and has struck out 126 opponents as a team. Josh Gowarski, Zach Lauzon, Louie Varland and Keanu Mendez all have more than one start on the season. Gowarski and Lauzon have sub 2.00 ERAs and Varland is the younger brother of Gus Varland, a former Golden Bear and a 1st round pick of the Oakland Athletics in the 2018 MLB draft. In relief, they can turn to Shane Benson and Blake Stetzer, who have a combined 112 ERA. The Golden Bears win a lot of games because of their pitching staff.

[Print Friendly Version](#)

PLAYERS MENTIONED

- | | |
|--|--|
| #30 Nate Albrecht
LHP / 6' 1" / Redshirt Sophomore / L | #32 Hunter Baldwin
3B / 6' 3" / Redshirt Sophomore / R |
| #9 Griffin Fussy
SS / 5' 11" / Redshirt Freshman / L | #36 Dalton Grose
LHP / 6' 3" / Redshirt Freshman / L |
| #35 Jayden Grover
RHP / 6' 3" / Sophomore / R | #33 Reed Hjelle
1B / 6' 2" / Junior / R |
| #25 Aaron Hollcraft
LHP / 6' 0" / Junior / L | #29 Ben Thoma
UT / 5' 10" / Freshman / R |
| #24 Zach Rustad
LHP / 5' 10" / Junior / L | #1 Landyn Swenson
OF / 5' 10" / Junior / R |

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