



Baseball | 1/25/2017 2:55:00 PM | Shawn Smith, Sports Information Director

UMC Baseball Picked Ninth in NSIC Preseason Coaches' Poll



BURNSVILLE, Minn. – The University of Minnesota Crookston baseball team was selected ninth in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) Preseason Baseball Coaches' Poll. The poll was released Wed., Jan. 25 by the conference office.

The ninth-place pick for the Golden Eagles is the best for UMC in recent history as they moved up from being picked 14th last season. The rise in the polls for the Golden Eagles comes after an impressive season in which they picked up 25 wins and finished sixth in the conference standings. The Golden Eagles also advanced to their first NSIC Tournament berth since 2001. Minnesota Crookston will look to continue their success in their third season under Head Coach [Steve Cust](#).

UMC is led a pair of sophomores. [Reed Hjelle](#) (So., 1B, East Grand Forks, Minn.) was picked as UMC's Player to Watch as he hit .387 with seven home runs, 38 RBI's and 39 runs scored as a freshman. Hjelle will make the move to first base as a sophomore after playing primarily in the outfield during his debut campaign in the Maroon and Gold. On the mound, the Golden Eagles look to [Zach Seipel](#) (So., RHP, Eagan, Minn.), who went 2-1 with a 4.24 ERA in 17 innings pitched. He had a league-best 11 saves with 28 strikeouts.

In addition to Hjelle, the Golden Eagles return four other starters in the field. On the mound, UMC will be younger with only eight starts returning from last season. Though they are young they still will have great potential on the mound.

Minnesota State University, Mankato was selected first in the Coaches' Poll with 10 first-place votes and 192 points overall. St. Cloud State University was picked second in the poll with four first-place votes and 178 points.

Patrick O'Donnell of Augustana University, an outfielder who hit .556 last season, was named NSIC Preseason Player of the Year. Sheldon Miks of St. Cloud State University, the 2016 NSIC and Central Region Pitcher of the Year, was named NSIC Preseason Pitcher of the Year. Miks was 8-3 with a 1.96 ERA last season.

The Golden Eagles will open up the season Feb. 24 at 10 p.m. against Minot State University at US Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minn.

2017 NSIC Preseason Baseball Coaches Poll

		Points
1	Minnesota State (10)	192
2	St. Cloud State (4)	178
3	Augustana	171
4	Concordia-St. Paul	156
5	Minnesota Duluth (1)	146
6	Winona State	121

8	Wayne State	106
9	Minnesota Crookston	85
10	Sioux Falls	82
11	Upper Iowa	59
12	Minnesota State	57
13	North Dakota State	54
14	Minot State	38

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#33 Reed Hjelle

University of Mary
1B / 6' 2" / Sophomore / R

#21 Zach Seipel

RHP / 6' 3" / Sophomore / R

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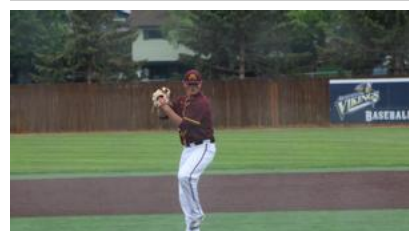
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