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2003 IOWA CONFERENCE MEN'S SOCCER PREVIEW

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MOUNT VERNON, IOWA . . . Two-time defending Conference Champion Luther topped the Iowa Conference men's soccer preseason coaches poll with 65 points despite having one less first-place vote than Loras. Loras finished second in the poll with 63 points and had four of eight first-place votes. Luther received three first-place votes and Central, which finished third in the poll, received the other first-place vote. The complete 2003 IIAC coaches poll follows.

Rank	School	Points
1 st	Luther (3)	65
2 nd	Loras (4)	63
3 rd	Central (1)	52
4 th	Wartburg	50
5 th	Simpson	47
6 th	Buena Vista	31
7 th	Cornell	23
8 th	Dubuque	21
9 th	Coe	8

Note: First-place votes in parenthesis.
Nine points awarded for first-place vote,
Eight points awarded for second-place vote

"The trend that the Conference has shown in the last few years should continue. There is less and less of a difference from top to bottom. Any one of five or six teams could win the Conference, with the others not far behind," Central coach **Garry Laidlaw** said. "The improved quality in the League has meant great gains for the IIAC at the regional level."

"The IIAC is getting better and better every year," Loras coach **Dan Rothert** said. "Along with us, Luther, Simpson, Wartburg, Central and BV should compete for the IIAC Championship. I also expect Cornell and Dubuque to be much improved."

"The Conference standings and more importantly the Conference Tournament will be very tight this year one through six," Dubuque coach **Jason Berna** said. "I believe this year will be the toughest year ever to compete in the IIAC and anyone could win it."

Under a new Conference policy adopted last season, the Iowa Conference men's soccer Champion and all-sports trophy points will be determined by the regular season round-robin schedule. The Conference Tournament will determine which school receives the automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. Previously, the standings of the top-four Conference teams were determined by the finish of the Conference Tournament. The 2003 IIAC Tournament will be November 4, 7-8. First round matches will be played at the higher seed. Semifinals and final will be played at the University of Dubuque.

Buena Vista University Beavers **(8-11-1, 3-6 7th in IIAC)**

Starters Returning/Lost: 9/1

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 12/1

About the 2003 Beavers: Fourteen of Buena Vista's 25 goals from last season left with the graduation of All-Conference forward **Bo Leonard**. Midfielder **Scott Janish**, the only other player on the Beaver roster last season to score more than one goal, returns. He netted seven goals last season.

All-Conference defenseman **Nick Fox** leads a group of four returnees that all tallied one goal last season. Included in that group are midfielder **Chris Bayer** (1 goal, 3 assists), defenseman **Joshua Weitzel** (1 goal, 1 assist) and forward **Seth Okoampa** (1 goal, 1 assist).

Midfielder **Kevin Shavnore** (3 assists), forward/midfielder **Frank Etchencamp** (2 assists) and defenseman **Andrew Derner** (2 assists) all return to the Beavers' line-up.

Goaltender **Daniel Padilla** returns after posting a 7-10-1 record as a freshman with a 1.52 goals against average and four shutouts.

Central College Dutch **(16-2-1, 8-0-1 4th in IIAC)**

Starters Returning/Lost: 8/3

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 19/4

About the 2003 Dutch: Central won 15 straight games to start last season with a line-up that included seven freshmen. The Dutch went 16-0-1 in the regular season before losing both games in the Conference Tournament.

"We expect that it is going to take some time to find our identity. With the loss of three standout players in the middle, there will have to be an adjustment period. However we are happy with the players we have returning as well as the new group coming in," sixth-year coach **Garry Laidlaw** said. "Improving on our fourth place Conference finish from last season will be one of our goals. We think we can be competitive again in the Conference, and we are very excited about the challenging non-Conference schedule we face this year."

Returning All-Conference performers **Kyle Halfpop** (midfield), **Nick Mohwinkle** (forward) and **Conrad Vernon** (defense) will lead the Dutch. Halfpop was the team's second leading scorer last season with nine goals and five assists. **Adam Little** and **Shane Wilson** return as starting midfielders while **Nathan Weir**, **Tim Dobberfuhl**, **Clint Cummings** and **Adam Johnson** expect to compete for playing time.

Mohwinkle was the team's top scorer last season with 10 goals and 24 points. **Clint Meek** was the first man off Central's bench last season and could move into the starting line-up this season. He scored five goals and added two assists. **Mike Augustin**, **Justin Austin**, **Jim Babcock** and **Chris Leyh** will see increased playing time this season.

Defensively, **Brandon Thomsen**, **Aaron Buzbee** and a trio of freshmen **Eric Bentzinger**, **Danny Schmidt** and **Ryan Petersen** will join Vernon and compete for the spot left open by the graduation of All-Region defender **Mike Kobylnski**.

Andy Quigg looks to be the leading candidate in goal. He appeared in three games last season and made eight saves. **Patrick Coyne** also appeared in three games last season with one save and should push Quigg for playing time.

Coe College Kohawks
(3-13-1, 1-7-1 9th in IIAC)

Starters Returning/Lost: 5/6

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 6/6

About the 2003 Kohawks: Coe graduated its goaltender and two of its top three scorers who accounted for nearly 50 percent of its offense last season.

“Graduation has taken its toll, but expectations of improvement are very high,” third-year coach **Brad Stiles** said.

Kyle Fargen, who tied for second on the team with four goals and eight points, leads the Kohawk offense that scored just 19 goals last season.

Scott Ligouri scored three goals as a freshman last season, which tied him for fourth on the team. **Marty Ruthaivilavan** added one goal. **Nick Spanel** and **Mike Drinkall** round-out the group of Coe returnees.

Newcomers expected to make an immediate impact in the Kohawk line-up include **Jesse Hale** and **Bryan Knapp**.

Cornell College Rams
(6-10-1, 3-5-1 6th in IIAC)

Starters Returning/Lost: 7/4

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 11/5

About the 2003 Rams: Cornell returns seven starters and 11 letterwinners from last season’s team that qualified for the Conference Tournament, but beyond the return of two of the team’s top-three scorers there is limited offensive fire power back.

Forward **Phillip Erickson** led the team with five goals and tied for the team lead with 13 points. Defenseman **Spencer Thielmann** tied for second last year with four goals and was third in scoring with 11 points. Erickson is the only returning forward but Thielmann will have help on defense with the return of **Danny Love** (1 goal, 2 assists) and **Dave Simpson**.

The midfield positions might have the most experience for Cornell but provide limited offense. **Alex Straight**, **Erik Eastman** and **Aaron Reykdal** all saw considerable playing time last season but none recorded a point.

Cornell has a big hole to fill in net with the departure of **Drew Spain** who notched a 1.98 goals against average in 17 games.

The group of newcomers looking to make an immediate impact include midfielders **Eric Horton**, **Gabe Gildner**, **Charlie Ellerbroek** and **Ben Tiemstra**; and defensemen **Frank Najera**, **Ian McDonald**, **Nick Andrajack** and **Tom Ritland**.

University of Dubuque Spartans **(5-11-3, 1-6-2 8th in IIAC)**

About the 2003 Spartans: Dubuque begins its third season of soccer with a team that gained some much needed experience last season. Third-year coach **Jason Berna** will look to a group of nine juniors, 10 sophomores and 10-15 freshmen to continue its climb up the Conference standings.

"I expect us to finish above .500 this season and more importantly, make it to the Conference Tournament," Berna said. "We've been on the bubble the last couple of seasons, with our hosting the Tournament, it should give the team extra incentive."

Returning All-Conference performers **Jon Janulis** (defense) and **Joey Kelly** (midfield) will lead the Spartans. **Matt Thompson** (1 assist) will join Janulis on defense.

Kelly finished fourth on the team in scoring with eight points (2g-4a) last season and will be joined at midfield by **Matt Zuckerman** (1 goal), **Matt Dolson** (1 goal, 1 assist)

Forwards **RaShard Flemming** and **Toby Herrera** finished first and second on the team in goals and points. Flemming had a team-high six goals and 13 points. Herrera, a 2001 All-Conference selection scored five goals and 11 points.

Goaltender **Ryan Fritz** posted a 5-6-1 record in 12 games last season. He had a 1.88 goals against average and five shutouts.

Loras College Duhawks **(11-6-2, 7-2 5th in IIAC)**

Starters Returning/Lost: 9/2

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 18/3

About the 2003 Duhawks: Loras will rely on the experience of 11 seniors and hope to be sparked by the return of three-time All-Conference forward **Brad Johnson**, who missed the 2002 season with an injury.

"With 11 starters returning and a group of new players that bring excellent experience to the table, we are very excited about the upcoming season. We hope the combination of leadership and talent can take our program to a new level," sixth-year coach **Dan Rotherth** said. "We have set our goals to not just compete for the Iowa Conference Championship, but we plan to compete for regional and national prominence as well."

Johnson missed last season after suffering a foot injury in the preseason and looks to return to his All-Conference caliber of play. Joining Johnson at forward will be **Jed Beyer**, who tied for the team lead with 20 points last season, **Troy Neideen**, **Ben McDougal** and **Nick Roe**

Two All-Conference performers return at midfield - **Nick Sullivan** and **Andy Zimmer**. Sullivan led the team with 10 goals last season while Zimmer added three goals and four assists. **Nick DeMoss** (1 goal), **Dan Johnson** (1 goal, 2 assists), **Kyle Lippold** (1 goal, 1 assist) and **Jeff Stevenson** (4 goals, 2 assists) will also be looked to for production at midfield.

RaShad Dacus and **Sean Moran**, both former All-Conference selections will lead the defense. **Tony Stehn** brings additional experience to the defense.

Nick Murray returns in goal and will be challenged by newcomers **Kevin Smerko** and **John Christie** for playing time. Murray posted an 8-4-1 record last season with a 1.08 goals against average and three shutouts.

Luther College Norse
(17-3-1, 7-1-1 1st in IIAC)

Starters Returning/Lost: 7/4

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 19/6

About the 2003 Norse: Coming off their sixth conference title in the last seven years, the Norse will look to an overpowering offense to carry them in 2003. Leading the charge will be All-Region forward **Eric Henderson**, who scored 15 goals and had 12 assists last season despite missing a handful of games late in the season due to an injury. He ranked 10th in the nation averaging 2.47 points per game.

Jordan Hartman scored six goals and 19 points as a freshman and will compliment Henderson at forward.

Three-quarters of last season's starting midfield return led by All-Conference performer **Bryan Korth**, who finished third on the team with 28 points. **Tim Stork** (2g-2a) and **Andrew Best** (1g-2a) also return.

On defense, the Norse will look to Second Team All-Conference selection **Jeremiah Reinkoester** as their leader in the backfield. Reinkoester scored three goals last season. **Ed Mauch** joins Reinkoester on defense.

In goal, Luther must replace Conference MVP and All-Region goaltender **Rick Isaacson**. **Scott Pearson** did not allow a goal in 142 minutes last season as Isaacson's back-up.

"I am very happy with our team. We have a strong group of returning players and some very good recruits," 13th-year coach **Doug Mello** said. "I still feel we are the team to beat coming off another Conference title but we know it is going to be a very tough road with the improvement of the other teams in the Conference."

Simpson College Storm **(15-5-2, 7-2 3rd in IIAC)**

Starters Returning/Lost: 7/4

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 14/4

About the 2003 Storm: Simpson came within a shootout of the Iowa Conference finals a year ago. Ninth-year coach **Aziz Haffar** will look to use that disappointment as motivation for 2003 and use it to take the next step of success.

"We will again face a difficult and challenging schedule," Haffar said. "We have an excellent group of core players and our recruiting class should make a better team overall. Now it's just a matter of how quickly the newcomers and the returners jell for us to reach our potential."

Forwards **Kenny Chapman**, **Henry Petersen** and **Brandon Volz** all started last season. Chapman was fifth on the team in scoring (15), goals (6), and shots (41). Petersen was selected Second Team All-Conference leading the team in assists (8) and finishing second in goals (8) and points (24) Volz was third on the squad in scoring with 21 points (8g-5a).

Juan Navas leads the midfield. In 2002, he was a First Team All-Conference performer after sitting out two seasons due to a knee injury. He was second on the team in assists (7), fourth on the team in scoring (19) and goals (6).

Brady Spagenberg joins Navas at midfield after missing 2002 with an injury. He was a 2001 All-Conference performer. **Charlie Petersen**, who saw action in 10 games last season, could also move into the starting lineup.

The defense will be anchored by **Garrett Biller**, **Michael Prunty** and **Joe Wilson**. Biller, who has played in 44 consecutive matches, took more of an offensive roll last season scoring three goals and adding one assist. Wilson missed much of the 2002 season with an injury. **Ryan Berry** and **Scott Roth** could also start or come off the bench and see extensive varsity time.

Jason Wichman and **T.J. Irvin** will look to replace **Matt Edgington** in goal. Wichman is only one of three Simpson goalies to ever record a victory in the eight-year history of the Simpson program. Wichman saw time in seven matches and went 1-0. He did not allow a goal in 133 minutes of action and made seven saves.

Newcomers **Lennart Kirchenwitz**, **Mikkel Jacobsen**, **Mark Pleiss**, **Nathan Ruland** and **Mosa Shayan** could contribute right away.

Upper Iowa University Peacocks (4-14, 1-8 10th in IIAC)

Starters Returning/Lost: 4/7

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 8/12

About the 2003 Peacocks: Upper Iowa will compete in a full Iowa Conference schedule but as a non-Conference team after reclassifying to Division II.

“We have brought in a solid freshman class that will compete not only for playing time but for starting positions,” second-year coach **Troy Otradovec** said. “As a staff we feel that we have upgraded our roster at every position and are excited about the upcoming season. The biggest challenge will be finding the right combination of new players and returners to have success on the field.”

Forward **Phongsay Luangsaysana** led the Peacocks with six goals and 14 points last season. Joining him at forward is **Dave Madsen**, who notched seven points and a pair of goals.

In the middle, **Christian Scott** and **Derek Seaman** will lead the group. Both players scored three goals last season. Scott also added two assists.

Clint Nereim, **Matt Raes** and **Hollis Weber** return having seen limited action last season

In goal, **Jeff Vogel** returns after posting a 4-8 record last season with a 3.35 goals against average and two shutouts in 12 games.

Wartburg College Knights (11-9-1, 4-5 2nd in IIAC)

Starters Returning/Lost: 10/1

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 17/2

About the 2003 Knights: A veteran group of players return from the team that lost to Luther in the Conference Championship game last season including 10 of 11 starters. Heading the list of returnees are the top-two goal scorers, four defensive starters and the top-two goaltenders.

“We expect to maximize our potential,” fourth-year coach **Jim Conlon** said. “We have a good team but we need to work to bring it all together.”

Two-time All-Conference forward **Verne Houston** led the team with 15 goals and 32 points last season. He will be joined at forward by **Scott Hill** who scored seven goals and added five assists as a freshman. Newcomer **Yani Stanley** will look to make an immediate impact.

Armin Muhamedagic, **Josh Judisch** and **Nick Wuertz** are experienced midfielders. Muhamedagic and Judisch are four-year starters and Wuertz appeared in all but one game last season as a freshman. Newcomer **Micah McMorris** will also see time at midfield.

All-Iowa Conference selections **Jeremy McEver** and **Kirk Artist** lead the defensive corps that includes **Zach Prieve** and **Seth Rowland**. **Matt Penning**, **Travis Kohl**, **Vedran Solaja** and **Sean Kane** will also see time on defense.

Collin Lane, a Second Team All-IIAC selection, and **Ian MacNaughton**, will handle the goaltending duties. Lane, who holds the school record for single-season goals-against average (1.24), finished second in the Conference with eight shutouts and 7.31 saves per game.