

MVC MEN'S SOCCER

PRESEASON POLL: AUGUST 22, 2019

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MISSOURI STATE PICKED TO WIN MVC MEN'S SOCCER CROWN

ST. LOUIS – Missouri State has been tabbed as the team to beat in the 2019 MVC men's soccer chase in a vote conducted by league coaches. The Bears received 32 points and four first-place votes in the poll to out-distance Loyola (31 points, one first place vote), Drake (22 points, one first place vote) and Bradley (18 points).

2018 MVC champion Central Arkansas represented the MVC in the NCAA Tournament field last fall but will not return to The Valley in 2019 after joining the Sun Belt Conference. The Bears became the 14th team since 1991 to earn an MVC regular season title along with a tournament crown, joining Bradley, Creighton, Missouri State, SMU and Tulsa as the only teams to accomplish the feat.

The Valley will look to build on last season as league teams return 41 starters (62-percent), including four first-team all-conference players and five who earned second-team accolades.



Missouri State returns seven starters from last year's 9-2-6 (2-2-2 MVC) squad that saw its season end in the MVC Tournament semifinals. Head coach Jon Leamy heads into his 28th season at the helm and will look to build off last season's solid campaign. Last year, Missouri State was 9-0-4 in non-conference play, earning the Bears their first national ranking (No. 25 in United Soccer Coaches NCAA Division

I top 25 poll) since 2009. Offensively, junior standout Josh Dolling was the Bears' top point provider in 2018, accumulating 10 goals and 3 assists (23 points) with five game-winning tallies. Dolling's 0.59 goals per game ranked 29th nationally his sophomore year, while his five game-winning goals ranked 11th. Both figures led the MVC. The Bears also return All-MVC selections Kyle Hiebert and Ben Stroud to the fold this fall.



Loyola welcomes back seven starters from a 2018 squad that registered a 10-7-2 (3-1-2 MVC) record. The returning starters are highlighted by All-MVC selection Giann Magno along with Aidan Megally and Fabian Becerra. The Ramblers were a win shy of making its second NCAA Tournament appearance in three seasons as it dropped a hard-fought 2-1 decision to Central Arkansas in the final of the MVC Men's Soccer Tournament Championship. Head Coach Neil Jones will also welcome

2019 PRESEASON POLL

Rank	Team (1st-place votes)	Points
1.	Missouri State (4)	32
2.	Loyola (1)	31
3.	Drake (1)	22
4.	Bradley	18
5.	Evansville	12
6.	Valparaiso	11

eight newcomers to Rogers Park, including South Carolina transfer Justin Sukow, who netted eight goals during his two-year stay with the Gamecocks. Last season marked the third time in the past four years that the Maroon & Gold have reached the double-digit win mark. Loyola will once again face a challenging non-conference schedule, with opponents from the Big Ten, Big East, America East, Big West, Mid-American and West Coast conferences on the docket.



Drake welcomes back seven starters from last season's 7-7-3 (1-3-2 MVC) team. Junior Leroy Enzugusi had an outstanding sophomore campaign, scoring a team-high eight goals,

2019 MVC PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

PLAYER, TEAM	CL.	POS.	HOMETOWN (LAST SCHOOL)
Jared Brown, Drake	Sr.	GK	Aurora, Ontario (Florida Gulf Coast)
Josh Dolling, Missouri State	Jr.	F	Liverpool, UK (Childwall Sports & Science Academy)
Leroy Enzugusi, Drake	Jr.	F	Marion, Iowa (Linn-Mar)
Kyle Hiebert, Missouri State	Sr.	M	La Salle, Manitoba (Glenlawn Collegiate School)
Giann Magno, Loyola	Jr.	M	Buxton, England (St. Thomas More Catholic School)
Aidan Megally, Loyola	Sr.	M	Park Ridge, Ill. (Maine South)
Cole Poppen, Drake	Sr.	M	Ankeny, Iowa (Tulsa)
Demar Rose, Valparaiso	Sr.	M	Kingston, Jamaica (Wolmer's Boys School)
Jesse Stafford-Lacey, Evansville	Sr.	M	Kerry, Ireland (Mercy Mount Hawk)
Ben Stroud, Missouri State	Sr.	D	Christchurch, New Zealand (Scots College)
Gerit Wintermeyer, Bradley	Jr.	F	Wiesbaden, Germany (Friedrich-Ebert Schule)



2018 FINAL MVC STANDINGS

	Missouri Valley Conference				Overall Records			
	W	L	T	Pct.	W	L	T	Pct.
Central Arkansas	4	1	1	.750	8	6	4	.556
Loyola	3	1	2	.667	10	7	2	.579
Valparaiso	2	1	3	.583	5	8	4	.412
Missouri State	2	2	2	.500	9	2	6	.706
Evansville	2	2	2	.500	4	8	7	.395
Drake	1	3	2	.333	7	7	3	.500
Bradley	1	5	0	.167	8	5	4	.588



Valparaiso returns five starters from last season's 5-8-4 (2-1-3 MVC) squad. Valpo will look to build on a strong finish to 2018 as

the team closed the regular season with a six-game unbeaten streak. That marked the longest season-ending unbeaten streak in program history. Valpo finished third in the regular season standings, marking the highest Valley finish by a Valpo team in any sport since the University joined the MVC in July 2017. Senior midfielder Demar Rose returns to the lineup for Valpo after earning All-MVC honors last fall. Senior Adan Garcia will be the leading returning scorer from last season after scoring a goal with a team-high three assists.

The 2019 regular-season campaign begins the weekend of August 29, with all six teams in non-conference action. Loyola will host the 2019 MVC Championship, Nov. 13, 15 and 17, in Chicago, Illinois, where all six teams will battle it out for the Valley's automatic bid to the 2019 NCAA Tournament.

earning All-MVC accolades. Senior midfielder Cole Poppen and senior goalkeeper Jared Brown will also be huge returners for the Bulldogs. Poppen led The Valley with eight assists a year ago, while Brown earned All-MVC honors after leading the MVC in save percentage (.848) and saves (95), while posting a 0.93 goals against average. Drake Head Coach Gareth Smith will also welcome seven division I transfers that bring a wealth of success and experience to the pitch.



Evansville returns seven starters from last season's 4-8-7 (2-2-2 MVC) team. Despite losing 14 letterwinners from last season's team, the Aces return much of their attack. UE scored 21 goals last season and 15 of those were recorded by student-athletes who are returning to the pitch for Evansville in 2019, including the top two goal-scorers in Ben Weber and Jesse Stafford-Lacey. Stafford-Lacey was an All-MVC selection last fall after scoring three goals with two assists. Weber led the Aces with nine points in 2018, scoring three goals with three assists in 18 starts.



Bradley returns a league-high eight starters from the team that finished the campaign 8-5-4 (1-5-0 MVC). The Braves were 6-0-4 in their 10 games outside conference play last season. Bradley is unbeaten (7-0-6) in its last 13 non-conference games, which sits as the second-longest streak in program history. Among Bradley's 14 returning lettermen are the team's top scorer from each of the past two seasons. Senior forward Roman Schindler led the 2017 Braves with seven goals and 19 points. Junior forward Gerit Wintermeyer led the 2018 Braves with eight goals and 20 points, earning All-MVC honors. The Schindler/Wintermeyer combination has totaled 60 points on 24 goals and 12 assists during their first two years with the Braves.

OPENING WEEK SCHEDULE

	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
Thurs., Aug. 29	UMKC at Missouri State	Springfield, Mo.	7 PM
Fri., Aug. 30	Vermont at Loyola	Chicago, Ill.	5 PM
	Eastern Illinois at Evansville	Evansville, Ind.	6 PM
	Belmont at Bradley	Peoria, Ill.	7 PM
	Drake at Oral Roberts	Tulsa, Okla.	7 PM
	Valparaiso at Green Bay	Green Bay, Wis.	7 PM
Sun., Sept. 1	Northern Illinois at Loyola	Chicago, Ill.	1 PM
Mon., Sept. 2	Milwaukee at Drake	Des Moines, Iowa	5 PM
	Evansville at Butler	Indianapolis, Ind.	6 PM
	IU-Northwest at Valparaiso	Valparaiso, Ind.	7 PM
	Missouri State at Santa Clara	Santa Clara, Calif.	9:30 PM