



Midwest Collegiate Cup: American Birkebeiner Results & Final Standings

UMD Men's dynasty continues; SOC Women clinch first title



Above: 2024 Women's Midwest Collegiate Cup podium. Courtesy of Diego Guevara.

CABLE, WI: A tenaciously-modified 50th American Birkebeiner concluded the 2024 Midwest Collegiate Cup. Having led this year's standings since the Half-Noquemanon, the University of Minnesota-Duluth Men defended a narrow lead to secure their third consecutive championship title by a mere eighteen points. The Bulldog Men now tie the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Women for the most consecutive Cup titles in league history.

Despite a remarkable surge at this year's Birkebeiner, the Gopher Women could not quite close against the College of St. Olaf to defend their own championship streak. The Oles' substantial lead, paired with a second-place finish in Birkebeiner Team Scores, was sufficient to clinch their first-ever Collegiate Cup win.



Celebrating 5 Years of MCSA Nordic

Remarking on the weekend's events, MCSA Nordic Student Coordinator and UMNTC Co-President Emma Reineke noted that "the Birkie, following suit with the rest of the season, was not a normal race." However, this did not detract from the much-anticipated energy of the day: "The laps allowed skiers and fans to interact more than they have probably ever have, making this year's Birkie extra special." With MCSA teams cheering one another on, the event served as yet another example of why collegiate racing in the Midwest is so important to preserve."

Five years into the league, MCSA Nordic "just seems to be getting stronger and stronger each year, with new teams making the podium and participating every race. Even the citizen racers are starting to get in on the collegiate fun, cheering for their alma mater and chatting with the teams before and after races. After years of building, it seems that the MCSA has now integrated into the Midwest Nordic culture and has made a real presence at races."



Above: 2024 Men's Collegiate Cup podium. Courtesy of Diego Guevara.

and dedicated day-of scoring from Emma Reineke, the MCSA was once again able to crown its champions on the famed Birkebeiner Podium.

American Birkebeiner Breakdown

With racing limited to a 10-kilometer ribbon of snow, equal parts perilous and miraculous, this weekend's races – and Collegiate Cup scoring – operated under an adjusted format. Saturday's 30k Skate and Sunday's 30k Classic were scored as independent events; so, too, was Saturday's 50k Skate Elite Wave, given its modified distances. Accordingly, teams had the opportunity to capture points across three races, rather than two.

Thanks to generous accommodation from the ABSF's Ben Popp and Kristy Maki,

SATURDAY SKATE RACES:

In the **Women's 30k Skate**, longtime scorer **Aubrie Ecker** (UMD) recorded her first MCSA win, taking the day in 1:29:27. Ecker was 7th in the overall Women's 30k. **Hadley Jensen** (UMNTC), an equally-reliable skier

for the Gophers, took second for the MCSA and 23rd for the Women's field in 1:34:54. **Rachel Poppleton** (CC) continued the Carleton Women's tradition of strong performances at the Birkie, making her first MCSA podium appearance in 1:36:09, and placing 28th in the Women's field.



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In the **Men's 30k Skate**, veteran Husky **Nick Petersen** was first for the MCSA and second overall among some 2,600 participants, taking the day in 1:17:36. **Wes Sumner** (SOC) followed in 1:18:19, taking third overall. In third for the MCSA was **Ryan Miller** (MTU), whose MCSA podium debut put him 25th overall.

In the **Women's 50k Skate Elite**, **Lily Hubanks** (SOC) was the first-place and only MCSA competitor, finishing in 2:35:11. Hubanks was 35th in the Women's Elite field.

In the **Men's 50k Skate Elite**, **Benjamin Bauer** (UMD) recorded his second win of the season, taking first in the MCSA field and 61st in the Men's Elite field with a 2:16:56 finish. Marking the season's first appearance of the Fighting Irish, Notre Dame teammates **Joe Thuente** and **Johnny Nemeth** rounded out the podium, finishing in 2:18:29 (77th in the Men's Elite field) and 2:24:37, respectively.

SUNDAY CLASSIC RACES:

In the **Women's 30k Classic**, **Katie Milligan-Susong** (UWM) went three-for-three, rounding out wins at the [Half-Noquemanon Skate](#) and Mt. Ashwabay to lead the MCSA in 1:45:25. Milligan-Susong was 6th in the Women's Classic field. Gopher teammates **Kaia Hilgendorf-Roost** and **Savannah Krull** followed in 1:47:36 (12th in the Women's Classic field) and 1:57:09 (31st in the Women's Classic field).

In the **Men's 30k Classic**, another Badger kicked his way to the top of the podium: **Aran Koob** (UWM), 13th in the Men's Classic field, recorded his first MCSA win in 1:31:46. In second was **Forrest Dorsey** (SOC), 69th in the Men's Classic Elite field in 1:32:28. Another newcomer to the podium, **Matthew Broderon** (UMNTC), took third for the league, finishing in 1:32:33 and 16th in the Men's Classic field.

TEAM SCORES:

With substantial performances across both the Skate and Classic races, the **University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Women** triumphed in Telemark, netting 176 points. Despite drawing from only four scorers, the **College of St. Olaf** nevertheless managed to secure second place for the day, with 144 points. In third came **Carleton College**, with 126 points.

In the **Men's Division**, the **University of Wisconsin-Madison** won their second day in as many Collegiate Cup events, with 166 points (this February's [Mt. Ashwabay Summit race](#) marking the first Badger Men's win since the [2020 Birkebeiner](#)). In second were the **Michigan Technological University Men**, shy of a single-day podium since the [2023 Birkebeiner](#), with 137 points. In third was the **University of Minnesota-Duluth**, with 121 points.

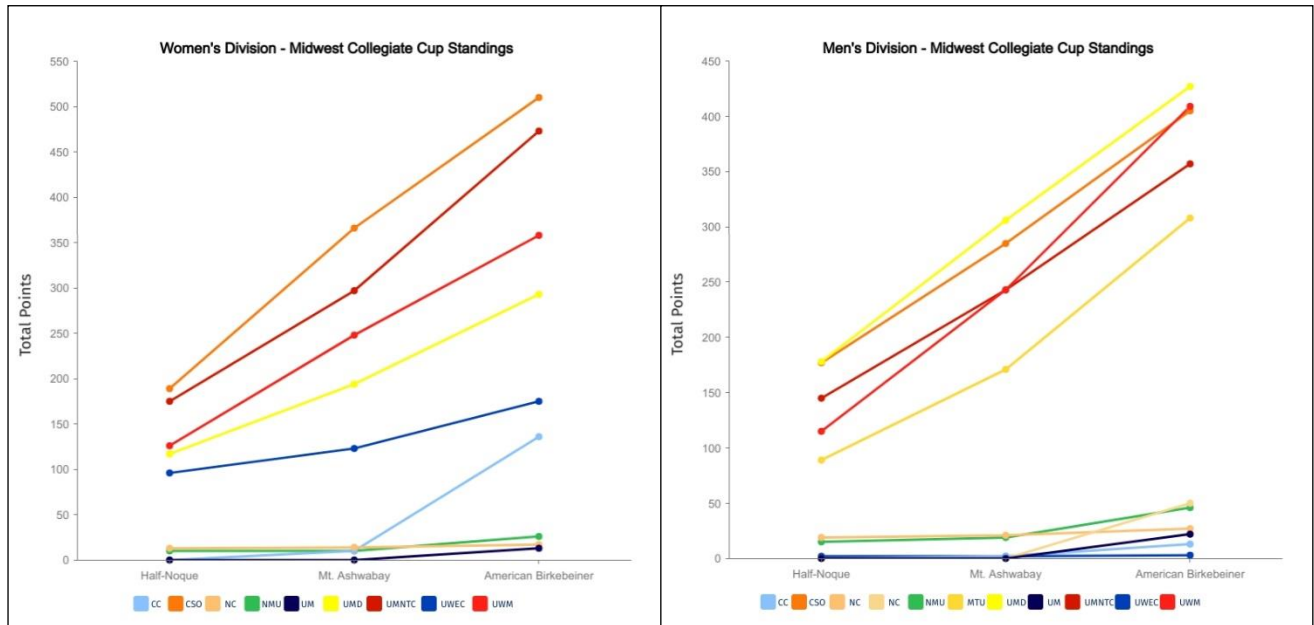
Full MCSA American Birkebeiner results are available [here](#).



Team Scores: Women (American Birkebeiner)						
MCSA Rank:	Team:	Composite Score:				
1	UMNTC	176 Jensen (46) Anderson (37) Hilgendorf-Roost (39) Krull (31) Reineke (23)				
2	STO	144 Hubanks (50) VanderWilde (40) Personius (28) Chandler (26)				
3	CC	126 Poppleton (43) Keyser-Parker (30) MacLaury (20) Davis (18) Munro (15)				
4	UWM	110 Susong (50) VanDenTop (34) Licha (24) Thatcher (1) Pudwill (1)				
5	UMD	99 Ecker (50) Martin (22) Urbanowicz (10) Baker (9) Houts (8)				
6	UWEC	52 Bussmann (32) Williams (14) Johnson (5) Moen (1)				
7	NMU	16 Raske (16)				
8	UMich	13 Brodeur (13)				
9	NC	3 Birkett (1) Seibel (1) Fine (1)				
Team Scores: Men (American Birkebeiner)						
MCSA Rank:	Team:	Composite Score:				
1	UWM	166 Koob (50) Long (34) Page (30) Finlay (28) Baker (24)				
2	MTU	137 Petersen (50) Miller (43) Novtch (40) Schmitzle (3) Zoll (1)				
3	UMD	121 Bauer (50) Hanson (37) Williams-Heim (13) Boehm (11) Pittelko (10)				
4	STO	120 Sumner (46) Dorsey (39) Erdahl (20) Stoufis (14) Goetze (1)				
5	UMNTC	114 Bjarlin (32) Broderon (31) Anderson (26) Han (18) Ruitter (7)				
6	ND	50 Thuerite (30) Nemeth (15) Schmidt (4) McQuestion (1)				
7	NMU	27 Hart (15) LaPlante (12)				
8	UMich	22 Fay (22)				
9	Carleton	11 Bartel (8) Grimlund (2) Tullio (1)				
10	NC	6 Fischer (5) Eichenger (1)				
11	UWEC	1 Urban (1)				
Total Teams: 20						
Total Skiers: 100						

Above: American Birkebeiner Team Scores, 2/25/2024. Scores calculated using the Mathie-Halvorson System.

Below: Midwest Collegiate Cup season standings.



Final Collegiate Cup Standings

Having led since the Half-Noquemanon, and expanding their lead at Mt. Ashwabab, the **College of St. Olaf** claimed its first Collegiate Cup Title, taking the **Women's Division** by 510 total points. Unseated from their three-year winning streak, and despite a spirited weekend of Birkebeiner races which halved their gap behind the Oles, the **University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Women** finished



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the season in second place, with 473 points. In third were the **University of Wisconsin-Madison Women**, with 358 points.

Team Scores: Women						
MCSA Rank:	Team:	Composite Score:	Half-Noque	Mt. Ashwabay	American Birkebeiner	
1	STO	510	189	177	144	
2	UMNTC	473	175	122	176	
3	UWM	358	126	122	110	
4	UMD	293	117	77	99	
5	UWEC	175	96	27	52	
6	CC	136	0	10	126	
7	NC	17	13	1	3	
8	NMU	26	10	0	16	
9	UMich	13	0	0	13	
Team Scores: Men						
MCSA Rank:	Team:	Composite Score:	Half-Noque	Mt. Ashwabay	American Birkebeiner	
1	UMD	427	178	128	121	
2	UWM	409	115	128	166	
3	STO	405	177	108	120	
4	UMNTC	357	145	98	114	
5	MTU	308	89	82	137	
6	ND	50	0	0	50	
7	NMU	46	15	4	27	
8	NC	27	19	2	6	
9	UMich	22	0	0	22	
10	CC	13	0	2	11	
11	UWEC	3	2	0	1	
Total Teams: 20						

Above: Final 2024 Collegiate Cup Standings, 2/25/2024. Scores calculated using the Mathie-Halvorson System.

Below: Historic Midwest Collegiate Cup victories, 2020-2024.

Midwest Collegiate Cup Wins: Women						
Team:	Total Wins:	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
UMNTC	3	299	233	578	734	473
UWM	1	381	206	551	504	358
SOC	1			383	552	510
MTU	0	3				
Midwest Collegiate Cup Wins: Men						
Team:	Total Wins:	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
UMD	3	398	302	711	844	427
UMNTC	2	511	412	697	718	
UWM	0	329	143			409
MTU	0			586		
SOC	0				647	405

Meanwhile, the **University of Minnesota-Duluth** weathered [a spate of star graduations](#) to cement its status as Dynasts of the **Men’s Division**, securing three consecutive Collegiate Cups – tying the record set by the UMNTC Women, and setting the league record for the Men. The Bulldogs’ 427 points were barely enough to fend off the **University of Wisconsin-Madison Men**, who launched themselves from tied-for-third (with UMNTC, behind SOC) into second place, with 409 points. This is the Badger Men’s first finish on the overall Collegiate Cup podium [since 2021](#) – and, in conjunction with their back-to-back wins in this season’s races, could herald their re-emergence as a regional racing force. Closely in third were the **College of St. Olaf Men**, with 405 total points. Notably absent from the top three were the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Men, whose fourth-place finish (with 357 points) marked their first-ever absence from the Collegiate Cup podium.

Commenting on the weekend, 2024 Men’s Regional Champion and UMD Nordic President Benjamin Bauer wrote that this year’s Birkie “was like no other [he had] ever raced.” With the fast conditions and crowds of spectators, “it felt like the World

Cup all over again, but this time, with us racing! The course, if sketchy in spots, was an impressive feat for the Birkie to pull together. Icy uphill under sugary snow, and a certain Carnegie Corner, just made the race even more unforgettable.”



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As for the Bulldogs' hat trick, Bauer stated the team is "really excited." "It shows that the UMD Club has enough depth to continue racing well even without the seniors that graduated last year (although we love seeing them at races such as the Birkie!) As a Club, our goal is to provide good opportunities for all levels of racing, while still being composed of *student-athletes*. This [win] shows that it is completely possible for us to race at a high level." With "a small group of two guys and two gals heading out to Lake Placid," the Bulldogs are eager to compete a few more times before the season ends, and to "see how we do against other schools from around the country. In addition, we are most excited to swim in each of the Great Lakes on our way!"

Tor Hanson, Assistant Coach at St. Olaf College, wrote that the Oles are "immensely proud of the performances our Women's and Men's teams have put on throughout the season. The chemistry generated by our skiers' desire to train hard, ski faster, and have fun along the way is incredibly heartening."

Commenting on their inaugural Collegiate Cup title, Women's Team Captains Lily Hubanks and Julia Everest echoed Hanson's praise for their fellow skiers. "Our team has been growing and improving these last couple of years and

we are really proud we get to show this off with a first place win in this season's Midwest Collegiate Cup – and, hopefully, continued good performances in next week's races!" The Oles "always love the racing environment at the USCSA races and are super excited to end the season with a bang at Lake Placid!"

Looking Ahead: The USCSA National Championships

At time of writing, eight of the ten MCSA teams qualifying for the 2024 USCSA National Championships have confirmed they will journey to the Fast and Far East, with the Men's and Women's squads from St. Olaf College, the University of Minnesota-Duluth, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison heading to Lake Placid, New York. The site of the [2022](#)



Above, from top: MCSA skiers Lily Hubanks (SOC) and Luke MacKinnon (UMNTC) at the 2023 USCSA National Championships in Mammoth, CA. Courtesy of the USCSA.



and [2020 USCSA National Championships](#), the grinding climbs and serpentine descents of Mt. Van Hoevenberg will pit the Midwest's top athletes against the USCSA's best.

You can cheer on our skiers – including defending Individual and Team National Champions, Lily Hubanks and the St. Olaf Women – [via the USCSA's livestream](#).

You can also **support our MCSA teams in financing their Nationals competitions** via the GoFundMe links below.¹ As student-led Clubs, MCSA teams rely on the material and financial resources of their own athletes to compete. Your support makes a tremendous difference for the Midwest, and is much appreciated:

University of Minnesota-Duluth: Support the team [here](#).

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities: Support the team [here](#).

University of Wisconsin-Madison: Support the team [here](#).

¹ St. Olaf Nordic indicated they had concluded fundraising at this time. Be on the lookout for the Oles' next National Championships fundraiser at the beginning of the 2024-25 season.



Celebrating 5 Years of MCSA Nordic

USCSA is the sports federation for collegiate team ski and snowboard competition in America. The organization believes that student-athletes of all levels and abilities should have access to quality and exciting venues of competition. Our athletes agree that our team orientation fosters a collaborative approach across their collegiate athletic and academic careers, and often this mentality proves indispensable in their adult lives and careers. USCSA includes over 175 institutions from coast to coast, fielding over 5,000 female and male alpine, freestyle, Nordic, and snowboarding athletes who participate in more than 300 events annually.

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For more information or to schedule an interview, please visit www.uscsa.org