



MCSA 2025 American Birkebeiner Results

by Luke Dykowski

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MCSA Midwest Collegiate Cup: American Birkebeiner

*Badger Men snatch first Cup by 10 points; St. Olaf Women storm to second title;
Hubanks wins Classic Birkie & Rova second*



Above: Podium of the 2025 Men's Collegiate Cup. (Photo: Cole Long)

HAYWARD, WI: A perfect late-winter day in Wisconsin's Northwoods saw the jubilant return of the American Birkebeiner to Main Street and a dramatic finish to the 2025 Midwest Collegiate Cup. As light morning snow turned to clear skies and warming temperatures, 107 MCSA skiers across 19 teams joined legions of North America's hardiest and hoariest citizens as they completed their annual—if briefly interrupted—pilgrimage from the shadow of Mt. Telemark to the shores of Lake Hayward.

Although the [MCSA Regional Championships took place last week in Rhinelander](#), the chase for the season's most prestigious awards—the Midwest Collegiate Cup—entered its frantic final stage as the starting gates opened in Cable. While in previous weeks St. Olaf College had amassed an



Above: The Women's 2025 Collegiate Cup Podium. (Photo: Cole Long)

insurmountable lead in the Women's Division, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison sat comfortably in second, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and Carleton College stood *tied* for third place at Saturday's outset.

Moreover, in the Men's Division, the University of Wisconsin-Madison—having led the Cup [after the Vasaloppet USA](#), before slipping to second place—trailed the St. Olaf Men by only 34 points. Whether wearing orange or red racing suits, the first MCSA Men into Hayward would

unseat the University of Minnesota-Duluth's three-year Collegiate Cup dynasty and secure for either the Oles or the Badgers their first-ever Championship title.

MCSA American Birkebeiner Breakdown

The drumming, undulating Power Lines. The sharp climbs to High Point, and the jeers of Scorers' Corner. The celebratory atmosphere of OO, the last kind words of volunteers at Mosquito Brook and Fish Hatchery before the grueling pitches towards the Lake. The distant water tower and the sounds of Main Street growing nearer across the ice, before the final sprint up the International Bridge and the roar of the finish. While the trail connecting them all may have been thinner than usual, and was certainly well-churned by the day's end, the trail *was* there—and the return to a full course was well worth dodging a few leaves and patches of dirt.

Weaving between the bibs of weathered citizens and accomplished professionals alike, our MCSA athletes were in good company as they hurried to complete the 51st American Birkebeiner and the 6th Midwest Collegiate Cup: wave placements, family and friends at the finish line, and a place in the annals of college racing history awaited!

In the **Women's 50k Skate**, 2025 MCSA 10k Skate Champion **Anne Straka** (UWM) was the league's fastest skier, finishing in 2:49:09, and 48th in the overall Women's standings. In second, **Leah Coleman** (CC) returned to the MCSA podium (after the Vasaloppet 48k) in 2:52:57, taking 59th in the overall Women's

standings. In third was **Mira Tomten** (SOC), finishing in 2:53:04 and 60th in the overall Women's standings.

In the **Men's 50k Skate**, **Benjamin Martin** (UWM) took his first league win of the season in 2:22:51, finishing 84th overall. **Benjamin**



Bauer (UMD) followed in 2:24:24, taking 97th overall. In third, 2025 MCSA Sprint Champion **Henry Fischer** (UST) claimed his third MCSA podium of the year in 2:25:56.

In the **Women's 53k Classic**, perennial podium presence **Lily Hubanks** (SOC) secured an astonishing first-ever for the MCSA: an outright American Birkebeiner victory, leading the citizen field in 3:05:56. **Eleanor Bennett** (UWM) was second for the league (and 14th in the overall Women's standings) in 3:29:32; **Madelyn Lawn** (UST) took third for the league (and 51st in the overall Women's standings) in 3:48:51.

In the **Men's 53k Classic**, 2025 MCSA 10k Skate Champion **Paavo Rova** (SOC) secured his third MCSA podium of the season in 2:50:30, finishing an impressive second overall.¹ **Henry Brandt** (UMD) took second for the league and 24th overall in 3:04:11; **Sam Rabaey** (CSBSJU) made College of St. Benedict-St. John's University's first MCSA podium appearance in 3:04:30, finishing 25th overall.

In **Women's Team Standings**, **St. Olaf College** secured their final victory of the season—having won each contest of 2025—with 187 points. The **University of Wisconsin-**

Madison took second, with 168 points. **Carleton College** was third, with 132 points.

In the **Men's Team Standings**, the **University of Wisconsin-Madison** took their first team win of 2025, with 153 points. The **University of Minnesota-Duluth** took second, with 135 points. **St. Olaf College** was third, with 109 points.

Full individual results are available [here](#). The MCSA is extremely grateful to Sean Gavigan for day-of scoring.

Below: Lily Hubanks (SOC), Classic Champion in the American Birkebeiner. (Photo: ABSF)



From the Athletes

Reached for comment about her spectacular overall win, Lily Hubanks (SOC) wrote that she started this Birkie with every intention of going big: “This being my last Birkie while in college skiing, I figured it would be my best shot to go for a podium finish! I’ve been really happy with my performances this

¹ Starting from Wave 1, Rova appears fourth in official results. However, by chip time, Rova's was the second-fastest of the day.



Above: Paavo Rova (SOC) during his Classic Race. (Photo: ABSF).

Below, from top: Ben Bauer (UMD) and Leah Coleman (CC) in the Men's and Women's Skate Elite. (Photos: SkinnySki / Jackie Schneider)



season and I tried my best to trust my training, my capabilities, and my love for classic distance races.” While Hubanks strove to “ski well without bonking by keeping a steady pace to get into a rhythm, enjoying the day, skiing in a pack, and drinking as much maple syrup as possible,” her first-place finish was well fought. In fact, Hubanks was dropped by “the two women who [she] skied most of the race with, Hannah [Olson] and Della [Bettendorf] [...] around OO,” and Hubanks “didn’t think [she] would be able to catch back up.” Even when she did reclaim the breakaway, she “wasn’t sure how long to hold on or when it would be smart to go for it.”

However, “the most satisfying part of the race was getting off the Lake and skiing over the bridge down Main Street while in 1st place. It’s always special to ski that final stretch—despite the deceptively-uphill finish—but it felt extra special this year. I just had the biggest smile on my face and tried to soak it in!”

For teammate Paavo Rova, this year’s race was also special. “This was my first Birkie and from the start I was planning to try and win my wave and make it into the Elite Wave next year,” Rova wrote. “I implemented the strategy of just skiing to catch the next person I could see in front of me. Somewhere a little after Gravel Pit someone told me that they thought there were only ten people ahead and encouraged me to continue ‘crushing it.’ I crossed the line rather unaware of my placement because of the difficulty of the last 3k across the Lake.” On top of his superb, and apparently-surprising, result, Rova found that “the Birkie was one of the most fun races I have done because of its atmosphere and traditions. This is one reason I have loved racing in the MCSA because it allows me to compete in these fun, cultural ski races like the Birkie and the Vasaloppet.”

For Ben Martin (UWM), this year’s Birkie was “really the one race that [he] was constantly thinking about and the race [he] wanted to be at [his] best for,” which led to plenty of nerves at the start. It seems that Martin wasn’t the only one feeling this way in the Men’s Skate Elite Wave: “From



the start it was more chaotic than any long distance race I've done," he wrote. "Lots of fighting for position and people falling or breaking equipment." While "there was a lot of switching between groups, so I never felt like I got in a good groove," Martin noted: "I knew I wanted to keep it controlled in the first half and that definitely helped me feel strong the whole way [...] Probably could have skied more relaxed, [but] overall I had so much fun, felt good the whole way, and learned a ton."

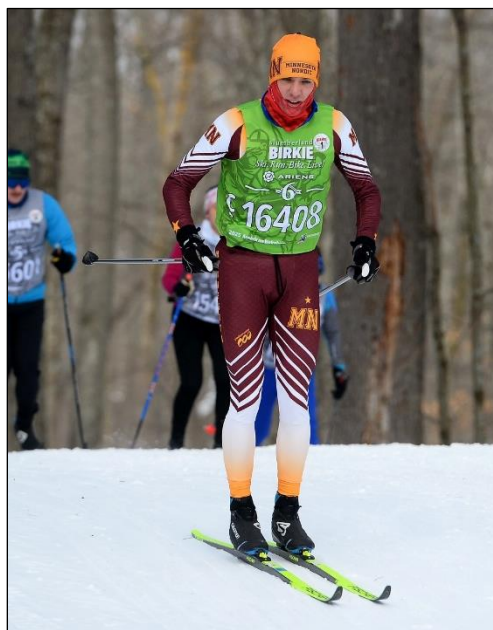
2025 Midwest Collegiate Cup: Final Standings

As the sun mellowed on Main Street, MCSA athletes and their supporters gathered at the Birkie Podium to conclude their 2025 season and crown their Collegiate Cup Champions.

Disembarking the buses in Cable with a 427 point lead, the 2025 **Women's Collegiate Cup Champions** could be none other than **St. Olaf College**. Expanding that margin by 19 more points, they claimed their second consecutive Collegiate Cup title, with a whopping 971 total points. In second place, the **University of Wisconsin-Madison** concluded the season with 525 total points.

Having started the day tied for third, **Carleton College** was third in Hayward and scored a mere 12 points against the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. This was just enough to secure Carleton's first-ever Collegiate Cup podium, and to push the UMNTC Women *off* the podium for the first time in MCSA history.

St. Olaf Coach (and alumnus) Tor Hanson wrote that the "strong MCSA spirit at the conference races this season" was palpable. Within to Ole squad, that spirit was essential to a successful season: "Our eager first years mentored by strong upperclassmen lead to fast development and incredible team depth. Our Women have always impressed me but this season has felt like a launching point towards something fantastic. Despite illness and injury, the Men's Team has made their presence known as well, and now everyone is up to full speed."



Above, from top: Tyler Bargman (UMNTC) in the Birkie Classic; Carleton College skiers stop for energy during Saturday's race. (Photos: ABSF)



Team Scores: Women (American Birkebeiner)						
MCSA Rank:	Team:	Composite Score:				
1	SOC	187	Hubanks (50)	Tomten (43)	Weider (40)	Chandler (32)
2	UWM	168	Straka (50)	Bennett (44)	Wulff (28)	Meza (24)
3	CC	132	Coleman (46)	Loescher (37)	Davis (18)	Keyser-Parker (16)
4	UMNTC	119	Anderson (30)	Krull (29)	Jensen (26)	Reineke (25)
5	UMD	67	Wolf (34)	Urbanowicz (15)	Karel (12)	Theyerl (6)
6	UWEC	63	Bussmann (34)	Williams (12)	Johnson (11)	Robertson (5)
7	UST	39	Lawn (39)			Field (1)
8	MTU	18	Myhre (18)			
9	NMU	13	Raske (10)	Lee (3)		

Team Scores: Men (Vasaloppet USA)						
MCSA Rank:	Team:	Composite Score:				
1	UWM	153	Martin (50)	Finlay (32)	Long (26)	Hemink (25)
2	UMD	135	Bauer (46)	Brandt (40)	Urbanowicz (28)	Back (15)
3	SOC	109	Rova (50)	Myers (37)	Erdahl (12)	Stoufis (10)
4	UMNTC	106	Hempe (34)	Anderson (24)	Callinan (22)	Collis (16)
5	MTU	89	Petersen (40)	Miller (30)	Oldenburg (14)	Zoll (5)
6	UST	47	Fischer (43)	Amundson (3)	Knapp (1)	
7	CSBSIU	45	Rabaey (33)	Karr (11)	Courchane (1)	
8	NMU	18	Hart (18)			
9	CC	2	Grimlund (1)	Miner (1)		
10	UWEC	2	Urban (1)	Bachman (1)		

Total Teams: 19
Total Skiers: 107

Above: Team Scores, American Birkebeiner (2/22/2025).
Below: Final Midwest Collegiate Cup Standings, 2/22/2025.
All scores calculated using the Mathie-Halvorson System

Collegiate Cup Scores: Women							
MCSA Rank:	Team:	Composite Score:	Mt. Ashwabay	Vasaloppet USA	Regionals Sprint	Regionals 10k	American Birkebeiner
1	SOC	971	165	208	211	200	187
2	UWM	525	74	106	67	110	168
3	CC	465	120	150	37	26	132
3	UMNTC	452	77	117	72	67	119
5	UMD	298	77	3	84	61	67
6	UWEC	135	35	37	0	0	63
7	MTU	82	27	0	19	18	18
8	UST	40	0	1	0	0	39
9	NMU	13	0	0	0	0	13
10	NC	1	1	0	0	0	0

Collegiate Cup Scores: Men							
MCSA Rank:	Team:	Composite Score:	Mt. Ashwabay	Vasaloppet USA	Regionals Sprint	Regionals 10k	American Birkebeiner
1	UWM	731	159	173	126	120	153
2	SOC	721	54	191	184	183	109
3	UMD	649	167	134	96	117	135
4	UMNTC	371	64	118	45	38	106
5	UST	229	41	56	51	34	47
6	MTU	178	32	0	22	35	89
7	CSBSIU	76	16	0	14	1	45
8	CC	28	3	21	1	1	2
9	NMU	21	0	8	0	0	13
10	NC	14	2	12	0	0	0
11	UWEC	3	0	1	0	0	2

Total Teams: 21

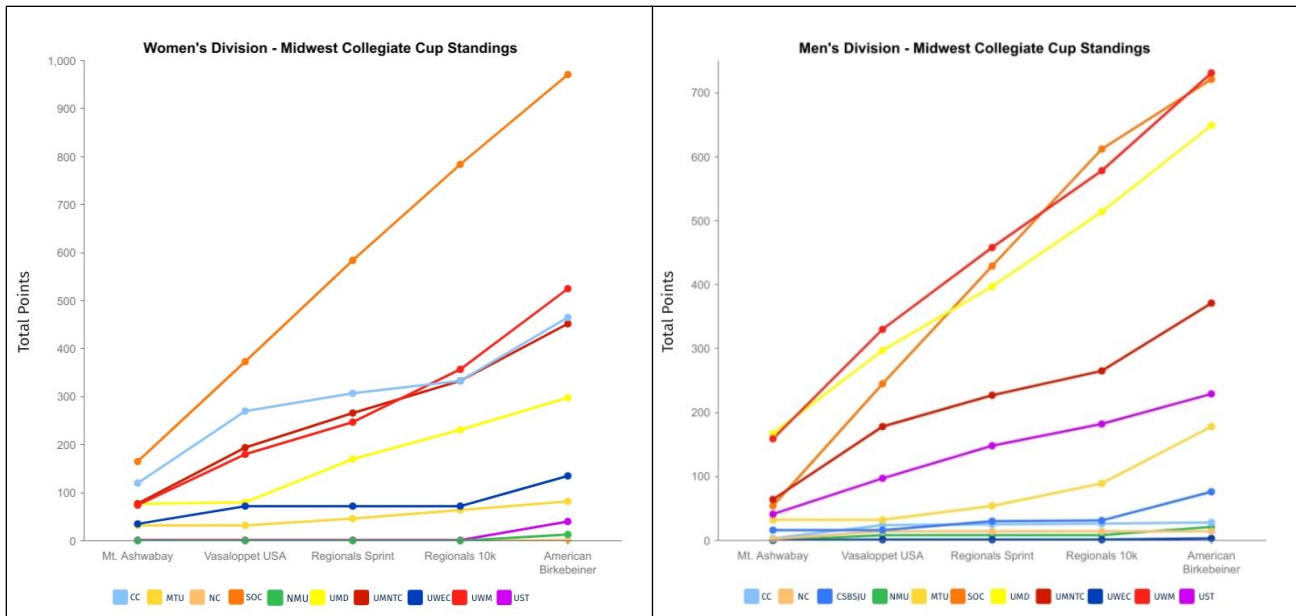
Below: Midwest Collegiate Cup Champions to date. All scores calculated using the Mathie-Halvorson System.

Midwest Collegiate Cup Wins: Women							
Team:	Total Wins:	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
UMNTC	3	299	233	578	734	473	
SOC	2			383	552	510	971
UWM	1	381	206	551	504	358	525
CC	0						465
MTU	0	3					

Midwest Collegiate Cup Wins: Men							
Team:	Total Wins:	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
UMD	3	398	302	711	844	427	649
UMNTC	2	511	412	697	718		
UWM	1	329	143			409	731
MTU	0			586			
SOC	0				647	405	721

Indeed, in the **Men's Standings**, it was a dramatic conclusion to the 2025 chase for the Cup. The **University of Wisconsin-Madison** had enjoyed a Silver Season—taking second place at Mt. Ashwabay, the Vasaloppet USA, and both days of Regionals Cup points—but they won the day when it mattered most. Victory in Hayward brought them their first-ever Collegiate Cup Championship by a mere 10 points. The Badgers *barely* skated ahead of **St. Olaf College** by 731 to 721 total points. This is the closest Collegiate Cup finish in the league's history (in 2022 the University of Minnesota-Duluth prevailed against the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities by 14 points, 711 to 697). In third place, the **University of Minnesota-Duluth** ended [their three seasons of Collegiate Cup dominance](#) but retained a spot on the overall podium, finishing the season with 649 total points.

Writing on behalf of the Badgers, Cole Long (UWM, MCSA Liaison) wrote that the team is “super stoked about our first MCSA Cup win ever. It is a huge milestone for us and really proved consistency is key. With St. Olaf and UMD keeping it close all season, we have a ton of respect for all the teams and individuals pushing the competition to a higher level.”



Above: Cumulative points in the 2025 Midwest Collegiate Cup. All scores calculated using the Mathie-Halvorson System.

Additionally, the MCSA recognized one Men's and one Women's Team, as voted by their peers, as the winners of a new 'Spirit Award' for exemplary camaraderie and sportsmanship during the season. These awards were given to the Carleton College Women and University of Minnesota-Duluth Men.

Finally, the MCSA gave thanks to the ABSF leadership (Ben Popp, Kristy Maki, and Redgy Jorstad) for their support for the final awards ceremony, and to MCSA Student Coordinator Emma Reineke (Co-President, UMNTC '24). For the last three years, Reineke has served as both a league athlete *and* an energetic, committed, and essential MCSA leader. From chairing annual meetings of the Midwest Nordic Assembly, to organizing MCSA events and scoring races, Reineke's contributions to the vitality and resilience of the league have been indispensable.

Alongside Reineke, the student leadership of the MCSA Teams serves as a dynamic and dedicated base of volunteers without which this league would not exist. Many are seniors this year: the MCSA is grateful for their support and engagement and excited to see what lies ahead for them, if poorer for their graduation!

Rest assured, however, that the MCSA will continue. Having weathered Covid-19 and two consecutive years of low snow, the role of the league in the world of college skiing has only grown—as has the passion of, and friendship between, its athletes. So long as there are students to ski and volunteers to score, the MCSA will return: as always, we hope you will join us.



Above: UMD at the 2024 USCSA National Championships in Lake Placid, NY.

Below, from left: A podium sweep for the MCSA in the 15k Classic National Championships, with Katie Milligan-Susong (UWM) in 2nd, Amae Kam-Magruder (SOC) in 1st, and Lily Hubanks (SOC) in 3rd. (Photos: USCSA)



Looking Ahead: The USCSA National Championships

While the Midwest Collegiate Cup may be concluded, the USCSA season is not: nine MCSA teams will be attending the 2025 USCSA National Championships at Mt. Bachelor, Oregon.

Last spring in Lake Placid, New York, the MCSA proved decisively that it is no mere provincial oddity, but “[a ruddy artery from which fresh lifeblood of the USCSA flows richly.](#)” In addition to the St. Olaf Women winning their *third consecutive* USCSA National Championship in 2024, the MCSA fielded no fewer than ten All-American finishers in each day of Nationals racing; notched six Individual and seven Team single-day podiums, two Individual overall podiums (Lily Hubanks (SOC), 2nd; and Amaeli Kam-Magruder (SOC), 3rd), and the Women’s National runner-up team (the University of Wisconsin-Madison).

Representing the MCSA this year, the St. Olaf College, University of Minnesota-Duluth, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and University of Wisconsin-Madison Women, along with the St. Olaf College, University of Minnesota-Duluth, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, University of St. Thomas, and University of Wisconsin-Madison Men will attempt to replicate—or outdo!—that feat.

They are up to the challenge. “We’re excited to represent the MCSA and UW on the bigger stage,” said Cole Long. “Our team is much deeper and larger than last year and we’re putting in those last-minute workouts and staying healthy to be ready. We’re excited to bring some freshmen to their first Nationals, as well as for our seniors to give it all they have for their last.” Tor Hanson agreed: In the days ahead, St. Olaf will “focus on the formats and conditions we’ll be going into at Mt. Bachelor to



polish before we shine! Suffice to say, I'm confident in their ability to embrace their love for Nordic and take nationals by storm!"

While Lily Hubanks undoubtedly has lofty goals, and the fitness to reach them, at Mt. Bachelor, she is "most excited to see [her] brother, Theo," another Wisconsin-raised skier who "will be at Nationals for his first time, racing for Western Colorado." Indeed, even if representing other colleges—and certainly when competing for our own—it seems likely that Paavo Rova is right to predict that the MCSA will "show the coastal skiers that there are good skiers in the Midwest, and we are a region that can't be ignored."

The [2025 USCSA National Championships](#) will run from March 10–15 in Bend, Oregon.

You can **watch the Nordic Broadcast** (commentated by the author) [here](#).

You can **donate to those MCSA Teams fundraising for Nationals** using the links below:

[St. Olaf College](#)
[University of Minnesota-Duluth](#)
[University of Minnesota-Twin Cities](#)
[University of Wisconsin-Madison](#)

Full MCSA Nordic results from the Midwest Collegiate Cup Circuit are available [here](#).

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 <https://www.uscsa.org>.