

# DIVISION III PRESEASON RANKINGS - 2017

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|----|---|--|--|
| 1  |    | <b>SAINT MARY CATHOLIC ZEPHYRS</b>     | The defending DIII Champions lost a lot of pitching but developed pitching at the lower levels too. In good position to defend their DIII title.                   |
| 2  |    | <b>LAKE COUNTRY LUTHERAN LIGHTNING</b> | Favored to win 5th straight Midwest Classic title. Majority of pitching and five starters return to a team that was 23-5 in 2016.                                  |
| 3  |    | <b>COLEMAN COUGARS</b>                 | Matt Osterburg can deal it. 11-1 with a 0.60 ERA as a junior, he's as close to automatic as they come. Favored to win 6th M&O title in the past seven years.       |
| 4  |    | <b>EAU CLAIRE REGIS RAMBLERS</b>       | UMD bound Paul Petit returns with seven other starters, all of whom can hit and play great defense. Favored to win West Cloverbelt and ramble to State.            |
| 5  |    | <b>PALMYRA-EAGLE PANTHERS</b>          | Took Tom Davey exactly one year to turn around a program that had not enjoyed success since Jeff Beardsley coached teams years ago.                                |
| 6  |    | <b>STEVENS POINT PACELLI CARDINALS</b> | 26-3 last year with five starters returning but will need unproven pitchers to amp it up if they are going to return to State. Favored to win 2nd straight CWC-8.  |
| 7  |    | <b>UNITY EAGLES</b>                    | Missed playing in State Championship by just a single run. Top pitcher Hunter Pedersen returns for his junior season after nine wins in 2016.                      |
| 8  |    | <b>WINNEBAGO LUTHERAN VIKINGS</b>      | Perennial Flyway champs, WLA is favored to win their 5th straight conference title, though there are holes to fill by inexperienced players.                       |
| 9  |    | <b>LA CROSSE AQUINAS BLUGOLDS</b>      | Playing a DI schedule always makes the Blue and Gold tournament ready. Won 20 games last year but enter this season with several unproven pitchers.                |
| 10 |   | <b>CUMBERLAND BEAVERS</b>              | The Beavers return their Heart O'North championship team almost completely intact. They have pitching depth, can run the bases, and play great defense.            |
| 11 |  | <b>STRATFORD TIGERS</b>                | The Tigers are set to unseat Marathon's domination of the Marawood South. Return all their pitching from last year but looking for five new starters.              |
| 12 |  | <b>FENNIMORE GOLDEN EAGLES</b>         | Although they return almost every starter from last year, they lost their top two pitchers. If young arms step up, watch out for them.                             |
| 13 |  | <b>DARLINGTON REDBIRDS</b>             | Deep and experienced, they are in a good position to defend their SWAL title and go deep in the playoffs.  |
| 14 |  | <b>ELK MOUND MOUNDERS</b>              | Went 17-4 last year and return two top pitchers and several starters. Trevor Mohr had an ERA under half a run a game in 2016.                                      |
| 15 |  | <b>OCONTO BLUE DEVILS</b>              | Favored to win the Packerland, the Blue Devils return almost their entire pitching staff back intact and seven starters.   |
| 16 |  | <b>WISCONSIN HEIGHTS VANGUARDS</b>     | Heights has almost every player returning from a 16-win team last year including two top-tier starters. Favored to win Capitol South.                              |
| 17 |  | <b>MARKESAN HORNETS</b>                | 23-1 last year, they lost almost all of their starters except for one of their top pitchers and are still favored to win the Trailways North.                      |
| 18 |  | <b>BROOKFIELD ACADEMY BLUE KNIGHTS</b> | The Blue Knights return seven starters and most of their pitching and are picked as most likely to challenge Lake Country Lutheran's recent dominance of the MWCC. |
| 19 |  | <b>SAINT MARY'S SPRINGS LEDGERS</b>    | Half of the pitching staff and four starters return to a team that won 19 games last year. Will challenge WLA in the Flyway.                                       |
| 20 |  | <b>OSHKOSH LOURDES KNIGHTS</b>         | Half of the pitching staff and four starters return to a team that won 19 games last year. Will challenge WLA in the Flyway.                                       |

**ALSO RECEIVING VOTES: SHULLSBURG-BENTON, BONDUÉL, ARCADIA, LAONA-WABENO, CRANDON, NEILLSVILLE, SPRNG VALLEY, COCHRANE-FOUNTAIN CITY. - SEVERAL DIII COACHES CONTRIBUTED TO THIS POLL -**