



# MVC MEN'S SOCCER

PRESEASON POLL: AUGUST 18, 2022

MVC MEN'S SOCCER CONTACT: RYAN DAVIS, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR COMMUNICATIONS

OFFICE: 314-444-4316 • CELL: 314-285-5675 • DAVIS@MVC.ORG

1818 CHOUTEAU AVE. • ST. LOUIS, MO 63103

MVC-SPORTS.COM



## MISSOURI STATE PICKED TO WIN MVC MEN'S SOCCER CROWN

**ST. LOUIS** – Missouri State has been tabbed as the team to beat in the 2022 MVC men's soccer chase in a vote conducted by league coaches. The Bears received 49 points and all seven first-place votes in the poll to out-distance Belmont (36 points), UIC (32 points), SIUE (32 points), Evansville (24 points), Bradley (12 points) and Drake (11 points).

Missouri State represented the MVC in the NCAA Tournament field after claiming the program's second-straight MVC tourney title. The Bears became the 16th program to sweep the MVC regular season and tourney titles and join former league members Creighton and SMU as the only teams to accomplish the feat more than one time.

The Valley will rely on some new faces this season as league teams return 44 starters (57-percent), including only three of the 13 first-team all-conference players and five of 11 who earned second-team accolades.



Missouri State returns five starters from last year's 17-2-0 (10-0-0 MVC) squad that saw its season end in the NCAA

Tournament for the third-consecutive season. Michael Seabolt takes over the reigns as head coach after serving as an assistant the last 15 seasons under Jon Leamy and will start the season ranked 19th nationally. The Bears return a core of players for the 2022 season including their top-two leading scorers as well as their leader in assists. Jon Koka and Jesus Barea will be back in action for the Bears

after combining for 11 of the teams' goals, while Kian Yari added a team-high eight assists. MSU's experience will also feature five All-Valley players, including Yari, who was named the 2021 Midfielder of the Year for his efforts on the field. Over the last three years, the Bears have won 26 of their last 28 matches at home, including a 12-1 record at Allison South Stadium last season. This year, MSU will look to continue its success in Springfield, sporting a home-heavy schedule.



Belmont welcomes back seven starters from last season's squad that registered a 13-5-1 (4-2 SoCon) record in the SoCon.

The Bruins enter their first season as full MVC members after spending the 2000 season as an affiliate member of the league. Belmont spent the last four seasons in the Southern Conference. Going 13-5-1 overall in 2021, Belmont set program records for match wins, shutouts (9), consecutive shutouts (4) and consecutive victories (6). Completing their first undefeated home slate (9-0), the Bruins received a vote in the final United Soccer Coaches Top

Rank	Team (1st-place votes)	Points
1.	Missouri State (7)	49
2.	Belmont	36
3.	UIC	32
	SIUE	32
5.	Evansville	24
6.	Bradley	12
7.	Drake	11

25 poll of the regular season for the first time in school history. Belmont returns its top two goal scorers from last season's team as Liam O'Brien and AJ Chastonay return to the fold. O'Brien netted 11 goals a year ago, while Chastonay added seven.



UIC welcomes back six starters from last season's 9-8-2 (6-4 Horizon) team in the Horizon

League. UIC's back line should be a strength in 2022. Despite the graduation of All-American defender Jacob Graiber, the Flames return three senior defenders in Pau Mateo, Eddie Garcia, and Manny Cerritos, as well as goalkeeper Andres Vasquez. Vasquez was in the top-25 nationally with seven shutouts a year ago. He played every minute of the season en route to sec-

## 2022 MVC PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

PLAYER, TEAM	CL.	POS.	HOMETOWN (LAST SCHOOL)
AJ Chastonay, Belmont	Jr.	M	Louisville, Ky. (St. Xavier)
Liam O'Brien, Belmont	Sr.	F	Freehold, N.J. (YSC Academy)
Pau Mateo, UIC	Gr.	D	Barcelona, Spain (Escuela Garbi Pere Verges)
Andres Vasquez, UIC	RJr.	GK	Pittsburgh, Penn. (Central Catholic)
Jesus Barea, Missouri State	Jr.	F	Cadiz, Spain (Putnam Science Academy)
Aadne Bruseth, Missouri State	Gr.	F	Batnfjordsøra, Norway (Atlanten Videregående)
Jon Koka, Missouri State	Sr.	F	Bilbao, Spain (Maristak Durango)
Nicolo Mulatero, Missouri State	Gr.	F	Givoletto, Italy
Kian Yari, Missouri State	Sr.	M	Manchester, England (St. Ambrose College)
Max Broughton, SIUE	So.	D	Rawstenall, England
Pau Palacin, SIUE	So.	F	Alizira, Spain (NC State)



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## 2021 FINAL MVC STANDINGS

	Missouri Valley Conference				Overall Records			
	W	L	T	Pts	W	L	T	Pct.
Missouri State	10	0	0	30	17	2	0	.895
Loyola Chicago	6	3	1	19	9	5	2	.625
SIUE	4	6	0	12	6	10	2	.389
Evansville	3	6	1	10	4	14	2	.250
Drake	3	7	0	9	6	9	0	.400
Bradley	3	7	0	9	5	12	1	.306

second team All-Horizon League honors. UIC ranked first in the NCAA in shots per game in 2021, getting off over 17 attempts per match. The Flames were also first in the country in shots and shots on goal per game in 2019 and ranked second in both categories in 2020.



SIUE returns six starters from last season's 6-10-2 (4-6 MVC) squad. The Cougars return 55 percent of its scoring from a year ago. The SIUE returning core includes third-leading scorer Oskar Lenz (eight points) and second team All-West region defender Max Broughton (second-leading scorer with nine points). Broughton was also a second-team All-Valley selection a year ago. Pau Palacin also returns to the pitch for SIUE after earning second-team All-MVC honors. Palacin scored three goals with two assists last season.



Evansville returns eight starters from last season's 4-14-2 (3-6-1 MVC) team that saw its season end in the MVC Tournament title match. Of those eight returning starters, Nkosi Graham and Carlos Barcia finished tied for third on the team with three goals each and Jose Vivas finished second for the Aces in assists with three, earning MVC Freshman of the Year. Evansville closed the season with a 3-2-1 mark over its final six contests, beginning with a 2-0 road win over SIUE on October 27, followed by a win over Drake at home 2-0. In the tournament, UE opened with a 4-2

victory over Drake before upsetting No. 2 seed Loyola in the semifinals in penalties to advance to the conference championship match for the first time since 2009. Despite the handful of returning starters, Evansville brings in 20 new players for 2022.



Bradley returns eight starters from last season's 5-12-1 (3-7 MVC) squad. A late-season surge saw the Braves close out the 2021 regular-season slate with a 2-1 home victory against Evansville followed by a 2-1 win at SIUE in the opening round of the MVC Tournament. Bradley advanced to the MVC Tournament semifinals for a third consecutive year.

Jack Douglas returns after capturing third-team all-region and second-team All-MVC honors last fall. Douglas transitioned from a central defensive position to the point of the Bradley offensive attack early in the 2021 fall campaign and finished the season as Bradley's leading scorer with 10 points on four goals and three assists.



Drake returns four starters from last season's 6-9-0 (3-7 MVC) squad. The Bulldogs look for a fresh start with 17 new members and a new head coach. Pat Flinn was hired as the Bulldogs' head coach in the spring. Flinn added five transfers and 12 freshmen to his roster. Bradan Allen returns for a sixth year with the Bulldogs. Allen is one of 11 returning players, alongside starters players Louis Yuill, Declan Watters, and Corey Pitlik.

The 2022 regular-season campaign begins August 25, with all seven teams in non-conference action. The high seed will host the 2022 MVC Championship, Nov. 6, 10 and 13, where all seven teams will battle it out for the Valley's automatic bid to the 2022 NCAA Tournament.

## OPENING WEEK SCHEDULE

	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
<b>Thurs., Aug. 25</b>	SIUE at Loyola Marymount	Los Angeles, Calif.	5 PM
	Evansville at Bellarmine	Louisville, Ky.	6 PM
	Southern Indiana at Belmont	Nashville, Tenn.	6:30 PM
	Northern Kentucky at Bradley	Peoria, Ill.	7 PM
	UC Santa Barbara at #19 Missouri State	Springfield, Mo.	7 PM
	Drake at Kansas City	Kansas City, Mo.	7 PM
	UIC at #8 Kentucky	Lexington, Ky.	7:30 PM
<b>Sun., Aug. 28</b>	Purdue Fort Wayne at Belmont	Nashville, Tenn.	2 PM
	IUPUI at Evansville	Evansville, Ind.	5 PM
	SIUE at CSUN	Northridge, Calif.	5:30 PM
	UC Irvine at #19 Missouri State	Springfield, Mo.	7 PM
	Bradley at Kansas City	Kansas City, Mo.	7:30 PM
<b>Mon., Aug. 29</b>	Drake at Western Illinois	Macomb, Ill.	5 PM
	Cleveland State at UIC	Chicago, Ill.	7 PM