The 2004-05 Gustavus men’s basketball team shook off a 4-5 start to win 16 straight games en route to capturing the MIAC regular season title with a record of 18-2. After defeating St. Thomas 68-58 in the MIAC Playoff Championship, the Gusties received an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament where they faced Lawrence University in the first round. Playing in front of the raucous home crowd was not enough for Gustavus as it fell to the Vikings 70-56. Numerous accolades were received by the team following the season. Doug Espenson, Phil Sowden and Adam TeBrake were named all-conference, while Trevor Wittwer was selected to the All-First Year Team. Espenson was also named the MIAC Player of the Year, selected to the conference All-Defensive squad, and earned all-region honors. He finished his career with 1,281 points, 600 rebounds, and 111 blocks. Head Coach Mark Hanson received MIAC Coach of the Year honors for the seventh time in his career.
Gustavus Head Coach Mark Hanson

Gustavus men’s basketball head coach Mark Hanson has been a prominent figure in the program as a player, an assistant coach and a head coach for 26 years. The most prolific scorer in Gustavus basketball history, Hanson compiled 1,774 points in 94 games from 1979 to 1983. He is the only Golden Gustie basketball player to ever be named to the all-conference team four times and one of only a handful of players in MIAC history to be so honored. Hanson served as an assistant coach from 1986 to 1990 prior to being named the head coach at the start of the 1990-91 season. Since that time, he has become the program’s all-time winningest coach with a record of 380-149, earned six MIAC regular season titles, won seven MIAC Playoff titles, and been named the MIAC Coach of the Year seven times.

Hanson was named to the NAIA All-America Team during his junior and senior years. In addition to success on the hardwood, he excelled in the classroom as he was also a two-time Academic All-American.

During his coaching career, the team has traveled across the country to play, including places such as Hawaii, California, Florida, Washington, Massachusetts and Texas. The team has also traveled to Sweden numerous times.

Hanson’s coaching career has been defined by his calm demeanor on the bench, his commitment to his players on and off the court, his class, and his respect towards his opponents. Since taking over the program in 1990, he has coached 23 players who have earned 41 All-MIAC honors. Hanson ranks 11th all-time among Division III coaches with a winning percentage of 72.1 percent.