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**Baseball Signs Four To National Letters Of Intent**

Clemente duo of Garcia and Melecio, hurlers Bjerke and Wyman sign on to play for the Flames in 2008.

Nov. 20, 2006

Chicago, Ill.- UIC Head Baseball Coach [Mike Dee](#) announced the signings of four student-athletes to National Letters of Intent on Monday, with all four joining the program in the 2008 season.

The four players that have signed letters of intent to play for the Flames are:

- Rafael Garcia, SS (Chicago, Ill./Clemente H.S.)**
- Devin Melecio, OF (Chicago, Ill./Clemente H.S.)**
- Michael Bjerke, P (Brooklyn Center, Minn./Champlin Park H.S.)**
- Eric Wyman, P (West Chicago, Ill./West Chicago H.S.)**

"We're very excited about these four guys," said UIC assistant coach and recruiting coordinator [Sean McDermott](#). "These guys will have an immediate impact on the program academically, emotionally and physically on the field.

"They love to play the game, they love to compete," McDermott said of the class overall. "They all bring what we need to win championships."

Garcia is a 6-foot-2, 175-pound shortstop who earned all-city and all-conference accolades last season for Chicago's Roberto Clemente High School. He hit .407 with three home runs, three triples, nine doubles and 32 RBI for the Wildcats and played for the Chicago White Sox squad at this past summer's Area Code Games in Long Beach, Calif.

"Rafi is a true shortstop with the entire package," said McDermott. "He has great instincts on the field. He's going to play in the middle of the diamond for us for many years. He loves to play."

Melecio is a 5-foot-6, 170-pound spark plug who wields a left-handed bat. Last season he hit .440 with 14 doubles, 13 triples, 40 RBI and 22 stolen bases for Clemente en route to all-city and all-conference honors.

"Devin is a set-the-table type guy," said McDermott. "He can run, he's a great defensive outfielder with good arm strength, and he plays with a lot of passion."

Garcia and Melecio grew up together on Chicago's West Side and have teamed up since their days on Little League and park squads.

"These two guys grew up playing together since the fourth grade," said McDermott of Garcia and Melecio. "Both guys are good students, and as good as they are as students and players they are equally good as people. We're very fortunate to have both of these guys."

Bjerke is a 6-foot, 180-pound right-hander out of Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. The prep hurler is a two-time all-conference selection for Champlin Park H.S, where he has gone 7-1 with four saves and 56 strikeouts in over 56 innings of work the last two seasons.

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UIC head coach Mike Dee announced the signing of four recruits to National Letters of Intent.

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"Mike is an extremely talented player," said UIC assistant coach [Mike Nall](#). "He's a very good athlete on the mound. He pitches with good velocity, reaching 86-88 mph, and he has a really good slider."

Wyman is a 6-foot-3, 205-pound lefty who owns a 6-6 record with a 3.50 ERA and a whopping 79 strikeouts in 58 innings of work for the Wildcats.

"Eric is a big, athletic kid," said Nall of Wyman, who also played quarterback for the West Chicago football team. "He's really smart, and like all of Coach [John] Walters' players he is very tough and likes to work."

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University of Illinois Chicago Baseball

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