



## Mike Dee — Head Coach

When University of Illinois at Chicago head baseball coach Mike Dee was named the Flames' fourth coach in school history on July 30, 1998, there was nowhere for the program to go but up.

Six short years and close to 200 wins later, Dee has rebuilt the program into a perennial Horizon League winner and has pushed the Flames into the national scene as well, following their 2003 Horizon League Tournament Championship and NCAA Regional berth.

In the last five seasons, Dee and the Flames have captured at least 30 wins, a feat that was duplicated just three times in the prior 49 campaigns, while claiming the last three Horizon League regular-season titles, on the west side of Chicago.

Making the transition easier for Dee and his staff was their ability to snatch up many of the top local and regional recruits, improving the Flames' strength of schedule and expanding the season to three and a half months to better prepare for the Horizon League regular-season and the league tournament.

In order to strengthen the Flames' schedule, Dee has looked no further than the Big Ten. Over the past four seasons, UIC has compiled a record of 15-4 against Big Ten opponents, including a three-game sweep of Michigan last year. This season, Dee has scheduled the Wolverines for another three-game set, as well as Iowa, along with single games against Ohio State and Northwestern.

Another opponent in 2005 includes 2004 NCAA College World Series participant Arkansas, and future opponents include Kentucky, Long Beach State, Mississippi, Mississippi State, Notre Dame, Tennessee and Vanderbilt.

Dee, who came to UIC after serving the previous 11 seasons as the pitching coach for the University of Minnesota, immediately imparted his knowledge to his pitching staff, and his hurlers have responded in kind.

Over the past six seasons, the UIC pitching staff has finished first or second in the Horizon League for team ERA, and finished in the top 10 in the nation for ERA in 2002 and 2003.

Dee is also very adept at developing talent as 43 of his former players, including 27 pitchers, have gone on to professional careers, including the first UIC player to ever make the big leagues in 2002 Horizon League Player of the Year and Detroit Tigers outfielder Curtis Granderson.

Joining Granderson in the big leagues last season were pitchers Kerry Ligtenberg (Toronto Blue Jays) and Jim Brower (San Francisco Giants).

Last season, Dee had five of his players move on to the professional ranks, including MLB draftees in pitcher David Haehnel (Baltimore Orioles, 8th round) and shortstop Jordan DeVoir (New York Yankees, 19th round). Joining Haehnel and DeVoir were outfielder Mike Hughes (Anaheim Angels), pitcher Ryan Gehring (Minnesota Twins) and catcher/third baseman Nelson Gord (Schaumburg Flyers), all of whom signed free agent contracts.



### MIKE DEE'S CAREER COACHING RECORD

1999	18-30	.375
2000	33-26	.559
2001	32-28	.533
2002	39-16	.709
2003	39-18	.684
2004	36-21	.632
<b>Totals</b>	<b>196-139</b>	<b>.585</b>

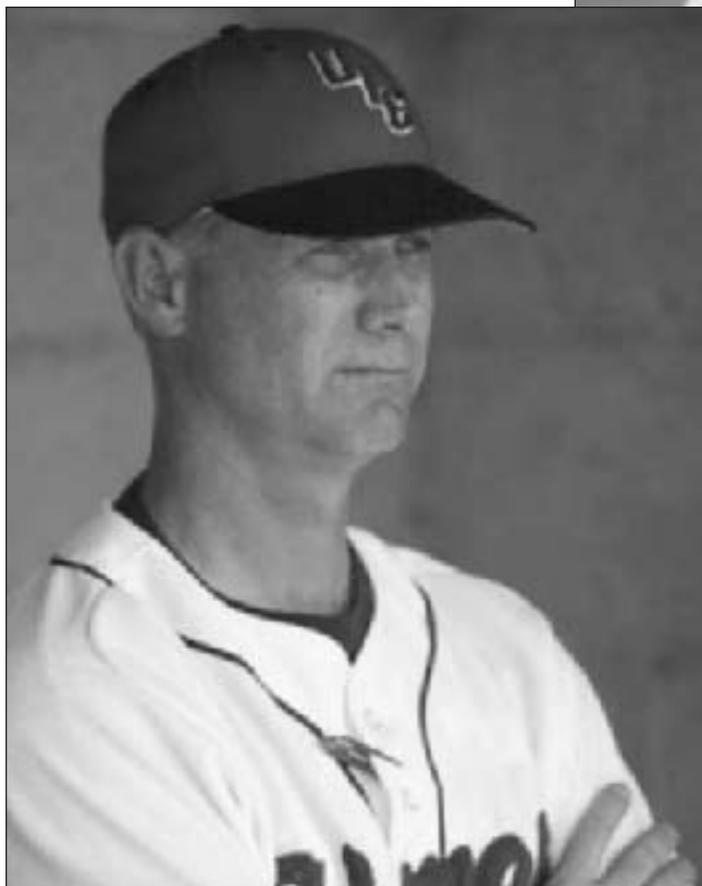
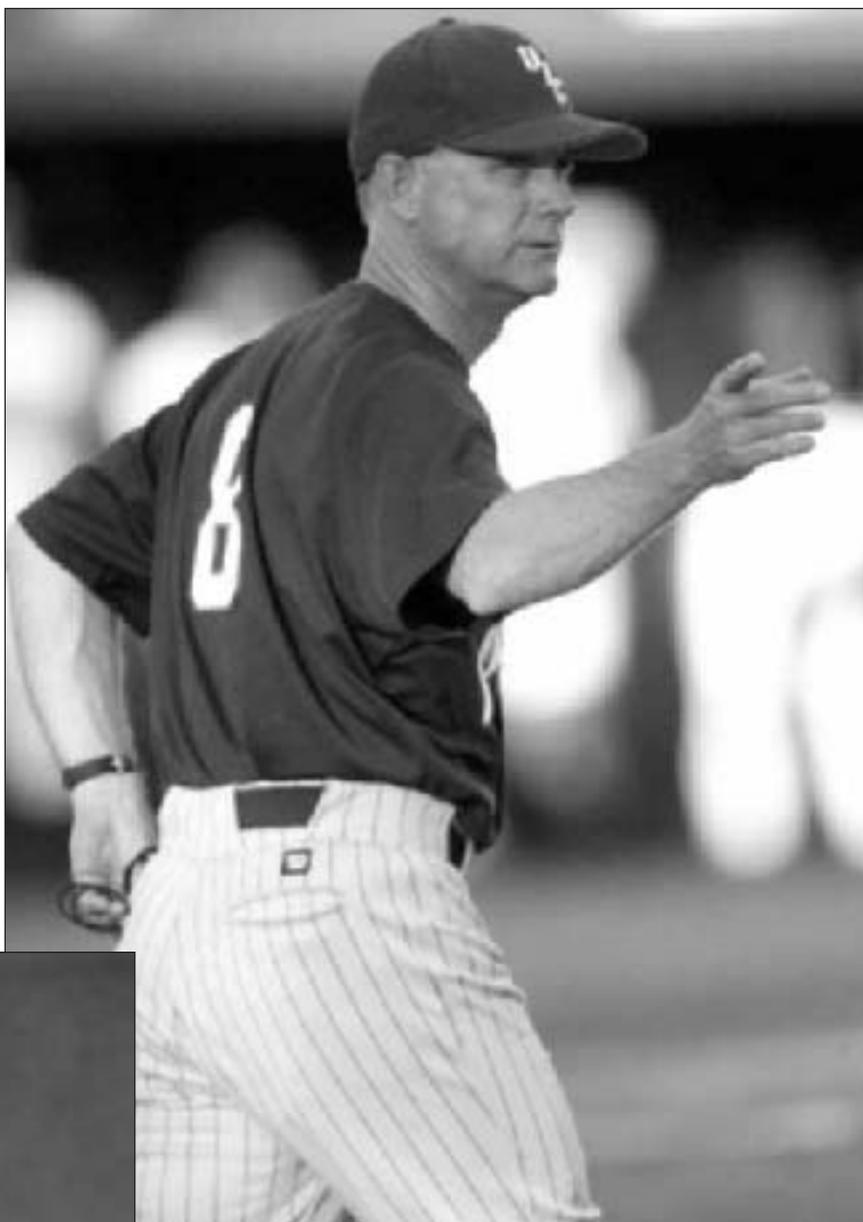
This marked the fourth consecutive year that the Flames have sent a player to the professional ranks, following Steve Carlson (New York Yankees, 2001), Curtis Granderson (Detroit Tigers, 2002), Wes Gilliam (Arizona Diamondbacks, 2002), Kevin Ryan (San Diego Padres, 2002) and Kevin Nelson (New York Yankees, 2003).

During his 11-year tenure at Minnesota as the team's pitching coach, Dee had his staff finish first or second in the Big Ten for team ERA in seven of his last nine years as the Golden Gophers compiled a 405-254 (.615) record while registering a 190-101 (.653) ledger against Big Ten foes.

In 1997, Dee's hurlers set a school record as they fanned 406 batters in 444.1 innings of work led by 110 strikeouts from Mike Diebolt, a 1997 draft pick of the Detroit Tigers. Dee's 1993 squad set a then-school record with 43 wins and still owns the current record of 15 saves for a single season.

Minnesota captured the Big Ten Tournament title four times during Dee's tenure and earned the regular-season championship twice, in 1988 and 1992. The Golden Gophers qualified for the NCAA Tournament seven times while Dee was an assistant, including as recently as 1998.

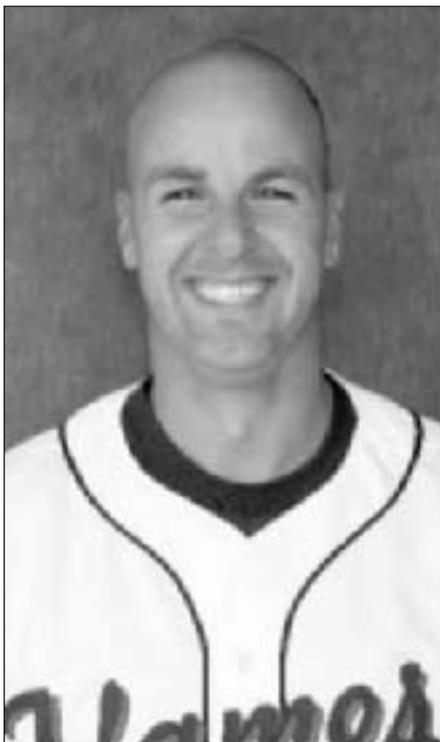
In addition to his coaching duties with the Golden Gophers, Dee also served as the chief executive officer for the Minnesota Baseball Instructional School in Minneapolis. In that position, he handled all staff hiring/training, marketing and scheduling and all business accounting. Under Dee's direction, the business grew into one of the largest baseball camps in the United States.



A Chicago native, Dee was an all-state selection as a high school junior at Benet Academy in Lisle, Ill., before finishing his prep career at Aquinas High School in La Crosse, Wis., where he garnered all-state honors. Dee attended the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse where he was a three-time letterwinner and an NAIA All-America selection his junior and senior seasons. As a senior, in 1979, he helped lead the Indians to a fourth-place finish at the NAIA College World Series.

Following his collegiate career, Dee played one season in the Milwaukee Brewers organization before entering the coaching ranks. He returned to Aquinas High School and, as head coach for six years, had his squads compile a 100-26 record over this period. Dee led Aquinas to six straight state tournament appearances and won the Wisconsin state title four consecutive years (1984-87). Following the 1987 season, Dee was named the Wisconsin State High School Coach of the Year. The following year, Dee joined the University of Minnesota coaching staff.

In addition to coaching, Dee has also served as a featured clinician at over 100 clinics nationwide, including the National Baseball Convention in 1991 and 2001.



### Sean McDermott — Assistant Coach/Recruiting Coordinator

**R**eturning for his seventh season with the Flames baseball program is Sean McDermott, who serves as the team's recruiting coordinator in addition to working with UIC's offense.

As the chief recruiter for the Flames, McDermott has been instrumental in bringing in top-notch recruits who have played a big part in resuscitating the Flames program so quickly to produce close to 200 wins over the past six seasons, including three Horizon League regular-season titles and its first-ever berth in the NCAA Regionals in 2003.

McDermott joined the Flames in 1998 after serving three years as head baseball coach at Viterbo College in La Crosse, Wis. During his stint with the V-Hawks, the squad set



a single-season record for wins with 32 victories in 1997, and then made their first-ever appearance in the NAIA Regional Tournament in 1998.

McDermott, who handled recruiting, scheduling, fund raising, academic advising and the development of a new outdoor athletic complex at Viterbo, left the V-Hawks program with a three-year record of 74-72.

Prior to his position at Viterbo College, McDermott served as an assistant coach/recruiting coordinator at Princeton University for two seasons. Additionally, he was the head baseball coach at J. Frank White Academy and a graduate assistant coach at Lincoln Memorial University, both located in Harrogate, Tenn.

McDermott began his collegiate playing career as a second baseman at Indian Hills Community College in Centerville, Iowa, before transferring to Lincoln Memorial University where he played short-stop for two seasons.

McDermott, a 1993 graduate of Lincoln Memorial University, is married to Lois and they have two sons, Jack and Joe.



**Mike Nall —  
Assistant Coach**

**N**all, a former hurler for both UIC and Northwestern, enters his second year on the Flames' coaching staff and his first as an assistant coach after serving as a volunteer assistant in 2004.

The second-year pitching coach played a key role in UIC's success on the mound last season, as three Flames hurlers earned postseason honors from the Horizon League.

Freshman Ryan Zink was named to the All-Horizon League First Team and All-Newcomer Team, after going 9-3 with 92 strikeouts in 95.2 innings pitched. Junior David Haehnel earned All-Horizon League Second Team honors, finishing with a record of 6-3 with 92 K's in 90 innings pitched, while teammate Tom Szalewski was named to the Horizon League All-Newcomer squad after going 4-2 with an ERA of 2.76.

Prior to joining the UIC coaching staff, Nall served as the pitching coach for Valparaiso in 2003. During his stint there, Nall helped the Crusaders improve their win total by eight, ERA by 1.77 runs, strikeout-to-walk ratio by 1/3<sup>rd</sup> and opponents batting average by 46 points. Nall was also instrumental in the success of 2003 Mid-Continent Conference Co-Pitcher of the Year, Tom Starck.

Nall, a 2001 graduate of Northwestern, also brings professional experience to the squad, playing in the Philadelphia Phillies minor league system after being selected in the 28th round of the 2001 draft.



**Nick Bridich —  
Volunteer Assistant Coach**

**B**ridich, a former standout for Horizon League rival Butler, enters his second year on the UIC staff and his first as a volunteer assistant coach after serving his rookie season with the Flames as an administrative assistant.

Prior to joining the UIC staff, Bridich, a 2002 graduate of Butler, spent the 2003 campaign as an assistant varsity coach for Pike High School in Indianapolis, Ind.

While at Butler, Bridich was a three-year Jostens Scholar-Athlete and helped the Bulldogs to an NCAA Regional berth in 2000.

Bridich also served as the head freshman and assistant varsity coach for Marquette High School in Milwaukee, Wis., for four seasons, while giving private hitting and infield instruction at Grand Slam USA for three years.





### Denny Wills — Associate Athletic Director

Serving the UIC baseball program in a variety of capacities is associate athletic director for academic services and compliance, Denny Wills.

Wills, who joined the UIC Athletic Department in 1987, has served as the Director of Academic Services since April of 1996. In January of 1999, he was promoted to Assistant Athletic Director, and in his new position, Wills took on the added responsibility of overseeing the baseball team in addition to his academic and compliance duties. In

June of 2001, Wills was promoted to his present position of Associate Athletic Director.

While overseeing all academic and compliance issues for the baseball program, Wills, a 1975 graduate of Saint Xavier, also assists with budget planning, competition and practice schedules, and facility issues.

Prior to arriving at UIC, Wills coached basketball at his alma mater, serving both as assistant coach and head coach from 1976–79. He then moved to Chicago State where he served as an assistant coach while also teaching and serving in an academic advising capacity from 1980–87.



Wills then joined the Flames basketball program in 1987 as an assistant coach. During his nine years on the bench, UIC compiled a 133-129 overall record and reached the championship game of the Mid-Continent Tournament four times.

In addition to his bachelor's degree in history, Wills also has a master's degree in educational administration from Saint Xavier as well as a master's degree in physical education from Chicago State.



### Ron Davis — Interim Strength and Conditioning Coach

Ron Davis enters his second season with the University of Illinois at Chicago strength and conditioning department and his first as the interim head strength and conditioning coach.

Davis is in charge of designing, implementing and supervising all aspects of the strength and conditioning program for all 18 Flames teams and is also responsible for the management of the fitness facility, which includes team scheduling, equipment maintenance and budget preparation.

Prior to UIC, Davis spent two seasons at Manhattanville College in Purchase, N.Y., serving as the head strength and conditioning coach as well as a compliance officer. Davis has prior Division I experience as an assistant strength and conditioning coach with the University of Minnesota and was a Division III graduate assistant with Gustavus Adolphus College.

Davis also has experience with professional sports teams, spending time as the head strength and conditioning coach for the Scottish Claymores and as an assistant strength and conditioning coach with the Minnesota Vikings in 2002.





## Gloria Balague — Team Psychologist

In her seventh season working with the UIC baseball program is team psychologist Dr. Gloria Balague. A professor in UIC's Psychology Department, Balague meets with the squad on a weekly basis as well as individually as requested by the players.

Balague started her professional career in her native Barcelona, Spain, working with elite athletes and teams at the National Sports Research Center and teaching psychology at the College of Physical Education.

In 1980, Balague came to Chicago where she obtained her doctorate in clinical/social psychology at UIC. Currently a clinical assistant professor in the Psychology Department, Balague's main research interest is in the area of achievement motivation, and she teaches both undergraduate and graduate level courses in the department at UIC.

Balague has continued her involvement with elite athletes, consulting with several national teams, including the USA Track and Field, USA Gymnastics and USA Field Hockey teams. As a team sport psychologist, Balague has also accompanied the USA Track and Field team to the 1992 Olympics and the USA Rhythmic Gymnastics team to the 1996 Olympics.



## Pat Donovan — Athletic Trainer

Pat Donovan, a 2000 graduate of UIC, enters his first season as the athletic trainer for the University of Illinois at Chicago baseball team after spending last season as a consultant for the Flames Athletics Department through HealthSouth.

Prior to UIC, Donovan spent two seasons as a graduate assistant for the University of Minnesota, where he earned his master's degree in applied kinesiology with a concentration in sport and exercise science.

During his stint with the Golden Gophers from 2001–03, Donovan worked exclusively with the football squad as well as the Spirit Squads.

Donovan graduated from UIC with University and High Honors, while a member of the Honors College. While working as a student-trainer for the Flames, Donovan worked primarily with the men's soccer and men's gymnastics teams, while assisting with the other 16 Division I athletics teams.

Donovan is an NATA-certified athletic trainer and a member of the National Academy of Sports Medicine, Great Lakes Athletic Trainers' Association, Minnesota Athletic Trainers' Association, National Strength and Conditioning Association and American Red Cross.



## Grounds Crew

(L-R): Seneca Smith, Ray Dombrowski, Mike Rollins

Not pictured: Joe Prieto

