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Former Men's Basketball Coach Willie Little Passes Away

Little served as the Flames' coach from 1983-87.

Jan. 7, 2002

Chicago, Ill. - Former University of Illinois at Chicago men's basketball coach Willie Little passed away Sunday, in Poplar Bluff, Missouri where he was coaching Kennedy-King College in a junior-college tournament at Three Rivers Junior College.

"Willie passed away doing what he loved to do," UIC athletic director Jim Schmidt said. "Willie loved Chicago basketball and loved to coach its players."

Little, who had health problems, including diabetes, in recent years, served as the Flames' head coach from 1983-87 and accumulated a record of 66-52 (.559) during that span. Prior to his head coaching stint, Little served as an assistant coach at UIC under Tom Meyer.

During his tenure, Little was named the Mid-Continent Conference coach of the year in 1984 as he led UIC to the conference championship and a school-record, 22 victories. One of his star players, Ivan Daniels, went on to the NBA as he was drafted in 1985, by the Indiana Pacers in the fifth round.

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