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Women's Basketball Opens Up Horizon League Campaign

Flames will take on Wright State at the UIC Pavilion tonight at 7:00 PM.

Dec. 3, 2001

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University of Illinois at Chicago women's basketball coach [Tim Eatman](#) stated it simply.

Respect.

Prior to the beginning of the basketball season, the Horizon League released the preseason poll, which slated the Flames to finish sixth out of the nine-team league.

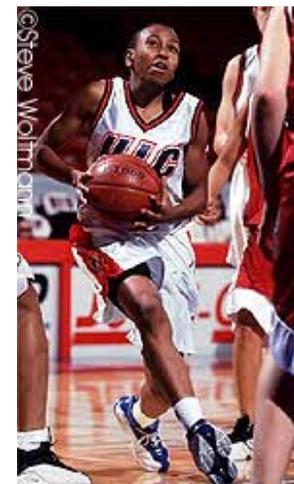
Eatman and his troops are out to prove the detractors wrong.

"It shows me the amount of work that we put in, that people haven't noticed that," Eatman said. "That tells me that they don't really respect us and they don't think that we're going to be very good."

"If they thought that we were going to be good and they did respect us, then they would have voted us higher," Eatman said. "A lack of respect is always not good."

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Junior guard LeKesha Williams is averaging 11.0 points per game for UIC

"It's something that we're going to work on and we're going to show people that we deserve respect."

Other people's perceptions, however, can change very easily

"We're letting people know in the Horizon League that we are going to be one of the teams that year-in and year-out that people are going to be talking about in the conference championship," Eatman said.

The Flames have gotten off on the fast track to open the 2001-02 season as they have won their first four games of the campaign. That marks the best start since the 1995-96 season, which was also the last time UIC finished over the .500 mark with a record of 17-14.

"Fortunately, we've done a good job recruiting," Eatman said. "So now, the seeds that we have planted are starting to grow and we're happy about that."

Eatman, has the luxury of having many different players take the reins for his squad last season as opposed to last season when graduated seniors [Melea Clark](#) (15.3 ppg) and Kim Henry (14.3 ppg) carried a bulk of the load for the Flames.

Heading into the Horizon League opener against Wright State on December 3rd, UIC had five different players averaging over 10 points a game including: junior center [Zsuzsa Tarnai](#) (15.8 ppg), junior guard [LeKesha Williams](#) (11.0 ppg), senior forward/center [Stesha Rhodes](#) (10.8 ppg), junior forward/center [Jaysie Chambers](#) (10.5 ppg) and senior guard [Josie Cole](#) (10.0 ppg).

"I think that day in and day out that everyone is not going to have their 'A' game," Eatman said. "There are some things that you can do every day, whether it's playing defense, rebounding or playing hard.

"If you can do those things, that's OK, so if you don't have your 'A' game offensively," Eatman continued. "It gives you the flexibility to have other people step up."

"Our style of play allows anyone to score."

Eatman, however, knows that in order for his team to be taken seriously, his squad must defeat the Flames' neighbors from the north, UW-Green Bay and defending tournament champion UW-Milwaukee.

"Green Bay and Milwaukee are always the teams to beat," Eatman said. "We haven't arrived, until we beat those two teams."

"We're ready to win."

this season.

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