



SOFTBALL

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20th-Ranked UIC Softball Team Ready To Open 2000 Home Season

Flames tackle Valparaiso on Wednesday, March 29, at 4:00 p.m.

March 27, 2000

Chicago, Ill. - After opening the season on a 51-game, seven-week, barnstorming tour, the 20th-ranked UIC softball team opens its 2000 home schedule on Wednesday, March 29, with a doubleheader versus Valparaiso at Flames Field, with first pitch set for 4:00 p.m.

"The barnstorming tour is now over," Head Coach [Mike McGovern](#) commented. "I think we have prepared ourselves very well for our local games and conference schedule."

Opening Day festivities at Flames Field include, States Attorney Dick Devine throwing out the ceremonial first pitch, numerous contests and giveaways, as well as a player autograph session following the game.

The Flames, who are 32-19 on the season and have been ranked in the USA Today/NFCA Coaches Poll all year, have been without All-American [Samantha Luli](#) (Chula Vista, Calif.) for the past 12 games. The senior pitcher/first baseman injured her ankle on March 16, when she slid awkwardly into third base in the opening game of the Clearwater Parks and Recreation Tournament versus Florida International. UIC is 8-4 in her absence.

Sophomores [Rory Gonzales-Gould](#) (Fountain Valley, Calif.) and local product [Maral Binnebose](#) (Northfield, Ill./Loyola Academy) have stepped up to carry the load on the mound. Gonzales-Gould leads the team with a 16-9 record, winning nine of her last 11, while Binnebose owns a 3-3 slate with a 1.78 ERA.

At the plate, sophomores [Edel Leyden](#) (Irvine, Calif.) and [Jennifer Tiffany](#) (Covina, Calif.), junior [Stefanie Christoferson](#) (Santa Barbara, Calif.) and senior [Julie Bumgardner](#) (Chicago, Ill./Loyola Academy) are four Flames' starters batting over .300. Christoferson leads the team with eight home runs, a single-season best, and 30 RBI.

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Mike McGovern guides the Flames into the 2000 home season.



The Flames begin defense of their Midwestern Collegiate Conference crown on Saturday, April 1, at Flames Field as they take on Loyola in an afternoon doubleheader starting at 1:00 p.m.

2000 UIC SOFTBALL HOME SCHEDULE

March

29 (Wed) Valparaiso (DH) 4:00 p.m.

April

1 (Sat) Loyola (DH) 1:00 p.m.

13 (Thu) Eastern Illinois (DH) 4:00 p.m.

21 (Fri) Cleveland State (DH) 1:00 p.m.

22 (Sat) Detroit (DH) 1:00 p.m.

May

4 (Thu) UAB (DH) 3:00 p.m.

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