



MEN'S GYMNASTICS

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UIC Set to Host 30th Annual Windy City Invitational

Field includes defending national champion Michigan along with national runner-up Ohio State

Jan. 12, 2000

Chicago, Ill.- UIC will renew an annual gymnastics tradition 7:00 p.m. Saturday night at the Physical Education Building when it hosts the prestigious Windy City Invitational. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the event and includes one of the top fields in the history of the Invitational.

Begun in 1971, the Windy City Invitational has turned into one of the nation's top regular season events, bringing many of the nation's premier gymnastics programs to UIC during the tournament's three decades of competition.

This year's event—the first of the new millennium—will be no different. All seven of the teams competing here tonight are ranked among the top 15 in the preseason College Gymnastics Coaches Association's Top 20 rankings. UIC, the host of the Windy City Invitational, enters the season with a No. 14 national ranking.

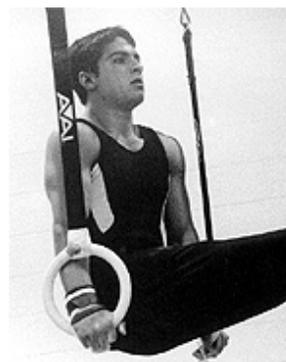
This year's lineup is identical to the 1999 field and includes the defending national and Big Ten champion Michigan Wolverines. Last year saw the Iowa Hawkeyes capture their second-consecutive Windy City title and their fourth of the nineties. Overall, Iowa has won the event six times.

When first organized, the Windy City Invitational was held in November to coincide with the start of the gymnastics season. But, when the NCAA pushed back the starting date of the season, the Invitational was moved to mid-January.

Over the years, both Iowa and Ohio State have seen the most success at the Windy City, each with six titles to their names. Running close behind are Nebraska, Iowa State and Indiana State with four titles each. The Cornhuskers had an impressive string of four consecutive championships between 1980-83. Other schools that can lay claim to a Windy City title are Southern Illinois, Minnesota and Illinois.

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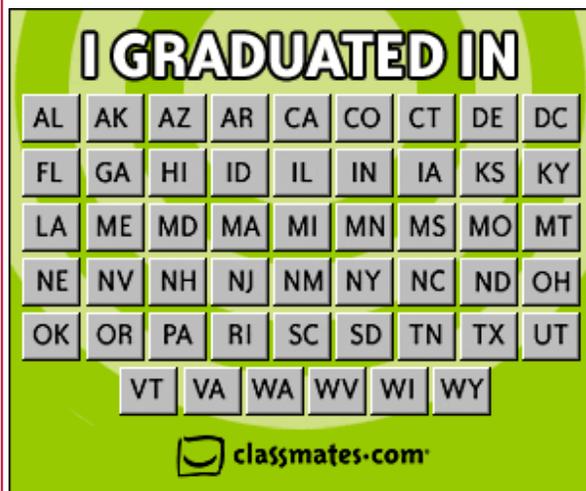
Dave Johnson and the UIC Flames look to make their mark against a potent field at the Windy City Invitational.

Despite the stiff competition, the Flames usually fare quite well in their own tournament. Last year, UIC finished sixth against a field that included the Michigan, Ohio State and Iowa. The Flames highest-ever finish at the Invitational is third.

A large number of outstanding national and regional champions have performed at the Windy City Invitational including several members of the Olympic and National Teams. This year's field includes Michigan's Justin Toman and Iowa's Todd Strada. Toman finished second last year at the NCAA all-around finals, missing the title by just one-tenth of a point while Strada finished a close third.

Previous meets have included notable gymnasts such as U.S. National Team members Ron Galimore, Jim Hartung, Phil Cahoy, Scott Johnson and Charles Lakes. In fact, no less than four gymnasts at the 1996 Olympic Games were former Windy City competitors John Roethlisberger, Kip Simons and Blaine Wilson of the USA and UIC alum Barry McDonald of Ireland.

The 2000 edition figures to be another great year in the history of this prestigious event. With seven of the nation's top 15 teams squaring off against each other, the Windy City Invitational should serve as a great early-season indicator of which teams and individuals are ready to make a splash on the national scene.



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