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**MEN'S BASKETBALL**

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## Basketball Practice Set To Tip-Off On Saturday

The official start of the NCAA Basketball season begins at 12:01 a.m. on October 13th.

Oct. 9, 2001

**Chicago, Illinois** - It has been over seven months since the University of Illinois at Chicago men's and women's basketball teams each were in action.

That long hiatus will come to an end on Saturday, as both teams will take the court for the first time as the official start of NCAA basketball season begins at 12:01 a.m.

Men's head coach [Jimmy Collins](#) enters the 2001-02 season with a sense of anticipation.

"I'm extremely excited about Saturday's practice because now we get an opportunity to get out there and see what the entire group looks like together," Collins said. "I'm excited for the opportunity to get out there and test them as a team, but we have a bunch of new guys that we haven't had an opportunity to work with."

Collins hopes that the 'new guys', freshmen [Josh Williams](#) and [Ajagbe Gillis](#) will make the smooth transition to Division I Collegiate Basketball.

"The first thing I do is let them know that when they were in high school, they were a big fish in a small pond," Collins said. "Now that you're here at the University of Illinois at Chicago, you become a minnow in the ocean."

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Men's head coach Jimmy Collins enters the 2001-02 season with a sense of

"They have to be ready to accept the challenge of being coached and their own personal challenges of getting better."

Williams, a freshman from Whitney Young High School, is looking forwards to the challenge.

Williams, right now, doesn't quite know what to expect of collegiate basketball. But once Saturday rolls around, he thinks he'll be ready.

"Before you do anything, most people have an idea of what's going to happen," Williams said. "It's going to be one of things, where once I get into a situation, I can see just how things are going to work out."

Collins knows what sophomore [Cedrick Banks](#) is capable of doing on the basketball court. Come Saturday, he'll get to see what the talented Banks can do as a member of the UIC basketball team.

"Cedrick is going to be a tremendous ballplayer," Collins said. "I expect him to learn quickly. He's already shown me on the basketball court that he's near genius.

"He does a lot of things on the basketball court that you don't have to teach."

Banks, the 2000 Chicago Sun-Times Player of the Year, was forced to sit out the 2000-01 basketball season due to NCAA Initial Eligibility standards.

"Cedrick is a dynamic ballplayer," Collins said. "But again, he played on a high school team, he hasn't played at this level.

"You have to be a little cautious about setting expectations too high, because I don't think, as we speak, that Cedrick is a lottery pick," Collins continued. "That's not to say that he won't be in a couple of years, but right now he has a lot to learn."



Eatman, believes that the 2001-02 edition of the women's basketball team will turn some heads as it will feature the 19th-ranked recruiting class in the nation.

"I'm really excited," Eatman said. "I'm looking forward to working with the new kids and I'm looking forward to seeing how much the older kids have matured since last season."

Those rookies include: [Ka'Ron Hughes](#), [Tiamber Derrick](#), [Charissa Greene](#), [Chastity Quinn](#), [Zsuzsa Tarnai](#) and [Sia Drebos](#). All are expected to make an impact this season.

"The junior class here was ranked 20th and this one is ranked 19th, so finally we have enough talent here to win basketball games," Eatman said.

As talented as these newcomers may be, Eatman believes that Division I basketball will be a rude awakening, but in due time, they each will be key contributors for the Flames.

"I don't think they have a clue (about Division I basketball)," Eatman said. "What we're trying to do is talk to them about

anticipation.

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the level of intensity that they have to play at.

"Starting on Saturday, we'll start showing them how hard they need to play."

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