



MEN'S SOCCER

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Soccer Kicks Off Regular Season This Weekend At UC Irvine College Classic

Flames face No. 24/28 Loyola Marymount on Saturday, play host UC Irvine on Labor Day.

Sept. 3, 2005

Irvine, Calif.- The 24th season of Division I men's soccer at the University of Illinois at Chicago begins this Saturday, as UIC begins their regular season slate against No. 24/28 Loyola Marymount at the UC Irvine College Classic this Saturday beginning at 7:00 p.m. Central/5:00 p.m. Pacific.

Following the Flames' clash with the Lions, UIC takes on the host Anteaters on Monday beginning at 3:00 p.m. Central/1:00 p.m. Pacific.

The wait is finally over as the [John Trask](#) era begins this Saturday. Trask will coach his first-ever regular season match as head coach of the Flames, along with new assistant coaches [Sean Phillips](#) and [Phil Presser](#). The trio cut their coaching teeth under Jerry Yeagley, the all-time winningest coach in Division I history, at the Indiana University juggernaut. Before coming to UIC, Trask spent the last five seasons as an assistant coach in Major League Soccer, tutoring the likes of Preki and Eddie Johnson.

Preseason Power

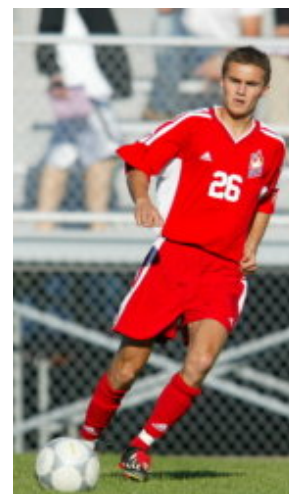
The Flames went 1-1 during the 2005 exhibition slate. UIC blanked IUPUI 4-0 at the IPFW Soccer Showcase on August 20th and fell in a tooth-and-nail affair to two-time defending national champion Indiana by a 2-1 tally in Bloomington, Ind., on August 27th. Sophomore [Pavle Dundjer](#) (Becmen, Belgrade/Zimunska Gimnazija) led the Flames with three goals and an assist for seven points in two matches.

Returning Firepower

The Flames return plenty of playmaking from 2004. UIC returns nine starters, with all nine playing in either their first or

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Junior Pawel Otachel and the Flames open the 2005 regular season against Loyola Marymount on Saturday night.



second full season of Division I soccer. Among the returning regulars are Dundjer, junior [Eric Cervantes](#) (Hoffman Estates, Ill./Hoffman Estates), and junior [Pawel Otachel](#) (Franklin Park, Ill./East Leyden/IPFW), UIC's three returning All-Horizon League selections. Junior [Tonci Skroce](#) (Zadar, Croatia/IX Gimnasium/Kendall College) also returns following a fine first year with the Flames that also included a stint on the U-21 Croatian National Team.

New Faces

UIC has plenty of new faces to help the cause in 2005. Many of them saw significant playing time in the preseason, including freshman back [Pat McMahan](#) (Bolingbrook, Ill./Benet), rookie forward [Dan Simek](#) (LaGrange, Ill./Lyons Township) and sophomore midfielder [Cesar Zambrano](#) (Chicago, Ill./Brother Rice).

Between the Posts

2004 Horizon League All-Newcomer Team selection [Jeff Engelbrecht](#) (Peoria, Ill./Notre Dame H.S.) and [Ross Cain](#) (Rochester, Minn./Mayo), the school's active leader in saves, will vie the starting goalkeeper spot. Engelbrecht started both preseason games while Cain played significant second half minutes. Both played well, giving the coaching staff a tough decision to make in who to start.

The Opposition: Loyola Marymount

Loyola Marymount comes into Saturday's match ranked 24th in the Soccer America preseason poll and 28th in the College Soccer News rankings. The Lions are fresh off their fourth straight NCAA Tournament appearance, losing to usual soccer power UCLA in the second round. Coached by eighth-year skipper Paul Krumpke (70-53-13 career record), the Lions finished 11-8-3 in 2004, good for second in the West Coast Conference. LMU was picked to finish second again in the conference's 2005 coaches poll. Forwards Nick Blanco (5 goals, 3 assists in 2004) and Bobby Burling (3 goals, four assists) and midfielder Diego Barrera (5 goals, 3 assists) pack the scoring punch for the Lions.

The Opposition: UC Irvine

UC Irvine, a 7-13-0 team in 2004, begins the team's 11th season under head coach George Kuntz (75-99-26 career record at UCI). The Anteaters return Brad Evans, an All-Big West First Teamer who also played with the U.S. U-20 Men's National Team this past summer.

Oh Captains, My Captains

Leading the Flames this season are captains Skroce and [Derek Kosek](#) (Batavia, Ill./Batavia), a junior back.

One Tough Schedule

Nothing will come easy for the Flames this year, as the 2005 slate features a bevy of ranked teams and NCAA Tournament regulars. UIC will face three nationally-ranked opponents in No. 24/28 Loyola Marymount, No. 14/8 Creighton, and No. 17/17 Northwestern. The Flames already faced top-ranked Indiana in an exhibition match. Defending Horizon League champion UW-Milwaukee, which received votes in most preseason polls, will host the Flames this year, as will perennial power Bradley.

You U-19 Guys Are Good

Sophomores [Nick Sutter](#) (Barrington, Ill./Barrington) and [Brandon Bilbrey](#) (Barrington, Ill./Fremd) come into this season with championship experience from their summer as the two paced Sockers FC Chicago to the US Youth Soccer Under-19 National Championship. Sutter and Bilbrey played huge roles in helping Sockers take home the prestigious James P. McGuire Trophy, a 70-year-old prize that is the oldest youth sports trophy in the United States.

UIC Head Coach [John Trask](#)

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