



URI Rams

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URI 76, Miami (Ohio) 59: James helps Rams make history of RedHawks

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SOUTH KINGSTOWN — URI's first appearance in the College Basketball Invitational turned out to be a historic night.

[Delroy James](#), the senior who has had such a terrific career, became the first Rhody player ever to record a triple-double as he led the Rams to a 76-59 triumph over Miami of Ohio Wednesday night at the Ryan Center. James had 22 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists as the Rams dominated the RedHawks from the Mid-American Conference.

"It's very humbling," James said of accomplishing something no URI player ever has. "I could turn on the TV tomorrow and watch Lamar Odom playing with Kobe (Bryant), know we went to the same school and I did something he never did."

James pulled down a rebound with 5:49 remaining for his 10th board. He was missing only an assist to complete his triple-double. He had been made aware of where he stood by assistant coach Preston Murphy during the eight-minute media time out.

After getting the 10th rebound, he came down court and kept the ball until he spotted his fellow senior [Marquis Jones](#) cutting to the hoop. He fed Jones who put the ball in, bringing a wide smile to James' face, and an arm wave, as he ran back downcourt.

The night completed a personal goal for James.

"I told (Will) Martell our freshman year that I'll have a triple-double before I finish here," said the lefty, who is in the top 20 in scoring in Rhody history with 1,442 points, and also in the top 10 in school history in blocked shots.

His performance was not the only special effort.

[Orion Outerbridge](#), the junior forward who will be asked to take over as one of the team leaders next season, put on a show of his own with 18 points. That included going 4-for-4 on 3-point shots. Until Wednesday night, the 6-foot-9 forward had never even attempted a 3-pointer.

The tiny crowd of 1,115 that took in the game also got to see James, Jones, Martell and [Ben Eaves](#) help the Rams win for the 90th time in the last four years, making them the winningest senior class in school history. The victory upped the team's record to 20-13, making the seniors only the second group ever to win 20 games in each of their four seasons. The other was Murphy's class of 1999.

It all made for perhaps the most enjoyable night all season at the Ryan Center.

The Rams advance to the quarterfinals, where they will get to spend the first part of spring break next week in Florida. They will visit Central Florida, which ousted St. Bonaventure Wednesday night.

Any worries about a letdown for the Rams were quickly put aside by James, Outerbridge and the rest of the URI team. The Rams led, 17-16, 12 minutes in, then outscored the RedHawks 19-8 over the remainder of the half to take a 36-24 lead at the break. URI had six 3-pointers in the half from five different players.

Miami got as close as 46-40 midway through the second half. Outerbridge got the Rams back on track with one of his treys. A 3-point play by James and two 3-pointers by [Akeem Richmond](#) (16 points) helped Rhode Island pull away to a 69-45 lead. It was on the final hoop of that surge that James fed Jones for the layup and 10th assist.

Coach Jim Baron got everyone into the game from there, including 7-foot-3 freshman Blake Vedder, who had his first basket at the Ryan Center. Afterwards, Baron was understandably upbeat, speaking about how playing in the CBI got him as energized as the NIT did in each of the last three years. Baron was especially happy for his fellow Brooklyn native, James.

"I was here this weekend working out with my son (Billy) by ourselves," Baron related. "Del came in and started working on his game. You tell me if he wasn't excited to be able to play this game. Here's a kid going in on a weekend and working on his game.

"This kid is a warrior. He's going to make a lot of money. He just plays to win," Baron continued. "In your lifetime, you don't get too many guys with that kind of gumption, that kind of passion."

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