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### UCF rolls to 66-54 win over Rhode Island, advances in CBI

**Knights are 15-0 in non-conference games, among final four teams alive for CBI title**

By Iliana Limón, Orlando Sentinel

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UCF junior point guard A.J. Rompza joked he wished it was birthday every day.

Rompza helped orchestrate a dominant second half that propelled the Knights (21-11) to a 66-54 win over Rhode Island (20-14) Monday in the College Basketball Invitational. The game drew an announced crowd of 3,949 at UCF Arena.

Fans sang "Happy Birthday to You" to Rompza, honoring his 21st birthday, following the victory.

"We're having fun right now," said Rompza, who finished with seven points, five rebounds and three assists. "You win games when you're having fun."

During an erratic season, one thing has remained consistent for the Knights. UCF is undefeated in games outside of Conference USA this season, posting a 15-0 record.

The CBI re-seeded its bracket, shaking up the matchups of the final four teams. UCF will play at Creighton in Omaha, Neb., Wednesday. Tipoff is set for 8 p.m., and the game will be broadcast nationally on HDNet.

Rhode Island jumped out to a 30-27 halftime lead. The Knights shot 30.8 percent from the field and 13.3 percent from 3-point range, but they outrebounded Rhode Island 44-28 and grabbed 19 offensive boards to stay in the contest.

UCF coach Donnie Jones said he urged his players at halftime to keep playing strong defense and trust that they would get good looks at the basket by calmly running their offense.

UCF's big men went to work inside, helping the Knights outscore the Rams 39-24 in the second half. Sophomore forward Keith Clanton led UCF with 16 points and eight rebounds, while senior forward A.J. Tyler had 11 points and senior center Tom Herzog added 10.

Freshman guard Isaiah Sykes and Rompza fired up the crowd with strong contributions off the bench.

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UCF's reserves outscored Rhode Island's bench 34-21.

Senior forward Delroy James, Rhode Island's top player, scored his team's first nine points in the game. Sykes took over guarding James during key stretches and helped limit him to nine more points the remainder of the contest, clearly altering the Rams' offense.

"He did a terrific job," Jones said of Sykes. "He disrupts. ... He does those things that really help our team have great toughness and really keeps our team in a lot of basketball games."

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