

Will Harris Nets 22 in Basketball's 2K Sports Classic Win Against NEC Champion Robert Morris

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[box score](#)

Albany, N.Y. – Will Harris scored 22 points and Tim Ambrose added 15 in leading UAlbany to a 71-66 victory over Robert Morris in the third round of the 2K Sports Classic, benefiting Coaches vs. Cancer, Albany Sub-Regional on Sunday, Nov. 22 at SEFCU Arena. In the first game of the doubleheader, Detroit upended Alcorn State, 79-59.

In a tight-fisted contest, UAlbany (3-3) ran off six unanswered to take an 18-9 lead midway through the opening half. Logan Aronhalt, a redshirt freshman, made a baseline jumper and a 14-footer, while Blake Metcalf hit a jump hook in the lane. Metcalf, a 6-foot-9 freshman, finished with a career-best nine points off the bench.

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Robert Morris (1-4), the defending Northeast Conference champion, rallied to within 21-19 when Russell Johnson canned a three-point field goal from the left wing after receiving an in-bounds pass. The Great Danes, who shot 58.3 percent in the period, came back with 10 of the game's next 12 points. Harris drilled a three-pointer from the right side for a 27-21 lead, before Fran Urli scored on inside cut and Metcalf made another basket off Harris' high-low exchange.

The Great Danes, who were coming off a 12-point loss the previous night to Detroit in this three-day regional tournament, settled for a 35-27 advantage at the intermission as the visitors were held to 30-percent shooting in the half. However, UAlbany quickly upped its margin to 12 in the final stanza when senior guard Mike Johnson made a layup and Harris sank two free throws after collecting an offensive rebound.

UAlbany still held a working 11-point margin when Harris, a 6-foot-5 senior, made another 3-pointer from the left wing with 4:14 remaining. The Colonials, who made their first NCAA appearance since 1992 last year, would make a late run.

Velton Jones, a 6-foot sophomore, nailed consecutive long-range jumpers, including one from the top of the arc off a screen that closed the gap to 67-63. Jones finished with 17 points, all in the second half. But UAlbany freshman Derrek Tartt calmly made two fouls shots with 16.4 seconds remaining. Harris, who had 17 second-half points and was named to the all-tournament squad, ended the dramatics with two more free throws.

"They tried to make us play fast and that's when we had trouble," said UAlbany coach Will Brown, whose team won two of three tournament games. "We gave ourselves a chance by executing our halfcourt sets. We got good contributions from a lot of guys. (Will) Harris was aggressive and played with rhythm."

The Colonials' Mezie Nwigie led his team with 18 points. Nwigie joined Alcorn State's Jonathan Boyd and Detroit's Xavier Keeling

on the all-tournament team. The Titans' Eli Holman was named most valuable player.

"I am happy that we had a lead from beginning to end," said Harris, who had his first 20-plus outing since last February. "This is the first offseason that I have been healthy. I was able to work out on a consistent basis and it is starting to show now."