

## No. 13 Cal Defeats Murray State, 75-70

[box score](#)

**BERKELEY, Calif. (AP)** – Jerome Randle scored 18 points and Patrick Christopher sparked a key second-half run that helped No. 13 California open its season with a 75-70 victory over Murray State on Monday night in the 2K Sports Classic.

Theo Robertson added 14 points, Christopher had 13 and Jamal Boykin scored 12 for the Golden Bears (1-0), who held off a game effort from the Racers (0-1) of the Ohio Valley Conference.

The Bears entered the season with high hopes, coming off an NCAA tournament appearance in coach Mike Montgomery's first season. Cal was ranked in The Associated Press preseason poll for the first time since 1995-96 and had its highest preseason mark since the 1993-94 team led by Jason Kidd and Lamond Murray was ranked sixth.

But it was a somewhat rusty start to the season for Cal. The top 3-point shooting team in the nation last season made only one of four shots from long range in the opening half, relying on free throws to open a lead.

But Christopher and Robertson hit consecutive 3s early in the second half to start an 11-0 run that gave the Bears a 47-31 lead. Christopher also had a three-point play during the run and Boykin got a second-chance basket.

Cal got its 32nd win in its last 34 nonconference home games.

The Racers managed to chip away at the lead, cutting it to six on a 3-pointer by B.J. Jenkins with 2:31 remaining. But Robertson got a key offensive rebound off a missed free throw and Randle hit an acrobatic layup with 1:22 to go to make it 72-64.

Ivan Aska scored 17 points to lead the Racers, Jenkins added 16 and Danero Thomas 12. Murray State was done in by 17 turnovers.

Cal will play Detroit on Wednesday before facing Syracuse next week at Madison Square Garden. Murray State plays next week in the Miami subregional against James Madison, North Carolina Central and Florida International.

Murray State, playing against a Pac-10 team for the first time in 23 years, kept it close for most of the first half. But Randle scored the final six points of the half, including four from the foul line, over the last 2:14 to give the Bears a 34-26 lead. Cal was 13 of 18 from the line in the half.

Former Cal star Shareef Abdur-Rahim got a nice ovation when he was introduced, but he might have been cheering for the Racers because his brother, Amir, is an assistant for the team. Murray state head coach Billy Kennedy also has ties to Cal, serving as an assistant there from 1993-97.

The Classic benefits Coaches vs. Cancer.

