

# Flames Record Signature Win over Rhode Island, 74-68

## Robo Kreps and Paul Carter combine for 51 points

[box score](#)

**TOLEDO, Ohio** - Seniors Robo Kreps and Paul Carter combined to score 51 points, and the Flames recorded a resounding 41-30 advantage on the boards, as the UIC men's basketball team tallied a 74-68 win over Rhode Island in the finale of the 2K Sports Classic benefiting Coaches versus Cancer at Savage Hall Sunday afternoon.

Kreps scored a game-high 27 points, his fourth-straight effort with 20 or more points, and pulled down a season-best eight rebounds. Paul Carter scored 24 points, including 22 in the second half, and corralled six rebounds. Junior center Darrin Williams added nine points, and pulled down nine caroms.

Marquis Jones' 21 points led Rhode Island - he was joined in double figures by Delroy James (16) and Will Martell (10). The Rams returned nine letterwinners, including three starters, from last year's team that went 26-10 and advanced to the "Final Four" of the 2010 National Invitation Tournament (NIT).

"This is a great win not only for our team, but our program," said UIC head coach Howard Moore. "We've got a great group of kids that are willing to do what they are asked to do, and that is to play winning basketball. I told the guys before the game that this would be a 'program win' for us; wins like these help turn a program around. The pressure we will have going forward is to sustain it, and keep moving forward.

"Now, we've got a chance to go back home to play four games against some very quality opponents. We need to continue to get better, and not get complacent. I can't say enough about Robo (Kreps) and the way he played this weekend; he's got the heart of a lion. He wants to be great, and he's starting to really prove a lot of the people wrong that said he couldn't play the point guard position. He's the heart and soul of this team, and in five games, has become a tremendous leader."

Rhode Island jumped out to a quick 4-0 lead, before UIC charged back by scoring seven of the next nine points - Williams had two field goals in the spurt. Right out of the first media timeout, Kreps drilled his first three-pointer, giving the Flames a 12-8 lead at the 14:58 mark of the first half.

The Rams' Daniel West completed a conventional three-point play with 7:14 left in the opening stanza, tying the score at 16-16 after UIC had held the lead for nearly 10 minutes. Akeem Richmond then made two free throws at the 2:46 mark, giving Rhode Island its first lead (20-18) since the opening two minutes of the contest.

Paul Carter tied the game (20-20) with his lone field goal of the first half on the ensuing possession, but Jones and Richmond converted back-to-back three-pointers to help the Rams build a 26-22 lead heading into the locker room at halftime, matching their largest lead of the half.

Jones and James each tallied field goals in the opening minute of the second half, as Rhode Island built its largest lead of the game (31-24) with 19:04 remaining. But the Flames went on an ensuing 12-4 run, with two field goals apiece by Kreps and Carter, and re-claimed the lead (36-35) with 15:46 remaining, forcing the Rams into an early timeout.

The Flames were in control of the lead for the next nine minutes, with their advantage fluctuating between one and eight points. After Zavion Neely drilled two free throws at the 11:55 mark, UIC built a 48-40 lead. But the Rams answered by stringing together a 16-8 run, and tied the game at 56-56 following a three-pointer by David West (5:15).

Following a timeout, Kreps drove the lane and scored to put the Flames back up by two, 58-56. Paul Carter then scored in transition, giving UIC its largest lead (60-56) since the 7:00 mark. The Rams' Nikola Malesevic answered with an ensuing three-pointer on the other end, pulling Rhode Island back within one, 60-59, with 3:41 left.

The Flames put the game out of reach with three field goals between the 2:29 and 1:19 marks, when a layup by Paul Carter gave UIC a comfortable 66-59 advantage. The Rams trimmed UIC's lead to five points twice down the stretch, and to four points (72-68) with 10 seconds remaining, but never had the opportunity to tie the score or take the lead.

The Flames out-scored the Rams 36-32 in the paint, 13-3 on second-chance points and 14-9 through the fast break. UIC shot 71.4 percent from the field in the second half, finishing the game with a 50 percent shooting effort. There were a total of nine ties and lead changes in the game.

UIC will return home to face Central Michigan at the UIC Pavilion Wednesday night (Nov. 24). Tip-off from the UIC Pavilion is set for 7 p.m. CST.