

UIC Grinds Out Road Win at Toledo, 57-51

UIC wins second-straight, will take on College of Charleston Saturday

[box score](#)

TOLEDO, Ohio - Senior guard Robo Kreps poured in a game-high 20 points, and drilled five free throws in the final 2:35, to lead the UIC men's basketball team to its first road win of the season, a 57-51 decision over Toledo at Savage Arena Friday night. The Flames never trailed in the contest, capturing their second-straight win.

Kreps' 20-point output, his second in as many games, led a threesome of Flames scoring in double figures. Senior forward Paul Carter chipped in 14 points, 12 in the second half, while junior guard Zavion Neely scored 10 points and dished out four assists.

UIC tallied a stingy defensive effort, holding the Rockets to a 39.5 percent effort from the field, forcing 17 turnovers and swiping eight steals. Toledo was also held without a field goal for the opening six-plus minutes in both halves.

The Rockets were led by Anthony Wright's 15 points on four three pointers; he was joined in double figures by Hayden Humes (12) and point guard J.T. Thomas (10), who was making his first-career start.

"It was a close one tonight," said UIC head coach Howard Moore. "Todd (Kowalczyk) does a great job with that team; they run great sets, and really get after you. I was proud of our guys; they never put their heads down, and just kept coming.

"It's great to get a win on the road early in the season," Moore said. "Tonight was a grinder. I've been involved with a lot of grinders in my career, and it was good to see our guys find a way to win. I thought Robo (Kreps) played tremendous. He's a player with a lot of heart. He really kept the team together, and continues to guide these guys. He made some huge shots tonight."

The Flames' aggressive man-to-man defense forced a combined eight missed shots and turnovers for Toledo before the first media timeout; the Rockets' first points of the game didn't come until the 14:49 mark. But UIC scored just four points during the spurt, as the defensive tone of the game was set early.

After Kreps' first three of the game, the Flames extended their lead to eight (10-2) with 13:10 remaining in the first half. But Toledo strung together an ensuing 12-4 run, and tied the game at 14-14 after a lay-up by Delino Dear (5:48). Junior forward Paris Carter scored on back-to-back field goals two minutes later, giving UIC a 20-14 lead with 3:16 left in the opening frame.

Toledo answered by scoring seven-of the next nine points, and pulled within 22-21 with 1:31 remaining. After recording a defensive stop, UIC called timeout and executed the play, as Neely penetrated the lane, and hit a runner with three seconds remaining to push the Flames' lead to 27-22 heading into the locker room at halftime.

Kreps' 12 points in the first half led all scorers, while Neely and Paris Carter each chipped in with four points. Paul Carter was limited to just five minutes of action after being whistled for two early fouls. Humes, Wright and Thomas each scored six points in the opening frame to pace Toledo, which shot just 33.3 percent from the field.

The second half started out much like the first, with the Flames' defense allowing them to build a comfortable cushion. UIC scored the first three points, including a field goal by Williams, to take a 30-22 lead with 16:23 remaining. The Rockets' first points of the second frame came at the 14:18 mark, after Malcolm Griffin, a graduate of Hyde Park Academy in Chicago, tallied his first field goal.

UIC stretched its lead to nine points (35-26) with 11:30 remaining, but the advantage never reached double digits. After a quick 4-0 run, Toledo cut the lead to just five, 35-30, with 10:24 left. But the Flames answered with a 6-3 spurt, and took a 41-33 lead with 9:06 remaining.

The Flames' lead fluctuated between four and seven points for the ensuing 7:33, before Wright hit his fourth three-pointer with 1:33 left that pulled Toledo within two, 52-50. Reese Holliday split two free throws with 39

second left, trimming UIC's advantage to 52-51. Paul Carter and Kreps hit a combined three free throws down the stretch, and Carter's steal and score with just two seconds remaining sealed the six-point win.

UIC will now turn its attention to a Saturday afternoon match-up against the College of Charleston (2-2) at Savage Arena, continuing the 2K Sports Classic benefiting Coaches versus Cancer. The Cougars dropped a 75-66 decision versus Rhode Island Friday afternoon.