



## **VMI 111, Canisius 100**

**First Round: Tuesday March 18, 2014**

BUFFALO, N.Y. - D.J. Covington poured in a career-high 37 points, leading a 93-point combined effort from VMI's top three scorers as the Keydets defeated the Canisius College Golden Griffins, 111-100, in the first round of the CollegeInsider.com Tournament (CIT) Tuesday night at the Koessler Athletic Center in Buffalo, N.Y.

The victory was VMI's first postseason win since beating Duquesne 73-66 in the opening round of the NCAA Tournament on March 12, 1977 and it sends the Keydets on to the second round of the CIT, which will be contested Friday and Saturday at sites to be determined.

On this night, the Keydets (20-12) exploded out of the gate, scoring the game's first 15 points and leading by as many as 21 in the first half behind 22 points from Covington. VMI would not trail in the game, but Canisius (21-13) stormed back in the second half, cutting its deficit to two, 76-74, with 10:07 to play. Rodney Glasgow and QJ Peterson then combined to score seven unanswered points, pushing the margin back to nine and VMI was never seriously threatened the rest of the way.

In addition to Covington, Glasgow and Peterson had 28 points apiece, with 20 of Peterson's markers coming in the second half. The 93 combined points for VMI's top three scorers was a season high and the third time the trio had broken 80, following games at Radford (Jan. 15, 84 points) and at UNC Asheville (Jan. 28, 85 points).

After the Keydets roared out to a 15-0 lead, the home team could not get within single digits until the 10:12 mark, when Chris Perez scored to make it 27-19, VMI. VMI promptly went on a 9-2 run to distance itself once again, and after Peterson hit a three with 8:40 on the clock, was up 36-21. The Keydet run continued from there, as the visitors scored 12 of the next 18 to take a game-high 21-point lead, 48-27 with 5:14 left in the half.

Canisius was able to close the gap to 14 at the break, 59-45, despite the Keydets taking full advantage of a 25-17 first half rebounding advantage that led to 18 second chance points. CC came out of the locker room strong, scoring the first eight points to reduce the VMI lead to eight at 61-53.

The Keydet margin was between eight and 13 from the 17:39 mark until the clock showed 12:16, when Dominique Raney started the Golden Griffins' final run with a three, making it 74-68. Tim Marshall scored at the other end to push

the lead to eight, but the home team scored the game's next six points to reduce the advantage to two and set the stage for the decisive 7-0 run. Canisius got no closer than eight the rest of the way.

Although the home team had slight edges in field goal percentage (51.4% to 50%) and three-pointers made (11 to 9), the key team stat of the night was free throw percentage. VMI blistered the nets from the charity stripe, going 30 of 34 (88.2%) to post the most free throws made by a Keydet squad since Dec. 10, 2011. Covington went 13 of 14 in his own right.

Canisius went 15 of 21 (71.4%) from the line. VMI also won the battle on the glass, 42-36, and moved to 14-2 this season when outrebounding its opponent this season.

With the win, VMI gets its fifth 20-win season in program history and the fourth postseason win in program annals. In addition, the Keydets came up just two points shy of the facility's overall team scoring record, set by the Golden Griffins against Mercyhurst in 1979. It was the most points scored by an opponent, and the Keydets' 59 first half points were also an opponent facility record.

Canisius was led in defeat by former Liberty Flame Perez, who scored 30 points, and Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Player of the Year Billy Baron, who notched 24 markers.

VMI basketball will return to action either Friday or Saturday for the CIT's second round. VMI's opponent and game time will be announced on [VMIKeydets.com](http://VMIKeydets.com) as soon as they become available.

#### QUOTES – VMI Head Coach Duggar Baucom

"I'm proud of the guys. We worked really hard in practice. I thought right from the start we played the way we wanted to play. D.J. Covington was a monster all night, Rodney ran the show and Tim Marshall gave us a lift in the first half with two big 3's."

"I thought the guys played hard, they played smart and they played together. They had 14 assists at the half and really shared the ball. We were able to push on transition and get some easy baskets."

"We were able to get to the line against their zone. Rodney was making incredible reads and big plays. Credit the guys for being more than one-dimensional."

"I thought a big play was QJ Peterson's steal and basket in the second half that gave us a lift. And he and Brian Brown did a great job defensively on Billy Baron. And Trey Chapman had unbelievable defense tonight with five assists. We played like we were capable of tonight."