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Radford's [Carlik Jones](#) had a career night in the Highlanders' season opener against Liberty University last Friday.

The redshirt junior scored 31 points leading the team to a 41-33 advantage over the Flames in the second half but was unable to overcome the first-half deficit.

The Highlanders only secured one lead during the 40-minute bout, and that came within the first 39 seconds of the game as Jones knocked down a free throw following a hard take to the basket.

Though the first half was led predominantly by Liberty, Jones and the Highlanders brought the lead within only four points in the second half.

Radford was able to cut the lead to four twice during the second half.

The first instance was when Jones was fouled on a layup, subsequently knocking down the shot from the charity strike to make it 45-41 with 5:06 left to play.

Unfortunately, Liberty's Myo Baxter-Bell converted a layup, and Kyle Rode knocked down a three-point shot to push the lead to nine.

With 30 seconds left in the game, the Highlanders brought it back within a four-point lead as Jones corralled a rebound and went coast-to-coast for a smooth transition dunk.



Photo Credit: (Radford Athletics) Redshirt Junior Guard Carlik Jones scored a career-high 31 points against Liberty.

On the succeeding play, sophomore [Cle'von Greene](#) caught a pass from the opposition and skipped the ball to Jones on the wing. Jones knocked down the shot and was fouled from behind the three-point line. He was unable to squeeze the lead to three as he missed the free throw shot with just 12 seconds left in regulation.

Kyle Rode was fouled to stop the clock, but with Flames in the double bonus, he was allotted two free throws in which he sunk both of them.

Liberty clinched the victory against the Highlanders with a final score of 66-60.

The Highlanders shot 45 percent from the field during the second half, and after a series of poor shooting in the first half, they redeemed themselves coming out of the locker room.

They went on an 11-6 run after the second half whistle blew. [Travis Fields Jr.](#) went on a scoring spree in the ensuing three and a half minutes, scoring 7 of his 15 total points.

Though the Flames jumped out to a 20 point lead in the first half, Jones and the Highlanders

showed a lot of fight. Jones, along with his 31 point outing, tallied six rebounds. He and Fields Jr. combined for 46 of the Highlanders' 60 points.

According to [Radford Athletics](#), Head Coach Mike Jones said, "Obviously the first half was very uncharacteristic of us. There was not a lot of production on the offensive end, and defensively it felt like they scored every time, but they only put up 33 when it felt like 53. Our guys have heart, and they locked into the things we were talking about in the second half, and we were able to make a game out of it."

The Highlanders will travel to Statesboro, Georgia, to face off against Georgia Southern on Friday, Nov. 15. Big South Conference play will not begin until January.

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