



## Williams' 43, LeBron's third triple-double lift Cavs to 21-0 at home



CLEVELAND -- The polls were closed. [Mo Williams](#) made a late push for All-Star votes anyway.

Cleveland rocks for the Cavs this season. At 21-0, Cleveland is off to the fourth-best home start in the league since the NBA-ABA merger in 1976-77. Here's how the Cavs compare:

Williams scored a career-high 43 points with 11 assists and strengthened his argument to be in Phoenix among the NBA's stars next month, and [LeBron James](#) recorded his 20th career triple-double as the [Cleveland Cavaliers](#) improved to 21-0 at home, beating the Sacramento Kings 117-110 on Tuesday night.

Williams, who is hoping to join James on the Eastern Conference squad, had his finest game since joining the Cavs. The do-it-all point guard went 15-of-24 from the floor, made a career-best seven 3-pointers and added eight rebounds.

But while James was voted an All-Star starter by fans, Williams must wait for a nod from NBA coaches.

They had to submit their All-Star reserve picks -- for seven spots -- on Tuesday and the results will be announced Thursday. Williams was expected to get plenty of support after helping the Cavaliers (35-8) get off to the best start in franchise history in his first season with Cleveland.

He's vying for a backup spot behind starter Allen Iverson, and his stiffest competition would appear to be Orlando's Jameer Nelson and New Jersey's Devin Harris.

Williams isn't counting on making it.

"There's a lot of guys in this league who deserve an All-Star spot," Williams said. "We'll see. It would be a great feeling. Don't let me fool you. It would be a great feeling, but trust me I won't lose any sleep."

James might.

As far as he's concerned, Williams is All-Star worthy.

"He deserves it," James said. "Look at our record. Look at the way he's playing. Tonight was a statement game. I'll be really disappointed because he's part of the reason we've played the way we have, and he's put up the numbers. We'll see."

James scored 23 points with 15 rebounds and 11 assists, his third triple-double this season. He picked up assist No. 10 in the third quarter with a pass to Williams, who knocked down three consecutive 3s -- all off feeds from James -- in a span of 1:05. Williams was so good, James only had to take 10 shots.

"They just kept letting him shoot the ball," James said. "It was funny to me. He was on fire. He kept letting it go, and I kept finding him."



Cleveland Cavaliers' Mo Williams, right, drives to the basket against Sacramento Kings' Francisco Garcia, of Dominican Republic, in the fourth quarter in an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2009, in Cleveland. Williams had 11 assists and eight rebounds and scored 43 points for the Cavaliers 117-110 win. (AP Photo/Tony Dejak)

It was the first time two teammates have recorded at least 23 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds in the same NBA game since Cleveland's Butch Beard and John Johnson on Dec. 23, 1971, at Atlanta.

Kevin Martin scored 35 points and John Salmons 21 for the Kings, who lost their sixth straight and dropped to 0-19 against the East with a date in Boston on Wednesday.

Sasha Pavlovic added 12 points and rookie J.J. Hickson 11 for the Cavs, who have been able to maintain their strong play despite being without injured starters Delonte West and Zydrunas Ilgauskas.

The Cavs were down early in the third quarter when Williams went to work.

After Martin's 3-pointer gave the Kings a 67-65 lead, Williams dropped a long-range shot. On Cleveland's next three possessions, Williams let James bring the ball up and waited patiently outside the arc. Each time, James found his teammate and Williams made sure he rewarded James' faith.

"You don't see too many quiet triple-doubles, and that's what he [James] did tonight," Martin said. "Mo was unbelievable. His shot was falling so you really can't do too much about that."

Williams has been everything -- and more -- that the Cavaliers could have hoped for when they acquired him in July in a trade with Milwaukee. The fifth-year guard has helped stabilize Cleveland's offense and may finally be the missing complementary player James has needed to win an NBA title.

Last week, James referred to Williams as "my sidekick."

Williams, too, has been a solid defender, an aspect of his game that was missing with the Bucks.

"Mo Williams had a monster night," said Sacramento coach Kenny Natt, who was an assistant when Williams was a rookie with the Jazz. "I've seen that show before. Not to this extent, but I know he's well capable. Maybe he wanted to stick it to his old coach, but he gave me a hug afterwards so that's OK."

It was Cleveland's first home game since the Cavaliers returned from a four-game trip out West, where they went 3-1 by winning three in a row after losing to the Los Angeles Lakers. The Cavs seemed uninterested early on against the lowly Kings, and with James on the bench, Sacramento built a 44-33 lead in the second quarter before Cleveland woke up.

James checked in and the Cavs embarked on a 15-3 run, capped by Williams' 3-pointer to go up 48-47. Cleveland outscored Sacramento 27-12 in the final six minutes to take a 60-56 lead at half.

### Game notes

It was the first time the Cavs had two players with at least 10 assists since Jan. 22, 2005. ... Cleveland is still a long way from the league record for the best home start. Chicago owns that mark after going 37-0 to open the 1995-96 season. ... Ilgauskas, who returned to practice on Monday, is hoping to return for Thursday night's game in Orlando. However, Cavaliers coach Mike Brown said he has gotten no indication his center has been medically cleared to return and will rely on a "gut feel" before he decides whether to play Ilgauskas. ... Martin grew up in Zanesville, Ohio, and expected more than 40 friends and family at the game.

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### Top Performers

CLEVELAND



[M. Williams](#)

Points: 43

Reb: 8

Ast: 11

Stl: 1

Blk: 0