

# JOHNSON READY TO BANG WITH UNC

There's no doubt that Wake's sensational sophomore James "King James" Johnson (chose Wake over Cincinnati, Kansas, Maryland and Wyoming) is one of the best players in the ACC. He's actually one of the best players around the nation this year.

The 6-9 small forward from Wyoming has done nothing but impress since joining the Deacs last year. He's seemingly stepped his game up this season — helping the Deacs to a 13-0 record heading into this weekend's class with UNC. I caught up with the big fellow after practice on Tuesday to see what his mind was like heading into that big game. James is focused and ready to bang. He really feels like this could be a special season for the Deacs. I've been trying to tell friends that exact thing recently. I honestly think Wake will do big things this year too. James is big reason I feel so good about Wake.

He and I also talked about girls, Carmelo Anthony, Kobe Bryant, break dancing and a few other things during a cool conversation. Johnson reminds of Josh Howard, in the fact that he's so honest. He doesn't simply give you the politically correct answer. Johnson hits you with the truth. He was very truthful during this interview.

Take a look at some of the things J.J. and I talked about during an interview from earlier this week.

**Anthony:** What's good, James?

**James:** Nothing, man. I'm just chilling.

**Anthony:** No doubt. Hey, this is a big week for you dawg. You have Carolina this weekend. What kind of things go through your mind when you have a big game like that coming up?

**James:** Go kill. (Smiles.) Kill. That's it. We get Dubs (wins). I only have a winning vision. I try to help my team have the same vision. We're just going to go out there and kill. That's all that's on my mind.

**Anthony:** You guys have a long break before playing Carolina.

**James:** Right. **Anthony:** Is it a good thing to have such a long break before games, or would you rather be playing a game on maybe, Thursday? You know, to kind of get ready for the weekend games or whatever.

**James:** You can look at

both ways. You have a lot of time to prepare for a team or whatever. Or, you could have a game to see some of the things you're doing wrong and fix them before you play another game. Right now, we have a break. Carolina just had a game. All we're doing is preparing and focusing.

**Anthony:** How are your legs, man? (Smiles.) I saw you shooting all those jumpers after practice. Looking good.

**James:** Right on. My legs are cool. We do a lot of squats to get stronger in the weight room. Testing strength is what we do everyday. I just try to bring it to the court.

**Anthony:** How many 3-point shots do you usually end practice with?

**James:** About two or three hundred of them. I go from free throws to threes. We also work on handling the ball on the floor. I'm trying to get my game right for the team. We're trying to go to the national championships. We have the guys that can do it. We just have to continue to work hard.

**Anthony:** Do you think you guys can really win a national title this year?

**James:** Um, I believe we have the guys to do it. We have to work hard and continue to be hungry.

**Anthony:** You looked as if you slimmed down for this year. Did you lose some weight during the off season?

**James:** Yeah, I lost about 10 or 15 pounds. Coach wasn't liking where I was. I came back skinnier. But the weights bigger. So, I've been doing a few reps to get cut. I'm trying to maintain my body and watch my diet.

**Anthony:** That's what's up. I know that you are focused on the ACC and national titles. But how much has the NBA been on your mind. Some people think you could be a high draft pick.

**James:** You know it creeps into my head every once in a while. The main thing is winning where I'm at right now, though. I'll let everything else fall into place. If it doesn't then I'll come back another year to help us win another national championship around here.

**Anthony:** (Smiles.) Did you grow up liking Utah and Denver? I mean, what NBA team does a guy from Wyoming cheer for?

**James:** (Laughs.) Yo, I was born and raised in California. I later moved to Wyoming. But I cheer for the

Lakers. Kobe is my dude, man.

**Anthony:** So you agreed with him getting MVP last year?

**James:** What? Yeah. He deserved it man. CP (Chris Paul) is a North Carolina fam. People are going to cheer for CP around here. But you have to pay your dues. It wasn't CP's time yet. But he's a helluva player. He's going to get it one of these times if he keeps working hard.

**Anthony:** Why did you choose to wear number 23?

**James:** They offered me a bunch of numbers. I wasn't sure which one I wanted at first. They gave me one, 23 and some other big numbers. I didn't want a big number. I was 15 in high school. I was the Melo-type. (Smiles.) Now I'm just try play. The number doesn't have anything to do with the skills. I'm just trying to go out there and win.

**Anthony:** I hear that. Who do you model your game after?

**James:** I like a little bit of Melo and Paul Pierce. I also like to attack the bucket like LeBron. I like to use different moves. I don't care who shows me. It could be a walk-on or a 5-year-old. If the move works then I will try it. And if it works for me then I will keep doing it.

**Anthony:** All right. What's the best part of your game?

**James:** Defense now. I didn't have defense last year or whatever. I also worked on my agility. I got stronger. Now I enjoy locking dudes up. That's it.

**Anthony:** Do you have a rare skill? I know that you can do martial arts. But what else can you do that the average person may not know?

**James:** (Smiles.) Um, I don't know. I can break dance like a mug.

**Anthony:** Break dance? Is that what ya'll do in Wyoming?

**James:** (Laughs.) Yeah. We break dance. Windmills, flares, back flips. It was fun out there. For real.

**Anthony:** (Laughs.) OK. What do you listen to before



Wake's dominant sophomore James Johnson is one of the top players in college basketball this season.



James Johnson

games?

**James:** A little bit of Beethoven. You know. A little bit of Wayne. He's cool. Jeezy. The Recession was hot. I liked that. And, Gucci Mane. I like all of them.

**Anthony:** You won't believe this but Lil' Wayne debated Skip Bayless on ESPN's "First and 10" today (Tuesday).

**James:** (Smiles.) Dang. I'm going to have to see what's up with that.

**Anthony:** Have you seen any good movies lately?

**James:** Nah. I don't really look at movies like that. I don't really go out on dates or nothing. I go by myself, man. (Both laugh.)

**Anthony:** Speaking of dates. How are the ladies treating James Johnson around here?

**James:** Oh, they're cool. My girlfriend goes to Georgia Tech, though. We're just mad cool. That's it.

**Anthony:** I hear you. Let's finish with free association real quick. Uh, Jeff Teague.

**James:** Killer.

**Anthony:** North Carolina.

**James:** Killer.

**Anthony:** James Johnson.

**James:** Killer.

**Anthony:** King James.

(LeBron James)

**James:** Killer.

**Anthony:** Best small forward to play at Wake.

**James:** James Johnson.

**Anthony:** Josh Howard.

**James:** The best.

**Anthony:** Coach Dino Gaudio.

**James:** Oh, great coach.



## One-on-One

with Anthony Hill

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## First season loss for Lady Deacs

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The Richmond Spiders (12-3) handed Wake Forest (12-1) its first loss of the season on Tuesday evening in Richmond.

Tuesday was Wake's third consecutive game shooting less than 50 percent from the free throw line.

Wake Forest had a season-high 29 turnovers but the Spiders also hurt in the same category, recording 27 turnovers.

After trailing the Spiders through the opening minutes, Camille Collier landed a three-point basket at the 13 minute mark to tie the game for the first time at 10-10. Collier followed with a jumper at the eight minute mark to give Wake its first lead of the game, 16-14.

The score was gridlocked at 19-16 for two and half minutes as both teams suffered turnover trouble and consecutive missed shots. Richmond guard Brittany Shells finally broke the scoring drought with a layup at the 3:31 mark, cutting the Deacon advantage to one point, 19-18.

Following a free throw from Corinne Groves, Richmond center Augustina knotted the score at 20-20 with 1:09 to play. Both teams would force turnovers and enter the locker room with the knotted score.

The Spiders picked up their tenth foul with three



Alex Tchangoue will lead the Deacs into Maryland tonight.

minutes to play in the first half but it didn't have much impact as the Deacons were only shooting 45 percent from the free throw line in the first 20 minutes (5-11).

Nikita Thomas netted back-to-back layups to open the second half, putting the Deacons behind by two possessions by the 19:19 mark (24-20). Collier got the Deacons on the board in the second half with a jumper at 17:40 to set the score at 24-22.

In the final 10 minutes of the second half Richmond completely shutdown Wake Forest shooting, limiting the team only eleven points during the entire second half.



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