

BASEBALL: UCONN WINS FINAL TWO GAMES TO WIN SERIES AFTER DROPPING OPENING GAME AT BUTLER

by Sam Calhoun
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/HIS
samuel.calhoun@uconn.edu

After losing the opening game of the series at Butler, the UConn baseball team (20-17, 6-3 Big East) beat Butler (13-22, 4-2 Big East) in the following two games of the three-game series to hand



The UConn baseball team battles Xavier University for the third time this week on March 29, 2026 at Elliot Ballpark. The Huskies won their Friday and Saturday matches against Xavier, but lost their Sunday game 6-1. PHOTOS BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS.

the Bulldogs their first losses of Big East play.

First baseman Jackson Marshall had the best overall series, with five hits and six RBIs and consistent play across all three games. However, the pitching was crucial to the Huskies' two wins this weekend, with back-to-back complete game performances from left-handers Cayden Suchy and Oliver Pudvar.

On Saturday, Suchy retired the final 19 batters after giving up a two-out RBI single in the third inning. The sophomore from Sterling, Va. earned his third win of the season.

On Sunday, Pudvar struck out seven batters and allowed no runs to complete the run-rule performance for the Huskies, giving the Shelburne, Vt. native his third win of the season.

"All of our starters, all weekend, just sensational," UConn head coach Jim Penders said after the series in a postgame interview posted to the team's X account. "[Pudvar] was up to snuff today."

In the win on Saturday, UConn did not allow a single free base runner for the first time since May 18, 2024, which coincidentally was also against Butler. Their 28 strikeouts through the first two games of the series were the most in back-to-back games since striking out the same number against Seton Hall in mid-April last year.

The fifth inning set the tone for the Huskies' offense with three runs scored. Shortstop Rob Rispoli led off the inning with his 100th career hit, hitting a single through the left side to begin the rally. Rispoli was moved over to third base after right fielder Chris Polemeni followed the hit with a one-out single. The game was tied after freshman catcher Cam Righi hit an RBI single to right field.

Righi was also responsible for the next run scored, as Butler catcher Will White committed a throwing error on Righi's steal attempt, giving UConn a 2-1 lead. Following that, Marshall hit an RBI double into the left-field corner, pushing the lead to 3-1 and ending up as the final score in the second game of the three-game series.

"I was very happy that we were able to grit one out [on Saturday]," Penders said in a postgame interview on Sunday afternoon.

In the rubber game of the series, the Huskies run-ruled Butler, 13-0, in seven innings.

Connecticut scored 10 runs in the seventh inning, beginning with an RBI single to right field from Marshall that gave UConn a 4-0 lead. Catcher Gabriel Tirado hit a two-run double that was followed by an RBI double by center fielder Nater Wachter that increased the lead to 7-0. Tirado eventually scored after Rispoli hit a sacrifice fly to center field to make it 8-0. Second baseman Peyton Jemison hit a two-run single through the left side to drive in third baseman Maddix Delena, as well as Wachter, for a 10-0 cushion. To make matters better for Connecticut, Marshall hit a three-run home run to left-center field to make it 13-0, which was the final score of the series' finale.

To open the series, the Huskies blew a 4-0 lead on Friday afternoon, allowing five runs in the final two innings that overshadowed a brilliant performance from left-handed pitcher Charlie West, who pitched 6.2 shutout innings while allowing just three hits and striking out a career-high 14 batters. It was the most strikeouts for a UConn pitcher since Ian Cooke's 14-strikeout performance on April 12, 2024 against St. John's. The last starting pitcher to accomplish the feat was Ben Casparius' 15-strikeout outing against Georgetown in 2021.

"Charlie West was sensational," UConn head coach Jim Penders said in a postgame interview posted to the team's X account on Friday. "Just not enough [runs] throughout the day. We gave [Butler] a chance to hang around."

The series-opening loss was the Huskies' first loss of the season when leading after eight innings. Connecticut was previously 14-0.

With two wins, UConn now holds a 16-2 record against Butler. Friday's defeat marked their first against the Bulldogs since May 14, 2023. The Huskies' 13 runs on Sunday were their most in the series since a doubleheader on May 10, 2025.

Connecticut stays on the road to pay a visit to former conference rival Boston College on Wednesday. They will be back at Elliot Ballpark in Storrs, Conn., on Friday for a three-game series against St. John's.