



Sports

WOMEN’S LACROSSE: A PAIR OF HAT TRICKS HOIST UCONN OVER XAVIER

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There’s a good chance that the UConn women’s lacrosse team sent a few fans in attendance hat shopping after their win on Saturday afternoon.

Both Hadley Bethke and Megan O’Brien picked up hat tricks for the Huskies, as UConn (5-8, 2-3) downed Xavier (3-12, 1-4) on the road for their second straight Big East victory, 15-6.

Though O’Brien took back her team lead in points with 35 after missing the Butler game on April 4, it was Bethke who led the way with four goals. The freshman also led her squad in points after picking up two assists as well, setting a new career high with six.

O’Brien, McKenna Merkel and Lucia Smigiel also had an assist on the day as well.

UConn dominated from the opening draw, scoring the first six goals of the game and five in the first quarter.

Emma Dacey started the scoring with 9:56 to go in the first, taking a pass from Bethke from the right pipe and dumping it into the top left corner.

Just a few moments later, Bethke picked up her first of the day, coming all the way around from behind the net to score unassisted through the legs of Xavier goalie Jada Brandon.

About a minute and half later, at 7:50, freshman Ava Palazzolo scored the first goal of her collegiate career on one which Brandon nearly swept out of the crease before it crept over the

line. Palazzolo also scored to open the second quarter, making it both the first multi-point and multi-goal game of her career.

However, before Palazzolo scored her second goal, Rayea Davis got in on the action. After reaching 200 career points against Butler, the redshirt senior kept building on that number with a side-arm rip into the top left corner on a free position shot.

Xavier finally got on the board with 2:19 left to go in the first half, but Bethke erased that goal 22 seconds later with her second goal of the day.

The start of the second half was eerily similar to the first for the Musketeers, as the Huskies again commanded the first

quarter out of the break while scoring four out of the five goals in the period. Bethke topped off her hat trick with 10:51 to go on a shot from the crease before scoring again on a free position shot at 4:57 to finish her day.

In the fourth, O’Brien took over. All three of the attackers’ goals came in the last quarter, with two coming with less than five minutes to play.

O’Brien’s second saw her land a check on Musketeers midfielder Mya Miller during a Xavier clear, forcing a loose ball. O’Brien secured the ground ball near the top of the box and took



UConn women’s lacrosse plays Butler University on April 4, 2026 at Morrone Stadium. The Huskies secured a 15-4 win against the Indiana team. PHOTOS BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS.



it all the way for the score with 4:20 to go.

The sophomore capped off her hat trick with just 22 seconds remaining.

Madison Sweeney also scored her first of the season in the fourth.

Other players to score for the Huskies included Anna Magen-nis, Kelsey Neary and Eve McGrogan.

The final score may have been even more lopsided had Xavier midfielder Brynley Hodge not achieved a hat trick of her own. The sophomore scored twice in the fourth quarter to go along with a goal one minute before halftime.

Gabby Bouman also had two goals for the Musketeers, while Samatha Balara had one.

UConn goalie Sofia Oximana had one of the best games of her season, as the junior made nine saves and finished with a .600 save percentage for the second straight game.

With the win, the Huskies now sit fifth in the Big East standings, one loss behind both Villanova and Marquette. The trip to Cincinnati was the UConn’s last road game of the regular season, as the Huskies will finish their schedule with three straight games at home.

The first of those contests will take place on Tuesday, as the University of New Hampshire comes to town for UConn’s first non-conference game since their March 18 loss to Colorado.

The opening draw at Joseph J. Morrone Stadium is scheduled for 6 p.m. The game will stream live on UConn+.