Women's Basketball: Huskies host Butler in second-to-last Hartford game of the season

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The worst thing about playing on the UConn women's basketball team isn't the overwhelming external pressure felt to win (and win convincingly). It isn't the gut-wrenching thought of failing to meet the UConn standard chiseled by the decades of champions before you. And it isn't the overbearing social media presence that some choose to ignore.

It's the fact that you have to eventually leave.

Azzi Fudd's shouldered the pressure of winning. She's met the UConn standard. She's embraced social media. But that doesn't change the fact that she has to leave.

Fudd just came back from her final trip to Chicago as a Husky. She is off the heels of her last rivalry duel with Tennessee. She's already disposed of Notre Dame and USC for (perhaps) the final time.

The beginning of the end, as pessimists would say.

But hey, there still are four home games on the schedule, and over a month until post season play begins in Uncasville. Look on the bright side, will you?

The Huskies (24-0, 13-0) return to Hartford on Saturday to host Butler (9-14, 3-10) in PeoplesBank Arena. It's another chance for Connecticut to iron out its rotational kinks and, more importantly, get healthy.

Freshman forward Blanca Quiñonez, who's missed the last three games with a reaggravated shoulder injury, could see the court for the first time this month. The Huskies felt Quiñonez's absence the most the last two games in the second quarter, when they were outscored by Tennessee and DePaul, respectively, failing to break 20 points on both occasions.

Quiñonez's return will put into the place the final rotational cog of the Husky machine, which looks to run nine deep at full strength. The emergence of Allie Ziebell as a consistent perimeter shooter, exemplified by her 34-point showing against Xavier last week, gives Geno Auriemma a third reliable piece to use off the bench. Whether or not Jana El Alfy can sustain her 10-minute per night average in the NCAA Tournament remains to be seen, but the redshirt sophomore has been steady on the glass (0.3 rebounds per minute when on the court) and a defensive anchor on the other end of the court.

Saturday is also an opportunity for the Huskies to shore up on the defensive glass, something that plagued them in the first half against Tennessee last Sunday; Butler ranks 314th in Division I on the offensive glass and 298th in second chance points per game. Look for Sarah Strong and Serah Williams to pull down boards at a frequent clip against a relatively undersized Bulldogs team.

Tip-off is scheduled for noon, with streaming available on FS1.



The Huskies vs. Villanova at Gampel Pavilion on Jan. 15. The Huskies won 99-50. PHOTO BY MADISON HENDRICKS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WOMEN'S SWIM AND DIVE: UCONN PREPARES FOR FINAL TEST AGAINST PROVIDENCE



UConn swimmers compete against Northeastern during a dual meet at the Wolff-Zakim Natatorium on Nov. 9, 2025. The Huskies won the meet 180-120, earning multiple first-place finishes across relay and individual events. PHOTO BY OLIVIA DICKINSON, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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The UConn women's swim and dive team will host Providence in its final meet of the season on Saturday afternoon. Saturday is also senior day where UConn will honor its eight seniors, Olivia Denery, Ella Epes, Camilie Gendron, Kiera Liesinger, Alexis Martino, Darah Ostrom, Molly Rogers and Norah Rome.

Providence took the win in their last meet against Holy Cross (142.5-100.5), snapping a five-meet losing streak. UConn will have to compete with Lauren Wagner as she picked up two golds in the 200m IM (2:29.37) and the 200m breaststroke (2:44.68). Watch for UConn freshman Lydia Gonzales (2:09.88) to compete against Wagner in the 200m IM as she took silver in her last outing.

UConn is coming off a dominant win over Seton Hall (159-80), also winning their sixth consecutive meet. Freshman Erika Pasakinskaite led the Huskies with two medals, a gold in the 100 fly and a silver in the 50 free. The highlight of the meet came in the 500 free, where junior Bridget Davis (5:11.23) narrowly beat Seton Hall's Zeynep Aysoy (5:11.33).

We are just under two weeks away from the Big East Championships, and the Huskies are firing on all cylinders. In diving, the Huskies have been nothing short of clinical. Junior Kate Cooper led the way in diving as UConn swept Seton Hall in all events. If Cooper can keep this up, the Huskies can have a back-to-back Big East champion in the 3m dive.

Over in the 1m dives, Denery has been on fire as she took gold with a score of 256.75, with Ostrom right behind with 243.07.

Both the 200m freestyle and the 1000m freestyle saw gold from UConn by sophomores Zoey Griffin (1:56.38) and Jordyn Ricciotti (10:39.60).

The combination of veteran leadership from seniors like Denery and Ostrom and the emergence of underclassmen like Griffin and Ricciotti once again suggests that this well-balanced roster is peaking at the perfect time.

Saturday's matchup is a huge test for UConn, as the team gets its chance to assert dominance over Providence. Although the Friars have been struggling, no win is guaranteed. UConn must get on the board early and not look back.

Providence brings depth to the IM events as well as breaststroke events. Freshman Madison Ebanks (2:47.42) recorded her personal best in the 200m breast finishing behind Wagner. UConn must start strong in these events to maintain control of the meet.

The Huskies aren't done after Saturday, as the Big East Championship kicks off in Ocala, Fla., on Feb. 18.

WOMEN'S HOCKEY: HUSKIES LOOK TO HOLD GROUND IN HOCKEY EAST RACE

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The No. 6 UConn women's hockey team (19-7-2, 12-5-1) will look to rebound from a tough three-week stretch, as they play a pair of Hockey East opponents while looking to remain in striking distance of the No. 1 seed in the Hockey East.

The Huskies will travel to Providence College (9-17-2, 6-10-2) on Friday night to take on the Friars before returning home on Saturday afternoon to face No. 24 Boston College (12-15-1, 10-7-1).

Currently sitting second in the Hockey East standings, a pair of wins this weekend would go a long way towards keeping the Huskies in the race for first place against No. 5 Northeastern University. With three weeks and six games left in the regular season, UConn find themselves 13 points and four wins behind their fellow Huskies. The two teams will face off once more during the final weekend of the regular season, though that game will lose much of its intrigue if Northeastern pulls away before then.

UConn should have a chance to sweep this weekend against a duo of lesser opponents.

Providence currently sits ninth in the Hockey East and dropped a weekend series to UConn in early January. UConn outscored the Friars 9-1 over the two-game series.

While Providence has historically dominated UConn (42-29-12 since 2002), UConn has won eight of the last ten matchups.

The Friars have struggled to score consistently on the season. Their offense has been shut out six times. Compared to UConn's 77 goals, Providence has scored just 52 times and is 39th in the country in scoring.



UConn women's hockey team takes on Boston College at the Toscano Family Ice Forum on Saturday, Nov. 8. UConn lost, 2-1. PHOTO BY PARKER MEYERS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

While BC is currently in fourth place in the Hockey East, they have struggled against the top of the Hockey East. The Eagles are a combined 2-5 against Northeastern, UConn and Holy Cross. The Huskies split a pair of games with BC in November.

Providence's biggest offensive threat is forward Reichen Kirchmair. The senior leads the team in goals and is the only Friar who has reached 20 points this season.

Kiara Kraft also had a nice performance last weekend, scoring a goal and assisting two in game one of a two-game sweep of the University of Vermont. That sweep put an end to a seven-game slide for the Friars that started with the January series against UConn.

For BC, forward Ava Thomas leads all Hockey East players in total points and is tied for third in goals. The freshman is among the top 20 in the country in goals scored. Most recently, she had a goal and three assists across two games against Maine last weekend.

Thomas was named Hockey East Freshman of the Month for January after winning both a Player of the Week and Rookie of the Week award over the course of the month.

Forward Sammy Taber and defender Madelyn Murphy have also crossed the 20-point threshold for the season.

UConn goalie Tia Chan will be tasked with stopping Thomas and company while also playing for a chance at history. The graduate student enters the weekend with 2249 career saves. That leaves her just 23 saves behind Shannon Murphy for the fifth most saves in team history and 60 behind Alexandra Garcia for fourth.

Chan has eclipsed 20 saves in 24 out 26 games played this season. While the fifth-year Husky will probably have to wait another weekend to pass Garcia, it's almost inevitable that she shoots past Murphy.

The Canada-native is currently third in saves, second in save percentage and second in average goals against in the Hockey East. One of the favorites for Hockey East Goaltender of the Year after winning it a season ago, another pair of shutdown performances would go a long way towards securing a sweep this weekend.

Puck drop for Friday's game is scheduled for 6 p.m. at Schneider Arena in Providence, R.I. Saturday's home game will commence at 3 p.m. at the Toscano Family Ice Forum in Storrs. Husky fans can tune in to both matchups on ESPN+.