Softball: Huskies look to extend streak as power-hitting Friars come to Storrs

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UConn Track & Field at the Dog Fight Challenge at George J. Sherman Family Sports Complex in Storrs on April 4, 2026. The Huskies secured the victory, scoring 260.5 points.
PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

This weekend, the Huskies will host Providence University for a three-day series at Burrill Family Field in Storrs, Conn. The first game will take place on Friday at 7 p.m. The next game will take place on Saturday at 2 p.m. The final game of the series will take place on Sunday at 1 p.m.

The Huskies will look to continue their hot streak after sweeping Butler in an away series in Indianapolis and defeating Bryant the same week in a 6-0 shutout bringing the team to their 11th straight win. In the series against Butler, the Huskies started off with a six-inning, 16-3 win, followed by a 5-0 shutout and capping off the series with a 2-1 win.

At the center of the offense is junior outfielder Kaitlyn Breslin, who has been a star hitter for the Huskies in recent games, highlighted by a grand slam against Bryant and multiple multi-RBI performances. Sophomore infielder Cat Petteys has also been a key to the Huskies' offense, producing multiple runs. Petteys has driven in runs in seven of the last eight games and delivered a two-home run, five-RBI performance in the Butler series.

Senior infielder Savannah Ring has been a catalyst for the Huskies, putting up a 14-game hit streak and consistently creating scoring opportunities. Senior outfielder Kaitlyn Kibling has also proven to be a key contributor, reaching base in 11 straight games and delivering key late-game moments, including a game-tying triple in the series finale against Butler. Freshman infielder Ava Calciano has also added depth to the team through breakout performances, timely hitting and a career high RBI total.

In the circle, freshman Caprice Bohmer has been a dominant force, leading the team with 10 wins and delivering a dominant five-inning, one-hit shutout performance against Bryant. Graduate student pitcher Jessica Walter has also been a formidable hitter, shown by multiple high-pressure appearances and key late-inning outs. Redshirt junior pitcher Sydnee Koosh has also provided defensive support, holding opponents to three runs or fewer in eight of their last nine games.

The Friars are also coming into the game sharp, following a doubleheader sweep against Boston University and Brown University. They are powered by junior Cameron Dunn, who is in the middle of a record-breaking season. Dunn recently launched her 13th and 14th home runs in a midweek doubleheader, setting a new single-season program record. Her ability to come in clutch in key moments, including a game-tying two-run shot against Brown, making her a potential threat the Huskies will need to contain.

Julia Renny has also added to the Friars powerful offense with a home run in the win over Boston University. Freshman Olivia Petrillo and senior Emily Jonte have also contributed key RBIs in clutch situations. Jonte has also been consistent in scoring and driving in runs across multiple innings, helping the Friars capitalize on scoring opportunities.

In the circle, the Friars rely on a steady rotation led by freshman Addyson Frye, who delivered a strong five-inning outing with seven strikeouts in game two of the doubleheader. Freshman Grace Brooks proved to be effective in relief to seal the win against Boston University. The Friars have been shown to be a powerful force putting up powerful hitting and reliable pitching.

The Huskies last versed the Friars' last season in the Big East tournament, where they narrowly defeated the Friars 5-4 to then go on to defeat Creighton and punch their ticket to the Big East Championship.

The Huskies and the Friars will both look to continue their dominant powered by offensive and defensive depths. Husky fans can tune into this Big East series on FloSports.

Men's Basketball: UConn gets much-needed center in Najai Hines

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On Wednesday, UConn got its first commitment from the transfer portal: Najai Hines, a center who played his freshman season at Seton Hall.

With Tarris Reed Jr. graduating and Eric Reibe hitting the transfer portal, the center position was in dire need for the Huskies. Even Rrezon Elezaj, a freshman center who did not get much playing time, entered the transfer portal. Overall, Connecticut had zero centers on the 2026-27 roster before Hines committed to the program.

Hines visited Tuesday and was scheduled to visit St. John's next, but his positive UConn visit led to a quick commitment as one of two centers the Huskies seek from the portal.

The Plainfield, N.J., native, nicknamed "Baby Shaq" at Seton Hall, stands at 6'10", 265 pounds. He told NJ.com's Adam Zagoria that he models his game after Shaquille O'Neal and Giannis Antetokounmpo.

Even though Reed was one of college basketball's premier centers, Hines held his own while coming off the bench. He averaged 10.5 points, 9 rebounds and 3 blocks over the two games against UConn. He put up a fight against St. John's, led by Zuby Ejiofor, the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Award winner, by reaching double figures with five rebounds twice this past season.

It did not take too long for Hines to introduce himself to the college basketball world. In the season-opening win against Saint Peter's, he had 12 points, nine rebounds and a whopping six blocks on 4-of-5 shooting in 21 minutes. He scored 10 points or more in 11 games this season, with four double-doubles.

Overall, he averaged 6.5 points, 5.5 rebounds and 2.2 blocks per game on 60.2% shooting. His blocks per game topped the Big East and tied for 15th in the country. He finished the season with a block percentage of 16%, fourth-best in the country behind Davidson's Sean Logan (18.6%), Virginia's Ugonna Onyeso (17.4%) and St. Bonaventure's Andrew Osasuyi (16.3%). According to CBB Analytics, opponents shot just 55% at the rim when he was on the court. Opponents shot 61% at the rim when he was not on the floor for Seton Hall.

Hines never started a game and only averaged 18 minutes per contest, but the potential for him to be a strong successor to Reed at the starting center position is present. He averaged 14.3 points, 12.2 rebounds and 4.9 blocks per 40 minutes.

Coming out of high school, Hines was highly sought after as a top-75 recruit. He had offers from Kansas, Indiana, N.C. State and Rutgers before picking Shaheen Holloway's Pirates as the No. 1 player in his class in New Jersey. That recruiting stock rose when he averaged 13.1 points, 9.8 rebounds and 2.8 blocks across eight games at the Peach Jam last summer, helping lead the NY Rens to the finals in the tournament.

According to KenPom, UConn has ranked in the top-30 nationally in offensive rebounding percentage in each of the last seven seasons. However, the back-to-back national championship teams were in the top-12 in that category, and the Huskies ranked 30th last season in offensive rebounding percentage. Hines should certainly help there, as he ranked 11th among major conference players (ACC, Big East, Big Ten, Big 12, SEC) in offensive rebounding percentage (15.4%).

247Sports' Adam Finklestein said that Hines "has a chance to develop into one of the more impactful interior bigs in the country."

Storrs Central contributor Brian Kervick said that Hines' "combination of rim protection, rebounding and physical post play would be a natural fit for next year's UConn roster."

UConn could very well get at least another commit this week as Duke's Nikolas Khamenia visited campus on Wednesday, and Syracuse's Donnie Freeman is set to visit Storrs on Friday should he not commit to Kentucky. Expect not only another center, but possibly more forwards and a backup point guard. UConn has six scholarships left, with decisions from Solo Ball, Jaylin Stewart, Braylon Mullins and Jacob Ross still to be determined. The transfer portal closes on April 21.



UConn men's basketball celebrates their seniors in Storrs, Conn. on Feb. 28, 2026. The Huskies defeated the Pirates as they played their last game in Gampel of the 2025-2026 season.
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