MEN'S BASKETBALL: NO. 2 HUSKIES DOMINATE CREIGHTON IN OMAHA, 85-58

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Despite being one of the winningest teams in college basketball this season, the UConn men's basketball team raised concerns due to the number of close games during January.

On the last day of the month, the Huskies (21-1, 11-0 Big East) showed just why they are ranked No. 2 in the country with a dominant win at Creighton (12-10, 6-5 Big East), earning the largest win in the series history by either program, a series in which the Bluejays still lead 9-4.

"We've been looking for a performance like this for a while here, where we were able to get some separation and play a full 40-minute game," Dan Hurley said after the game. "Thrilled to get out of here with how well we played."

Braylon Mullins returned to action after missing Tuesday's Providence game with a concussion that was suffered in a thriller against Villanova on Jan. 24. For the second consecutive season, a freshman led the Huskies in scoring. Mullins's 16-point performance (including four 3-pointers) is nothing like the 38-point performance Liam McNeeley had at the CHI Health Center Omaha last season, but Mullins paved the way for the offense to flourish.

"He picked up right where he left before the injury," Alex Karaban said. "And to do it in this environment, too. We know how rowdy Creighton can be, so to go in there and be as confident as he was as a player was awesome to see.

In Big East play, Mullins has shot 60.6% from inside the 3-point line and 40.9% from long range. According to Stathead's Katie Sharp, he is the only Big East player shooting at least 60% on 2-pointers and 40% on 3-pointers in conference play, with a minimum of 20 2-point attempts and 20 3-point attempts.

"He's a special player, a special talent," Hurley said.

The Huskies had their second-highest total in 3-pointers made with 16, trailing a record 18 3-point field goal performance at Providence.

"That was bullet-proof basketball," Hurley said.

The Huskies were also impactful inside the 3-point line and shot 54.1% from the field, the highest shooting percentage in conference play. According to KenPom, the win was the sixth-highest offensive efficiency in conference play since the 1996-97 season, and the second-highest on the road.

The offense has raised concerns at times, but those concerns went away as UConn went up 12 spots in KenPom's offensive efficiency rating to 30th in the country. If the Huskies play at the same level on offense moving forward, there is no doubt that they can reach that top-10 ceiling Hurley has talked about throughout the season.

Alex Karaban and Silas Demary Jr. each had 15 points, but it was Solo Ball with the highest plus/minus rating with a +27, finishing the game with 11 points and three of his four made baskets coming from downtown.

Maybe the performance was sparked by Hurley claiming that this season's roster was nowhere near the level that the back-to-back championship teams were at. Overall, Connecticut responded in every way that he was concerned about. UConn won the rebounding margin by 13, took advantage of the open shots the team was getting and had four of the five starters in double figures, with Tarris Reed Jr. being the only one to not hit that clip with eight8 points on 4-of-4 shooting.

The bench production was on level with the win against Providence on Tuesday. After most of thea month of the Huskies not getting the bench production that the team has needed, UConn has scored 46 points off the bench in the last two contests.

The end of the first half was excellent, as Connecticut went on a 14-3 run. For Creighton fans, the blowout was reminiscent of a 24-point loss at Marquette on Tuesday.

"It's just us keeping our foot on the gas," Demary said. "I think Coach [Hurley] has been preaching just having that killer instinct, and I think today we were able to build on that. We were saying at halftime, those first four minutes [of the second half] are the most important of the half. I think that gets us going."

Those first four minutes were important indeed, as Creighton would close the margin to single digits before Mullins knocked down a 3-pointer and helped the team lead by as many as 30 points.

"It's just one of those nights where they were all making shots," Creighton head coach Greg McDermott said. "There's a reason they're ranked No. 2 in the country. They're a heck of a basketball team."

UConn has now won 17-straight games and is off to the best start in Big East play since the magical 1998-99 season.

"Obviously, the record, winning that many in a row and winning 21 is cool," Demary said. "But I think we've gotta continue to just play a full 40 [minutes], try to play as mistake-free as we can and just play together. I think we did a good job, and I think we're gonna start being able to do that consistently."

If UConn is to play a full 40 minutes on a consistent basis, it should start with a meeting with Xavier on Tuesday night in Hartford, Conn.



UConn men's basketball takes on Villanova at PeoplesBank Arena on Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026. Both teams were tied 61-61 at the end of the second half, but the Huskies toppled the Wildcats in overtime, winning 75-67. PHOTO BY ZACK MOLLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS