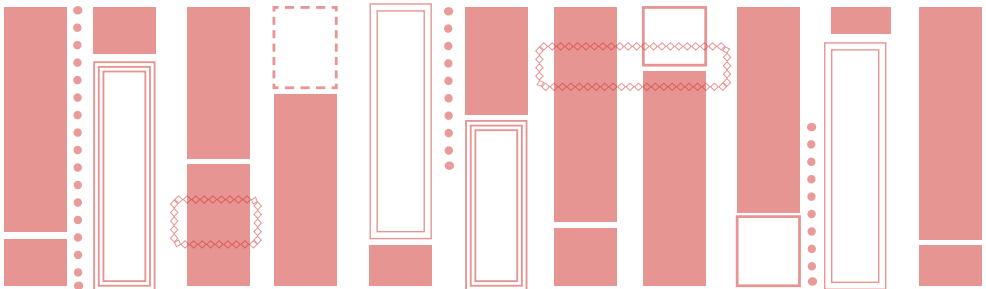




Sports



Men’s Hockey: Huskies set for pivotal home and home against UMass with Hockey East seeding on the line

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A crushing weekend at the hands of Boston College dropped UConn to third place in Hockey East.

A 5-2 defeat in Boston on Friday, Feb. 20, was followed by a heartbreaking 2-1 loss just 27 seconds into overtime. In front of over 10,000 fans in Hartford on Saturday, Connecticut could not finish the job after jumping out to an early lead.

The Huskies now have 37 points in conference play after gaining just one point last weekend. So, who is in fourth place? You guessed it: the UMass Minutemen.

The Minutemen went 6-1 in January to propel themselves in the standings. They are 3-2 in February ahead of this weekend’s two game set. UMass has 32 points in Hockey East play with a record of 11-9 in confer-

ence play.

The top four seeds are important in Hockey East because they get a home game in the conference tournament before heading to TD Garden if they win. If UMass gets all six available points this weekend, they will jump UConn for third place like Boston College did to Connecticut’s second place spot last weekend.

UConn had not lost since Jan. 17 before last weekend, so there is still room for error. With a record of 17-9-4 (11-7-2 in Hockey East), the Huskies are holding on to one of the final spots in the NCAA tournament. A first ever Hockey East Championship win would automatically clinch their spot in the tournament, but a strong showing throughout the entire tournament should go a long way for the Ice Bus.

Kaden Shahan was a bright spot in a rough weekend for the Huskies.

The sophomore scored in both matches against BC and has tallied

9 goals and 10 assists on the season. He also had plenty of great plays on Saturday that did not show up on the stat sheet — a valuable trait this late in the season.

Despite the two losses last weekend, Tyler Muszelik has been great in goal all season for the Ice Bus. Muszelik snagged 50 saves over the course of two games against the Eagles, including some beautiful game-saving ones which sent Saturday’s game into overtime. He was playing some of his best goalie all season before facing a strong BC offense. The New Jersey native shut down Northeastern and Maine for back-to-back shutouts. His presence will be felt in both Storrs and Amherst this weekend.

Jack Musa is having the best season by any skater on UMass this season. The junior forward has 14 goals on the year, including a hat trick against UMass Lowell at the beginning of the month. Musa has also dished out 17 assists, bringing his point total to 31 on the season.

Michael Hrabal has started most of the games in net for the Minutemen. In 24 games, Hrabal averages about 26 saves per game and has notched 4 shutouts, including one last week against UNH. However, he on average gives up two goals per game, a stat that the Huskies can take advantage of this weekend.

UConn is 11-17-4 against UMass all time. The squads faced off three times last season, each ending a different way. The first two games took place in October with UMass winning via shootout on their home ice. UConn got its revenge the next night with a 3-2 victory at home. The two teams did not see each other again until February when the Minutemen left Storrs with a 5-4 nail-biting victory.

Both teams know the stakes of this weekend’s tilts and their play should emulate that fact.

Puck drop is set for 7 p.m. on both days and fans can tune into ESPN+ to see the Huskies and the Minutemen battle.



The UConn men’s hockey team faces Merrimack College at Toscano Family Ice Forum on Dec. 6, 2025. The Huskies won with a final score of 5-2.
PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS