WOMEN'S HOCKEY: TIA CHAN CEMENTS LEGACY IN HOCKEY EAST CHAMPIONSHIP VICTORY

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It was business as usual for Tia Chan.

Through her pregame footwork drills, taking her spot in the middle of the defense and in the 24 regulation-time saves she secured, the goalkeeper remained as stoic as ever.

Chan brought her play to a new level in overtime. In the final game of her career on her home ice at the Toscano Family Ice Forum, the graduate student stopped 33 straight Northeastern shots over 35-plus minutes in double overtime.

Chan outlasted the entirety of Northeastern's scoring attack for almost 100 minutes before fellow captain Kyla Josifovic put the game on ice, scoring the game winning goal over three hours after the contest began to win the Hockey East Championship for No. 6 UConn (27-8-2, 17-6-1) for the second time in three years, 2-1 over No. 5 Northeastern (28-8-1, 21-2-1).

"Before we scored, there was a TV time out," UConn head coach Chris MacKenzie said after the game. "I basically told the team, 'I don't think our goalie is going to let us lose. I don't think she's going to let us lose, so somebody needs to make a play.

Get this thing done and we'll go from there.'"

Indeed, Chan didn't let them lose and made save after save in overtime on her way to being named the Most Valuable Player of the Hockey East Tournament. The Ontario native finished her historic performance with a career-high 57 saves.

"You gotta stop it," Chan said following the game. "Championship game, you gotta put it all on the line. So it doesn't matter. Two on [none], five-on-five in the zone; it doesn't matter.

You just have to stop the puck. That was my mindset."

Chan did in fact have multiple breakaway stops in overtime, including stopping Hockey East Player of the Year Stryker Zablocki in her tracks with 17:22 to go in the second overtime period. With Zablocki fast approaching and making her move towards the net with just feet separating herself and Chan, Chan stuffed the forward before killing another shot seconds later by Northeastern leading scorer Lily Shannon from inside following the ensuing draw.

"[Chan] came up big, and, like I said, being a former goalie, it was a fun goalie battle to watch," said Northeastern head coach Dave Flint, who played goalie at North Adams State College for four seasons.

Northeastern goalie Lisa Jönsson, who also posted a career-high in saves with 54, gave an arguably equally impressive performance. The two goalies combined for 111 saves over a combined 190 minutes and 14 seconds.

With two goalies playing at the top of their games, Jönsson blinked first.

After rejecting forward Claire Murdoch from dead on, Jönsson allowed a ricochet to slide in the direction of Josifovic. Josifovic sent one flying from the right pipe faster than Jönsson could turn her body. Slipping it inches away from Jönsson's skate, Josifovic cleared the UConn bench with her sudden death game-winning goal with 4:37 to go in the second overtime period.

"Honestly, it's kind of a blur," Josifovic said about the game-winning score. "I don't even remember it happening.

All I did was open my eyes and people are just like, on me celebrating. It was kind of really special."

After scoring the first postseason goal of her career in the quarterfinals against Maine, the senior also netted one in the semifinals against Holy Cross to score in all three Hockey East Tournament games for the Huskies.

The Huskies, who snapped a 0-7 run against Northeastern that began following their last win in the 2024 conference title game, scored both the first and last goal of the game.

Just over three minutes into the second period, Sadie Hotles sent UConn fans' arms rocketing to the sky, filling the stands with spinning white rally towels as she snuck it in through a scrum in front of the net after being denied multiple times by Jönsson. Christina Walker and Livvy Dewar worked the puck down the left side through traffic, channeling it towards the middle to give Hotles the opportunity to score.

Despite the early deficit and having to play on the road as a one seed, the regular-season conference champion Northeastern Huskies did not go down without a fight.

In a scrappy game where the two teams combined for 16 minutes in the penalty box, Northeastern's only goal came on a power play with 12:57 to go in the second.

Junior defender Rylie Jones took a crossing pass from Zablocki and drove a slapshot from between the face-off circles. The puck snuck under the glove of UConn captain Emma Eryou and past Chan for the game-tying score.

That was it for Northeastern, as that tie would hold for over an hour of game time before Josifovic's game-winner.

UConn's main defensive pairing of Eryou and Meghane Duchesne-Chalifoux were a big reason for that stalemate. The defense as a whole posted a season-high 39 blocks, with the former contributing 10 and the latter adding eight.

As UConn lined up to receive the Bertagna Trophy, it was only fitting that MacKenzie was joined by captains and top contributors Chan, Josifovic and Eryou.

In addition to Chan's MVP award, Murdoch, Josifovic and Julia Stephen were named to the All-Tournament team for UConn. Jules Constantinople and Morgan Jackson received the honor for Northeastern.

After claiming an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament with the win, the Huskies will head to University Park, Pa. on Thursday, March 12 to take on No. 9 Princeton (23-10) in the Penn State Regional for a chance to play in the Frozen Four. Puck drop is scheduled for 7 p.m. at the Pegula Ice Arena.

Though Chan's time at Toscano has now come to a close, what will remain is the memories of the student section holding up posters forming a brick wall after a big save and the chants of "Tia" echoing off the walls of the forum that encapsulate the legendary mark she left on the building with a historic night and career.



UConn women's hockey team goes up against the Holy Cross Crusaders in the Hockey East semi-finals. The game occured at the Toscano Ice Forum on Tuesday, March 3, 2026. PHOTO BY MORGAN BLANCHARD, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS.