Baseball: Hook C set for three-game Big East matchup against Xavier

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The UConn baseball team will look ahead to their three-game series against Xavier after falling 8-3 to the Quinnipiac Bobcats during their midweek matchup.

That game was a quiet first two innings with graduate student Austin Trumpour pitching a 1-2-3 inning for UConn in the first. His momentum carried into the second inning as he nailed two strikeouts.

Quinnipiac got the scoring started in the third inning to gain a 3-0 lead against UConn. The Huskies responded with a run of their own during the fifth inning when Nater Wachter hit an RBI single to bring Cam Righi in to score.

The Bobcats extended their lead over UConn, scoring two more runs in the top of the sixth, but Righi responded with a two-run homerun to keep the score close.

Quinnipiac's offense scored three more runs while UConn failed to generate offensive chances of their own, resulting in the loss.

The Huskies will have little time to rest as their three-game home series against Xavier begins on Friday. This is the first Big East matchup for both teams this season.

The Musketeers (8-18) are coming off a 4-3 walk-off win over the University of Cincinnati. Xavier was trailing throughout the early innings but responded in the seventh inning to even the scoreboard. Catcher Jonathan Fitz singled to left field to bring in Clay Burdette from second for the walk-off win in the bottom of the ninth.

Pitcher Joey Young started on the mound for the Musketeers pitching just over two innings and allowing just two runs scoring on four hits. Young had a season-high five strikeouts to just one walk.

Freshman pitcher Sam Hoeft closed out the game in the ninth inning, securing his first win as a Musketeer.

Entering the three-game series, UConn will need to keep an eye on these pitchers and Burdette, who leads the team in hits (25) and RBIs (16). Burdette also leads the Musketeers with a .385 batting average.

Freshman infielder Josh Stonehouse has an impressive seven home runs so far this season.

UConn enters the series having lost five of their last ten games. Despite the loss to Quinnipiac, the Huskies have continued to produce a strong offense on the field and on the mound.

UConn holds a 15-12 overall record against Xavier and in the Big East matchup this weekend, will look to add three more wins to their all-time series lead.

The three-game series will begin at Elliot Ballpark on Friday, March 27 at 3:05 p.m., and continue Saturday, March 28 at 2:05 p.m. The series will conclude on Sunday with a start time of 12:05 p.m. If fans are unable to make it to the game, each one will be available to watch on ESPN+.

The Big Apple: Yankees roll on Opening Day, Knicks look to wrap up season on a high note

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MLB Opening Day is officially here.

The New York Yankees began their season on Wednesday night in San Francisco against the Giants, and the Bronx Bombers were ready to go, winning 7-0. Max Fried went 6.1 IP, striking out 4 batters and allowing just 2 hits. The Yankees got after Logan Webb early, putting up a five-spot in the second inning. The rally was led by leadoff batter Trent Grisham, who knocked in two on a triple. The only rough patch on Wednesday night came from captain Aaron Judge, who struck out four times.

After this three-game series, the Yanks will head to Seattle for a three-game set and head back to the Bronx for their home opener against the Marlins.

The Yankees have big aspirations after a disappointing exit in the ALDS to the Toronto Blue Jays. The bats need to get going if they want to compete with the competitive AL East. Boston and Baltimore loaded up during the offseason. The Boston pitching staff is top-notch this season; O's Pete Alonso is ready to mash against his now division rival, the Yankees.

Looking ahead at the season, here are my AL East predictions:

New York Yankees (93-69)
Boston Red Sox (90-72)
Toronto Blue Jays (88-74)
Baltimore Orioles (80-82)
Tampa Bay Rays (71-91)

I believe New York has what it takes to win the division. Once they get key pieces like Gerrit Cole, Anthony Volpe and Carlos Rodon back from the IL, they will make a charge in the American League. Health is crucial for the Bronx Bombers; if they can remain healthy, expect them to make a significant impact in the American League.

Boston, as mentioned earlier, improved its roster in the offseason. The Red Sox's young talent in Roman Anthony and Ceddanne Rafaela and veteran pitchers in Garrett Crochet and Ranger Suarez will win far more games than the Sox did last year.

Toronto will cool off after its near World Series win in 2025. Losing shortstop Bo Bichette to the Mets is a killer for the Jays, as he was a key reason for the major success in their postseason run. I could be wrong, but I don't expect the Blue Jays to repeat last year's playoff run.

Baltimore and Tampa Bay's rosters don't scare me. Yes, the O's had a great 2024 and followed it up with a lackluster 2025. They added Pete Alonso, but I don't think one All-Star hitter can get Baltimore over the hump. Tampa Bay, on the other hand, doesn't have "that guy" anywhere on its roster. We can expect Junior Caminero to have a great season, but other than that, I don't see production from anywhere else on the diamond.

Shifting to the NBA, baseball season means the NBA playoffs are in sight.

The New York Knicks are currently on a seven-game winning streak as of writing. Yes, they've beaten up on the poor-performing teams in the league, but they are proving they can dominate when they need to. They stand at 48-25, just half a game behind Boston at 48-24 for the 2 seed. The 1-seeded Pistons are four games ahead of second, with their star Cade Cunningham out with a collapsed lung.

I don't expect the Knicks to catch the Pistons, but I do think they will finish one game ahead of the Celtics for the 2 seed. Have April 9 circled on your calendar; it's the final matchup between the rivals, which may decide who gets the 2 seed. Jayson Tatum made his return and picked up right where he left off. Boston is 6-2 since its return and is coming off a win against the defending champion Oklahoma City Thunder.



Three players from the Boston Red Sox entering an embrace while on the field. The Sox beat the Cincinnati Reid 3-0 on Thursday. Photo courtesy of @redsox on Instagram
PHOTO COURTESY OF @REDSOX ON INSTAGRAM

In the win streak, Mikal Bridges has been criticized by the media for his poor performances. Averaging just 10 points a game in the month of March, the forward is still effective on the floor. He's shooting 40.6% this month; the shots he normally makes aren't falling. Players slump, but the media is acting like he's been this way for his entire Knicks tenure. Bridges' two clutch defensive plays in the 2025 playoffs are the reason the Knicks advanced over Boston.

Yet ESPN's Stephen A. Smith, a "diehard Knicks fan," has made negative comments about the forward. The Knicks traded 6 first-round picks for him. Yes, it is a lot, but Smith talks about it like it was the worst thing that ever happened to the franchise.

Josh Hart shared his opinion on the situation. "For me, I think Stephen A., as a part-time Knicks fan, needs to shut the hell up. He barely knows guys that are on the team," Hart said.