FOOTBALL: EXPLOSIVE HUSKIES PICK UP SIGNATURE WIN OVER JAMES MADISON

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The University of Connecticut football team took down the James Madison University Dukes 46-22 at Rentschler Field on Saturday afternoon behind a dominant offensive attack.

UConn bounced back in a vengeful fashion after losing two straight games. They are now 2-0 against Sun Belt Conference opponents.

"Very proud of our team, very proud of the effort they showed today for all 60 minutes of the football game," UConn head coach Jason Candle said.

The offense hit a rhythm on the first drive as Cyncir Bowers had a few good runs getting UConn in the redzone. On third-and-three from the five yard line, Kalieb Osborne was sacked and Jack O'Connor trotted out to nail a 28-yard field goal for an early Connecticut lead.

James Madison responded right away as starting quarterback JC Evans used his arm along with his legs to pick up multiple firsts before taking it in himself from the one. James Madison attempted a fake extra point, but the holder fumbled the snap, and the fake was no good leaving the score at 6-3 JMU.

That lead was short lived as on the ensuing kickoff; Ky "Flash" Wilson fielded the kickoff and was off. The Youngstown State transfer found a hole and cut up field down the sideline for a 100-yard kick return score. The returner touchdown was the first for UConn since 2024 and the first 100-yard Connecticut score since 2010.

"I saw the hole off my teammates back and just hit it, made a move and got downfield," Wilson said. "Shoutout to Shamar Porter for coming down there just in case if [the defender] would've caught me."

The Huskies got a stop and were marching down the field before a critical fourth and one. They were lined up to go for it before Xavier Watson flinched, and the Huskies moved back five yards. O'Connor came back on the field for the 40-yard try. The kick was no good, and the Dukes got the ball back.

JMU worked its way down the field but faced a third-and-six a little past midfield. Evans aired it out for Corey Scott, but it was read beautifully and intercepted by Jayden Price. Unfortunately, K'Von Sherman was flagged for a roughing the passer penalty and the drive continued. Evans then connected with Braeden Wisloski for a 16-yard score to make it 13-10 with 2:02 remaining in the half.

Osborne had two quick passes to Julian Allen to set up a first down. He then found Shamar Porter who slipped through the cracks down the sideline for a 67-yard touchdown. Osborne tossed one of his best passes of the season to the reliable Porter who did the rest to make it 17-13. In just 28 seconds, the Huskies were back on top.

James Madison looked to be getting a drive started but a holding penalty backed them up to a third and long. On that play, Evans fired a pass over the middle that was intercepted by a diving Hayden Pegg. The junior's second interception in as many weeks set up the Huskies with 32 seconds and two timeouts.

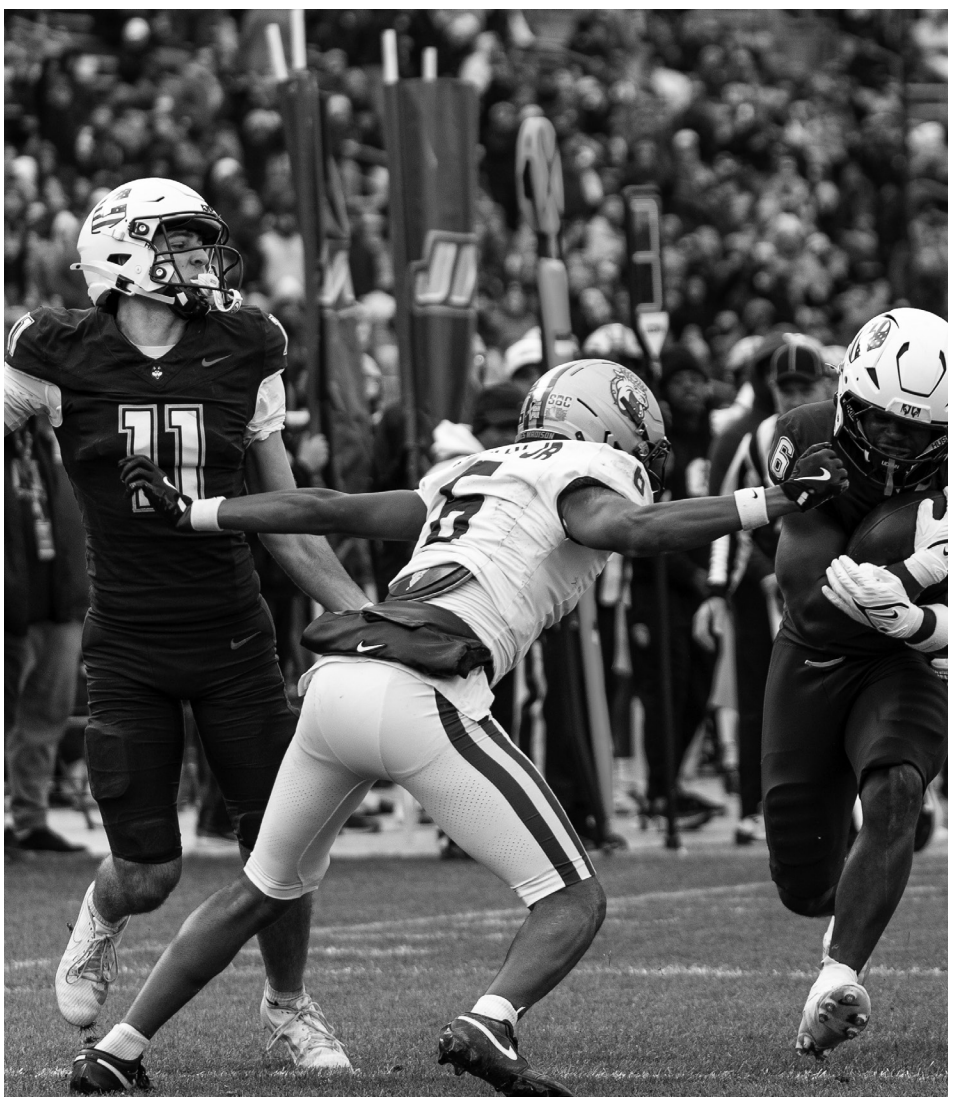
On the first play of the drive, Osborne broke free for a 36-yard run, and the Huskies had something going. Back-to-back pass interference calls on the Dukes set UConn up three yards from the endzone with six seconds to play. An incomplete pass left the Huskies with one second left on the clock, and the field goal team came out. This time, however, it was Mike Baker who hit the 21-yard field goal as the first half expired. The Huskies took a 20-13 lead into the locker room.

UConn got two quick stops thanks to a sack by Zakaih Saez and screen passes blown up by Price and Saxton Suchanic.

The Dukes looked like they got the ball back after sacking Osborne, but Ernest Willor Jr. was called for taunting, and the Connecticut drive continued. Later in that drive, it was third-and-19 because of a holding penalty. Osborne rolled out of the pocket and lofted it up to Cam Abshire, who made an incredible 51-yard grab down the sideline. Bowers carried the ball nine yards on second and goal to make it 26-13 after a failed extra point attempt.

James Madison surged down the field in an attempt to answer. The Dukes got into the redzone but were faced with a third-and-nine. The pressure came from UConn, and Esean Carter got a hand on the pass to bring out kicker Morgan Suarez. The seventh-year kicker booted in the 36-yarder to make it 26-16.

Osborne used his legs once again and picked up 21 yards on the first play of the next drive. An unnecessary roughness penalty on JMU set the Huskies up once again. Osborne fired it down the sideline for JD Willoughby on third and six, the junior made the grab and disposed his defender for a 35-yard score.



The UConn football team faces off against the James Madison University Dukes on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2026, at Rentschler Field. The game ended in a 46-22 Huskies win, their fifth of the season. PHOTO BY JACOB BLACKWELL, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

UConn got the ball right back thanks to back-to-back sacks by Pegg and Joshua Mickens. Osborne found Porter once again for a miraculous 40-yard grab before hitting a wide-open Bowers for a two-yard score.

Porter had his best game ever as a Husky, hauling in four catches for 135 yards and a touchdown.

"He's been outstanding, a guy that continues to improve," Candle said. "He's made his mark now on special teams and he's continued to impact the game on offense; he's a tough cover."

Evans responded with a three-yard rushing touchdown, but JMU was unable to recover the onside kick attempt, and Connecticut took over leading 39-22.

Bowers iced the game with his third score to make it 46-22. The running back had 123 yards on the ground with two touchdowns along with a receiving touchdown. The Huskies got into victory formation and UConn moved to 5-5, just one win away from their third straight bowl game.

They have two chances left to pick up a victory, including Saturday against Old Dominion. The game is also Senior Day, and kickoff is set for 3:30 at Rentschler Field.

LINSANITY RUNS: WHEN ROLE PLAYERS PLAY LIKE ALL-STARS

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If you ask most basketball fans today, they will know the name Jeremy Lin.

Is it because he was an all-star? No. Did he hit a super clutch shot in the playoffs? No.

Basketball fans only know who Lin is because he was an undrafted free agent who averaged 24 points per game over the span of 10 games in February 2012.

Jeremy Lin's run is known to many as "Linsanity," and while Lin's run was extraordinarily special, there have been other times in NBA history where players have played like an MVP for two weeks.

One of the most recent "Linsanity" runs came in the NBA bubble in 2020. TJ Warren was a forward for the Indiana Pacers at the time. Warren was having a great season, averaging 18.7 points per game and solidifying himself as one of the best players on his team.

However, Warren was no superstar or even All-Star level player. That is, until he was.

In the Pacers' first game in the NBA bubble, Warren dropped 53 points and shot 69% from the field in a win over the Philadelphia 76ers. The next game, Warren poured in 34 points, and he followed that performance up with a 32-point game where he shot a remarkable 76.5% from the field. After scoring 39 points two games later, Warren finally came back down to earth.

His run was historic.

Warren averaged 34.8 points per game and shot 60.5% from the field over the five-game stretch. While this run may not be as highly recognized as Lin's in 2012, many basketball fans today will know what you mean when you say that "Bubble T.J. Warren" was one of the greatest players of all time.

What was it about Lin's run, though, in 2012 that made it so special and popular?

Early on in the 2011-2012 NBA season, the New York Knicks were riddled with injuries at the point guard position. Thus, with New York in need of an emergency point guard, they decided to sign Lin to a non-guaranteed minimum contract.

The Knicks went into their matchup against the New Jersey Nets on February 4th, 2012 with an 8-15 record. Knicks' head coach Mike D'Antoni decided to put Jeremy Lin in the game late into the first quarter.

Let's just say he wouldn't regret it.

Lin went off for 25 points in that game, helping the Knicks defeat the Nets, 99-92. However, this game was no fluke for Lin.



Jeremy Lin and Kobe Bryant stand next to each other during a game. Jeremy Lin's performance in the 2012 game against Kobe Bryant and the Los Angeles Lakers was a memorable one, scoring 38 points that game. PHOTO COURTESY OF @JLIN7 ON INSTAGRAM.

In the next five games, Lin scored 28, 23, 38, 20 and 27 points, respectively. He continued this dominant play over the course of the next six games before he started to regress a bit. Lin went down with a knee injury in a game on March 24th and was sidelined for the rest of the season.

Over the 11-game stretch, Lin averaged 23.9 points per game and carried the Knicks to a 9-2 record.

The highlights of his historic run that have made it so memorable to this day are Lin's 38-point performance against Kobe Bryant and the Los Angeles Lakers and Lin's game-winning three-pointer against the Toronto Raptors.

For the rest of his career, Lin would never come close to the same level that he played at during that 11-game stretch in 2012, but the legend of "Linsanity" still lives on in basketball history as one of the greatest runs by an individual player ever.

Another legendary run took place during the second half of the 2016-17 NBA season when Dion Waiters of the Miami Heat went nuclear. Waiters was a solid player who was an important part of the Miami Heat at the time, but he never had a season in his career where he averaged more than 16 points per game.

On Friday, January 13 of the 2016-17 season, the Miami Heart had an abysmal 11-30 record. However, that is until Dion Waiters decided to flip the script.

Waiters went on to average 21.5 points per game over his next 11 games, helping the Heat win 14 games straight. In one of these wins, Waiters scored 33 points against the 38-6 Golden State Warriors who went on to win the championship that year.

Waiters continued to help the Heat win games. He scored 20 points or more in three out of the next four games and during a four-game stretch in March, Waiters would average 24.3 points. The Heat went 30-11 in the second half of the season, and much of that success can be attributed to Waiters' stellar play.

"Linsanity" runs are always fun to witness as fans. A role player who may not have much recognition playing like Michael Jordan is part of what makes sports so exciting to watch because; they are just so unpredictable. You never know who might go off for 40 or hit the game-winner in any given game.

Heck, it could be an undrafted free agent named Jeremy.