WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

UCONN OVERCOMES IOWA, inducts Azzi Fudd into Huskies of Honor

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STORRS - In the rafters of Gampel Pavilion hang banners, upon banners.

Banners from past National Championships, retired numbers from past players and the prestigious Huskies of Honor. With all the success from both programs, it can be a little daunting for a recruit to see all of those names.

For former University of Connecticut women's basketball player, Azzi Fudd, it was.

On Sunday afternoon, Fudd recalled to the media what it felt like stepping foot in the Huskies' practice gym and seeing all the names that donned those banners. From players like Breanna Stewart, Morgan Tuck and Gabby Williams; Fudd never expected to see her name up there.

That is, until Sunday afternoon, when Fudd received her very own banner in the rafters when she was inducted into the UConn Huskies of Honor.

After a five-year tenure for the Huskies, Fudd collected numerous accolades including being named the Most Outstanding Player for UConn's 2025 National Championship.

Over her career, she amassed 1,687 points and 270 rebounds, while persevering through various injuries. There were times when Fudd never expected herself to get to this point.

"I think that doubt creeps in for any athlete, but especially when you go through an injury, get that doubt that kicks in. Like, 'Will I make it back? Will I be a good player?" Fudd said to the media on Sunday. "All five years, we have been such a super special group, and I think being able to lean on each other and use each other as motivation and fuel, like regrowth."

In April of 2026, Fudd was drafted No. 1 overall to the Dallas Wings, but always looks back on her time at UConn fondly.

"They are involved in so many things, doing so many great things that the stuff they're doing on the court [...] that's just a piece of it," head coach Geno Auriemma said. "It's like your own kids, you know, basically. You want them to be growing out in the real world."

According to Fudd, if there's one thing she wants to be remembered by is that there is always a light at the end of the tunnel.

"I hope [the new players] can look at my time and see how imperfect it was and have that as inspiration and motivation," Fudd said to the media.

After Fudd greeted Auriemma to watch her number get unveiled, she made a speech to the crowd. However, in true Fudd fashion, she humbly noted the while the crowd may be there for her, they should be cheer for the game that was to come after.

Following being stunned by the Michigan Wolverines on Thursday evening, the No. 2 ranked Huskies came into Sunday's game against the No. 10 ranked Iowa Hawkeyes looking for redemption.

With a 91-79 win over the Hawkeyes and a new career high in points for Sarah Strong, the Huskies achieved successful reclamation.

While it was a slow start for the Huskies as they worked to cut their deficit against Iowa in the beginning moments of the first frame. With Ava Heiden's size and Chit-Chat Wright's tenacity in the paint, the Huskies struggled to combat the Hawkeyes at first.

That is, until Blanca Quiñonez ran to the scorer's table and checked into the game.

The combination of Quiñonez and Strong in the front court proved to be Iowa's Achilles heel, with Strong reaching a new career high in points.

Strong finished the matchup with 39 points and 10 rebounds, smashing her previous career record of 29 against Ohio State. It just happened to be one of those dominant games for the North Carolina native.

"She forgot to pack it for Ann Arbor, but it was there today," Auriemma said when asked about Strong's edge. "Every one us, I think, probably needs a reminder, needs a little nudge that doesn't happen by itself. You have to actively engage like that, and you have to create that mentality for yourself."

With Jana El Alfy finding herself in foul trouble early in the game, Auriemma and the Huskies relied heavily on Strong, Quiñonez and Olivia Vukosa.

Quiñonez followed Strong in leading the team with 21 points, shooting 7-10 from the field and collecting three rebounds and four assists.

As the clock wound down in the first half, and Heiden was in foul trouble for Iowa, Strong beat the buzzer with a triple, setting the score at 52-37 heading into the half.

As the second half of the game commenced, Iowa worked tirelessly to cut their deficit, getting as close to 10 points with just over three minutes to go in the final frame.

Although the Huskies' defense held steady, solidifying the win.

"I think we came back from the [Michigan] trip, and there was a lot of 'I have to be better.'" Auriemma said. "All of these things are things that you have to be intentional about [...] we have a long way to go with our defense."

Connecticut will hit the road again this Thursday to take on the No. 18-ranked Ohio State Buckeyes. Tip-off is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. from Schottenstein Center in Columbus, Ohio. Husky fans can tune in to the matchup on FS1.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Sarah Strong spearheads No. 2 UConn's "aggressive" response in 91-79 win over No. 10 Iowa

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Women's Basketball: Sarah Strong spearheads No. 2 UConn's "aggressive" response in 91-79 win over No. 10 Iowa

STORRS — It took 20 full minutes for Sarah Strong to smile.

She looked miserable for the first 19 — mostly because No. 2 UConn was struggling to pull away from No. 10 Iowa Sunday as the same, ugly scene that unfolded in the Huskies' 77-66 loss at Michigan last Thursday was playing out again in Gampel Pavilion.

Iowa was smothering UConn on the glass for most of the first half and, much to head coach Geno Auriemma's chagrin, Connecticut was relying primarily on (up to that point) an inefficient 3-point shot to keep pace with the Hawkeyes offensively.

Only after her buzzer-beating triple fell to end the second quarter, her ninth field goal in 18 minutes and the exclamation point of UConn's end-of-half blitz that pushed its lead to 15, did Strong — momentarily — eke out a grin.

"She was really upset about what happened and how it happened — how the whole thing evolved," Auriemma said, referencing the Michigan game. "She had a different look about her at practice. She had a resolve in the ways she was talking to the players and the example that she was setting."

Strong's career-high 39 points, 10 rebounds and three assists were the catalyst in UConn's (2-1) separation and eventual 91-79 win over Iowa (2-1), but the normally reticent superstar's career day was emblematic of the Huskies' need to respond after Thursday's demoralizing loss.

"I've been watching last game," Strong said postgame, "and knowing how I just didn't show up at all, I wanted to make an impact from the start."

Strong certainly made an early impact, forcing Iowa's linchpin, Ava Heiden, to the bench with two fouls in the first five minutes while carving out space in the paint with a wide array of elbow jumpers and off-the-glass hook shots.

Perhaps most importantly, though, after every Hawkeye basket, it was Strong who implored her teammates to run down the court on offense. It was Strong who emphatically ran the in-game huddles.

"Personally, I know I messed up in every aspect of the Michigan game," Strong said. "Coach told me that and I knew I had to be better for my team."

How has she balanced being a leader with her role as the team's undisputed No. 1 option?

"You don't really think about it, you just do it," Strong said. "I just play basketball."

Strong and sophomore wing Blanca Quiñonez combined for 60 of UConn's 91 points as Connecticut, buoyed by a 52.4% mark from 3, forced 12 turnovers, out-rebounded Iowa 38-22, scored 30 points in the paint and 15 on fast breaks.

There is still room for improvement, though: UConn was outscored in the paint, 36-30, and turned the ball over 17 times while allowing 30 field goals and 79 total points.

"We came back from the trip (to Michigan) and there was a lot of, 'I have to be better,'" Auriemma said, taking his glasses off and rubbing his eyes. "But all of these things are things you have to be intentional about. Like, 'I have to be better at what?' We have a long way to go with our defense. My eyes hurt."

Nonetheless, Connecticut responded — albeit for less time than Auriemma would've liked — following a deflating loss in the first week of the season thanks to Strong's herculean effort and leadership. Now the Huskies have to string 40 full minutes of championship-caliber basketball together against a top-shelf opponent. Thursday's trip to Columbus, OH for a date with No. 18 Ohio State is good chance to prove just that.

"We're a weird team," Auriemma said. "Remember I said Thursday, we won two of the four quarters. Well, today, they scored 14 (points in the first quarter), 23, 14 and 28. So, we're schizophrenic, a little bit."



Sarah Strong vs the Iowa Hawkeyes on Sunday at M&T Bank Center at Harry A. Gampel Pavillion in Storrs. Huskies took the win over the Hawkeyes with a final score of 91-79. MADISON HENDRICKS, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

MEN'S BASKETBALL

UConn's backcourt engine leads the way in win over No. 16 Michigan

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BOSTON — On Friday night, the No. 4 UConn men's basketball team faced off against the No. 16 Michigan Wolverines at TD Garden, with the Huskies' backcourt duo of Braylon Mullins and Silas Demary Jr. combining for 44 points in the 85-77 win.

"I feel like we're the best backcourt in the country, no matter who we go against on any given night," Demary said.

In the season opener on Nov. 2, Demary attempted just three shots. Instead of scoring, the Preseason Big East Player of the Year awardee contributed eight assists and eight rebounds in the win.

"There's going to be nights, just like last time we played in Boston versus BYU where he went for 20-plus [points]," Dan Hurley said after the opener against Gardner-Webb. "Then there's going to be nights where he's kind of flirting with a triple-double."

Fast-forward to Friday's marquee matchup against No. 16 Michigan, Demary fired off 14 of his 17 shots in the first half, scoring 21 points. It was the most shot attempts Demary has taken since February 2025, to which he let out a chuckle when he heard that statistic.

"Coaches told me to be an All-American point guard. So that's just being able to go out there and run the offense, and if it's time to score, score," Demary said.

Demary picked apart the Wolverine defense in the first half, driving the lane and scoring floaters with ease. Demary also nailed a pair of three-pointers, one of which at the 9:16 mark which he argued should have been an and-1.

Demary's counterpart, Mullins, opened the game for the Huskies on a wide-open three-pointer that resulted in nothing but string music.

A few minutes later, following an offensive rebound, Nik Khamenia used a head fake to scramble the Wolverine defense. He then dished the ball to a wide-open Mullins at the left wing, who hit the triple to force the first Michigan timeout and ignite a deafening U-C-O-N-N chant rippling through TD Garden.

Mullins missed last year's game at TD Garden against BYU and mentioned he was looking forward to playing this game.

"The environment was great, and UConn brings a crowd. It was definitely exciting," Mullins said postgame. "I'm hoping many more games in the future it is like that again."

The sold-out Boston crowd was going bonkers in the first half; boos filled the air every time a fan with a Michigan shirt came up onto the jumbotron, followed up by roars of excitement when a UConn fan would flash on screen.

Unlike the first half, Demary's first shot attempt came with just under 12 minutes to play in the game, right when Michigan was mounting a brief comeback.

The duo of Mullins and Demary kicked off UConn's tough nonconference schedule with an impressive performance, proving they are ready for primetime hoops. The end of November sees an even bigger test as UConn faces No. 5 Arizona and No. 2 Duke — two heavyweight showdowns that will truly define how far this backcourt can take them.



No. 4 UConn men's basketball faces Gardner-Webb on Monday, Nov. 2, 2026, at PeoplesBank Arena in Hartford. The Huskies defeated the Runnin' Bulldogs 86-46 in their regular-season opener, earning head coach Dan Hurley his 200th win at UConn. PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS