VOLLEYBALL: UCONN HITS THE ROAD TO TAKE ON SETON HALL

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UConn women's volleyball team sophomore, Maja Daca, leaps into the air and serves a ball, scoring an ace on Oct. 31, 2026. The Huskies went on to beat Georgetown 2-3 for their second straight win with a 10-15 record overall.
PHOTO BY PANAGIOTIS TROUGAKOS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Tonight, the Huskies will travel to South Orange, N.J., for a Big East matchup against the Pirates. In the all-time series, UConn leads Seton Hall 12-7. Coming off two wins, UConn is looking to ride their hot streak and increase this to 13-7.

Kills, blocks and defense in general will be especially important in this game. This was evident earlier this season in the Huskies' 3-1 victory over the Pirates. UConn out blocked Seton Hall 16-4 and recorded 53 kills while limiting them to a .171 hitting percentage.

For a similar feat to be achieved, the Huskies will rely on their key players in these categories. Courtney Grayson leads the team in blocks, averaging 1.04 per set and accumulating 96 on the season. Grayson is followed by Jordyn Hughes with 69 and Sydney Borowy with 41. Strong blocking at the net will be essential to disrupting the Pirates' offense. Limiting Seton Hall's attacking opportunities creates more chances for the Huskies to control the pace of the match.

As for defense in general, Hughes and Hazuna Akishige hold down the back row. Akishige leads the team in digs, averaging 3.13 per set and totaling 291 for the season. Hughes acts as the utility player, performing above average in all aspects of defense and filling in where she's needed.

On offense, Borowy leads the team in kills, averaging 2.87 per set and totaling 258 for the season. She's followed by Grayson with 204 and Maja Daca with 189. These offensive threats could make it more challenging for Seton Hall to focus its defensive efforts on just one player. The consistent contributions of Borowy, Grayson and Daca may prove to be a difficult force for the Pirates to break through.

A victory in tonight's game would put UConn's overall record at 11-15 and their conference record at 4-9. With the regular season approaching its conclusion, the Huskies are out of time to qualify for the Big East tournament. However, conference games are still important, as UConn has the chance to improve their conference standing in general. Coming off a three-game losing streak, Seton Hall currently sits with an overall record of 9-15 and a conference record of 1-11.

This contest kicks off a series of two road games the Huskies will play in the back half of the week. After the Pirates, they will take on St. John's on Nov. 7.

The game will be streamed on YouTube and start time is set for 5 p.m.

FIELD HOCKEY: TOP-SEEDED HUSKIES EYE BIG EAST CHAMPIONSHIP

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UConn field hockey will look to claim its 21st Big East Tournament Championship this weekend in Philadelphia.

The Huskies are coming off a 14-1 regular season and are currently riding the nation's second-longest winning streak with 11 consecutive victories.

Several UConn players were recognized as Big East Field Hockey award winners, which were released Thursday, highlighted by freshman forward Lucy Zich winning Co-Offensive Player of the Year and Freshman of the Year.

Senior goalkeeper Natalie McKenna received Goalkeeper of the Year and the UConn coaching staff, led by head coach Paul Caddy, was awarded Coaching Staff of the Year.

As for the all-league teams, junior defender Fien Hollander, senior midfielder Olivia McKenna, Natalie Mckena and Zich were selected to the All-Big East First Team. Senior midfielder Maya Everett was recognized on the second team.

UConn went unbeaten in conference play for the first time in seven years, clinching the program's 21st Big East regular season title on its way to the top seed in the Big East Field Hockey Championship bracket.

The Huskies will face fourth-seeded Villanova (10-7) in the semifinal on Friday. The winner of the match will take on No. 2 seed Liberty (12-5) or No. 3 seed Old Dominion (13-4) in the title game on Sunday.

Villanova is led by graduate forward Ava Borkowski, a First Team All-Big East selection, who is tied for second in the Big East with UConn's Zich in goals (12). Borkowski has been the engine of the Wildcats offense for multiple years now, one that ranks tenth in the country this season.

In fact, every team in the Big East Tournament besides UConn ranks in the top ten in goals per game. Liberty is fifth (3.47), Old Dominion is eighth (3.29) and Villanova is tenth (3.18). The Huskies have the 26th highest total (2.53).

Now, UConn has held those three premiere offenses to just three goals combined when it has faced them this season. Stellar defense and timely goal scoring has been the formula for Caddy's squad all season long, and it should be no different in postseason play.

Aside from Borkowski, Second Team All-Big East forward Colleen Finnan and First Team All-Big East defender Gemma Lysaght have been standouts for Villanova. Finnan has provided a secondary scoring punch for the Wildcats and is tied for sixth in the Big East in goals with nine. Lysaght has served as the Swiss army knife, affecting all facets of the game whether it be goal scoring, assisting or being a stopper on defense. Lysaght is 11th in the conference with eight goals, and fifth in assists with eight as well.

Villanova went 3-3 in Big East play, falling to UConn (3-1), Old Dominion (4-3 OT) and Liberty (2-1). The Wildcats' 2-1 win over Providence on Oct. 23 was a pivotal victory that propelled them to securing the fourth spot in the standings, giving them a postseason berth.

UConn last played Villanova for its home opener on Sept. 18. Junior forward Ellie Goldstein had a season-high two goals in the match, while freshman forward Lucy Zich tallied a goal and an assist. Borkowski scored the lone goal for the Wildcats.

Perhaps another meeting with Villanova could rejuvenate Goldstein, who was awarded Big East Offensive Player of the Week on Sept. 22 due to her multi-goal performance. Goldstein has not scored since and has moved into a bench role for the past month.

If the Huskies can limit the Wildcats' firepower on offense, and convert on penalty corners to fuel their own goal scoring like they have been doing all season, UConn will advance to its third-straight Big East Championship.

In the event the Huskies face Liberty, it will be a Big East Championship rematch from last year. UConn lost to the Flames 2-1 in overtime a season ago.

The squads are entirely different now, however, and both programs' offenses are being led by freshman sensations. Zich is a seven-time Big East Freshman of the Week, and the only player to interrupt her dominance all season has been Liberty's first team all-league selection, freshman forward/midfielder Clarisa Iudicello, who has won the award the other three times. Zich and Iudicello have been in a back-and-forth race all season for the conference freshman goal lead, although Zich has separated herself recently with 12 compared to Iudicello's 10.

Zich shared the Offensive Player of the Year with Liberty's junior forward Josefina Tomasi, who has nine goals and four assists on the season.

The programs met in Storrs earlier in the year on Sept. 25, where UConn won 3-2 as Zich scored twice.

If the Huskies survive Villanova and meet Old Dominion in the final, it will be a battle between the Big East's top goal scorer and goalkeeper.

The Big East Defensive Player of the Year, Old Dominion's junior defender Serena Langendoen, leads the conference by a wide margin with 17 goals, the third-highest total in the nation. UConn's Natalie McKenna's 0.72 goals against average leads the Big East and ranks fourth in the country.

Natalie McKenna and Connecticut won the battle just a couple weeks ago on Oct. 23, when Langendoen fired off five unsuccessful shots as McKenna tallied four saves in the game to secure a 3-0 shutout win over the Monarchs.

UConn will start its quest for its first Big East Tournament Championship since 2024 in the semifinal against Villanova at 1 p.m. on Friday. Shall they advance, the final is scheduled for noon on Sunday. All games will be played at Howarth Field on the campus of Temple University and can be streamed on ESPN+.



Midfielder Maya Everett passes the ball during the UConn field hockey team's game against Fairfield on Friday, Oct. 30. The Huskies won 3-1 and sealed an undefeated regular season.
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