Sports

WOMEN'S SOCCER: HUSKIES' SEASON HANGING BY A THREAD HEADING INTO REGULAR SEASON FINALE

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The UConn women's soccer team's season has been defined by the draw.

Finishing a program-record nine games in a tie, the Huskies are just one draw shy of tying the NCAA Division I women's soccer record for the most draws in a season at 10.

UConn will have one final chance to match the peculiar record on Saturday, though the team will need a win should it hope to continue its season.

The Huskies (4-4-9, 2-2-5 Big East) will head to Pennsylvania on Saturday to face Villanova (11-1-5, 6-1-2 Big East) with their season on the line.

The Wildcats are 15th in the nation with 7.35 points per contest, almost five more than the Huskies' 2.59 per contest average, according to the NCAA website. The Huskies are tied for 281st in Division I in the category.

While the Huskies have scored 16 goals on the year, the Wildcats' three top scorers — forwards Avrie Nelsen, Dez Zapata and Morgan Kotch — have combined for 19 on their own. As a team, the Wildcats have scored nearly three times as many goals as the Huskies with 40.

Kotch leads the Big East with 3.82 shot attempts per game, while Zapata is second in the conference with 19 points, according to the Big East stats page. Zapata's mark is aided by a Big East-leading seven assists.

UConn's best hope for overcoming the staggering scoring difference may very well be the continuing reemergence of senior midfielder Anaya Johnson. After missing the start of the year and not making her season debut until Sept. 25 against Vermont, Johnson has hit her stride since Big East play began against St. John's on Sept. 30.

Johnson has scored three goals in that span, including the game winner against Georgetown last Saturday. Johnson is now tied for the team lead in goals with three alongside freshman midfielder Maeve Staunton.

Villanova has allowed just seven goals in the net this season, with graduate goalkeeper Hannah Dickinson picking up a pair of Big East Goalkeeper of the Week awards and a conference-leading 10 shutouts.

Beyond just the Huskies' scoring struggles and the Wildcats' success on both halves of the field, a win may be hard to come by for UConn based on recent historical results.

The Huskies have not won on the road against the Wildcats since 2012. Across the 20 seasons prior to 2026, UConn won just one away contest against Villanova, going 1-1-4.

Even if it does come away with a win, UConn would need some help from the rest of the Big East to make the conference postseason tournament.

In addition to a victory over Villanova, the Huskies would need DePaul (5-6-6, 2-4-3 Big East) to either win or draw on the road against Creighton (7-7-3, 3-4-2 Big East).

The Huskies would also need either St. John's (3-10-4, 0-6-3 Big East) to win or draw against Seton Hall (7-2-6, 3-2-4 Big East) or Providence (5-4-9, 3-3-3 Big East) and Marquette (7-3-8, 3-2-4 Big East) to finish their contest in a draw.

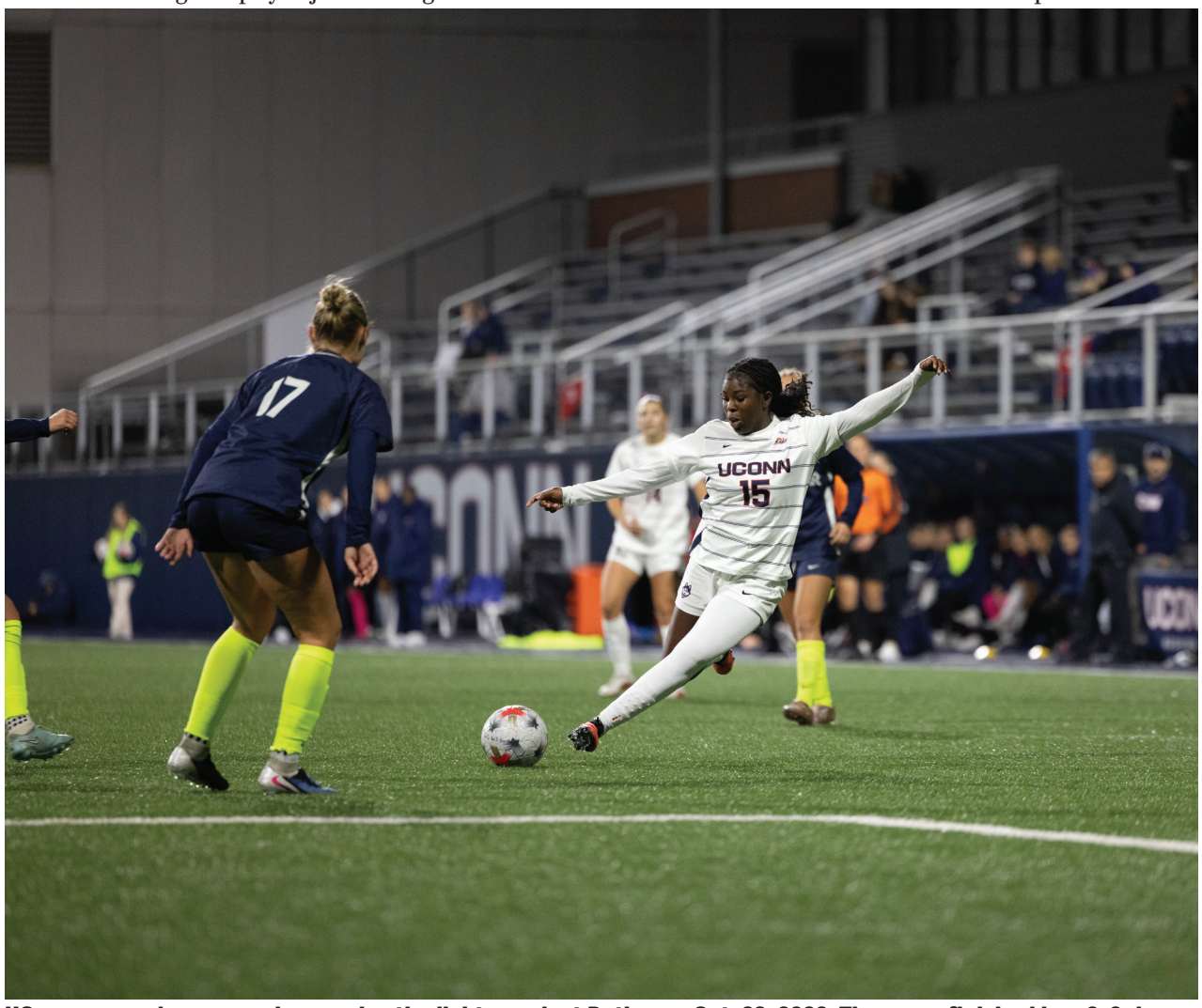
St. John's has yet to win a game in Big East play and has lost five straight contests, part of a 10-game winless streak dating back to Sept. 19. That makes a Providence and Marquette draw far more likely, though Marquette also needs a win to make the tournament.

The Huskies can clinch as high as the No. 3-seed should all three of the above scenarios occur.

Xavier (12-2-3, 6-0-3 Big East) and Villanova have each already claimed the top two seeds. Marquette and Seton Hall are currently tied for third, while Providence also sits ahead of the Huskies in the standings.

Butler (7-5-5, 2-3-4 Big East) and Creighton are each in the hunt, with the Bluejays sitting tied with UConn in the standings. DePaul, Georgetown (5-7-5, 2-5-3 Big East) and St. John's have been eliminated.

Kickoff at the Higgins Soccer Complex is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. The contest will stream live on ESPN+.



UConn women's soccer plays under the lights against Butler on Oct. 28, 2026. The game finished in a 0-0 draw.
PHOTO BY PANAGIOTIS TROUGAKOS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

MEN'S BASKETBALL: HUSKIES SET FOR CHAMPIONSHIP REMATCH AGAINST NO. 16 MICHIGAN IN BOSTON

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Championship rematches in college basketball are hard to come by, let alone in the first week of the regular season. The rematch of the 2026 national championship is on tap Friday night as the No. 4 UConn men's basketball team seeks revenge on the No. 16 Michigan Wolverines at TD Garden in Boston, in the TNT Sports Hall of Fame Series. This will be only the 11th time since 1996 that the two finalists will meet in the following season.

Out of the gauntlet of the Huskies' nonconference schedule, Jayden Ross had this game in particular circled on his calendar.

"The second game [of the season] is definitely on my mind," Ross said during an interview in September.

UConn will head to Boston carrying a bitter taste, having fallen just short in that 69-63 national championship defeat — coming exactly seven months to the day before Friday night's rematch.

The Wolverines look different this season compared to last year, following a summer that saw Aday Mara, Yaxel Lendeborg and Morez Johnson Jr., from the 2025-2026 squad that Dan Hurley described as "the Monstars," selected in the NBA Draft lottery. It is the first time Michigan has produced multiple lottery picks in the same year. Another departure for the team is head coach Dusty May, who was hired by the Dallas Mavericks. Former assistant coach Mike Boynton Jr. was hired in July as the 19th head coach in the program's history.

Unlike UConn's 40-point blowout, the defending champions kicked off their season with a much tighter battle where they defeated Oakland Golden Grizzlies 84-68. The Golden Grizzlies hung around for a bit longer than expected, and they cut the lead to as close as seven points with eight minutes to play in the second half. Trey McKinney and Roddy Gale Jr., both Michigan returners, each led the Wolverines with 17 points.

Although they lost three of their starters, Michigan retained point guard Elliot Cadeau, who scored a game-high 19 points to knock off the Huskies in April. The fourth-year player had a slow start in the opener, scoring just seven points on 1-of-5 shooting, including five turnovers as well.

A vital addition to the Wolverines is Tennessee transfer J.P. Estrella, who put up a 15-point, 12 rebound double-double in the contest against Oakland. Estrella averaged 10 points per game last season for the Volunteers in only 13 starts. Now entering his fourth season, the 6-foot-11-inch forward will have a much more important role for Michigan.

Moustapha Thiam, a Cincinnati transfer, will fill the Mara role this season. The towering 7-foot-2-inch junior averaged 12.8 points and 1.6 blocks per game last season. Thiam missed Monday's game against Oakland due to illness.

The Huskies are coming off a dominant 86-46 win in the season-opener against Gardner-Webb on Monday night. Braylon Mullins led the way with 20 points while knocking down four three-pointers in nine attempts.

"I think just playing this for game two just shows what our nonconference [schedule] is like. It's a really good team and you've got to bring your all," Mullins said. "It's going to be good to play this team again just to see what they're about."

Tipoff from TD Garden is set for 8 p.m. and can be watched on TNT or TruTV.



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 PARKER MEYERS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS