DAVID BENEDICT DISCUSSES GAMPEL PAVILION NAME CHANGE, NEED TO GROW REVENUE



The M&T Bank Center sign installed on the fencing of Gampel Pavilion, Oct. 26. 2026 in Storrs, CT. Gampel Pavillion will now be called "M&T Bank Center at Gampel Pavilion" following a new naming rights deal.
PHOTO BY MADISON HENDRICKS, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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Inside the East Entrance of Gampel Pavilion, a worn and chipped plaque from the Jan. 27, 1990, dedication ceremony for the arena hangs between two glass doors, going largely unnoticed as fans file into the Basketball Capital of the World.

"In loving memory of Fannie and Benjamin Gampel by Edith and Harry A. Gampel '43," the start of the plaque reads.

Outside the East Entrance Friday morning, construction workers moved steadfastly to attach large white letters against the new metal fencing on top of the concrete overhang above the entrance.

Letter by letter, the words "M&T Bank Center" appeared, spelt out in letters far larger than those used for the comparatively small "Gampel Pavilion" sign sitting below. Just days after UConn announced that they had agreed to a multiyear deal with M&T Bank to add the company's name to the Pavilion, the new branding already dominated the intersection of Hillside Road and Jim Calhoun Way.

While a sea of students, alumni and fans have come forward to express both displeasure and understanding in the new addition to the name, UConn Athletic Director David Benedict didn't give himself that same option.

"I don't get the choice, or at least I don't give myself the option of choosing whether I like it or not," Benedict said on Friday during a media tour of the newly renovated arena.

With the first phase of a $99.4 million renovation process soon to be complete and a second phase to follow, paid for by "UConn 2000" bonds, Benedict said that he thinks people will recognize the renovated space's potential for a lasting return on investment.

"We have a commitment and an expectation at UConn that we are the best in class with respect to men's and women's basketball," Benedict said. "That comes with a cost, plain and simple."

That cost for M&T Bank was $32.5 million across the 20-year span of the deal. In addition to the name, other changes include M&T Bank advertising on Alumni Court and security personnel swapping out their customary yellow jackets for brand new green jackets featuring the arena's new logo.

The agreement was not the first partnership related to the basketball programs announced this preseason. UConn athletics also agreed to an expanded partnership with UConn Health, including the introduction of jersey patches for both the men's and women's teams.

Earlier this fall, the logo of real estate company William Raveis showed up at the 25-yard lines at Rentschler Field.

"We have to generate revenue," Benedict said. "If we don't, the alternative is we can continue to have old, outdated facilities. We can continue to show up in the wintertime and worry about the roof leaking or whether or not we're going to even host a game and be embarrassed nationally, or we can do the things and take advantage of opportunities where people want to invest in what we're doing."

Harry A. Gampel and Dee Rowe were two of the first individuals who saw the value of investing in the arena. Gampel donated $1 million toward the arena, while Rowe spearheaded the launch of the fundraising arm of the UConn athletics department and helped raise millions of dollars for the arena.

Benedict called both men visionaries, as evidenced by their continued presence at the arena. Even with change, Gampel's name is still on the building. Rowe is honored by a statue inside the arena. The former coach of the men's program was also inducted into the team's Huskies of Honor as a member of the inaugural class in 2007.

Even new additions from the renovation pay homage to the arena's past.

The plastic siding on player's lockers features the printed design of triangles meant to resemble the original roof of the arena. The triangles comprising the cushions affixed to the lockers in the coach's locker room are meant to do the same.

"I appreciate change and the challenge with change," Benedict said. "I certainly appreciate the iconic nature of the name of this building."

While Benedict said college athletics aren't run strictly as a business, he also recognized the importance of resource acquisition and leveraging available assets to increase revenue and support a "national championship-level program."

"The alternative is we choose not to do these things, and ultimately, we won't be competitive," Benedict said. "That's just the realities of it. It's not a scare tactic; it's just the reality."



New "M&T Bank Center" signage on Gampel Pavilion. The basketball hub was renamed following a new naming rights deal.
PHOTO BY MADISON HENDRICKS, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Men's Soccer: HUSKIES LOOK TO EXTEND WINNING STREAK AGAINST ST. JOHN'S



UConn men's soccer forward Justin Hubbard signs a Junior Husky's poster after playing Providence on Oct. 24, 2026. The Huskies won the game versus Providence 2-0 and set their overall record to 7–6–2.
PHOTO BY PANAGIOTIS TROUGAKOS, CONTRIBUTOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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The UConn men's soccer team (7-6-2, 3-2-0 Big East), has recorded back-to-back shut outs in its past two games and will look to add to their win column against St. John's (5-7-2, 1-2-2 Big East) Tuesday night.

The Huskies most recently defeated the Providence College Friars 2-0 on Saturday, earning crucial points in conference play.

Junior forward Alfonso Arrendono was a key player for UConn against the Friars, scoring twice in the opening 13 minutes to secure an early lead for the Huskies. His goals gave UConn early control of the match, while goalkeeper Kyle Durham and the Huskies' defense remained strong against Providence to claim the shutout.

The victory followed a 1-0 road win over Marquette on Oct. 16 when Arredondo scored the game-winning goal while Durham also recorded six saves to help UConn earn its first shutout in Big East play.

The consecutive shutouts mark an important turnaround for the Huskies, who had previously fallen in back-to-back games against Bryant and DePaul. With the two wins in a row, UConn will look to add to their winning streak highlighting both their defensive and offensive roster in Tuesday's matchup.

Durham will remain a strong player and St. John's will need to watch out as the redshirt junior goalkeeper has recorded six saves in each of UConn's last two victories. Durham's ability to remain strong in net will be crucial against a fellow Big East team looking to capitalize on a home-field advantage.

Offensively, Arredondo's recent performances help showcase the strong scoring abilities UConn has as it looks to add to their Big East wins. His two-goal game against Providence demonstrated the Huskies' ability to establish an early lead which is something they will need to do to ensure they beat the Red Storm.

St. John's entered Big East play with a 4-4 overall record before defeating Villanova 2-1 on Sept. 18. They fell in conference matchups against Georgetown and tied against Creighton.

Sophomore goalkeeper Nico Bezama is a player the Huskies will need to watch as he entered the weekend with five shutouts, ranking among the Big East leaders in the category. Despite allowing three goals against Seton Hall, Bezama recorded six saves showcasing his ability to remain strong in the net.

Luca Fargnoli and Travis Thompson lead the team in goals scored (3) and are two strong offensive players for the Red Storm. Fargnoli has provided a consistent attack presence while Thompson gives St. John's multiple chances to generate scoring opportunities against the Huskies.

Tuesday's matchup was originally scheduled for Sept. 26 but was postponed due to weather. With the Big East tournament approaching, each conference win is important for the Huskies who look towards the post-season.

UConn will kick off against St. John's at 6 p.m. at Belson Stadium in Queens, NY. Fans can watch the game on ESPN+.



UConn men's soccer Midfielder Grant Emerhi goes against a Providence Defender on Oct. 24, 2026. The Huskies went on to win the game 2-0.
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