FOOTBALL: LOOKING FORWARD AND LOOKING BACK AT THE BYE WEEK

by Brayden Gorski,
STAFF WRITER,
HE/HIM/HIS,
brayden.gorski@uconn.edu
and Elliot Koplas,
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT,
HE/HIM/HIS,
ejk23008@uconn.edu



UConn football takes on Syracuse on Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026, at Rentschler Field in East Hartford, Conn. Syracuse defeated the Huskies 42-41 in overtime.

PHOTO BY PARKER MEYERS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The UConn Huskies are currently in a much-deserved bye week sitting at a record of 3-3. A rollercoaster season under first-year head coach Jason Candle hits its halfway point, with Connecticut just three wins away from their third consecutive bowl appearance and their fourth in five years.

If you've missed the first six games of the season, here is what you need to know and what you should look out for during the next six games of Husky football.

Looking Back

The Huskies started off with a statement season opener in front of their home fans, routing Lafayette 56-7. UConn quarterback Kalieb Osborne was named the starter just one day before the first game. So far, Osborne has accounted for 16 touchdowns with 10 through the air and six on the ground.

The following week, Maryland visited the Huskies. Due to an explosive second and third quarter from the Terrapins, they handed UConn a 38-14 loss. It was the team's first Power Four opponent of the season but a big learning curve for the program. They took the game film and blew Southern Mississippi out the following weekend in their first road game of the season. Osborne accounted for four touchdowns with two in the air and two on his feet in the monstruous 48-20 win. The defense showed up for the Huskies in this one with Anas Luqman securing a 24-yard pick-six for UConn.

The momentum seemed to carry into the following week for UConn going up 14-0 against Miami University in the first quarter. However, a quick response by the RedHawks tied the game going into the half. Miami's quarterback David McComb capped a 90-yard drive with a 10-yard touchdown run followed by a 57-yard pass to Brendan Loftus. The quick turnaround pressured the Huskies for the first time of the season and running back Cyncir Bowers responded with a touchdown run to tie up the game late in the third quarter. A late field goal secured the comeback victory for the RedHawks, handing UConn their second loss going into a big week against Syracuse.

The Syracuse game showed a lot about the Huskies and their willingness to fight back, especially after blowing a 14-point lead to Miami the previous week. The Orange jumped out to an early lead and went into halftime up 27-14. Another touchdown in the third quarter gave the Orange a 20-point lead. The Huskies responded as Bowers took off in the second half, ending the game with 163 yards and two touchdowns. The first came in the third quarter, capping off a 75-yard drive with a 10-yard rushing touchdown. After a big defensive stop, the Huskies quickly cashed in with a three-play 43-yard possession. After a forced turnover, Bowers took over again, this time on a house call going 71 yards for the score.

The game continued into overtime, where the Huskies scored first in two plays before Syracuse was given an opportunity. After a pair of penalties, the Orange were pressured to score on a fourth and 17, and they did just that. Quarterback Amari Odom connected with wide receiver Umari Hatcher for the score before Odom rushed on the two-point conversion, giving the Orange their second consecutive overtime win against the Huskies.

Despite the loss, a lot was displayed by the Huskies including their willingness to fight back after going down and facing adversity. UConn wide receiver Javon Brown left the game late in the second half and needed to be stretchered off. An emotional time for the Huskies amid battling back in the game and now a concern about one of their teammates was on their mind. However, the team regrouped and fought back for their injured teammate and nearly completed the comeback victory.

The following week, UConn controlled the rushing game against Temple, totaling four rushing touchdowns led by Trey Cornist. Cornist carried for 114 yards and a score on seven attempts in the 34-20 victory. Back to a .500 record for UConn heading into the bye week, but an aggressive second half schedule awaits them.

Looking Ahead

UConn has two road games remaining and four games left at Rentschler Field, highlighted by back-to-back games at The Rent against North Carolina and James Madison. North Carolina is coached by Patriots legend Bill Belichick and JMU made the College Football Playoffs last season, and former Florida coach Billy Napier is at the helm in Harrisonburg, Va.

The Tar Heels are better than their 3-2 record shows. UNC put up a fight against Clemson and Notre Dame while beating ranked Pitt last Saturday. Led by quarterback Billy Edwards Jr. and tight end Jelani Thurman, the North Carolina offense has been a force. The Nov. 7 matchup will draw eyes in New England and nationally. A win for the Huskies would be similar pandemonium to their victory against Duke last season.

James Madison is off to a scorching 6-0 start and received votes on the AP Top 25 Poll this week. The high-powered offense has scored over 40 points three times, including 87 against Wagner. This could cause trouble for a young UConn defense who have struggled against the more physical Maryland and Syracuse teams. This game on Nov. 14 will be one of the best G6 games of the season.

The next biggest game on the schedule is a rivalry game against an unsung UMass Amherst team. The Minutemen are 4-2 with a chance at their first even bowl game. UMass was 0-12 last season, and this turnaround has brought new life to the program. If star quarterback William "Pop" Watson returns for injury by Oct. 23, this game in East Hartford will be the biggest ever between the two New England institutions.

The other three games are Air Force, Old Dominion and Wyoming.

The Huskies travel to the Air Force Academy for a Halloween showdown. The Falcons lost their starting quarterback Liam Szarka to a season ending leg injury, but that has not stopped the 4-1 squad so far. They beat Northern Illinois 28-7 last Saturday without completing a forward pass. The triple option rushing attack could be trouble for the Huskies, but the run defense has stood tall so far this season and could make another stand against the Falcons.

Old Dominion is UConn's senior day at The Rent. The Monarchs are 2-4, and who knows what their season will look like by the time they come to East Hartford on Nov. 21.

The final game of the season is on the road against Wyoming. The Cowboys are 3-3 and in the thick of the Mountain West standings. Laramie, Wyo. is a tough place to play, so if the Huskies head in with bowl eligibility on the line, it could raise the stakes of this Nov. 28 clash.

That raises the question: What about the Huskies themselves? They have key injuries to Brown, Ty McKinstry and Kenji Christian who are all crucial to UConn's success. If they can come back and produce at a high level, the Huskies will be in the mix of all six remaining games.

In the meantime, Connecticut will try to grow the running and passing game while keeping the defense steady.

Luqman, K'Von Sherman and Renick Dorilas have been the anchors of UConn's defense. All three have made huge plays and their numbers will be called again before season's end.

On the offensive side of the ball, Osborne has been sharing the wealth. The Toledo transfer has thrown for 1,421 yards and 10 touchdowns while rushing for 254 yards and six touchdowns. Bowers and Cornist have elevated their games with Christian out, and the wide receivers have produced steadily without Brown.

Ky "Flash" Wilson has made an instant impact in his first two games back from an ACL tear, and the duo of Shamar Porter and Ryder Treadway has been making timely catches all season. If these three can keep these production levels up, the Husky offense will continue to be dangerous.

Buckle up UConn fans, these next six weeks will be memorable.



UConn goes up against Maryland at Pratt & Whitney Stadium in East Hartford, Conn. on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. The nice weather brought out a large crowd to support the Huskies.

PHOTO BY MORGAN BLANCHARD, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS