

VOLLEYBALL: HUSKIES CLOSE OUT NON-CONFERENCE PLAY IN HOME TOURNAMENT

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The UConn Women's Volleyball hosted the For the White and Blue Tournament this weekend in Storrs, featuring Coppin State University, Merrimack College and the University of Rhode Island to close out the Huskies' non-conference schedule.

The Huskies opened on Friday night against defending MEAC champion Coppin State. Service errors allowed the Eagles to build an early 17-11 lead, but UConn rallied behind a Courtney Grayson block and a pair of Sydney Borowy kills to knot set one at 18. The set went down to the wire, but the Huskies reached set point first, with a Borowy kill capping it off 25-23.

The Eagles came out swinging to start the second set, blitzing out to a 6-0 lead. The Huskies fought back with 5 straight, but the Eagles went on another run to go up 19-15. A 7-0 flurry helped UConn reclaim the lead at 23-21, but costly errors allowed the

Eagles to reach set point first, stealing the set late to win 25-23.

The momentum shifted completely in set three, in which long spikes plagued the Huskies, putting them in an early 8-2 hole. UConn struggled to find a break point, as Coppin State's blocking shut down every comeback attempt. The Eagles ran away with the set, taking ten of the last thirteen points in a convincing 25-12 set three.

The Huskies were the ones to strike first in set four after a Helena Einarsdottir kill and a Jordyn Hughes block put UConn up 4-2. Coppin State quickly responded, rattling off six straight, putting the Huskies on the ropes at 12-6. The Eagles' blocks continued to stifle UConn's hopes of clawing back before the visitors began to pour it on late. Coppin State rode the momentum to take the fourth set 25-18, winning the match three sets to one.

Looking to bounce back Saturday, UConn faced a winless Merrimack team. After a back-and-forth opening, Borowy and Ein-

arsdottir sparked an early surge before Daca took over with a crafty tip and block to extend the lead to 15-9. Daca went on to dominate at the service line, powering in back-to-back aces during a 7-0 run to end a 25-12 set win.

Maggie Carley opened set two with an ace, and defense from Hazuna Akishige along with blocks by Grayson and Daca fueled a 5-0 UConn push. Einarsdottir's spike found a corner, and Carley floated in another ace to extend the lead to 15-11. Olivia Grenadier added two late kills before Einarsdottir capped off another set-closing 7-0 run to win 25-15.

Set three saw an energized Merrimack squad take advantage of early UConn mistakes and a service ace to jump out to a 7-1 lead, eventually pushing it to 16-5. The Huskies found life late in the set, mounting a 7-1 run of their own behind two blocks from Grayson and an unexpected dump by Jensen to cut the deficit to 19-15. The Huskies continued to fight, bringing

it within two, but a missed serve dashed their comeback hopes, giving Merrimack the 25-22 set win.

Merrimack carried that confidence into the fourth set, opening with a 3-0 run. UConn answered back on the outside through powerful kills from Borowy, helping the Huskies take a 8-6 lead after a Jensen ace. The Warriors refused to go quietly though, battling back to tie the set at 14 each, going on to grab a 19-17 lead after a clutch ace. Unfazed, Connecticut forced Merrimack out of system to take back the lead, and Akishige sealed the match, delivering a pair of aces to secure the 25-22 victory.

After breezing through the first two sets, the Huskies faced unexpected adversity as Merrimack flipped a switch in the third set. "We had to go all out, it was that or just go home," Einarsdottir said after the match.

The final match of the weekend pitted UConn against Rhode Island. The Rams raced out to a

4-0 lead before Carley's ace capped off a 3-0 run to knot things up at 7-7. Einarsdottir pushed the Huskies ahead 15-13, but URI reeled off six unanswered to lead 19-15. UConn fought back, with Hughes and Einarsdottir kills forcing a deuce. However, the Rams capitalized on their next set point to finish off the opening set, 27-25.

The Huskies went on the offensive to begin the second set, stringing together six straight off an Einarsdottir kill and ace, followed by Sohl and Grayson combining for two kill blocks. URI pulled within one at 8-9, but a Grace Maria ace and a pair of misplaced URI spikes gave UConn another six unanswered. During that stretch, an accidental collision forced Sohl to leave the match early. Despite her absence, UConn held firm, closing the set on a 4-0 surge to win 25-17.

UConn's confidence carried into the third set, jumping out to an 11-3 lead. The Huskies controlled most of the set,

delivering on both ends, including a key joust won by Jensen to push the score to 20-17. Connecticut capitalized on errors by the Rams to close out the set 25-18.

Einarsdottir opened the fourth set with an ace, as both sides traded points to start. Neither side found momentum until the Rams put up three in a row to go up 15-12, but Einarsdottir's career-high 18th kill brought it even at 16-16. Carley's jump-float-er ace launched a 19-16 UConn lead, as the Huskies cruised to a 25-20 match-clinching victory.

Stepping in for Sohl, Jensen delivered a season-high 26 assists. "Trusting everybody and knowing that they're going to do their jobs worked every single time," she said after the match.

The Huskies went 2-1 on the weekend, finishing the nonconference schedule 6-5. They will remain in Storrs next weekend for their first Big East tests against Marquette and DePaul.

UConn women's volleyball coach Ellen Herman-Kimball talks to players Maggie Carley and Courtney Grayson in a huddle. The Huskies won 3-1 against Merrimack College on Saturday. PHOTO COURTESY OF GAVIN FOSTER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER / THE DAILY CAMPUS.



Men's Soccer: UConn's comeback falls short against Seton Hall

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The UConn men's soccer team hosted Seton Hall at Joseph J. Morrone Stadium on Friday, Sept. 18 at 6 p.m. to open Big East play. The game was largely defined by one frantic, early stretch by the Pirates, which left UConn chasing to erase the deficit for the remainder of the game. The 2-1 loss brings the Huskies to a 3-4-2 overall and 0-1 in conference play. Despite the loss, the Huskies controlled much of the later game, mounting a late push to try to erase the deficit.

The Pirates did not waste time, coming out with immediate aggression before the Huskies had a chance to settle in. Junior midfielder Sivert Ryssdalsnes scored just 13 minutes into the first half assisted by junior forward Joaquin Brizuela. Less than two minutes later senior midfielder Nico Rubio doubled the score for the Pirates. The Pirates relied on efficiency to obtain the early lead, having six first-half shots, the same number as the Huskies, but having success in converting two of them. Showing Seton Hall did not need a

large number of chances to create an early advantage.

The early lead for the pirates created an aggressive atmosphere with 30 fouls and eight cards overall. For the Huskies senior forward Elijah Langford provided most of the offensive strength in the first half. Langford had four shots in the game, which included one on goal late in the first half. The Huskies matched Seton Hall in first-half shots, 6-6, showing they were not completely outplayed. However, they struggled throughout the first half to capitalize on opportunities and turn possessions into goals.

Halftime gave the Huskies a chance to regroup and return with renewed strength for the second half. Redshirt junior Kyle Durham was a dominant force for the Huskies' defense, having five saves in total with four of them in the first 15 minutes. Seton Hall continued to create dangerous opportunities, but the Huskies defense was able to provide a formidable wall. Durham's saves gave the Huskies a chance to mount their comeback, especially since Seton Hall out shot them 7-4 on goal.

The momentum of the game began to drastically pick up for the Huskies when freshman forward Justin Hubbard was fouled inside the box in the 62nd minute. This earned the Huskies a penalty kick, which sophomore midfielder Preston Alessio converted to make it 2-1. This marks Alessio's second goal of the season. Hubbard's goal fueled the Huskies, increasing their aggression and giving them the strength to generate seven shots during the final 25 minutes. However, the Pirates goalkeeper also stepped up making two critical saves to keep the lead. The Huskies were able to respond in the second half after falling behind early on but could not find the equalizer.

The slow start for the Huskies proved to be detrimental, allowing two goals in a 74-second span, putting them into a hole they were unable to escape. Despite the early deficit, the Huskies continued to generate more offensive opportunities, finishing with 16 shots and seven corner kicks. However, only four of these shots were on target, making it difficult for the Huskies to capitalize on

their offensive pressure. UConn continued to create opportunities during the final stretch of the match but ultimately could not close the deficit.

Meanwhile, Seton Hall made the most of its opportunities to protect its early advantage. The Pirates finished with 10 shots, but seven were on goal compared to UConn's four. Seton Hall goalkeeper Devin Armstrong also made three, including two during UConn's late push, helping to keep the Huskies from completing a comeback. While UConn generated more total shots, Seton Hall's ability to put its chances on target and withstand UConn's pressure ultimately allowed the Pirates to hold onto the lead.

The game captured the Huskies' endurance, and they will look to respond when hosting Siena Tuesday, Sept. 22 at 6 p.m. The matchup gives the Huskies an opportunity to regroup after their conference opening loss and build momentum as the season continues. Husky fans can tune into the matchup on FloSports.



The UConn men's soccer team huddles together before a Big East matchup against Seton Hall at Joseph J. Morrone Stadium on Sept. 18. The Huskies lost 2-1, and will now prepare for their Big East match against St. John's on Sept. 26. PHOTO COURTESY OF EMMA RODRIGUEZ, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER / THE DAILY CAMPUS.