

CONN @ MICH Recap

Monday, April 6, 2026 · Final CONN 63 – MICH 69

FINAL

- **Score** – CONN 63 – MICH 69 · Monday, April 6, 2026
- **Venue** – Lucas Oil Stadium – Indianapolis, IN
- **Series** – Series W-L this season: CONN 0 – MICH 1
- **Result** – MICH wins CONN @ MICH 63-69

KEY PERFORMERS – MICH

- **Elliot Cadeau** – 19 PTS 3 REB 2 AST 2 STL 0 BLK 1 TO in 30 min | 5/11 FG, 1/4 3 P, 8/9 FT | TS 62% | BPM +19.7
- **Yaxel Lendeborg** [inefficient volume] – 13 PTS 2 REB 1 AST 0 STL 1 BLK 1 TO in 36 min | 4/13 FG, 0/5 3 P, 5/5 FT | TS 42% | BPM +4.5
- **Morez Johnson** [elite efficiency, double-double] – 12 PTS 10 REB 0 AST 1 STL 2 BLK 3 TO in 28 min | 5/7 FG, 0/0 3 P, 2/2 FT | TS 76% | BPM +13.9
- **Trey McKenney** [inefficient volume] – 9 PTS 8 REB 1 AST 0 STL 0 BLK 0 TO in 29 min | 2/9 FG, 1/4 3 P, 4/4 FT | TS 41% | BPM +8.2
- **Aday Mara** – 8 PTS 4 REB 1 AST 1 STL 1 BLK 2 TO in 30 min | 4/7 FG, 0/0 3 P, 0/0 FT | TS 57% | BPM +8.7
- **Nimari Burnett** [inefficient volume] – 4 PTS 4 REB 0 AST 2 STL 0 BLK 1 TO in 16 min | 0/3 FG, 0/2 3 P, 4/4 FT | TS 41% | BPM +12.3
- **Roddy Gayle** [inefficient volume] – 4 PTS 4 REB 2 AST 0 STL 2 BLK 2 TO in 25 min | 1/4 FG, 0/0 3 P, 2/4 FT | TS 34% | BPM +7.9
- **Quiet** – Will Tschetter (0 PTS 1 REB 0 AST 0 STL 0 BLK 0 TO in 6 min)

SHOT DIET

- **Three-point split** – CONN hit 9/33 (27%) vs MICH's 2/15 (13%)
- **CONN Three** – 9/33 (27.3%)
- **CONN Two** – 12/35 (34.3%)
- **MICH Three** – 2/15 (13.3%)
- **MICH Two** – 19/40 (47.5%)
- **Shot** – H2 0:37 | Solo Ball makes 26-foot three pointer (Braylon Mullins assists) (AST Braylon Mullins)
- **Shot** – H2 1:50 | Trey McKenney makes 26-foot three point step back jumpshot (Roddy Gayle Jr. assists) (AST Roddy Gayle)
- **Shot** – H2 2:30 | Alex Karaban makes 27-foot three point jumper (Silas Demary Jr. assists) (AST Silas Demary)
- **Shot** – H2 4:40 | Braylon Mullins makes 26-foot three point step back jumpshot (Alex Karaban assists) (AST Alex Karaban)
- **Shot** – H2 5:23 | Braylon Mullins makes 25-foot three point jumper (Silas Demary Jr. assists) (AST Silas Demary)
- **Shot** – H2 12:56 | Elliot Cadeau makes 25-foot three point jumper (Yaxel Lendeborg assists) (AST Yaxel Lendeborg)
- **Shot** – H1 2:10 | Solo Ball makes 25-foot three point jumper (Malachi Smith assists) (AST Malachi Smith)
- **Shot** – H1 6:06 | Braylon Mullins makes 25-foot three point jumper (Malachi Smith assists) (AST Malachi Smith)

PLAYER SPOTLIGHTS

- **Elliot Cadeau** – The Michigan junior point guard and NCAA Tournament Most Outstanding Player (MOP) dominated the floor with 19 points, 3 rebounds, and 2 steals, finishing with a team-high +19.7 BPM and a 62% true shooting mark.
- **Elliot Cadeau** – With the lead at seven, Cadeau drained a momentum-shifting 25-foot three-pointer at **H2 12:56** off a feed from Yaxel Lendeborg to ignite a critical second-half surge that kept the Huskies at arm's length.
- **Elliot Cadeau** – A transfer from North Carolina, Cadeau started all 40 games for the Wolverines this season, orchestrating the offense with 5.9 assists per game and matching his season-high of 19 points in the championship clincher.
- **Alex Karaban** – The Connecticut senior forward delivered a relentless 40-minute performance in his collegiate finale, recording a gritty double-double with 17 points and a game-high 11 rebounds while logging a +19.0 BPM.
- **Alex Karaban** – Refusing to let the Huskies fade, Karaban buried a deep 27-foot three-pointer at **H2 2:30** to trim Michigan's lead to 62-56 and keep UConn within two possessions during the final stretch.
- **Alex Karaban** – The two-time national champion finished his decorated career in Storrs with a 119-25 record as a starter, having previously helped lead the program to a peak of 110 points earlier this season.
- **Morez Johnson** – The sophomore anchor provided elite interior efficiency, scoring 12 points on a blistering 5-of-7 shooting (76% TS) and cleaning the glass with 10 rebounds in just 28 minutes of action.
- **Morez Johnson** – Early in the contest at **H1 10:10**, Johnson capitalized on the glass with a tip-in layup to bring Michigan within one point, eventually leading to a 33-29 half time advantage.
- **Morez Johnson** – Johnson solidified his role as a premier Big Ten interior presence by starting all 40 games for the Wolverines, averaging 13.1 points and 7.3 rebounds during their national title campaign.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT & RARITIES

- The victory on Monday, April 6, 2026, secured Michigan's national championship and ended their season with a dominant 37-3 record.
- With the 69-63 result, the all-time head-to-head series between Michigan and Connecticut is now tied at 2-2.
- The meeting was the first between the programs since November 25, 2015, when Connecticut won 74-60.
- Michigan's 37 wins in the 2025-26 season represent a peak for the program under Dusty May, including a 19-1 mark in Big Ten conference play.
- Connecticut finished their season at 34-6 overall, marking their third consecutive season with at least 30 victories.
- The 70,720 in attendance at Lucas Oil Stadium ranks among the largest crowds in the history of the Indianapolis venue for a title game.
- Elliot Cadeau became one of the few players to match his season scoring high (19 points) in a national championship game.
- Alex Karaban's 40 minutes played in his final game punctuated a career where he became the first active Husky to be inducted into the "Huskies of Honor."
- Tarris Reed's 14 rebounds in the final game followed a regular season where he recorded a single-game high of 27 boards.

What DECIDED IT

- **Free Throw Precision:** Michigan converted 89.3% of their free throws (25-for-28), outscoring Connecticut by 13 points at the charity stripe.
- **Second Half Defensive Surge:** Michigan held Connecticut to a season-low 28.9% field goal percentage in the second half.
- **Interior Efficiency:** Michigan shot 47.5% on two-pointers (19/40), while UConn struggled to a 34.3% mark (12/35) inside the arc.
- **Late-Clock Execution:** Michigan's Trey McKenney buried a step-back three at **H2 1:50** and went 2-for-2 at the line at **H2 0:13** to halt a late 7-2 UConn run.
- **Foul Disparity:** UConn's 22 team fouls put Michigan in the bonus early, resulting in Elliot Cadeau attempting nine free throws (making eight).
- **Rim Protection:** The 6-to-2 block advantage for Michigan neutralized Tarris Reed and Braylon Mullins' attempts to score in the restricted area.
- **Point Guard Stability:** Elliot Cadeau committed only one turn over in 30 minutes of high-usage play, maintaining Michigan's 103.1 offensive rating.

KEY PERFORMERS – CONN

- **Alex Karaban** [double-double] – 17 PTS 11 REB 2 AST 2 STL 0 BLK 1 TO in 40 min | 5/14 FG, 3/10 3 P, 4/6 FT | TS 50% | BPM +19.0
- **Tarris Reed** [double-double] – 13 PTS 14 REB 0 AST 1 STL 0 BLK 3 TO in 34 min | 4/12 FG, 0/1 3 P, 5/6 FT | TS 44% | BPM +6.5
- **Braylon Mullins** [inefficient volume] – 11 PTS 7 REB 2 AST 0 STL 1 BLK 1 TO in 36 min | 4/17 FG, 3/10 3 P, 0/0 FT | TS 32% | BPM +8.2
- **Solomon Ball** – 11 PTS 0 REB 0 AST 0 STL 0 BLK 1 TO in 17 min | 4/10 FG, 3/7 3 P, 0/0 FT | TS 55% | BPM +11.1
- **Malachi Smith** – 6 PTS 3 REB 3 AST 1 STL 0 BLK 1 TO in 20 min | 3/6 FG, 0/2 3 P, 0/0 FT | TS 50% | BPM +14.8
- **Jayden Ross** [inefficient volume] – 3 PTS 4 REB 0 AST 0 STL 0 BLK 1 TO in 19 min | 0/2 FG, 0/1 3 P, 3/4 FT | TS 38% | BPM +1.7
- **Quiet** – Silas Demary (2 PTS 2 REB 2 AST 0 STL 1 BLK 1 TO in 21 min); Eric Reibe (0 PTS 0 REB 0 AST 0 STL 0 BLK 1 TO in 6 min); Jaylin Stewart (0 PTS 2 REB 0 AST 0 STL 0 BLK 0 TO in 9 min)

HALF FLOW

- **Final** – CONN 63 – MICH 69
- **Late** – H2 1:07 [CONN 58-MICH 67]: Elliot Cadeau makes free throw 2 of 2
- **Late** – H2 0:53 [CONN 58-MICH 67]: Foul on Roddy Gayle Jr..
- **Late** – H2 0:37 [CONN 63-MICH 67]: Solo Ball makes 26-foot three pointer (Braylon Mullins assists)
- **Late** – H2 0:29 [CONN 63-MICH 67]: Foul on Jaylin Stewart.
- **Late** – H2 0:13 [CONN 63-MICH 67]: Foul on Malachi Smith.
- **Late** – H2 0:01 [CONN 63-MICH 69]: Alex Karaban Steal.

DEFENSE, HUSTLE & TURNING POINTS

- **Turnover** – Braylon Mullins: 1 TO
- **Turnover** – Morez Johnson: 1 TO
- **Turnover** – Tarris Reed: 1 TO
- **Late** – H2 13:48 [CONN 37-MICH 43]: Alex Karaban makes 0-foot tip in layup
- **Late** – H2 2:45 [CONN 53-MICH 60]: Foul on Silas Demary Jr
- **Late** – H2 2:30 [CONN 56-MICH 62]: Alex Karaban makes 27-foot three point jumper (Silas Demary Jr. assists)
- **Late** – H2 2:06 [CONN 56-MICH 62]: Tarris Reed Jr. Steal
- **Late** – H2 1:50 [CONN 56-MICH 65]: Trey McKenney makes 26-foot three point step back jumpshot (Roddy Gayle Jr. assists)
- **Late** – H2 1:23 [CONN 56-MICH 65]: Foul on Elliot Cadeau
- **Late** – H2 1:07 [CONN 58-MICH 65]: Foul on Silas Demary Jr
- **Late** – H2 0:53 [CONN 58-MICH 67]: Foul on Roddy Gayle Jr
- **Late** – H2 0:37 [CONN 63-MICH 67]: Solo Ball makes 26-foot three pointer (Braylon Mullins assists)
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GAME STORY & MOMENTUM

- Played before a crowd of 70,720 at Lucas Oil Stadium, the matchup featured AP #1 Michigan and AP #2 Connecticut in a tactical heavyweight bout.
- Michigan established an early interior presence with Morez Johnson converting a layup at **H1 18:23** to open the scoring.
- Connecticut relied on perimeter volume to stay afloat in the first half, connecting on 5-of-15 attempts from deep, including a Solo Ball 26-footer at **H1 14:10**.
- The Wolverines built their half time lead despite a total drought from the perimeter, going 0-for-8 on three-point attempts in the opening twenty minutes.
- A late **H1 0:28** tip-in dunk by Roddy Gayle Jr. ensured Michigan took a 33-29 lead into the locker room.
- Michigan found its range in the second half, improving to 40% from the field and 2-of-7 from three-point range to maintain separation.
- UConn's offense sputtered significantly after the break, shooting just 28.9% (11/38 FG) in the second half as Michigan's interior defense intensified.
- After Elliot Cadeau sank two free throws at **H2 2:45** to push the lead to 62-53, Alex Karaban answered with a deep triple at **H2 2:30** to cut the deficit to six.
- Freshman Trey McKenney delivered the dagger at **H2 1:50**, burying a 26-foot step-back three-pointer to extend the Michigan lead back to nine points.
- Solo Ball gave UConn a final glimmer of hope with a 26-foot three-pointer at **H2 0:37**, bringing the Huskies within four points at 67-63.
- Trey McKenney sealed the national title at the charity stripe, sinking two free throws at **H2 0:13** to finalize the 69-63 victory.

STORYLINES & TALKING POINTS

- **Charity Stripe Chasm:** Michigan won the game at the line, posting a massive 45.5% free-throw rate (25/28) compared to UConn's 17.6% rate (12/16).
- **Paint Lockdown:** The Wolverines rejected six UConn attempts at the rim, led by two blocks apiece from Morez Johnson and Roddy Gayle Jr.
- **The 40-Minute Warrior:** In his final collegiate appearance, Alex Karaban played every second of the game, finishing with a double-double and a team-high +19.0 BPM.
- **Volume vs. Precision:** UConn launched 33 three-pointers (27.3%) to compensate for a dismal 34.3% shooting performance inside the arc.
- **Floor General to MOP:** Elliot Cadeau, who "gave Michigan exactly what it needed" according to early reports, cemented his legacy with a 19-point masterpiece.
- **Freshman Dagger:** Trey McKenney, the standout freshman, scored 7 of his 9 points in the final two minutes to fend off the UConn rally.
- **Clean Defense:** Despite the physical nature of the title game, Michigan committed only 13 team fouls, never allowing UConn to get into a rhythm at the free-throw line.
- **Second-Chance Stalemate:** UConn won the rebounding battle 43-36 with 20 offensive boards but converted those into just 63 total points due to 30.9% overall shooting.
- **Karaban's Reflection:** "I gave it my all every single game," the senior forward noted postgame. "During the good and bad days, we kept fighting."
- **May's Masterpiece:** In just his second season in Ann Arbor, Dusty May guided the Wolverines to an AP #1 ranking and their first title of this era.
- **Senior Center Battle:** Tarris Reed (13 pts, 14 reb) and Aday Mara (8 pts, 4 reb) waged a physical battle in the paint that limited both teams to sub-40% shooting.
- **Perimeter Spark:** Solomon Ball provided an efficient 11 points in just 17 minutes, proving to be the Huskies' most effective bench weapon.
- **Big Ten Dominance:** The win capped a season where Michigan went 19-1 in the Big Ten, asserting the conference's dominance on the national stage.
- **The Cadeau Return:** Despite testing NBA Draft waters, reports indicate the MOP intends to return to Ann Arbor to defend the title in 2027.