

= 2009 International Bowl =

The 2009 International Bowl was a postseason college football bowl game between the Connecticut Huskies ( UConn ) and the Buffalo Bulls at the Rogers Centre in Toronto , Ontario , Canada , on January 3 , 2009 . The game was the final contest of the 2008 NCAA Division I @-@ Football Bowl Subdivision ( Division I @-@ FBS ) football season for both teams , and ended in a 38 ? 20 victory for Connecticut . UConn represented the Big East Conference ( Big East ) in the game ; Buffalo entered as the Mid @-@ American Conference ( MAC ) champion .

Connecticut was selected as a participant in the 2009 International Bowl following a 7 ? 5 regular season where they won their first five games , only to lose five of their last seven contests . Facing the Huskies were the Buffalo Bulls with a regular season record of 8 ? 5 , highlighted by an upset win over then @-@ No. 12 and undefeated Ball State in the 2008 MAC Championship Game . Pre @-@ game media coverage focused on the legacy of the 1958 Buffalo Bulls , the first team from the university to be invited to a bowl game . When told that the two African @-@ American members of the team would not be allowed to play because of segregation , the team elected to refuse the bowl bid . Buffalo would not play in a bowl until this game , 50 years later .

The game began at 12 : 00 PM EST . Connecticut , led by running back Donald Brown 's 208 yards rushing , dominated the first half statistically , but found themselves down 20 ? 10 midway through the second quarter because they committed six fumbles , five of which were recovered by Buffalo . UConn would close the gap to 20 ? 17 by halftime , and take the lead for good late in the third quarter off a 4 @-@ yard touchdown pass from quarterback Tyler Lorenzen to tight end Steve Brouse . The Connecticut victory was sealed when , late in the fourth quarter , Buffalo quarterback Drew Willy threw a pass that was intercepted by UConn safety Dahna Deleston and returned 100 yards for a touchdown .

UConn junior running back Donald Brown was named player of the game . He finished with 261 rushing yards and one touchdown ; his 2 @,@ 083 rushing yards for the 2008 season was best in the NCAA . Following the game , Brown declared his eligibility for the 2009 NFL Draft ; he would become the first Connecticut player ever drafted in the first round . Three other UConn players were drafted in the second round .

= = Team selection = =

The International Bowl had contracts with the Big East and Mid @-@ American Conferences that allowed them to select one team from each conference to participate in their annual game . By virtue of being the Big East champion Cincinnati was awarded an automatic Bowl Championship Series berth ; they would play in the 2009 Orange Bowl . The Gator Bowl and Sun Bowl shared the second pick of Big East teams ; after the Gator Bowl opted to select Big 12 member Nebraska and the Sun Bowl learned that they would not be allowed to select Notre Dame , Pittsburgh received the Sun Bowl invitation . The Meineke Car Care Bowl , which had the third selection , picked West Virginia . The fourth , fifth , and sixth selections of Big East teams belonged collectively to the International Bowl , PapaJohns.com Bowl , and St. Petersburg Bowl , which , in consultation with the Big East , decided which schools were the best fit for each bowl . There were three remaining bowl @-@ eligible Big East teams : Connecticut , Rutgers , and South Florida . The previous season , Rutgers had played in the International Bowl and South Florida had appeared in the PapaJohns.com Bowl ; bowls in general dislike inviting the same team in consecutive years , on the theory that fans are less likely to want to travel to the same destination they were at the year before . Additionally , the St. Petersburg Bowl , in its inaugural year , sought to have local team South Florida play in their game to drive local attendance . Therefore , the teams were apportioned among the bowls as follows : South Florida to the St. Petersburg Bowl , Rutgers to the PapaJohns.com Bowl , and Connecticut to the International Bowl . On December 7 , 2008 , UConn formally accepted the bowl invitation , the third in their history .

Buffalo accepted an invitation to the International Bowl following their victory over then @-@ undefeated Ball State in the 2008 MAC Championship Game . Although in past years the MAC

champion had been invited to the Motor City Bowl , Buffalo preferred to go to the International Bowl due to Toronto being closer to the school than Detroit , the home of the Motor City Bowl . The game marked the first bowl for the Bulls after their first MAC Championship since moving to Division I @-@ A and joining the MAC in 1999 .

The Bulls and Huskies had been frequent opponents during the previous decade as both programs made the transition from Division I @-@ AA to Division I @-@ A. The two teams played each other in six consecutive seasons from 1999 to 2005 , with Connecticut winning five of the six contents . The 2005 game , won by UConn 38 ? 0 , was the most recent meeting between the two teams . Overall , the Huskies and Bulls had played each other 16 times since their first meeting in 1939 , with Connecticut holding a 12 ? 4 advantage in the all @-@ time series . Prior to the 2008 season , Buffalo and UConn had signed a contract to play a four @-@ game , home @-@ and @-@ home series beginning in 2010 .

= = = Buffalo = = =

Entering 2008 , the Bulls sought to build off of their 2007 season , where they shared the MAC East championship but did not appear in the championship game due to a 31 ? 28 loss to fellow division co @-@ champion Miami ( Ohio ) . Their 5 ? 7 final record , while not good enough to qualify for a bowl game , was still the best by a Buffalo team since they had moved up to Division I @-@ A in 1999 . With 10 starters returning on offense and eight on defense , the 2008 team was predicted to be perhaps the most talented team in Bulls history ; however , due to their challenging schedule , their final record was predicted to be no better than 3 ? 9 .

Buffalo opened the season stronger than expected , with a dominant home win over the University of Texas @-@ El Paso ( UTEP ) , 42 ? 17 . This was followed by a closer @-@ than @-@ predicted loss at heavily favored Pittsburgh , 27 ? 16 . Buffalo 's third game and conference opener , versus Temple , was a back @-@ and @-@ forth contest that came down to the final play of the game . Keeping the game within seven points for the first three quarters , the Bulls first took the lead with 2 : 27 left in the fourth quarter , on a 25 @-@ yard field goal by A.J. Principe . Temple responded with a nine @-@ play , 74 @-@ yard drive capped by an 11 @-@ yard touchdown catch by wide receiver Bruce Francis , his second score of the game , to take a 28 ? 24 lead with only 38 seconds remaining . Taking over at their own 40 @-@ yard line after the kickoff went out of bounds , the Bulls drove down the field , scoring the game @-@ winning touchdown on a 35 @-@ yard desperation heave from Drew Willy to wide receiver Naaman Roosevelt with no time remaining on the clock . Buffalo 's record following the last @-@ second win was 2 ? 1 , marking the first time since 1969 that the Bulls had a record over .500 beyond Week 1 as a Division I @-@ A team . The last time the Bulls had started a season 2 ? 1 was 1998 , while they were still played in Division I @-@ AA .

The Bulls proceeded to lose their next three games . Buffalo was unable to keep up with No. 5 @-@ ranked Missouri , losing 42 ? 21 in a game that Missouri saw as a tuneup for their later season . In the next contest , against MAC opponent Central Michigan , down nine points with under three minutes left Buffalo scored on a 65 @-@ yard pass to James Starks , recovered an onside kick to retain possession , and attempted a game @-@ winning field goal ? but A.J. Principe 's 46 @-@ yard kick hit the right goalpost to give Central Michigan the victory . In the next game , against the Western Michigan Broncos , also in the MAC , Buffalo squandered a two @-@ touchdown advantage with just over five minutes left , allowing the Broncos to win the game in overtime . Buffalo 's overall record fell to 2 ? 4 , 1 ? 2 in the MAC .

Bouncing back , Buffalo won their next five games . Against Army , Buffalo reversed the result of the Western Michigan game , coming back from a two @-@ touchdown deficit to win in overtime . Handling conference opponents Ohio and Miami ( Ohio ) with relative ease , Buffalo continued conference play by beating Akron in a four @-@ hour , four @-@ overtime slugfest , 43 ? 40 , in Akron 's final football game at the Rubber Bowl . In their next game , against Bowling Green , the Bulls found themselves down 21 ? 0 midway through the third quarter , but still managed to come back for their third overtime win of the season . With the win , Buffalo clinched the MAC East

championship and ensured that they would have their first winning regular season since moving to Division I @-@ A ; the final regular season game , a 24 ? 21 loss to Kent State , was only a formality . The Bulls finished the regular season with an overall record of 7 ? 5 , 5 ? 3 within the conference .

Buffalo 's opponent in the 2008 MAC Championship Game would be the No. 12 @-@ ranked Ball State Cardinals , who had gone undefeated in winning the MAC West . Ball State was a two @-@ touchdown favorite entering the game ; Buffalo in its history was 0 ? 5 against the Cardinals . The Bulls struck first with a touchdown late in the first quarter ; Ball State responded with a touchdown and a field goal in the second quarter to take a 10 ? 7 lead at the half . The two teams traded touchdowns early in the third quarter . Disaster then struck for Ball State : on two consecutive possessions late in the third quarter , after having driven into the red zone , the Cardinals fumbled the ball . Buffalo returned both of these fumbles for touchdowns and took a lead they would not surrender . The Bulls won the game 42 ? 24 , earning their first @-@ ever MAC Championship as well as their first @-@ ever win over a ranked opponent in nine attempts .

= = = Connecticut = = =

The Huskies entered 2008 seeking to prove their success the previous season was no fluke . In 2007 , Connecticut earned their first Big East co @-@ championship , albeit after losing to their fellow co @-@ champion , West Virginia , 66 ? 21 . A loss to Wake Forest in the 2007 Meineke Car Care Bowl ? the team 's second bowl appearance all @-@ time ? gave the Huskies a final 2007 record of 9 ? 4 . In the Big East preseason media poll , UConn was picked to finish 6th overall in the conference .

UConn started the season strong , winning their first five games . The Huskies easily won their first game 35 ? 3 against Division I @-@ Football Championship Subdivision ( Division I @-@ FCS ) opponent Hofstra . The second game , at Temple , was played as the remnants of Hurricane Hanna hit Philadelphia . UConn won 12 ? 9 in overtime as Donald Brown ran for a then @-@ career high 214 yards and scored the game @-@ winning touchdown . Connecticut next avenged their loss to Virginia from 2007 , winning the rematch 45 ? 10 . Baylor was next on the schedule ; the Huskies pulled out the win in a back @-@ and @-@ forth game , 31 ? 28 . Connecticut opened Big East conference play in their next game against Louisville . The game was not decided until UConn linebacker Lawrence Wilson returned an interception for a touchdown with 2 : 45 left in the fourth quarter , giving the Huskies a 26 ? 21 lead they would not relinquish . This was the second straight season where Connecticut won their first five games ; before 2007 , they had not opened a season so successfully since 1995 , when they won their first six straight . Following the game , UConn achieved their first and only ranking of the year , appearing at No. 24 in the Associated Press ( AP ) and Harris polls and No. 23 in the Coaches ' poll . However , starting quarterback Tyler Lorenzen broke his foot in the Louisville game ; the Huskies would be forced to rely on backup Zach Frazer for the next few games .

The Huskies were unable to match their early success in the second half of the season , losing five of their next seven games . Everything went wrong for UConn in their game at North Carolina , as Frazer was intercepted three times and three Connecticut punts were blocked ; North Carolina won in a blowout , 38 ? 12 . Against Big East rival Rutgers , UConn lost 12 ? 10 as kicker Tony Ciaravino missed three field goals , including one with 1 : 09 left in the game that hit the right goalpost . The Huskies bounced back in their next game against eventual Big East champion Cincinnati , winning in a blowout 40 ? 16 . While not ranked in any of the polls , after the win Connecticut found itself No. 25 in the BCS standings . The Huskies would promptly give up that honor , losing to West Virginia 35 ? 13 after leading 10 ? 0 at the end of the first quarter and 13 ? 7 at halftime . UConn would win the next week at Big East bottom @-@ dweller Syracuse , 39 ? 14 , as Lorenzen returned from his injury . This would prove to be their last win of the regular season , as the Huskies finished with losses to South Florida ( 17 ? 13 ) and No. 23 @-@ ranked Pittsburgh ( 34 ? 10 ) . Connecticut ended the regular season with a record of 7 ? 5 , 3 ? 4 within the Big East conference .

= = Pregame buildup = =

In the weeks leading up to the game , media coverage focused on the achievements of the Buffalo Bulls . Buffalo had been one of the least successful programs in college football from their transition to Division I A in 1999 to 2006 , during which they had a cumulative record of 12 ? 79 . In 2008 , the Bulls had their first winning season since 1996 , won five games in a row for the first time since 1986 , beat a ranked team for the first time in program history with their upset victory over Ball State in the MAC Championship Game , and would be making the first bowl appearance in school history . The turnaround of the Buffalo program brought acclaim to Bulls head coach Turner Gill , who had taken over the team in 2007 .

Comparatively , Connecticut was an afterthought heading into the game . Pre bowl coverage of UConn focused on NCAA rushing leader Donald Brown , who was considering foregoing his senior season to enter the 2009 NFL Draft . Brown indicated before the game that he had decided to return to UConn for the 2010 season .

== Coaching change rumors ==

Following the regular season , speculation surrounded whether Turner Gill would leave Buffalo for another school 's head coaching position . He was identified as a candidate at two schools : Syracuse and Auburn . In neither case was Gill hired ; Syracuse opted for New Orleans Saints offensive coordinator Doug Marrone , while Auburn passed him over in favor of Iowa State head coach Gene Chizik , a move that prominent former National Basketball Association ( NBA ) player , Basketball Hall of Fame Famer , and Auburn alumnus Charles Barkley claimed was due to racism . Gill ended up signing a contract extension with Buffalo .

UConn head coach Randy Edsall , who had been with the Huskies since 1999 , was also rumored to be a candidate for the Syracuse job . Edsall , a Syracuse alumnus , denied any interest . Offensive coordinator Rob Ambrose accepted the head coaching position at Towson , his alma mater ; he would stay to coach UConn during the bowl game , however .

== Legacy of the 1958 Buffalo Bulls ==

While the 2009 International Bowl marked the first appearance of the Buffalo Bulls in a bowl game , it was not the first time the school had been invited to a bowl . Fifty years earlier , the 1958 Buffalo Bulls team finished with a record of 8 ? 1 . They were awarded the Lambert Cup , given to the best small college team in the eastern US , and received a bid to play in the 1958 Tangerine Bowl , where they would face Florida State . There was one catch : the team 's African American players ? starting running back Willie Evans and backup defensive end Mike Wilson ? would not be allowed to play . The Tangerine Bowl Stadium was controlled by the Orlando High School Athletic Association , who prohibited integrated football games . University officials and the coaching staff decided to allow the team to vote on whether they would accept the bowl bid . Before secret ballots could be passed out , the players unanimously decided to reject the bid .

Surviving members of the 1958 Bulls team were invited to the 2009 International Bowl and were honored before the game . The Reverend Jesse Jackson spoke at the kickoff luncheon prior to the game , paying tribute to the legacy of the 1958 team .

== Offensive matchups ==

== Buffalo offense ==

Buffalo featured a high powered , high tempo , balanced offense that was good at not committing turnovers . During the regular season the Bulls averaged 380 offensive yards per game , 45th best in the nation , and scored an average of 31 points per game , 31st best . Buffalo 's turnover margin was 6th best in the nation , at + 15 .

The Bulls were led offensively by the triple threat of quarterback Drew Willy , running back James Starks , and wide receiver Namaan Roosevelt . The three combined to break 14 single @-@ season school records , including most points scored in a season ( 404 ) . Willy , heading into his final game as a Buffalo Bull , had already surpassed the 3 @,@ 000 @-@ yard mark in passing on the season , throwing for 25 touchdowns against only five interceptions . Starks , while not seen as the same caliber of player as UConn 's Donald Brown , had run for over 1 @,@ 300 yards and caught 41 passes for 340 yards , scoring 16 touchdowns on the year . Roosevelt was seen as the top playmaker , going over the 100 @-@ yard mark in each of Buffalo 's last five games and scoring at least once in his last seven .

= = = = Connecticut offense = = = =

Especially compared to Buffalo , the UConn offense was extremely unbalanced ; the Huskies ranked 19th in the nation in running , averaging 204 @.@ 6 yards per game , but only 106th in the nation in passing , averaging 147 @.@ 3 yards per game . Connecticut 's offense was centered around running back Donald Brown . Described as " the ultimate workhorse " , Brown led the NCAA in rushing going into the game with 1 @,@ 822 yards . He had already tied the school single @-@ season rushing touchdown record with 17 scores . His dominant performance led to him being named the Big East offensive player of the year as well as an All @-@ American by multiple organizations . Somewhat surprisingly , he was not a finalist for the Doak Walker Award , annually given to the best running back in college football ; the award was eventually won by Shonn Greene of Iowa . UConn 's rushing attack was supplemented by the efforts of quarterback Tyler Lorenzen and running back Jordan Todman .

The Huskies struggled to pass the ball all season , only completing four touchdown passes as a team heading into the International Bowl . Lorenzen completed under half of his passing attempts on the season . He threw for 820 yards with more interceptions ( eight ) than touchdowns ( two ) . Nevertheless , before the game Randy Edsall confirmed that Lorenzen would be the starting quarterback for UConn in the International Bowl . This would be his ninth appearance at quarterback on the season ; he missed four games with a broken right foot .

= = = Defensive matchups = = =

= = = = Buffalo defense = = = =

The Buffalo defense was described as " among the worst in the MAC , meaning it 's among the worst in college football " . In Division I @-@ FBS , the Bulls ranked 84th in total defense , allowing an average of 408 yards per game . Buffalo 's run defense was 83rd in the country , allowing 141 @.@ 1 yards per game ; their pass defense was ranked 97th , allowing almost 250 yards per game . The Bulls allowed other teams to score an average of 27 points against them per game , which ranked 73rd in the country .

Buffalo did have one strength on defense : forcing turnovers . The Bulls recovered 20 fumbles and caught eight interceptions on the year . Buffalo 's turnover margin of + 1 @.@ 15 was 6th best in the nation .

= = = = Connecticut defense = = = =

Conversely , UConn boasted one of the better defenses in the country . The Huskies allowed the 10th @-@ fewest yards per game in the nation with 281 yards allowed . Connecticut was especially good against the pass ; they allowed an average of only 165 yards per game , seventh @-@ best in the country . No UConn opponent passed for more than 259 yards during the regular season .

The Huskies had several standout players on defense . One was defensive end Cody Brown , who led UConn with 14 tackles for a loss ( TFL ) and nine sacks while also being named to the All @-@

Big East first team . Cornerback Jasper Howard was another standout player : he had 37 tackles and four interceptions on the year while also leading the Big East in punt returns .

= = Starting lineups = =

Source :

= = Game summary = =

The 2009 International Bowl kicked off on January 3 , 2009 , at 12 : 00 PM in Toronto , Ontario , Canada . Official attendance was listed at 40 @, @ 184 , the highest in the history of the International Bowl . The attendance record was largely due to Buffalo fans ; an estimated 30 @, @ 000 attended the game . John Saunders , Jesse Palmer , and Doug Flutie , all with ties to Canada , were the announcers for the television broadcast , which aired on ESPN2 . The game was watched by over 2 million households with a rating of 2 @. @ 12 , both the highest in International Bowl history . Prior to the game , spread bettors favored Connecticut to win by four and a half points .

= = First quarter = =

Buffalo received the ball first to begin the game , and returned the opening kickoff to their own 24 @- @ yard line . They were unable to move the ball in three plays , and punted the ball to Connecticut . The Huskies took possession on their own 18 @- @ yard line and drove down the field with alternating rushes by running back Donald Brown and quarterback Tyler Lorenzen , earning two first downs . On 2nd down and 5 from the UConn 49 @- @ yard line , Lorenzen was sacked by Buffalo 's Sherrod Lott and fumbled ; the ball was recovered by UConn right tackle Mike Hicks , allowing the Huskies to retain possession . A holding penalty on the next play called on UConn left tackle William Beatty set up 3rd @- @ and @- @ 24 . Donald Brown rushed for fifteen yards but was unable to reach the first @- @ down marker , forcing UConn to punt .

Buffalo took over at their own 19 @- @ yard line and promptly earned their 1st first down of the game on a 10 @- @ yard pass from quarterback Drew Willy to wide receiver Naaman Roosevelt . The Bulls ' drive stalled from there , forcing them to punt . The punt struck the ground and hit UConn 's Jonathan Jean @- @ Louis , who was attempting to block for the punt return ; Buffalo recovered the loose ball , giving them back possession at the Connecticut 23 @- @ yard line . The Bulls were unable to move the ball any closer to the end zone , and settled for a 38 @- @ yard field goal by kicker A. J. Principe , giving them a 3 ? 0 lead with 4 : 26 remaining in the first quarter .

The ensuing kickoff was returned by UConn running back Jordan Todman 45 yards to the Buffalo 45 @- @ yard line . On the first play from scrimmage , Donald Brown broke through the Buffalo defense and ran the length of the field for the first touchdown of the day . UConn kicker Dave Teggart 's extra point attempt was good , giving UConn their first lead of the day , at 7 ? 3 .

Buffalo got the ball back at their own 21 @- @ yard line and were only able to advance it to their 34 @- @ yard line before punting the ball back to Connecticut . UConn cornerback Jasper Howard returned the ball 26 yards to the Bulls ' 41 @- @ yard line . The Huskies handed the ball to Donald Brown for five straight running plays , advancing the ball to the Buffalo 19 @- @ yard line as the first quarter clock expired . At the end of the first quarter , UConn held a 7 ? 3 lead and looked to be in position to score more when the second quarter began .

= = Second quarter = =

UConn began the second quarter by having Tyler Lorenzen rush the ball for four yards . On 3rd and 7 , Lorenzen attempted his first pass of the game , which was behind Husky wide receiver Michael Smith . Dave Teggart kicked a 32 @- @ yard field goal to increase Connecticut 's lead to 10 ? 3 .

The Bulls began their next drive at their own 26 @- @ yard line , but went three @- @ and @- @ out . Buffalo punter Peter Fardon kicked the ball over the head of UConn returner Jasper Howard ;

rather than let the ball go , he ran backwards chasing after it . Trying to grab the ball over his shoulder , he muffed the catch , and the ball bounced into the end zone , where it was recovered by Buffalo 's Ray Anthony Long for a Bull touchdown . The special @-@ teams miscue by Howard allowed Buffalo to tie the game at 10 ? 10 with 11 : 36 remaining in the second quarter .

UConn 's turnover woes continued on their next possession when , on their second play from scrimmage after receiving Buffalo 's kickoff , Tyler Lorenzen was sacked , causing him to fumble the ball . The Bulls recovered and drove down the field to the UConn 12 @-@ yard line where they were stopped . Principe kicked a 29 @-@ yard field goal giving Buffalo back the lead , at 13 ? 10 .

The ensuing kickoff saw yet another Connecticut special @-@ teams blunder . UConn running back Robbie Frey misplayed the ball off of the kickoff , letting it roll back into the end zone . Frey recovered the loose ball ; if he had simply taken a knee , by rule it would have been a touchback and the Huskies would have gotten the ball at their own 20 @-@ yard line . Instead , Frey carried the ball out of the end zone , was hit at the 4 @-@ yard line , and fumbled . Buffalo recovered and promptly scored on a 4 @-@ yard touchdown run by Bull running back James Starks , giving themselves a 20 ? 10 lead . UConn had committed its fifth fumble of the game , four of which were recovered by Buffalo . All of Buffalo 's 20 points were directly off of UConn turnovers .

Connecticut fumbled the ball for the sixth time on the next possession ; this time Donald Brown was responsible for dropping the ball . Buffalo recovered for the fifth time , but was unable to score , punting to ball back to UConn with 4 : 37 left in the half . Brown made up for his earlier mistake by breaking off a 75 @-@ yard run before being caught from behind . On the next play Tyler Lorenzen ran the ball into the end zone from 13 yards out . Neither team scored for the remainder of the first half , making the score 20 ? 17 Buffalo going into halftime .

= = = Third quarter = = =

Connecticut received the ball to start the third quarter and drove down the field on rushing plays by Donald Brown , Jordan Todman and Tyler Lorenzen , before the drive stalled at the Buffalo 36 @-@ yard line . UConn punter Desi Cullen 's punt was downed at the Buffalo 1 @-@ yard line , pinning them against their own end zone . The Bulls were unable to move the ball , punting the ball back to UConn after three plays . Starting from their own 44 @-@ yard line , the Huskies drove to within the Buffalo 10 @-@ yard line ; an offside penalty on Buffalo 's Jerry Housey gave UConn a 1st @-@ and @-@ goal at the Buffalo 4 @-@ yard line . Connecticut used a play @-@ action pass , only their second pass attempt of the game , to fool the Bulls ; UConn tight end Steve Brouse was wide open in the end zone , catching the ball for the touchdown and giving Connecticut back the lead at 24 ? 20 with 5 : 22 left in the third quarter .

Buffalo received the ball off the kickoff on their own 28 @-@ yard line . Losing eight yards on their three plays , Buffalo once again punted the ball to Connecticut . UConn drove to the Buffalo 25 @-@ yard line and attempted a 42 @-@ yard field goal ; the kick by Dave Teggart was blocked . Buffalo got the ball back with less than a minute left in the quarter and completed two passes , moving the ball 13 yards down the field before the quarter expired . The score remained in Connecticut 's favor , 24 ? 20 .

= = = Fourth quarter = = =

Buffalo began the final quarter with the ball in a 2nd @-@ and @-@ 11 situation and were unable to convert the first down . UConn received Buffalo 's punt and were also unable to move the ball , going three @-@ and @-@ out and punting back to the Bulls . On their next possession Buffalo managed to get a first down off of a Drew Willy pass to tight end Jesse Rack , but were unable to move the ball further than UConn 's 49 @-@ yard line and punted again .

Connecticut took over at their own 32 @-@ yard line and , after throwing only two passes in the first three quarters , completed three passes over 10 yards apiece to move down the field . On a 2nd @-@ and @-@ 5 from the Buffalo 15 @-@ yard line , Tyler Lorenzen scored his second rushing touchdown of the game . UConn 's lead was extended to 31 ? 20 with less than five minutes left in

the game .

Receiving the ball at their own 8 @-@ yard line following a penalty on the kickoff return , Buffalo began to move down the field , with Drew Willy completing a 38 @-@ yard pass to wideout Brett Hamlin and a 29 @-@ yard pass to Naaman Roosevelt . On 3rd @-@ and @-@ 4 from the Connecticut 19 @-@ yard line , Willy completed a ten @-@ yard pass to James Starks , giving the Bulls a 1st @-@ and @-@ goal . Starks rushed for four yards on first down ; on second down , Willy threw an incomplete pass intended for Roosevelt . On 3rd @-@ and @-@ goal from the Husky 5 @-@ yard line , Willy attempted a pass that was deflected and intercepted by UConn safety Dahna Deleston , who returned the ball 100 yards for the game @-@ sealing touchdown . UConn won the game 38 ? 20 .

= = = Scoring summary = = =

= = Final statistics = =

For his performance in the 2009 International Bowl , Connecticut running back Donald Brown was named the player of the game . Brown rushed for 261 yards and one touchdown on 29 attempts . He finished the 2008 college football season with 2 @,@ 083 rushing yards which led the nation . Brown set several new UConn school records , including the single @-@ season records for rushing yards ( 2 @,@ 083 ) , attempts ( 367 ) , and yards per game ( 160 @.@ 2 ) , the career records for rushing yards ( 3 @,@ 800 ) and attempts ( 698 ) , and the record for consecutive games with at least 100 yards rushing ( 8 ) . His performance did not break the International Bowl rushing records , however ; the previous year Rutgers running back Ray Rice ran for 280 yards and four touchdowns .

Brown 's dominant rushing performance was supplemented by RB Jordan Todman 's 62 yards on seven attempts , QB Tyler Lorenzen 's 32 yards on twelve attempts , including two touchdowns , and fullback Anthony Sherman 's three yards on one attempt ; in total Connecticut ran for 358 yards . The Huskies attempted to pass only six times during the game ; Lorenzen completed four of them for 49 yards and a touchdown . Four different UConn receivers caught one pass each : wide receiver Kashif Moore ( 18 yards ) , cornerback and sometime wide receiver Darius Butler ( 16 yards ) , fullback Anthony Sherman ( 11 yards ) , and tight end Steve Brouse ( 4 yards and a touchdown ) .

Buffalo 's offensive performance was in some ways the opposite of Connecticut 's : while UConn dominated on the ground and barely passed the ball , Buffalo struggled with the run but had a good day passing . The Bulls ran for a total of 24 yards on the game ; James Starks accounted for 25 yards on thirteen carries and scored a touchdown , while RB Brandon Termilus ran three times for five yards . Their total was partially offset by Drew Willy , who lost six yards on three rushing attempts . Willy had a much more successful day passing , completing 29 out of 43 passes for 213 yards and one interception . Naaman Roosevelt led the Buffalo receivers with 90 yards on eight catches ; of the five other Bulls who received passes , WR Brett Hamlin caught four passes for 54 yards , TE Jesse Rack caught three for 22 yards , RB Starks caught 11 for 21 yards , WR Ernest Jackson caught two for 17 yards , and WR Gary Rice caught one for 9 yards .

Connecticut dominated Buffalo statistically in the first half , gaining 225 yards to the Bulls ' 94 , led by Donald Brown 's 208 yards rushing . Buffalo won the turnover battle however , recovering five UConn fumbles . The Bulls scored 20 points off UConn turnovers in the first half , but were held scoreless in the second half when the Huskies stopped turning the ball over .

= = Aftermath = =

Connecticut 's win gave the team a final record of 8 ? 5 and back @-@ to @-@ back winning seasons for the first time since 2003 ? 04 . Buffalo 's final record fell to 8 ? 6 , which still marked the first winning season for the Bulls since transitioning to Division I @-@ A football in 1999 .



In a press conference after the game , Brown announced that he would not return for his senior season and enter the NFL Draft , saying he told the media he said he was staying to take the focus off of himself prior to the game . Brown was drafted 27th overall by the Indianapolis Colts , becoming the first UConn player ever drafted in the first round . Three other UConn players were drafted in the second round : Darius Butler 41st overall by the New England Patriots , William Beatty 60th overall by the New York Giants , and defensive end Cody Brown 63rd overall by the Arizona Cardinals . Tight end Martin Bédard was drafted 15th overall in the second round of the Canadian Football League 's ( CFL ) 2009 Draft . Buffalo did not have any players drafted by either league in 2009 ; in the 2010 NFL Draft James Starks was selected in the sixth round , 193rd overall , by the Green Bay Packers . UConn cornerback Robert McClain was also drafted by the NFL in 2010 , in the seventh round , 249th overall , by the Carolina Panthers .

In the offseason Connecticut hired Joe Moorhead as their new offensive coordinator , replacing the departed Rob Ambrose . Turner Gill returned to coach Buffalo in 2009 . Following that season , however , he left to take over the football program at the University of Kansas .

Connecticut and Buffalo resumed their rivalry on September 25 , 2010 , playing a regular season game at UConn 's Rentschler Field . Although the score was tied 14 ? 14 at halftime , the Huskies pulled away in the second half after changing quarterbacks , winning the rematch 45 ? 21 .