

# UCF Knights hounded by UConn Huskies in a blowout loss

*UConn struggled to solve Tacko Fall and then blew the doors off a struggling UCF Knights team that could not find the bottom of the net or any rhythm.*

By **Timothy Briggs** - January 31, 2016

The UCF Knights were outclassed and overmatched in a 67-41 beatdown at the hands of the Connecticut Huskies on Sunday afternoon at CFE Arena.

UCF's primary problems in the past month have been turnovers and a lack of defensive awareness. Those problems were on display Sunday.

But for some of those games, including a hard-fought loss to the Memphis Tigers on Tuesday, there were positives to take away from the game in order to try to improve.

Tonight, there were little to no positives at all.

"A lot of this stuff has to do with heart and being a competitor. We have to take this personally," Justin McBride said.

Coming off a 20-point performance against Memphis, McBride struggled tonight, along with the rest of the Knights. In 14 minutes, the junior big man scored just four points and added only three rebounds. UCF only had one player in double figures and that was Matt Williams with 10.

UCF actually had the lead at the first timeout at 4-3. The first 4:20 of the game was mostly a defensive struggle, with the Knights finding a hard time getting any open looks and the Huskies struggling to find ways inside because of the imposing Tacko Fall.

Fall's subsequent substitution spelled doom for UCF as his exit, along with Amida Brimah's entry after an 11-game absence, resulted in a 17-0 UConn run that put the team up 20-4, significantly hindering UCF's chance for any kind of comeback.

"We have to go back to the drawing board and fix our mistakes. We have a lot of work to do to just try to be patient," senior guard Daiquan Walker said. "It's frustrating and draining when

you're getting open looks and it feels like there's a lid on the basket."

There certainly seemed to be a metaphorical lid on the basket for the Knights. UCF shot just 23.5 percent from the field. The Knights had three more turnovers (15) than they had made field goals (12).

On a night where nothing worked for UCF, shots were not falling, but a lot of that was due to poor shot selection and a reluctance to move the basketball with pace and direction. Too often UCF looked intimidated and were unable to create its own shot.

The Huskies deserve credit for their hounding defense, as they were prowling in the passing lanes and swatting shots left and right all afternoon to the tune of 12 steals and four blocks.

However, it is a question as to why Tacko Fall was not able to have the same kind of impact for the Knights on the other end. One reason was he did not play enough. The freshman played only 14 minutes, but in those minutes the Knights actually looked competitive.

Fall is just a freshman and still being stretched out by head coach Donnie Jones, but having the sixth highest minute total for a player that, when effective, can be a true difference maker causes some questions to be asked.

"Tacko is usually good for about 4 minutes and so we start seeing a decrease in his effort when he gets tired," head coach Donnie Jones said. "We wanted to get him to that mark and get Justin in to get us a different big, but looking back on that we could have left him in. Would it have mattered? I'm not sure, but it couldn't have hurt. That's for sure."

Additionally, Adonys Henriquez was forced to leave the game in the second half with an apparent knee injury. He awkwardly slipped on a loose ball and seemed to twist his knee.

He left under his own power, but did have a noticeable limp. Jones said Henriquez was examined, and there will be more to follow about his status for the Knights next game against the Tulane Green Wave.

With the loss UCF drops to 10-9 on the season and moves to .500 in American Conference play with a 4-4 record.

