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St. Mary's Aidan Mahaney heads to the University of Connecticut to finish his college career

By Jon Kingdon



Aidan Mahaney Photo UConn Athletics

After playing two seasons at St. Mary's, a team that was a fifth seed in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament, Aidan Mahaney decided to enter the NCAA portal. Having visited, Creighton, Kentucky, Virginia, and Connecticut, Mahaney made the decision to transfer to the University of Connecticut.

Despite the team's and his personal success at St. Mary's, Mahaney is excited about the opportunity to play for Uconn, which has won the last two national championships. "It's an unbelievable opportunity that I have to be able to play for a back-to-back national championship team, going for a third one, and my family is really excited and happy for me," Mahaney said.

Having grown up with St. Mary's Coach Randy Bennett and his two sons, it was not an easy decision for Mahaney. "Since I was a baby with his kids growing up together, I want to emphasize that I love Coach Bennett

to death," Mahaney said. "I'm so grateful for him to be a part of my journey and although it's sad that I'm parting ways, right now in my heart I'm forever a Gael and will forever be in debt to the program and Coach Bennett."

Mahaney hopes to ultimately play professionally, and he sees this move as a way to facilitate that goal, particularly with Connecticut having lost both of their starting guards from last season. "After my freshman year at St. Mary's, I was on some draft boards and after my sophomore year, I still got some good buzz," Mahaney said. "I think that in going to Connecticut, I will be getting tougher. I am working on my defense and their offense is so efficient, I think my shooting numbers will go up a lot because of that. Their style of play will be an adjustment for me but I'm coachable, I work hard and am accountable, so I think it'll be a quick adjustment and I'll be hitting the ground running when I get there."

Mahaney's family made it to all of his home games: something he will miss after transferring to Connecticut. "I think the toughest adjustment will be that my older brother Noah will not being able to come to my games, but I'm going to get him some UConn gear and he'll be a Husky fan in no time."

Mahaney also consulted with his Campolindo coach Steven Dyer. "I talked with Coach Dyer prior to entering the portal and we texted afterwards," Mahaney said. "He's really excited for me, and I will try to keep in touch with him. He's a really knowledgeable guy and he looks at everything through a different lens, so I like to get his opinion on things."

Mahaney said he tried to keep his teammates informed about what was transpiring: "It was really tough because everything happened so fast, so I tried to let everyone know before I entered the portal and before I committed to UConn. I love all my teammates and I feel it's such a brotherhood at St. Mary's and I'm so grateful for all of them. I hope that we can continue to be lifelong friends, which I think we will be."

Mahaney kept in contact with Bennett throughout the process. "Coach Bennett and I have had about four conversations," Mahaney said. "A couple of them were leading up to my announcing that I was entering the portal, and one was the night before I committed to UConn. I have nothing but great things to say and a lot of love for Coach Bennett, the entire staff, and St. Mary's because I wouldn't be in this position without him, the school, and the program. I really tried to thank him for everything that he's done for me. Coach Bennett has been a staple in my basketball career."

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