

UConn Engineering Professor Honored for “Breakthrough” Energy Research

by Gabriel Duffany
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Professor Chih-Jen “Jackie” Sung was presented with the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics’ (AIAA) 2024 Energy Systems Award for his research in “fuel-flexible, ultra-low emission, efficient combustion energy systems,” the AIAA website reads.

Professor Sung is an esteemed contributor to the field of green energy design, specializing in propulsion and combustion as the University of Connecticut’s CT Clean Energy Fund Professor in Sustainable Energy. Beyond his position as a mechanical engineering professor, Sung leads UConn’s internationally recognized Combustion Diagnostics Laboratory, whose groundbreaking research is making waves within the scientific community.

“The depth and breadth of his experience will be pivotal in shaping the future direction of our School in research and education,” says Horea Ilies, UConn’s department head of mechanical engineering.

Sung’s work touches on many aspects of propulsion including flame dynamics, low-

temperature chemistry and energy-efficient combustion. Conducting both theoretical and practical investigations, Sung’s lab recently developed a rapid compression machine of the “next generation,” as described by Sung.

The machine, used for evaluating the quality of different fuels and combustion methods, has been lauded as “a breakthrough in the experimental studies of chemical kinetics,” says Kazem Kazerounian, dean of UConn’s College of Engineering. The team’s cutting-edge technique allows for the measurement of fuel autoignition characteristics, including “ignition delay time, heat release rate, etc.” Sung notes.

The research potential of Sung’s machine has innovative implications for the future of combustion research, with practical applications extending to engines everywhere.

“Autoignition ... affects the efficiency and operation of all modern internal combustion engines. It is so important that ignition performance is the basis of the fuel quality rating systems for conventional petroleum-derived and renewable bio-derived fuels,” Sung emphasizes.

Alongside their continued research in engine optimiza-



Jackie Sung, Connecticut Clean Energy Fund Professor of Sustainable Energy, received the 2024 American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Energy Systems Award on Jan. 10.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNENGINEER ON INSTAGRAM

tion, the Combustion Diagnostics Lab has plans to advance findings in sustainable and efficient aviation.

In being honored for his many contributions, Sung credits the extensive team of graduate and postdoctoral researchers. “I was very appreciative of this tremendous honor, but also humbled by

it. It is truly rewarding to be recognized by your peers,” Sung says.

In addition to the next generation of science, Professor Sung has excitement for the next generation of scientists. “Always challenge yourself,” Sung encourages. “Don’t be afraid of exploring new things and thinking outside the box.”

“Always challenge yourself. Don’t be afraid of exploring new things and thinking outside the box.”
JACKIE SUNG

With Trump closing in on nomination, the effective audition to become his vice president is underway



President Donald Trump appears with South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, Sept. 7, 2018, in Sioux Falls, S.D. Noem is considered a close ally of the former president who is among those being considered for the job.
PHOTOGRAPH BY SUSAN WALSH, AP PHOTO

MANCHESTER, N.H. (AP) — As she addressed a crushing crowd of volunteers and media at Donald Trump’s New Hampshire headquarters on Saturday, New York Rep. Elise Stefanik received a welcome chant.

“VP! VP! VP!” one man shouted across the room.

While vice presidential can-

didates typically aren’t picked until after a candidate has locked down the nomination, Trump’s decisive win in last week’s Iowa caucuses and the departure of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis from the race have only heightened what had already been a widespread sense of inevitability that he will be the Republican nominee. That

has given the campaign trail stops by Stefanik and other Republicans the feel of a public tryout reminiscent of Trump’s days as a reality TV host.

Many Republicans covet a spot on the presidential ticket with Trump as a chance to serve in a high-profile role that has elevated many ambitious politicians from relative obscurity.

That interest comes despite the fate of Trump’s first vice president, Mike Pence. For four years, Pence was Trump’s most loyal defender, advocating for him at every turn. But in the final months of their administration, Trump turned on Pence, casting him as disloyal for refusing to go along with his unconstitutional effort to block President Joe Biden’s win.

Pence’s role in certifying the 2020 election not only threatened his life during the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol but also sidelined his political career. He would end his own bid for this year’s GOP presidential nomination in October after failing to get traction. Many of Trump’s supporters still believe the former president’s lies about the election and view Pence as a traitor.

The Trump campaign has held several events in both Iowa and New Hampshire with high-profile surrogates.

Beyond serving as opportunities to display their loyalty and star power to Trump’s team, the events serve as a reward for volunteers as well as a recruiting tool that brings in new faces, senior Trump officials said.

Stefanik joined Trump on stage at his Friday night rally in New Hampshire and stopped by his campaign headquarters the next morning to thank volunteers and

make calls. In both appearances, she stressed that she was the first member of Congress to endorse Trump’s comeback bid.

“I’m proud to be one of his strongest supporters, particularly at key moments,” she told reporters. Asked if she would consider being his running mate, Stefanik said, “Of course I’d be honored, I’ve said that for a year, to serve in a future Trump administration in any capacity.”

Others who have appeared in Iowa and New Hampshire on Trump’s behalf include Sen. JD Vance of Ohio, South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, Arizona Senate candidate Kari Lake and Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia. Lake was at a rally Sunday night taking pictures with supporters and holding a baby in the crowd.

Former presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy appeared with Trump on stage in New Hampshire a day after dropping out of the race, also drawing “VP” chants from the crowd as he delivered a fiery speech.

And at the same rally where Stefanik spoke, Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina, Trump’s former rival in the presidential race, announced his enthusiastic endorsement in what sounded like his own audition.

See NOMINATION, p. 02

NOMINATION, cont. from p. 01

“We need Donald Trump!” said Scott, leading the crowd in an impassioned call-and-response full of the fervor many of his own campaign appearances seemed to lack. Trump stood behind him grinning.

Trump, too, has been stoking the speculation, saying during a recent Fox News town hall that he already knows “who it’s going to be.” He told Fox News host Bret Baier over the weekend that “there’s probably a 25% chance” that he would ultimately pick the person he had in mind, adding: “The person that I think I like is a very good person, pretty standard. I think people won’t be that surprised.”

Jason Miller, a senior campaign adviser, declined to address vice presidential prospects or speculation about potential running mates. But he said those who have campaigned on Trump’s behalf in Iowa and New Hampshire “have drawn massive crowds and have all done a fantastic job of energizing voters

to turn out for President Trump. So we’re very happy and very excited with both the jobs that they’ve all done but as well, the reception that they’ve all received,” he said.

Trump has been talking through potential choices since well before he formally launched his campaign, throwing out names, peppering friends and Mar-a-Lago members for feedback, and keeping a close eye on those jockeying for the post.

In those conversations, he has often indicated his interest in selecting a woman. Allies also say that while loyalty — and having a dependable attack dog who can effectively defend him — is paramount, Trump is also cognizant that he would enter a second term as a lame duck president and wouldn’t want a second-in-command who might overshadow him with immediate 2028 speculation.

Among those considered high on the list is Stefanik, a member of House Republican leadership who has seen her profile rise after her aggressive

questioning of a trio of university presidents over antisemitism set in motion two of their resignations.

Mindful that aggressively angling for the job risked backfiring, the once-Trump critic has tried to position herself as a trusted ally of the former president, defending him in both of his impeachments and filing an ethics complaint in New York against the judge hearing his civil fraud case.

During a recent appearance on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” Stefanik referred to those imprisoned for crimes committed on Jan. 6 as “hostages.”

At a roadside country western saloon last week in the small town of Kingston, Vance, the senator from Ohio, offered a robust endorsement of Trump to a small crowd seated on bar tables nestled between whiskey barrels.

Vance once called himself a “never-Trump guy” and labeled Trump an “idiot.” But like so much of his party, he has rallied to Trump’s side. He says the two are now “very close” and talk “all the time.” And

while he said he would “help out however I can” if he was offered the vice presidential ticket, he said Trump would also need allies in Congress.

“I think that’s the best place for me is to actually be an advocate of the agenda in the United States Senate. But certainly if the president asked, I would have to think about. I want to help him out in however I can,” he said.

Vance said he wouldn’t pretend to give Trump advice on the decision, but that Nikki Haley, Trump’s last remaining major Republican rival, would be a poor choice. “Stefanik’s great. Kristi Noem’s great. I think all these people are great. Tim Scott’s a very, very good dude and would make a great vice president,” he said.

Trump has already effectively ruled out Haley. He said at a rally in Concord last week that his former U.N. ambassador is “not presidential timber.”

Haley is staunchly opposed by many in Trump’s “MAGA” base, including his son, Donald Trump Jr., who said he would go to “great lengths” to prevent

her from being offered the job.

Other potential contenders mentioned by Trump allies include Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, his former press secretary, Tennessee Sen. Marsha Blackburn, North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum, who recently endorsed Trump after dropping his own White House bid, Florida Rep. Byron Donalds and Fox News host Tucker Carlson.

Susan Ingrahm-Kelly, 64, from Bedford, New Hampshire, visited Trump’s campaign headquarters to see Stefanik in person Saturday and raved about the congresswoman’s questioning of Ivy League presidents.

“Oh, I think she’s fabulous!” she said. “I absolutely love what she did, this whole thing with the Harvard.”

Ingrahm-Kelly, who is leaning toward voting for Trump on Tuesday, said she also likes the idea of another woman vice president. “I like to see strong, educated, articulate women, don’t we? I think she’s fantastic.”

Supreme Court allows federal agents to cut razor wire Texas installed on US-Mexico border

WASHINGTON (AP) — A divided Supreme Court on Monday allowed Border Patrol agents to resume cutting for now razor wire that Texas installed along a stretch of the U.S.-Mexico border that is at the center of an escalating standoff between the Biden administration and the state over immigration enforcement.

The 5-4 vote clears the way for Border Patrol agents to cut or clear out concertina wire that Texas has put along the banks of the Rio Grande to deter migrants from entering the U.S. illegally. Some migrants have been injured by the sharp wire and the Justice Department has argued the barrier impedes the U.S. government’s ability to patrol the border, including coming to the aid of migrants in need of help.

None of the justices provided any explanation for their vote. The one-page order is a victory for the Biden administration while the lawsuit over the wire continues.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott had authorized the wire, one of a series of aggressive measures the three-term Republican has taken on the border in the name of curbing illegal crossings from Mexico. His spokesman said the absence of razor wire and other deterrents encourages migrants to risk un-

safe crossings and makes the job of Texas border personnel more difficult.

“This case is ongoing, and Governor Abbott will continue fighting to defend Texas’ property and its constitutional authority to secure the border,” Abbott spokesman Andrew Mahaleris said.

A spokesperson for U.S. Customs and Border Protection did not immediately return a message seeking comment Monday.

A federal appeals court last month had forced federal agents to stop cutting the concertina wire.

The concertina wire stretches for roughly 30 miles (48 kilometers) near the border city of Eagle Pass, where earlier this month the Texas Military Department seized control of a city-owned park and began denying access to Border Patrol agents.

Eagle Park has become one of the busiest spots on the southern U.S. border for migrants illegally crossing from Mexico. Abbott has said Texas won’t allow Border Patrol agents into Shelby Park anymore, having expressed frustration over what he says are migrants illegally entering through Eagle Pass and then federal agents loading them onto buses.

Abbott also has authorized installing floating barriers



Concertina wire lines the path as members of Congress tour an area near the Texas-Mexico border, Jan. 3, 2024, in Eagle Pass, Texas. A divided Supreme Court on Monday, Jan. 22, allowed Border Patrol agents to cut razor wire that Texas installed on the U.S.-Mexico border, while a lawsuit over the wire continues.
PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC GAY/AP PHOTO

in the Rio Grande near Eagle Pass and allowed troopers to arrest and jail thousands of migrants on trespassing charges. The administration also is challenging those actions in federal court.

In court papers, the administration said the wire impedes Border Patrol agents

from reaching migrants as they cross the river and that, in any case, federal immigration law trumps Texas’ own efforts to stem the flow of migrants into the country.

Texas officials have argued that federal agents cut the wire to help groups crossing illegally through the river before

taking them in for processing.

Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Amy Coney Barrett, Ketanji Brown Jackson, Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor sided with the administration. Justices Samuel Alito, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Clarence Thomas voted with Texas.

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THE DAILY CAMPUS CROSSWORD

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15 On one’s toes
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20 Sambuca flavor
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23 Unpaved side of the road
27 Patella place
28 Common first section of a menu, familiarly
29 Food Network host Garten
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41 Grumble over
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6 “As ___ our agreement”
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21 Fondue fuel
24 Safe space
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31 “I Hope You Dance” singer Lee ___ Womack
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- 48 Bury
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51 Pilot’s update, briefly
52 Reacts to yeast
53 Bubble and churn
54 One of four active volcanoes in Italy
56 Den sets
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58 Fjord kin
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ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

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FRESH

styles of humor arrive to IRELAND in new streaming SEASON OF

by Patrick Boots
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When you picture Ireland, you probably see a land famed for its rolling hills, shamrocks and leprechauns, and, of course, an infectious brand of wit. So, what happens when you put ten of its finest comedic talents in a room together and tell them not to laugh? That’s the premise of “LOL: Last One Laughing, Ireland Edition,” Amazon Prime Video’s latest foray into the global laughter-warfare reality show format. Does it crackle with the sharp tongue and charm of Irish humor, or does it leave you yearning for the pot at the end of the rainbow?

“LOL: Last One Laughing” originated in Japan, and versions co-produced in Canada and other European countries have established the format: comedians try their hardest not to laugh at the others’ jokes. For the new series in Ireland hosted by Graham Norton, where humor fuels daily conversation and a well-timed quip can deflect even the worst hailstorm, the sheer act of suppressing a chuckle comes off as almost unnatural - but maybe that’s part of its charm. This

tension forms the core of the show’s appeal. Watching comedians like the mischievous Deirdre O’Kane weave tales of misadventures while others like the deadpan David McSavage stoically bat away giggles is strangely captivating.

However, the show stumbles on the unevenness of its execution. Host Graham Norton, ever the consummate entertainer, tries his best to inject spontaneity and camaraderie, but the format often feels stilted compared to his other chat shows. The forced “challenges, from puppet shows to improvised musicals, sometimes interrupt the natural flow of comedic banter. It’s the unscripted moments, the casual asides, and witty observations that arise organically, that truly shine.

The cast, to their credit, is a delightful mix of personalities. The ever-reliable Dara Ó Briain offers dry wit and sardonic observations, while the energetic Joanne McNally delivers infectious enthusiasm and laugh-out-loud impressions. Newer voices like the up-and-coming Shane Byrne and Kevin McGahern hold their own with seasoned veterans.

One of the show’s strengths is its exploration of the uniquely Irish brand of hu-

mor. From playful digs at national stereotypes to witty references to local lore, the show captures the essence of what makes Irish comedy tick. There’s a warm and self-aware humor that permeates even the most outrageous jokes, a nod to the shared history and experiences that bind this nation together.

Ultimately, “LOL: Last One Laughing, Ireland Edition” is a mixed bag. It’s a fascinating experiment in cultural humor, showcasing the talents of some of Ireland’s finest comedians. There are moments that leave you wishing you were watching these comedians perform in a real pub, but for a television performance it can certainly be enjoyed. The series would be recommended for anybody who enjoys comedy and is interested in seeing where the laughter flows freely and the wit truly takes flight. And remember, sometimes the best laughs are the ones shared, not stifled.

Produced by MGM Studios, you can watch “LOL: Last One Laughing, Ireland Edition” on-demand with an Amazon Prime Video subscription. Reruns and other versions of “LOL” air on Comedy Central (HuskyVision channel 22).

RATING:



"LOL: LAST ONE LAUGHING"



IMAGE COURTESY OF IMDB



Life

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Stick it to them in ‘Stick Fight: The Game’

by Desirae Sin
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Welcome back to The Backlog! For January, we are diving into games based on the word “fight,” but this doesn’t limit the games to a specific play-style. Last week we covered the never-ending brawl that is “Brawlhalla,” and this week, we are going to look at the physics-based fighting game titled “Stick Fight: The Game.” Initially released in 2017 by Landfall Games, “Stick Fight: The Game” took the internet

Fight: The Game” so hilarious is the fact that it takes the physics aspect to the extreme. Just like real guns, the ones in the game produce different levels of recoil as they are shot. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve accidentally sent myself off-screen by shooting the sawed-off shotgun because I forgot to account for the significant recoil from the gun. There are other weapons that do more than just shoot bullets. A silly addition to the game is the snake weapons, which are the same as the regular guns, except they are colored green and shoot

may even, like I did, accidentally get yourself a few times. With how chaotic the weapons and stages can be, I would estimate that each round lasts between five to 30 seconds, depending on if you manage not to kill yourself before the others. “Stick Fight: The Game” is reminiscent of the stick figure games and animations that arose in the early 2000s. One artifact that forever gives me an appreciation for animation is “Animator vs. Animation” on YouTube by Alan Becker. “Stick Fight: The Game” brings back the nostalgia of the days when

LOGO BY HALEIGH SCHMIDT, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

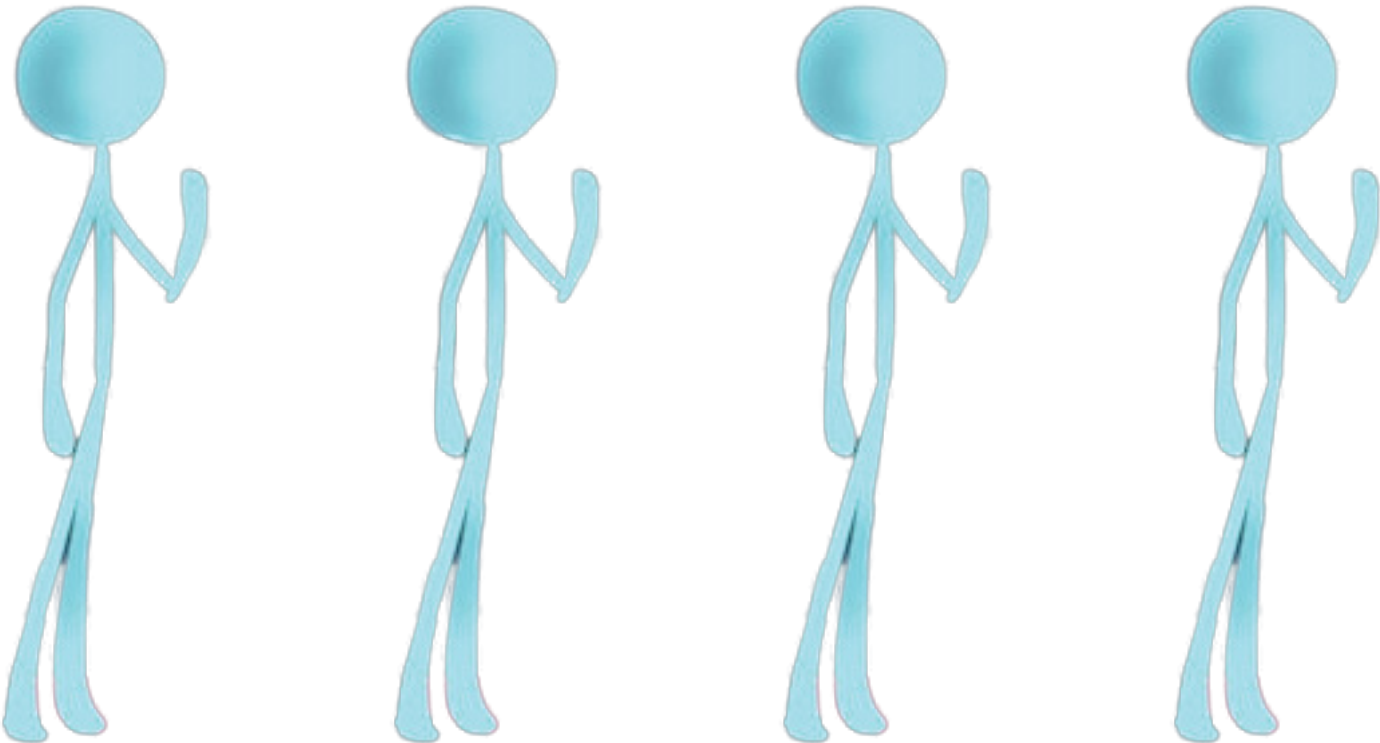


by storm with hilarious videos of friends annihilating each other in comedic ways. Like any other 2D platform fighting game, players can come together through local or online play and battle it out to see who is the last one left standing. It can be downloaded and played on virtually any platform, from big consoles to mobile devices. Instead of having unique characters, each player is assigned to a different colored stickman. The only way to defeat your opponent is by using the weapons that spawn randomly, falling off the stage or getting eliminated by traps on said stage. What makes “Stick

snakes instead of bullets. Be warned, these snakes will attack anyone near them even if you are the wielder. These snakes are also surprisingly nimble and jumpy for animals with no legs. The weapons are not limited to long-range or guns; there are a variety of melee weapons that are just as dangerous. There are some as simple as the sword or spear, which do exactly what you’d expect them to do: stab and slash your enemies. Yet there are some with a few quirks. The blink dagger can teleport you a certain distance, based on the direction you are facing. Not to mention the fact that it will instantly kill anyone it stabs. You

young kids would watch fighting animations made by one or a few people on the internet. Because of the spirit and love put into the game, I’d have to say that “Stick Fight: The Game” is a fun experience for everyone. You don’t need to be a hardcore gamer or extremely skilled to be able to win at “Stick Fight: The Game.” Because of the simplistic yet goofy nature of the game, anyone from any age group could easily win each round. There are also countless videos on YouTube and clips on TikTok from the game displaying how shockingly accurate and exaggerated the physics are.

Rating:



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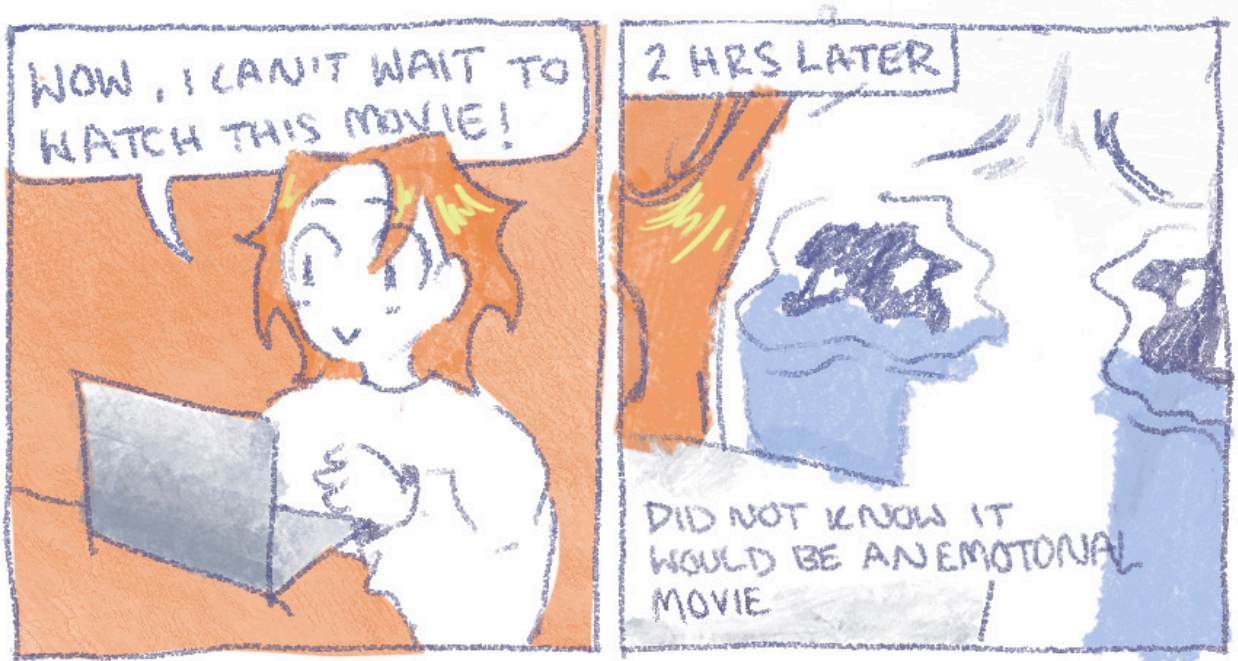
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COMIC BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Editorial

AN ANALYSIS OF UCONN'S 10-YEAR PLAN

PART 3: CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY

The University of Connecticut Board of Trustees unanimously approved a new 10-year strategic plan for the university on Dec. 6, 2023, according to UConn Today. The plan is in service of three goals: promoting holistic student success, expanding research impact and powering a thriving Connecticut.

Progress on the plan, led by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and containing four working groups concerning student success, research, local impact and implementation, will be measured against four Key Performance Indicators. As The Daily Campus Editorial Board has previously discussed, these will include achieving a six-year graduation rate of 90%, increasing the size of the university endowment to \$1 billion, reaching carbon neutrality by 2030 and obtaining \$500 million in research funding.

The Daily Campus Editorial Board certainly does not think aiming for carbon neutrality is a bad goal — far from it, achieving maximal sustainability is a moral and ethical imperative for this public land-grant university. However, too often when it comes to climate change UConn has provided far more promises than meaningful action.

While we agree with the university's classification of climate change as "an existential threat," University President Radenka Maric has still failed to release a comprehensive plan to achieve carbon neutrality.

The Daily Campus Editorial Board has covered UConn's double standard when it comes to climate change. While rhetorically the university has routinely expressed alarm regarding climate change, their actions often contradict their words.

UConn's Central Utility Plant is responsible for generating over 100,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually; however, the university has presented no real way to phase out this plant in the future. This plant remains open for the foreseeable future, undercutting the legitimacy of individualistic initiatives like the month-long EcoMadness challenge, which encourages students to reduce their water usage and overall waste. If the university was so worried about their impact on the environment they would first start by removing one of the largest sources of carbon emissions from campus and phasing in an alternative energy source. Reducing waste is a necessary cultural change that must be made in the United States writ large, but introducing the efficient technologies needed to precipitate these changes is a systemic, not individual, process.

In addition, UConn receives the majority of their power from Eversource, Connecticut's largest power company who enjoys a geographic monopoly throughout Connecticut when it comes to providing fossil fuels.

There are also the countless partnerships that UConn holds with some of the world's worst polluters, including Raytheon-sponsored career fairs, to the annual "Lockheed Martin Day" and million dollar donations to faculty members at the College of Engineering from Sikorsky. UConn's close ties with several of the largest arms developers in the United States have been covered by The Daily Campus Editorial Board. Of the 195 countries in the world, the United States military alone ranks 47th in terms of yearly emissions.

The lack of oversight on the UConn Foundation has led to persistent allegations from climate activists that the school has directly and indirectly invested millions of dollars into fossil fuel companies from the university endowment.

UConn cannot have it both ways. You can't claim on the one hand to be for a sustainable future while on the other hand accepting millions from the very companies doing the most damage to the environment. The Daily Campus Editorial Board believes that if the university really wants to reach their goal of carbon neutrality they should take a serious look at who some of their biggest donors are. UConn must end its paradoxical nature of claiming to want to do something about climate change while persistently accepting the money of the world's worst polluters.

If you live in the United States, you've likely seen it: dozens of people at school, work, the gym and other areas of social life lugging around the 40 oz stainless steel vats of liquid known as the Stanley Quencher. By all accounts, these pastel-colored behemoths, fit with a handle, straw and cup holder compatibility for convenient sipping, have exploded in popularity over the past two years, in no small part due to a literal explosion. On Nov. 15, 2023, TikTok user @danimarilettering posted a viral video of the aftermath of a fire that wrecked her car. One surviving remnant was her slightly charred Stanley tumbler, which had even kept ice frozen amidst the inferno. The video, which has garnered 9.1 million views as of January 2024, caught the attention of Stanley 1913 president Terrence Riley who, via TikTok, made the generous — and incredibly media savvy — offer to replace her vehicle at the company's expense.

With that, Stanley tumblers have undoubtedly cemented their position as the water bottle of the moment. On Jan. 19, 2024, the Wall Street Journal interviewed a 16-year-old from Alabama whose towering collection of 67 Stanley tumblers, coming in every size, color and collector's line, cost her parents an upwards of \$3,000.

As she was quoted by the Journal, "If they are rare, I would want to use them more because I'm special for having them."

A Sacramento woman was arrested for grand theft for walking out of a store without paying for 65 Stanley tumblers, which amount to nearly

\$2,500 in merchandise according to CBS. Whether they were for resale or a personal collection, her motivation was undoubtedly influenced by the immense clout of the product. Across the country, concerns are growing among parents that fashionable drinkware is causing rifts between the youth, corroborated by one mother's story of her daughter being accosted by her classmates for owning an "off-brand tall plastic cup with a straw."

What is it about this all-around unremarkable water bottle that could light such a fire beneath consumers that it led to Target shoppers stumbling over each other and enduring minor injuries to own a limited-edition Valentine's Day Stanley? In the broad view of our global economy, it's not, as one CNN Business article suggests, "because of its ability to keep beverages hot and cold for extended periods of time, and the fact that despite its size, the tapered bottom still perfectly fits in a vehicle's cup holder."

But before delving into why the Stanley tumbler is more than just a regular everyday appliance, it's important to recognize that the Quencher H2.o FlowState (I don't think "Parks & Recreation's" Tom Haverford could come up with more buzzwords in one title) is far from the only trendy bottle to transcend its function as a drinking receptacle. While Stanley's marketing trajec-

tory is unique, refurbishing a brand traditionally advertised to the archetype of working class men to appeal to young women, it is one of many water bottles riding the wave of social media discourse to mass appeal. For those of who attended school prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, it's near impossible to forget the memeified — and still enduring — ubiquity of the Hydro Flask.

Even now, new competitors emerge. As recently as Jan. 14, 2024, one writer for Food & Wine Magazine has answered the call of the hydration wars by launching a frontal assault on the Stanley in favor of the other vacuum-insulated, stainless steel option, the Owala FreeSip (I was unaware that other forms of sipping were unfree). Stephanie McNeal, senior editor for Glamour Magazine, goes as far as to anthropomorphize and gender the ambitious challenger: "The Owala is cute. She's trendy. She's insulated, with a straw and a lid. Some say she has life-saving properties. In short, she's that bitch. Stanley? Never heard of her."

Absolutely brilliant lede aside, it shouldn't be lost on us how bizarre it is to eulogize a water bottle brand.

Absolutely brilliant lede aside, it shouldn't be lost on us how bizarre it is to eulogize a water bottle brand.

Fortunately — or perhaps unfortunately — theorists have had their fingers on the pulse of this phenomenon for hundreds

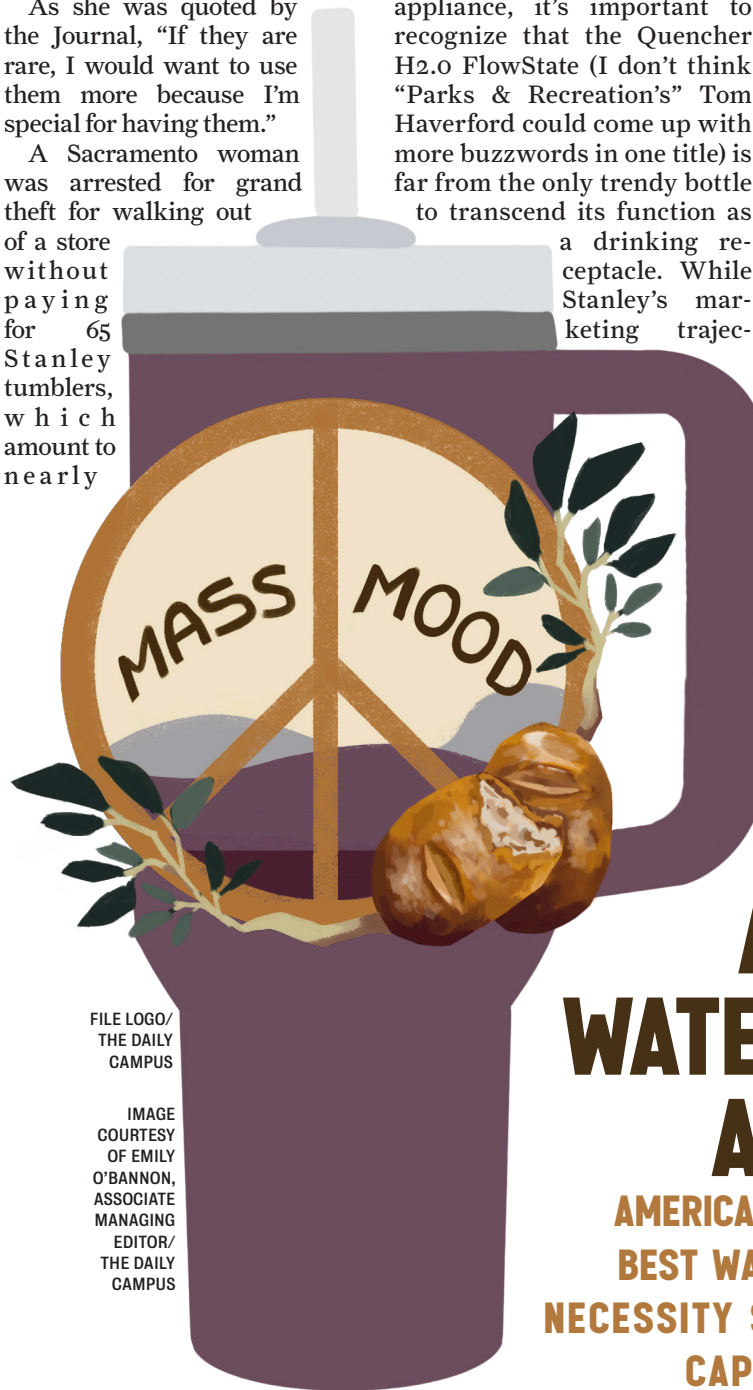
of years. German theorist and friend of the column, Karl Marx, made the first stride towards understanding this attachment to the commodity by explicating the theory of commodity fetishism. In layperson's terms, commodity fetishism describes the process by which the human labor embodied in a commodity — the labor that gives it value beyond its use as unassembled parts or raw materials — is made invisible through exchange on the market. While to Marx the embodied labor in a commodity was objectified as price, nowadays corporations have a multi-billion dollar advertising industry, as well as social media, to further distance consumers from the people who produce their commodities.

See STANLEY, p. 08

WHY IS NO ONE GETTING A NORMAL WATER BOTTLE ANYMORE?

AMERICA'S OBSESSION WITH THE BEST WAY TO CONSUME A BASIC NECESSITY SHOWS THE REACH OF CAPITALISM IN OUR LIVES

by Nell Srinath | OPINION EDITOR | THEY/THEM/SHE/HER | nell.srinath@uconn.edu





AMERICA'S OBSESSION WITH THE BEST WAY TO CONSUME A BASIC NECESSITY SHOWS THE REACH OF CAPITALISM IN OUR LIVES

STANLEY, cont. from p. 07

In their essay, “Just doing it: Enjoying commodity fetishism with Lacan,” Steffen Böhm and Aanka Batta argue that advertising and branding are critical in obscuring the social relations — namely production by labor and exploitation by the capitalists — required to produce merchandise. Using Nike’s close association with high-performance athletes as an example, Böhm and Batta write, with hard-to-decipher academic chops, “What

contemporary consumer capitalism has arguably achieved is that it has provided a symbolic system onto which the subject’s constitutive anxieties (lack) can be transferred, creating a set of fantasies for people to believe in.”

In other words, marketing invites people to create artificial identities, communities and realities to participate in, even for an effervescent moment. Owning Nikes will make you jump higher, and owning the cool new bottle will make you popular (or will, in a practical sense, insulate you

from ridicule, speaking as a hideous “green text bubble” Android-user). In this sense, new needs, the strongest of which being the desire to merely belong, are created out of thin air solely to justify the surplus production of commodities. In our contemporary situation, a particularly brutal example would be how the relative overproduction of Apple products drives (and is driven by) dangerous, illegal mining of cobalt in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Love it or not, capitalism runs our lives at every level; however,

it doesn’t happen at the edicts of secret, international summits staffed by old men in antique leather chairs stroking their Persian Longhairs. The laws of production dictated by this centuries-old global system are plenty visible in how we treat each other, use social media and adapt to social institutions like schools and workplaces. No longer the exclusive realm of advertising firms, the duty of pushing unnecessary products has been outsourced to consumers themselves who, through

the construction of artificial social identities, can exalt normal, tangible objects to an almost supernatural status while the exploited hands that produce them remain unacknowledged, unappreciated and undercompensated. Thus, a symbol of social status to someone in the heart of global imperialism is a token of exploitation to the workers in imperialism’s periphery, further insulating us (with a Stanley brand vacuum seal) from the everyday horrors of the capitalist economic model.

THE DAILY CAMPUS

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FLIP THE PAPER UPSIDE-DOWN FOR THE ANSWERS!

Stratton's Stand:

Ceiling, floor & more for UConn women's basketball

by **Stratton Stave**
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As has become a typical winter tradition, the UConn women's basketball team is facing injury adversity. It's only January, but they already have sustained what feels like four years worth of injuries. Regardless, the No. 9 Huskies have remained resilient. After starting 4-3 and seemingly losing a different player for the year every time they set foot on the court, things have stabilized.

Aside from losing sixth-man Aubrey Griffin to an ACL tear, there's been continuity in their past several games. This has allowed the team to actually develop a flow together and the results have shown. In Connecticut's 12-game streak, they got it started with a solid win over No. 24 UNC and a walloping of No. 18 Louisville.

As impressive as those were, even more encouraging were their back to back victories against No. 18 Marquette and No. 21 Creighton, neither of which were remotely close. Their combined margin was +75, a demonstration of sheer dominance that's been rarer in recent years. Since that pair, the Huskies have taken care of business, beating unranked Big East teams with even more ease.

Upcoming matchups against No. 19 Notre Dame and No. 1 South Carolina should make it easier to figure out where they stand, but let's take a look at the roster, the ceiling and the

floor and what this means for them longer term.

ROSTER

The guard depth is exceptional for the Huskies. Especially with the way their freshmen have shown up, there's not another team in the country that could definitively beat them in a backcourt battle. Spearheading the effort is Paige Bueckers, who is returning to the form that saw her win the 2021 National Player of the Year. She's at around 20 points per game and has the star-guard shot-making abilities that can help a team overperform down the stretch.

Joining her is Nika Mühl, who struggled a bit to start the season, largely because it took time to figure out her role with Bueckers back in the fold. With the ball always in her hands last year with Bueckers sidelined, Mühl was the sole point guard. Though it took

some adjusting, she and Bueckers have figured out the mix of scoring and passing that works for each of them and are playing off each other nicely.

The three freshmen guards have done what's been needed. Ashlynn Shade, fresh off a 21 point performance, is looking like she will be a key cog for the Huskies for as long as she's around. KK Arnold, while quiet at times, has shown a killer instinct and has been excellent on the defensive end. Qadence Samuels has been good enough, but the team would benefit from more confidence as she looks to make the most of her limited playing time.

At the forward spots, this is where UConn is thin. They have 6-foot-3 Aaliyah Edwards manning the middle and she's done a great job. She's putting up nearly identical numbers to her All-American campaign last year and it's difficult to find too many faults with her in the scope of UConn's larger frontcourt issues.

After Edwards, there's no obvious options. Redshirt freshman Ice Brady has been decent in moments. It's hard to see her being the answer given her recent production though. Aside from a 17 point outburst against St. John's, Brady has left much to be desired. It's unlikely she'll be effective against a team like South Carolina, or another squad that has a pair of great bigs. Edwards can handle one, but not two elite forwards. And Amari DeBerry has been out of the picture for a while.

CEILING

The ceiling for this team is the same as it always is: a national championship. It feels unlikely at this point given the aforementioned lack of depth up front, but magical things could happen with the right draw. Bueckers has the talent to be the lead guard on a national championship roster. They have the guard pieces. But things need to go nearly perfectly in a way unlike most of the other UConn championships. A title is far from a foregone conclusion. But it is possible.

FLOOR

Similar to last year, the floor is a Sweet 16 exit. As long as they host the first round, the Huskies likely aren't losing in Storrs. But after that, they're not safe. If they end up as a two seed and face a team like LSU (currently No. 10 nationally), they could easily lose. UConn's success in March is very matchup-dependent, making this season's NCAA tournament very intriguing.

PROJECTION

As for a projection, the Elite Eight seems fair. This is a very talented squad, but they don't have the same powerful frontcourt as their all-time great teams have boasted. If they end up as a two and make it to the regional final, then they've done what they're supposed to. With all the injuries this team has sustained, an Elite Eight appearance would be a win, even if it wouldn't feel like it given the program's long line of success.



FILE ILLUSTRATION/THE DAILY CAMPUS



The UConn Huskies won against DePaul University on Jan. 20, 2024 as part of the Big East Conference. The UConn women's basketball team will take on the Marquette Golden Eagles on Jan. 23, 2024.

PHOTO BY ZACH MOLLER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Photo of the Day | Women’s basketball



UConn women’s basketball returns to a sold-out Gampel Pavilion on Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024, taking the win against Big East opponent DePaul. This win sets the Huskies at a 12 game win streak and an 8-0 standing vs Big East teams this season.
PHOTO BY ZACH MOLLER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

THE WEEKLY REED:

Is Mahomes/Allen really the new Brady/Manning?

by Noah Reed
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One of the biggest things that was mentioned going into this weekend was the newest rivalry between the Bills and the Chiefs, specifically Patrick Mahomes versus Josh Allen. The broadcast, fans and even multiple publications have dubbed it the new Tom Brady/Peyton Manning pairing in the NFL, which people have gone back and forth on especially with Allen losing again to Mahomes. Comparing generations in sports is nothing even remotely new but I wanted to see how much of this comparison was true.

When looking back at the regular season matchups, they looked pretty on par. Brady typically got the best of Manning, taking him down nine times in their 12 regular season games.

Allen and Mahomes have already matched up four times in the regular season, with Allen taking the 3-1 advantage. The win this year at Arrowhead for the Bills really brought the team back to life and is where I think that the comparison started to make sense.

The playoffs are what have been the separating factor for me. Manning and Brady met in the playoffs three times between 2003 and 2006. Brady and the Patriots took the first two matchups hosting the Colts and then when Manning and Indianapolis got homefield for the third game, they managed to get their first playoff win.

It then took seven more seasons from 2006 to 2013 before Manning (now with the Broncos) and Brady would meet in the playoffs. Peyton and his new team would get the last laugh in his last two playoff games with

Brady, sending Tom and the Patriots home in the AFC Championship game in 2013 and 2015.

To everyone's credit, the similarities are there to what we saw with Allen and Mahomes. From 2021 to 2024, the Bills and the Chiefs met with each other three times. Mahomes and the Chiefs hosted and won the first two meetings, and this Sunday's game was Allen's chance to be just like Manning. That sadly didn't happen as Mahomes and the Chiefs took down Buffalo on the road, giving Mahomes the 3-0 all-time head-to-head record in the playoffs against Allen. To me, that's what we need to see to even get close to calling this the new Brady/Manning rivalry: an Allen win against Mahomes in the playoffs.

The easiest rebuttal to anyone making this argument is of course to mention the history behind Brady and his seven rings and how dominant Manning was in his prime, but that's too easy. I think it's just people projecting nostalgia onto the game they love, and I get it, but I don't think the rivalry is at the point where it can be compared because Mahomes has the edge in the playoffs. One playoff win can change the whole narrative, but what made the Manning and Brady games so great was that both had proven they could beat the other when it mattered most; that cannot be said about Allen and the Bills.

This is also not to say that this can't be a great rivalry itself. People forget just how Brady dominated the first six matchups against Manning and the Colts. He took each of their first six meetings, including two playoff games, with an average margin of victory of over 14 points. In the last four meetings between the Bills and Chiefs, every single one of them has been a one score game as time expired. This resembles more of the latter half of the Brady/Manning head-to-head matchup as seven out of their last ten meetings ended up being decided by a single score.

If anything, this just proves the lack of star power that the NFC has with quarterbacks, as fans aren't really hyping up the Jared Goff/Brock Purdy NFC Championship next weekend. Why would they either, when after this week's Bills/Chiefs game we get to see MVP Lamar Jackson taking on Mahomes, who's in his sixth consecutive AFC championship himself.

I'm hopeful that we'll see this rivalry between Allen and Mahomes build in years to come, but let's just let it be its own thing. Mahomes and the Chiefs have been like the Astros of the NFL, making the conference championship for six years straight. I don't think they're going anywhere soon. Losing again only grows the chip on the Bills' shoulder and losing at home added insult to injury. These teams will remain powerhouses atop the AFC and will have many more meetings, but it doesn't need to be compared to others to still be great.



Patrick Mahomes scored a total of two touchdowns in a game against the Washington Commanders. The Kansas City Chiefs outscored the Commanders by 18 points on Oct. 17, 2021.
PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



IMAGE COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Incredible weekend results in solo first place for No. 1 Huskies

by Sam Calhoun
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I think everyone feels out of breath after an incredible weekend of Big East games.

Four of the five Big East games this past weekend finished in one-possession games. Creighton and Seton Hall made an argument for the best college basketball game this season in a triple-overtime thriller. Also, DePaul let go of head coach Tony Stubblefield on Monday afternoon after two and a half seasons with the Blue Demons. In his tenure, DePaul went 28-54 and currently sits in last place in the Big East with a winless conference record.

With many incredible performances in the past week, let's take a look at the best basketball conference in this edition of Big East Baller Update.

Player of the Week: Tristen Newton, G, UConn (20.5 PPG, 7 RPG, 4 APG, 43.7 FG% in two games)

Newton looked like an All-American caliber guard last week, leading the Huskies wins over No. 18 Creighton and Villanova. The national champion starting point guard scored 19 of his 25-point performance in the second half against Villanova, lighting the fire to keep the Huskies at the top of the AP Poll.

Freshman of the Week: Rich Barron, F, Providence (vs. DePaul: 12 pts, 4-5 FG, 2-2 3PT)

Barron, who grew up in Chicago, returned to his hometown to take on DePaul, where he scored a career-high 12 points on efficient shooting coming off the bench.

Top Games (not including UConn-Villanova. Check out the recap from Saturday's game!)

Xavier comes back after trailing at half to beat Georgetown 92-91

Quincy Olivari helped the Musketeers stay in the game

possessions. Georgetown guard Jayden Epps exploded with an All-Big East caliber performance, finishing with 32 points and 11 assists on 9-19 shooting. Four of Xavier's five starters scored in double figures, with Olivari,

dropping a double-double with 15 points and 11 assists, he missed three straight free throws down the stretch, giving Rick Pitino's Red Storm a chance to win. Daniss Jenkins and Chris Ledlum had opportunities to give the Johnnies

would force overtime with three seconds in regulation. Trey Alexander and Baylor Scheierman combined for 43 points while playing the majority of the game, as Creighton ended the Pirates' five-game winning streak.

Upcoming Games
Providence at Seton Hall (Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., FS1)

The Friars will be looking for revenge tomorrow night as they travel to Newark to take on Seton Hall. In their previous meeting, the Pirates won 61-57 at Providence, thanks to Dre Davis scoring 17 points to lead the team. Providence star forward Bryce Hopkins suffered a season-ending injury in that game. The Friars have turned to Devin Carter to lead the team, the team's leading scorer (18.2 PPG).

Villanova at St. John's (Wednesday, 8:30 p.m., FS1)

Following that exciting matchup, we'll cross the Hudson River to a big matchup at Madison Square Garden between Villanova and St. John's. Against the Big East's top teams, both Villanova and St. John's lost by one possession and look to improve their records not only in the conference but overall. St. John's is currently in seventh place in the conference, while the Wildcats are in a tie for fourth with Marquette and Xavier. However, whoever wins this game will be above the other in the Big East standings. There will be an exciting matchup down low between Villanova's Eric Dixon and St. John's Joel Soriano.

Seton Hall at No. 14 Marquette (Saturday, 1 p.m., FS1)

Seton Hall is arguably the toughest team in the conference and has a resume to be ranked in the AP Poll. Despite not getting the love they deserve in Monday's AP Poll, Seton Hall can prove their belonging with the best in the Big East if they beat Providence and Marquette. It will be a battle between two of the Big East's best guards: Seton Hall's Kadary Richmond and Marquette's Tyler Kolek.

Saturday's matchup is undoubtedly the best game the Big East has to offer this week.



UConn secures victory over Creighton with a final score of 62-48. The Huskies dominated the court in a thrilling matchup, showcasing their prowess and skill during the Jan. 17 game.

PHOTO BY JORDAN ARNOLD, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

going into the break, scoring 12 points in the first half despite trailing at the half by two

Desmond Claude and Dayvion McKnight leading the way. Coming off the bench, freshman Dailyn Swain put Xavier ahead for good with 30 seconds left with a dunk as the Musketeers held on to win on Friday night.

No. 17 Marquette holds on to beat St. John's 73-72

It felt like a vintage Big East game at Madison Square Garden. It wasn't because of the throwback court St. John's had on their home floor. Tyler Kolek, the reigning Big East Player of the Year, is considered one of the best free throw shooters in the conference, shooting a career-high 88.9% from the charity stripe (94% coming into the game). Despite

life down the stretch, including a Jenkins buzzer-beating shot that bounced off the rim.

Kalkbrenner, No. 18 Creighton beats Seton Hall in triple overtime 97-94

In possibly the best game we may see all season, center Ryan Kalkbrenner put up a monster performance, dropping 28 points, nine rebounds and a career-high seven blocks, going 12-23 from the floor. Despite the loss, it was a historic day for Seton Hall, as star guard Kadary Richmond had a triple-double with 21 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists. The last and only other time the Pirates had a player record a triple-double was Eddie Griffin in 2000. Steven Ashworth's layup through traffic saved the game as it



FILE ILLUSTRATION/
THE DAILY CAMPUS



Sports

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:

No. 9 Huskies aim to sweep Marquette in Wisconsin

by Stratton Stave
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For the UConn women's basketball team, the past few weeks have been smooth sailing. Ever since they started 4-3 and things were looking dire, they put the pieces in place and have strung together a 12-game win streak, four against ranked competition. One such squad was Marquette, and they won that game with authority. After trailing by 10 early, the Huskies played exceptional basketball, ultimately winning by 31.

As Marquette's first loss of the season, the defeat stung so much that they dropped their next one too. That matchup was at St. John's in Queens, N.Y. and they lost by a point. In UConn's game at the Johnnies, they won by 43. The Golden Eagles stabilized in victories over a trio of less solid Big East teams, but most recently couldn't survive Villanova and Lucy Olsen's 37 points.

The Huskies and Marquette had very different starts to the

season, but the then 12-0 Golden Eagles' momentum took a 180 when they entered Hartford, Conn. Now welcoming Connecticut into their house, they have a chance to take a huge step in the right direction.

At the head of their efforts is Liza Karlen, who is having a fantastic season. She's averaging 17 points and seven boards per game on 53% shooting, the latter of which ranks in the top 60 nationally. When she isn't at the top of her game, Marquette struggles. In all three of their losses, Karlen has been either held to poor efficiency, under 15 points or—in the case of the UConn game—both.

The Huskies did an excellent job guarding the forward, holding her to a hideous 5-18 shooting line. If they can do that again, it's hard to imagine the Golden Eagles winning this one.

Leading the backcourt is Jordan King, who had an excellent start against the Huskies in December. She hit a pair of great 3-pointers early to help blitz UConn, but she cooled off considerably after. King did finish with a team-



The UConn women's basketball team defeated the DePaul Blue Demons on Jan. 20, 2024. The final score was 88-51.

PHOTO BY ZACH MOLLER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Paige Bueckers of the UConn Huskies scored a total of 20 points during their game on Jan. 20, 2024. The game took place at Gampel Pavillion on the UConn Storrs campus.

PHOTO BY ZACH MOLLER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

high 16 points and just a single assist, but a 31-point loss is still just that. She averages 14.8 points on 43% shooting for the season and will look to get closer to that efficiency and swing the ball more.

Regardless of anything Marquette tries, this will be an uphill battle however one looks at it. UConn has been exceptional, they already blew the Golden Eagles out and they've generally beaten their shared opponents worse.

But as is often the case for the Huskies in Big East play, they will dictate how this game goes. If they want to fall asleep early and let Marquette get ahead, then that's what's going to happen. Last year's Huskies found a way to lose that game, though this year's team is different.

For starters, they have Paige Bueckers, who has been sensational. Her 25 points on 10-16 shooting the last time these teams met wasn't an anomaly. Bueckers is having an All-American type of campaign and would likely be a favorite to win Player of the Year if Caitlin Clark didn't exist.

Bueckers has a way of making everyone around her better and has done just that this season. After returning from an ACL tear, there was an adjustment period that coincided with the Huskies losing those three games. Bueckers is looking like herself and Connecticut has looked better for it.



Ashlynn Shade is also starting to hit her stride. Though it took her 19 shots to get to 21 points against DePaul, the increased confidence is encouraging. She was essentially nonexistent to start the year, but the injuries thrust her into the role as the team's volume shooter. Shade went 0-4 from deep the last time the teams saw each other and she'll look to redeem herself this time.

Regardless of who steps up, UConn needs to not overlook this game. They got into the habit of losing against middling conference teams last year and they cannot look ahead to a marquee matchup against Notre Dame. Because if they do, Marquette has a chance.

The game can be viewed on SNY and will tip off at 7 p.m.


WHAT TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS WEEK

TODAY

 vs. 



Women's Basketball
Milwaukee, Ws. 7 p.m.

Upcoming Games




Men's and Women's Track and Field
BU Terrier Classic
Boston, Ma.

INSTAGRAM OF THE DAY



@uconnwbb
Ashlynn Shade is heating up

TWEETS OF THE DAY



Bobby Douglas
[@bobbydouglas21](#)
UConn is the easiest watch in college basketball. The offensive movement is just outstanding.

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For the second week in a row, YOUR UCONN HUSKIES... ARE RANKED NO.1 IN THE COUNTRY

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