



Faculty and students protest UConn's budget cuts



UConn faculty express frustration at a protest over the planned budget cuts at the University of Connecticut. Administrators at UConn held a virtual town hall responding to these concerns on Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 12 p.m.

PHOTO BY SKYLER KIM, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Jenna Outcalt
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University of Connecticut faculty and students picketed outside the Homer Babbidge Library on Tuesday to protest recently announced budget cuts. The protest was organized by UConn's chapter of the American Association of University Professors. The picketers expressed particular concern about the lack of transparency from the university and how the cuts focused on academic and graduate programs. "Beyond the question of whether or not these cuts need to happen at all, the idea that they would be targeted and pointed at academics is what is devastating, because if we are not fully funding our academic programs, what are we

doing?" said Sam Sommers, an assistant professor in residence in the English Department. According to a virtual town hall held on Wednesday to answer questions about the cuts, all 2-Ledger budgets are to be cut 15% over the next five years. Both the town hall and the picketers indicated that these cuts will lead to larger class sizes and more online classes. "Huge classes, although they work for some fields, they don't work for every field, and you know, students don't always learn that well in a lecture class with 500 people. I would like more understanding of the uniqueness of what makes UConn, UConn, and it is the interactions with the students and the closeness of the community," said Martha Cutter, the interim director of American Studies and a professor in English and Africana Studies.

Pickers also expressed concerns about the effect that cuts would have on graduate programs. "In our department meeting, we really felt as a group that these cuts would represent the end of education at UConn as we know it. It would eradicate a large number of graduate programs. It's a very imprecise kind of cutting and it's cutting where there is no fat to trim," Melanie Newport, an associate professor of history at the Hartford campus, said at the protest. Eric Berg, a doctorate student in the Philosophy department and the sergeant of arms for the Graduate Student Union, said that communication to graduate students had been lacking and they were concerned about how the cuts would be affecting their work and schooling.

"First, we heard about it through other channels, so there hasn't been a lot of communication to graduate students about this, and as we know, with cuts that affect labor, a lot of that rolls downhill and graduate students are the ones that are going to pick up a lot of the extra slack," Berg said at the rally. Multiple picketers also brought up a lack of transparency from UConn about how and when the cuts would be implemented. "There's a real lack of clarity from the administration about what these cuts are, who they're going to affect, and the size of them seems like it's hard to envision how this isn't going to affect our ability to teach students in really important ways," said Andrew Bush, a professor in the Earth Sciences department. Sommers and others at the rally said that funds had been removed from department accounts overnight without any clear warning. "There's already an effect for students with either classes getting canceled or conference funding going away or work study jobs not being funded," Sommers said. According to UConn president Radenka Maric in the virtual town hall, the cuts were still in an unpredictable stage, and the university will be communicating more to departments in the future. Mary Beth Allen, an assistant professor of French & Francophone studies, said that the cuts have already had an effect on department morale. "I can already hear that people are worried about their jobs, and people are worried about the ways this will transform our work and our mission, and that we won't be able to achieve our mission," Allen said.

A flyer handed out at the demonstration also called for UConn to stop employing Huron Consulting, a consulting firm that has been employed by schools such as the University of Wisconsin and the University of New Hampshire. Both of these schools experienced layoffs as a result of budget cuts. "This can affect our standing as a tier-one research institute. This can affect a lot of things and it doesn't make sense to me that we're trying to cut the budget and spending \$1.5 million already on Huron," said Shana Bartlett, an administrative program assistant in the Humanities department who attended the protest. Jeffrey Ogbar, the president of UConn's chapter of the American Association of University Professors and a professor of history, said that the rally was meant to be informational about how destructive the budget cuts would be. "The university cannot absorb 15% budget cuts over five years and not be eviscerated and unable to meet its mission as a flagship university, as a world-class university, as an R1 university. It will undermine and gut our graduate programs in particular and eliminate our ability to teach undergraduate students by the thousands," Ogbar said. Ogbar also emphasized that getting a healthier budget will "solely be at the behest of lawmakers." "I'm perhaps foolishly optimistic that if lawmakers are made fully aware of how destructive these budget cuts will be, they will act accordingly and responsibly to maintain the integrity of the flagship university in the state of Connecticut," Ogbar said.

STEEPLE OF HISTORIC CONNECTICUT CHURCH COLLAPSES, NO INJURIES REPORTED

NEW LONDON, Conn. (AP) — An historic Connecticut church's soaring steeple and roof collapsed on Thursday, leaving a gaping hole in the top of the building and the front reduced to a heap of rubble. No deaths or injuries were reported in the collapse at the First Congregational Church in downtown New London, which happened around 1:30 p.m., though a search was ongoing afterward, authorities said. The fire department found one woman at the building when it initially responded, but she was escorted out and is safe, Mayor Michael Passero said at a news briefing. Nobody else is believed to have been inside, he said. Assuming the city confirms no lives were lost, the circumstances of the collapse were "extremely fortunate," Passero said. There was no service taking place at the time and the building fell in on itself, rather than onto the street or nearby properties, which include City Hall and dormitories for Connecticut College students. "It could have been a much bigger disaster for us. However

we did lose a cherished historic structure," he said. The cause of the collapse was not immediately known. Passero said there was no prior indication that there was anything wrong with the building, and the city was not aware of any work being done on the property. It wasn't immediately clear if it had been recently inspected, he said. Two smaller steeples that remained on the building would have to be taken down immediately, Passero said. It remained to be seen whether the rest of the building would need to be demolished, he said, but it was expected to be a "total loss." The stone building dates to around 1850, according to state building records, though the congregation dates back to the mid-1600s, its website says. The Engaging Heaven Church, which also worships in the space, said on Facebook that it wasn't aware of anyone inside at the time of the collapse. Phone calls left for the congregation and Engaging Heaven were not immediately returned.



Emergency crews respond to the former First Congregational church after the steeple of the old, historic church collapsed, Thursday, Jan. 25, 2024, in New London, Conn.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH GORDON/AP

A Texas school’s punishment of a Black student who wears his hair in locs is going to trial

ANAHUAC, Texas (AP) — A judge ordered Wednesday that a trial be held next month to determine whether a Black high school student in Texas can continue being punished by his district for refusing to change a hairstyle he and his family say is protected by a new state law.

Darryl George, 18, has not been in his regular classroom in Barbers Hill High School in Mont Belvieu since Aug. 31. Instead, he has either been serving in-school suspension or spending time in an off-site disciplinary program.

His Houston-area school district, Barbers Hill, has said George’s long hair, which he wears in neatly tied and twisted locs on top of his head, violates a district dress code that limits hair length for boys. The district has said other students with locs comply with the length policy.

George, a junior, said Wednesday that he has felt stress and frustration over what he sees as unfair punishment, but that he was grateful to soon be getting his day in court.

“I’m glad that we are being heard, too. I’m glad that things are moving and we’re getting through this,” George said after the hearing in Anahuac, with his mother, Darresha George, standing next to him.

State District Judge Chap Cain III in Anahuac set a Feb. 22 trial in a lawsuit filed by the school district regarding



Darryl George, an 18-year-old junior, along with his lawyer, Allie Booker, left, and Texas state Rep. Ron Reynolds, center, speak with reporters on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2024, before a court hearing in Anahuac, Texas, over whether his Houston-area school district can continue to punish him for refusing to change his hairstyle. A judge ordered Wednesday that a trial be held next month to determine whether George can continue being punished by his district for refusing to change a hairstyle he and his family say is protected by a new state law.

PHOTO BY JUAN A. LOZANO/AP

whether its dress code restrictions limiting the length of boys’ hair violates the CROWN Act. The new Texas law, which took effect in September, prohibits race-based hair discrimination and bars employers and schools from penalizing people because of hair texture

or protective hairstyles including Afros, braids, locs, twists or Bantu knots.

Darresha George said she was disappointed the judge did not consider granting a temporary restraining order, which would have halted her son’s punishment until next month’s trial.

“I have a son, 18 years old, that wants to go to school, that wants to get his education, and y’all messing with him. Why?” she said.

In an affidavit filed last week in support of the temporary restraining order, Darryl George said he is being subjected to “cruel treatment.”

“I love my hair, it is sacred and it is my strength,” George wrote. “All I want to do is go to school and be a model student. I am being harassed by school officials and treated like a dog.”

A spokesperson for the school district didn’t speak with reporters after the hearing and didn’t immediately reply to an email seeking comment.

In a paid ad that ran this month in the Houston Chronicle, Barbers Hill Superintendent Greg Poole maintained the district is not violating the CROWN Act.

In the ad, Poole defended his district’s policy and wrote that districts with a traditional dress code are safer and had higher academic performance and that “being an American requires conformity.”

“We will not lose sight of the main goal — high standards for our students — by bending to political pressure or responding to misinformed media reports. These entities have ‘lesser’ goals that ultimately harm kids,” Poole wrote.

The two Texas lawmakers who co-wrote the state’s version of the CROWN Act — state Reps. Rhetta Bowers and Ron Reynolds — attended Wednesday’s hearing and said the new state law does protect Darryl George’s hairstyle.

The district “is punishing Darryl George for one reason: his choice to wear his hair in a protective style which harms no one and causes no distraction in the classroom,” Bowers said.

George’s family has also filed a formal complaint with the Texas Education Agency and a federal civil rights lawsuit against Gov. Greg Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton, along with the school district, alleging they failed to enforce the CROWN Act. The lawsuit is before a federal judge in Galveston, Texas.

Barbers Hill’s policy on student hair was previously challenged in a May 2020 federal lawsuit filed by two other students. Both students withdrew from the high school, but one returned after a federal judge granted a temporary injunction, saying the student showed “a substantial likelihood” that his rights to free speech and to be free from racial discrimination would be violated if not allowed to return to campus. That lawsuit remains pending.



Darryl George, an 18-year-old high school junior, stands outside a courthouse in Anahuac, Texas, on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2024.

PHOTO BY JUAN A. LOZANO/AP

The Daily Campus

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TALES FROM THE TURNTABLE:

Panchiko

LOGO BY KRISTA MITCHELL, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



THE INTERNET’S OWN BAND



by Henry St. Pierre
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Two of my favorite things in this whole wide world are thrifting and archiving music. Every time I stop at a thrift store, I always make sure to thumb through hundreds of the dusty CDs to find something interesting. Every so often, there’s a hidden gem somewhere deep within that bin of discs, probably sandwiched between a Bon Jovi compilation disc or some issue of “Now That’s What I Call Music.”

It was July 2016 when an anonymous user on 4chan’s /mu/ board posted an interesting-looking CD they had discovered at a flea market in the United Kingdom. The album cover was just a still from an obscure late-90s manga, complete with an equally intriguing title, “Death Metal,” (stylized as “D>E>A>T>H>M>E>T>A>L”).

4chan is notorious for its unserious nature and tendency of its users to lie about the most basic of things; however, many users were quick to give the anonymous buyer the benefit of the doubt. Within minutes, many chronically online users came out of the woodwork hounding the user to upload a rip of the CD to the board.

There was a problem however: The CD had been neglected for almost two decades by this point and was severely deteriorated. After an extended period, many cheap optical discs will rot away from oxidation,

which had ravaged the user’s copy of “Death Metal” almost to the point of no return. While the music was still audible, it was covered in fuzzy distortion, adding a somewhat creepy element to the already melancholic music.

The user later uploaded the entire EP, and what many had expected to be some kind of noise rock or J-pop creation turned out to be echoey, lo-fi trip-hop almost reminiscent of Portishead’s “Dummy.” The title track was melancholic and introspective, taking influences from popular Midwest emo bands at the time. Though hard to make out clearly, the instrumentation ranged from sparse and intimate to grandiose and triumphant. The EP’s lush sound piqued the interest of thousands across the world.

Almost immediately, the songs spread like wildfire. Up until this point, almost no one had ever heard of Panchiko, “Death Metal” and its 4chan thread seemed to be the only record of this band and EP ever existing.

Things really picked up once “Death Metal” became part of the lost media canon. The “lost media” community is a dedicated group of internet users who spend their time sleuthing the internet to find obscure media of times gone by. The search went on for almost four years until one of the band members had been tracked down on Facebook.

Unbeknownst to the former band members, their pet project from the late 1990s had

gained a massive cult following across the internet. When lead vocalist and guitarist Owain Davies was contacted, he was initially confused by such a strange request. Panchiko had called it quits 19 years ago, without so much as a murmur of their music since then. Quickly, Davies and the rest of the band would discover just how large their one and only release had gotten.

Fortunately, Davies had a copy of the EP stored on a hard drive, and quickly made it available to the public. After four years of searching, the songs were finally found without any added noise. Now that the band had been found, many wondered what would come next from the former members. Quickly after “Death Metal” was reissued and re-released alongside several other unreleased tracks, Panchiko reformed and started to release new material. In 2021, the band performed their first show in 20 years, accompanied by a new drummer and guitarist. A year later, they would embark on their first tour in the United States.

It’s now been about four years since Panchiko’s music was found and released, and the band has been making up for their absence ever since. Last year, the group released its first full-length album since 2000 and embarked on several international tours. Their story often fuels thousands, including myself, to dig through the used CD bin at Goodwill for just a little longer.





IMAGE COURTESY OF @PANCHIKO_DEATHMETAL ON INSTAGRAM



**PANCHIKO STRIKES GOLD
20 YEARS AFTER BARELY
MAKING A DENT**

TWO DECADES LATER, THEY JUST STARTED SELLING
OUT SHOWS THROUGHOUT THE U.S. AND EUROPE.

IMAGE COURTESY OF @PANCHIKO_DEATHMETAL ON INSTAGRAM



LOGO BY VAN NGUYEN, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

HEALTHY HUSKIES:

The potential of AI in treatment settings

by Abigail Bonilla | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER/HERS | abigail.bonilla@uconn.edu

Treatment for mental health can be a difficult road to navigate. As more people struggle with their mental health, the spaces of psychology, treatment and counseling must evolve. For years, mental health providers have relied on “traditional” treatment routes. Avenues such as talk therapy, medication and treatment facilities have kept many patients afloat for decades. While there are still many downsides to these methods of treatment, they are regarded as the most useful in the battle against mental illness. However, less “traditional” methods of treatment have come to light in recent years. Methods such as transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) and psychedelic therapy have begun to make their way into the toolboxes of treatment providers, allowing for new breakthroughs. Another method has been discussed recently: the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for mental health treatment.

AI has skyrocketed in popularity recently. AI programs such as ChatGPT can be used for virtually anything, from creating recipes or helping craft study plans. Recently however, there has been discussion in the medical community regarding whether or not AI can be useful in helping to treat patients. Some believe that the use of AI in the medical field could have the potential to cause more harm than good, arguing that AI is not an adequate tool to aid healthcare professionals. As advanced as the technology is, it is no replacement for an actual healthcare worker. However, some also argue that AI can be a useful tool for healthcare

professionals by aiding in providing resources and analyzing data to provide a diagnosis.

When it comes to mental health, the argument is just as divided. In America alone, about 44 million individuals are living with a mental illness. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these numbers increased in recent years, with more people struggling now than ever. Treatment for mental illness traditionally follows routes such as cognitive behavioral therapy, medication management and various levels of treatment programs if needed. All these avenues rely on the use of mental health workers. However, the use of AI in treatment settings may become more commonplace as time goes on. Institutions such as the World Health Organization suggest that AI has the potential to be used in analyzing patient data and progress notes to come to a final diagnosis. The technology also has the potential to help psychiatrists manage and prescribe medication by taking into account symptoms and health data, in order to find different medications and dosages that may help the patient. Not to mention AI can also provide many crisis resources to anyone struggling.

Many argue that AI is not a safe replacement or supplement for actual mental health care. Psychiatry and therapy rely heavily on human-to-human connection, and so using AI for these treatments may not be a smart idea. There have been arguments that AI can be used as a sort of “therapist” — helping users with issues such as anxiety or sadness. However, if you are struggling with a serious

mental health concern, such as depression or issues with eating for example, AI is not the place to turn to. As advanced as the technology is becoming, AI is not equipped to handle serious mental health issues. Additionally, allowing AI to input patient data into an online system could have the potential to violate many HIPAA patient privacy laws. Many mental health outlets have also remarked on the system’s potential to adhere to what is called “algorithmic bias.” Algorithmic bias is described as a system not considering differences in user experience such as disability, race, gender, sexuality and so on. AI treats each user the same, not noticing important differences between them. This can create a large bias that may gravely harm a patient rather than help them.

In conclusion, there are many different viewpoints when it comes to discussing the potential use of AI in mental health treatment. AI can provide interim resources to many different users and could be used in making diagnosis or managing medications. However, there are also many potential flaws when thinking about the use of AI in the field of mental health. AI has not advanced enough to provide unbiased and confidential counseling, as AI has a hard time grappling with emotion and differences in patients. Additionally, uploading confidential patient data into an AI system has the potential to violate many patient privacy laws. While AI could be utilized as a helpful tool for mental health providers, it is no replacement for help and support from an actual person.

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COMIC BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

TALKING WITH NO MOUTH:

LOYALTY IS ALL THAT MATTERS IN FAR-RIGHT POLITICS



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LOGO BY HALEIGH SCHMIDT, ASSOCIATE
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In a continuing crusade against political boogeymen, far-right Republicans in Oklahoma have decided that the ability to fearmonger on the internet and ideological loyalty is more important than actual job qualifications or field experience.

This is the story of Chaya Raichik and the state of the Oklahoma Department of Education, and their fight against the “woke agenda” in public schools all across the country. On the internet, Raichik runs an account called “Libs of Tiktok,” where she maintains over three million followers, devoted to eliminating this “liberal scourge” wherever it can be found. An easy source for misinformation and straight-out lies, her posts are meant to be as inflammatory as possible with the goal of using angry mobs of online believers to put pressure on institutions to undo their evil policies. The bad news is that people often mistake her propaganda for actual information, and start to take action because of it. In two separate instances, unabashed lies of hers targeting one Union public school in Oklahoma and Boston Children’s Hospital were posted just days before bomb threats were repeatedly called in to shut them down.

As a result of her great work rage-baiting her followers into crime, she has been given a spot on Oklahoma’s Education Department’s Library Media Advisory Committee. It’s at this point I should probably mention that she does not even live in Oklahoma, nor does she have an ounce of experience working in or around education at any point in her life. The point is that her repeated ethical shortcomings, (willful...?) ignorance of the lethal potential of her posts and complete lack of any professional qualifications are inconsequential compared to her allegiance to the cause.

This story is an absurd, but not at all abnormal, example of the modern far-right, which has in many areas ignored the logistical nature of policy, governance and leadership in favor of loyal ideologues and empty culture wars. This problem has been growing in the right wing for years, like with

Steve Bannon’s entrance into the White House in 2016, and it is only going to continue to get worse with time. On a national level, this strategy is central to Republicans’ plans if Donald Trump gets the White House again through Project 2025. This is a holistic plan to “institutionalize Trumpism” in the federal government, with one of its central tenets being to fill the executive branch and its agencies with MAGA devotees. To demonstrate the extent of their commitment to this goal, those who apply to Project 2025’s talent database for filling administrative positions have their social media and political beliefs scanned by AI to help ensure anyone “queasy about testing the limits of Trump’s power will get flagged and rejected.”

This shift in politics towards valuing loyalty above all else is reminiscent of a period earlier in American history wherein political machines used the spoils system to fill all levels of government with their supporters. In the same way that this led to major corruption and failing ethics in politics during the Gilded Age over a century ago, a future in which the right wing continues to value and hire ideological zealots will surely lead to a dangerous concentration of power, threatening the very existence of democracy in America.

This is happening all across America, on the federal level with Project 2025 and the local level with people like Chaya Raichik. Whereas one is a systemic issue perpetrated by the powers central to the GOP, the other demonstrates the smaller ways that ideologues can use their self-righteous rage to fearmonger their way into leadership. All the same they represent the values of the far right and the power that they have over the entirety of republican policymaking at present. The solution remains the same. For all those who want a government that is fair, qualified, capable, bipartisan and secure against the crimes of its leaders, rejecting the shameless cronyism being employed by members of the Republican Party is an absolute necessity.

ROUNDTABLE:

HOW LONG WILL SOCIAL MEDIA STAY RELEVANT?

Social media has made an irreversible impact on all segments of our society, garnering high engagement across age demographics. As our friendships, familial connections, professional networks and even activism move even further online, it might seem like social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok and their eventual successors will remain a permanent fixture in our lives — but is that true? In this week’s roundtable, Opinion writers discuss how long social media will stay relevant.

NELL SRINATH,
OPINION EDITOR:

This is more of a hope than a prediction, but in order to salvage our society from the clutches of climate change — among other existential issues that require an all-hands-on-deck societal response — we need to salvage ourselves from the clutches of social media. Endless doomscrolling or distractions from the real world are already having a corrosive effect on how we interact with each other and the world around us; imagine when we’ve reached the warming point of no return and our collective “fight or flight” response kicks in. Furthermore, do we have any guarantees that the generations inheriting social media from us will be any less vulnerable to misinformation, celebrity worship or political nihilism? I optimistically hope that, out of necessity, we regain the ability to care about what happens in our local communities while also developing less obsessive and superficial ways to stay informed about the world. I would say the change begins in making our immediate social circles less online and more intellectually curious.

DAN STARK,
ASSOCIATE
OPINION EDITOR:

I believe that social media will remain relevant for quite a bit of time, but there will be changes in the used and the devices that will use them. There’s inevitably going to be another platform like TikTok that comes out of nowhere and becomes the next big thing. I also think that as each generation gets older, their use of social media will decrease. I find it weird to picture Gen Z in our late thirties sending snaps to each other and learning new TikTok dances. But the younger generations beyond us, like Gen Alpha and the soon-to-be memed Gen Beta, will likely be using TikTok and similar platforms in their young ages. But who knows, they might think that apps like that are stupid and will be mocking older generations for using them. Nonetheless, I find it hard to believe at the moment that social media won’t be relevant over the next few decades.

TOMAS HINCKLEY,
WEEKLY COLUMNIST:

I think an interesting aspect of this question is the fact that a lot of us are

thinking of social media as it is right now and whether or not that will continue into the future. At the end of the day though, social media started in a different way before most of us were fully developed humans, like with MySpace, OG Facebook, etc. I mean, there are even further back examples like with the Bulletin Board System, which was all the way back in the early 90s. The point is that right now what we have would have probably been unthinkable to the people back then, especially in the sheer power and pervasiveness that social media has on our everyday lives. I think we’re headed in the same direction now, where eventually we’ll see even more drastic man-made horrors beyond our comprehension in the form of social media. It’s part of human nature to want to connect with people, and technology has become the tool with which we do everything in our lives, so I think social media is becoming somewhat of a guaranteed conclusion for ever.

EVELYN PAZAN,
CONTRIBUTOR:

Just like MySpace and Vine, I am sure that TikTok and Instagram will eventually lose popularity. That does not mean that social media will go away. Right now, participating in social media is a choice. But because our generation is so addicted to our phones, I am sure that it will have an ever increasing impact on our lives, even the parts of them that we view as completely mundane and private. We’ve already seen this shift happening as people tune in to watch their favorite creators “Get ready with me” and “Day in my life.” Who knows? Maybe next there will be an app specifically designed to live stream our sleep, vlog a funeral or something equally as creepy and disheartening.

LUKE FEENEY,
WEEKLY COLUMNIST:

Towards the end of his 2016 special, “Make Happy,” comedian Bo Burnham said this “Social media — it’s just the market’s answer to a generation that demanded to perform, so the market said, here — perform. Perform everything to each other, all the time, for no reason.” How often do you see people doing stuff specifically for social media? All the time. Be it “Get ready with me” videos, photoshoots, exercises or even people who live stream their journey battling an illness. Deep down we all want to perform. We all want to feel unique and important and social media presents itself as something that can do that. As long as that desire remains, there will always be a market for social media. So unfortunately, I believe social media is forever. People come and go, but likes never leave (unless the person unfollows you).

ILLUSTRATION BY JASON J. SAMPSON, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Photo of the Day | Winter spirit



Trees at the University of Connecticut shine bright during these cold winter months, contradicting the start of the spring semester. With cold temperatures on the rise, it's important for Huskies to bundle up and stay warm. PHOTO BY SHELAGH LAVERTY, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

PICK BETTER VICE PRESIDENTS

by Youssef Macary
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As the 2024 presidential election approaches, America is faced with the very probable possibility of a 2020 rematch. Democratic polls show Joe Biden in the lead, while Republican polls show the same for Donald Trump. Such a predicament comes with a myriad of issues for the country, and for our two major political parties.

Both candidates are simply too unpopular for the position of president. The President of the United States should be someone that Americans approve of, but that seems to be less of the norm than it has previously been. According to a Gallup poll, Donald Trump's average approval rating was 41.1%. Gallup gives this statistic for every president since Harry Truman, who took office in 1945, and Trump's average approval

rating is the worst. Truman has the second lowest (excluding Joe Biden) average approval rating at 45.4%, which is still over four percent higher than Trump. The numbers clearly show that Trump is statistically the least popular president in the modern history of the United States.

When it comes to Joe Biden, he has a slightly better approval rating than his competitor, but still has the second lowest average approval rating in modern United States history. According to Gallup, his "term average to date" is 43%, with his "last job approval rating" being 39%. The last two presidents we have had have been the least popular presidents we have ever seen. Even the scandal-ridden Richard Nixon had a higher average approval rating than either of these candidates.

What makes matters worse is that both candidates are problematic, even without the popularity issue. According to ABC, "Biden is

the oldest commander-in-chief in U.S. history" and "...if re-elected, he will be 82 at the start of his second term and 86 when it ends." This is something many people are concerned about. For reference, the Centers for Disease Control lists the "life expectancy at birth" for males at 73.5 years. This is an issue, both because of the very real possibility that Joe Biden's age could affect his job, but also because there is danger in the perception among voters that he is unable to do his job. Even if his age is not a real issue, it can still make Americans lose confidence in his ability to lead. Donald Trump also has his issues, such as the myriad of legal issues he is facing. This goes without saying, but this is not an attractive trait in a prospective president.

There would be hope to resolve this issue, had either of these candidates had strong vice presidents who could run in their place, and gain the popularity of their party and the American people. Histor-

ically, many vice presidents have run for president. This includes Joe Biden, Al Gore, George H.W. Bush, Walter Mondale and Hubert Humphrey. A person doesn't have to have been a vice president to be a strong presidential candidate, but having the role certainly gives someone the national exposure that can help.

Our current vice president, Kamala Harris, currently has an approval rating of 37.5% of Americans, and former vice president Mike Pence has a favorability rating of 28.9%. From a nonstatistical view, another way to look at this is to see that the Democratic Party has more confidence in Biden's ability to win the election than Kamala Harris even though 69% of Democrats believe the incumbent is too old to run again. If Biden had a popular vice president, it would make sense for them to run in his place. On the other side of the aisle, Mike Pence actually ran for president, and ended up dropping

out of the race, showing his own lack of popularity.

The United States is approaching an election with two wildly unpopular and overall bad candidates. There were a lot of events that led to this, but one of the reasons I feel this happened is because both of the last two vice presidents chosen have not been people capable of winning the presidency on their own. This normally isn't a necessity, but when the last two American presidents were the least popular, it certainly would have helped. When presidential candidates are choosing their running mates, they need to make sure that they can see that person as the future Commander in Chief. They should be a strong and popular leader, something that the last few vice presidents quite simply have not lived up to. We need more presidential candidates who are both viable and popular, and that is something the country lacks.

The Pink Tax:
The cost of being a woman

by Athena Brown
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The gender wage gap has remained stable in the United States over the past 20 years, with women earning only 82% of their male counterparts earnings for full-time, year-round work as of 2022. Differences in education, skill and experience cannot fully explain such disparities, since women have on average surpassed men in college attainment. Instead, enduring inequalities across society and among certain job categories favor men for raises and promotions, with women (especially women of color) disproportionately represented in lower-paid yet important sectors (e.g., child care, home care) and often disadvantaged for decisions around parenting. Paid leave, while advancing in some states like Connecticut, is brief and limited compared with other advanced countries. In 2015, the pay gap came to nearly \$10,500 a year, and \$500,000 over a lifetime for average female employees. As if this wasn't enough, beyond the workplace, women find themselves substantially disadvantaged as consumers.

Women are subject to the "pink tax," a term applied to products and services aimed at women that cost substantially more than the same or similar products for men. This pervasive pricing bias results in women paying more than men for goods and services. From razors and soaps to dry cleaning, everyday items are often priced higher for women. Manufacturers claim a difference in production costs, despite contrary evidence; sometimes the only product difference is color.

Razors supply a striking example of the pink tax. Schick Slim Twin ST 2 Disposable Razors for Women Sensitive Skin are \$14.29, while the counterpart for men is \$12.79, a dollar and a half less. This discrepancy even extends to children's toys; a pink Radio Flyer scooter sells for twice the price of its red counterpart. Although men's and women's products are rarely identical, making precise comparisons difficult, multiple surveys have shown higher prices for women's products.

Consumer Reports found common drugstore purchases, such as shaving cream, deodorant and body wash, "products directed at women — through packaging, description or name — might cost

up to 50 percent more than similar products for men." In 2015, the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (NYCDOCA) examined nearly 400 pairs of products for sale by New York City retailers and determined women's products were more than twice as likely to be priced higher than men's products. Specifically, 42% of women's products had a higher price tag, whereas men's products had a higher price tag only 18% of the time. Women's and men's products were roughly equal 40% of the time. This pink tax stretches across industries and even generations, ranging from children's bike helmets to senior health care products such as canes, with a 12% price difference.

Despite being recognized for decades, the pink tax persists. In 1992, the NYCDOCA investigated "price bias against women in the marketplace," and issued a report concluding that women paid more than men at used car dealers, dry cleaners, laundromats and hair salons.

In addition to the pink tax, many women pay a "gender tax" from sales taxes on feminine products. A California Senate study estimated that, in 1994, women alone effectively paid an



ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

additional annual tax of \$1,351 each. While California took the pioneering step in 1995 by enacting a bill to protect consumers from gender-based price discrimination, data from 2014 and 2015 shows continued violations, and most states — not including Connecticut — still impose sales tax on feminine hygiene products.

This taxation adds to the economic challenges women face. Despite some progress, recent measures only begin to ease the burden — which includes the high cost of child care — although early childhood educators, mostly women, are underpaid. Continuing gender-based price disparities, the pink tax, undeniably impose real financial strains on women and their families. While an individual price difference may seem small, the cumulative cost is significant.

Policymakers and consumers alike must work to dismantle the pink tax, ensuring an equitable economic landscape for all. Becoming aware of the pink tax can help female consumers navigate the marketplace effectively. With knowledge about pricing disparities, women can make informed decisions, minimizing the economic impact on their households. However, the persistence of the pink tax raises questions about the underlying factors contributing to gender-based price disparities throughout the economy. The issue goes beyond intentional gender discrimination; it reflects patterns and practices embedded in the market. As voters, citizens and consumers — of goods, services and information — together we can address these challenges. Awareness is the first step.

MEN’S HOCKEY: HUSKIES SET TO HOST CT ICE TOURNAMENT AT THE XL CENTER

by **Ava Inesta**
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This year, the UConn men’s hockey team will take a week-end away from Hockey East play to host the fourth annual CT Ice Tournament in Hartford at the XL Center. Three other Connecticut Division I hockey teams are set to compete for the trophy: Sacred Heart, Quinnipiac and Yale. Current No. 7 Quinnipiac was crowned the champions of last year’s tournament hosted in Hamden, Connecticut at M&T Bank Arena.

“We’re really excited for the tournament,” said Head Coach Mike Cavanaugh. “I’ve been lobbying for a while that this tournament be played at the XL Center. I think it’s the best venue in the state to play the tournament, especially now that we have our own rink and Sacred Heart as their own rink. It’s more of a neutral site for everybody. I’m excited to see what the tournament brings this weekend at the XL Center.”

UConn will open up the tournament on Friday to face Sacred Heart. Friday night will be the first time that the Pioneers and the Huskies will meet at CT Ice. To date, UConn has faced SHU 67 times and holds a tight 31-30-6 record in their competition history. The Pioneers are coming into the tournament with an 11-12-2 overall record and 6-7-1 in conference play. Last weekend, Sacred Heart split a home-and-home Atlantic Hockey Series with Holy Cross. The Pioneers had a 2-1 overtime victory at home last Friday night after a goal by senior forward John Jaworski. Holy Cross then found an answer to defeat Sacred Heart 5-2 in Worcester on Saturday night to split the weekend.

As for the Huskies, they have recorded a 3-2-1 record in the second half of the season thus far. After a poor performance last Friday against New Hampshire at the Toscano Family Ice Forum, UConn

responded on Sunday with a victory in Durham. A stellar performance from goaltender Arsenii Sergeev paved the way for the Huskies behind two goals scored by sophomore forward Ryan Tattle and junior forward Chase Bradley. Despite some inconsistencies throughout the season, there have been many moments where the Huskies have pulled together and capitalized with wins. The Ice Bus looks to keep that momentum going this weekend in the CT Ice Tournament.

“I just think we gotta stick to our game plan every game,” said Bradley. “We have plans going into

every single game and sometimes pucks, you don’t get the bounces that you want. Like I haven’t found the back of the net in some games. I don’t think that’s our issue. But, I think just sticking with it and being able to go out there and play our brand of hockey and try to get wins out of it. I think that’s really important for us.”

To scout out the other competition, the defending NCAA national champions Quinnipiac currently has a 15-6-2 overall record and 9-2-1 in ECAC action. Before being swept on a trip to New York at Colgate (2-1 loss) and Cornell (3-2 loss in OT) last weekend, they had been

unbeaten for seven games with a 6-0-1 record. As for Yale, they are entering this tournament with a 7-12-0 overall record and 5-8-0 in the ECAC. Coming off the semester break, they have split six games with a 3-3-0 record, however they have lost their last three games. Last weekend, the Bulldogs were swept as they fell to Clarkson, 5-3 and St. Lawrence, 4-2. The Huskies will be missing out on facing one of these teams as they face Sacred Heart first and then the winner of the second game between Yale and Quinnipiac. In last year’s CT Ice Tournament, UConn faced Quinnipiac in the championship game

and were defeated, 4-3 in Hamden at the home arena of the Bobcats.

The Huskies are set to face off against Sacred Heart to commence the annual CT Ice Tournament on Jan. 26. Puck drop is set for 4:00 p.m. After the result of the UConn and Sacred Heart matchup, Quinnipiac will face off against Yale at 7:30 p.m. After Friday’s games, the losing teams of each game will play in a consolation game at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday Jan. 27. It will be followed by the championship game played between the winners of each game at 7p.m. All of the games in the CT Ice Tournament will be broadcasted on SNY.



The Huskies face off against the fourth ranked Eagles after a 5-4 loss in overtime the night prior. Unfortunately UConn was shut out, losing 0-3 to Boston College on Saturday, Nov. 18 at the Toscano Family Ice Forum.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHELAGH LAVERTY, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WOMEN’S ICE HOCKEY: NO. 11 HUSKIES HOST VERMONT IN HOPES OF EXTENDING WIN STREAK

The UConn women’s hockey team celebrates their third goal of the night. UConn women’s hockey wins the game against UMaine 3-1 at the Toscano Ice Forum, on Jan. 19, 2024.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



by **Sam Calhoun**
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The UConn women’s ice hockey team (16-6-2, 13-3-1 Hockey East) has an opportunity to finish January with their only loss coming from No. 2 Minnesota.

Since being swept in Minneapolis, the Huskies are coming into the season’s first meetings against the University of Vermont (9-14-1, 7-10-0 Hockey East) on a five-game winning streak, with wins over Brown, Merrimack, Boston University, Maine and most recently New Hampshire.

Connecticut dominated from start to finish in Sunday’s 4-0 win over the University of New Hampshire. In the win, goaltender Megan Warrenner finished with 20 saves. Senior forward Kathryn Stockdale provided an offensive spark for the red-hot Huskies, scoring one goal and finding forward Megan Woodworth to tally an assist later in the game.

UConn scored two power-play goals in the win, their most this season. Defenseman Ainsley Svetek scored her second goal with a man advantage in January.

Warrenner and Stockdale’s performances against Maine and

New Hampshire earned them spots on the list of the Hockey East Top Performers, alongside teammate Claire Peterson, who dished out two assists in the shutout win on Sunday.

Vermont, on the other hand, has not found the same success as the first-place Huskies. Along with Maine, the Catamounts sit in a tie for seventh in the conference out of ten teams. They could not be colder coming into Storrs, with a six-game losing streak and only one win this month. This weekend wraps up their back-to-back weekends on the road, losing by multiplied goals in both games at Boston University.

In the two-game series against the Terriers, Vermont sophomore forward Lara Beecher shined with two goals, finishing with a plus-one rating.

Despite allowing ten goals in the two games last weekend, goaltender Jessie McPherson tallied 45 saves to earn a spot on the Hockey East Top Performers list. The six goals allowed in one of the games against the Terriers tied for a season-high in goals allowed. Boston College and Providence both had the same prolific outings against Vermont.

Limiting Vermont’s total shot count was key in Bos-

ton University’s win over the Catamounts. Vermont only recorded 15 shots, just five less than New Hampshire’s total in UConn’s shutout win on Sunday.

Last season, it was a back-and-forth battle between the two schools. Vermont won the first two games, the first being in a shootout and the second being a 6-1 rout. However, UConn got the last laugh in the third and final meeting of the 2022-23 season, winning 4-1.

Vermont forward Nátalie Mlynkova leads the team in points with 23. The senior from the Czech Republic tallied 23 points on the season thanks to her 12 goals and 11 assists. She leads the team in goals, but is second in assists to sophomore defenseman Krista Parkkonen, who has 12 so far.

The last time the Catamounts won in Storrs was in a series sweep during the 2020-21 season, shutting out the Huskies in the first game 2-0 and having the edge over them with a 3-2 score the day after.

It won’t be the last time these conference rivals meet this season, with a third game in Burlington, Vt. in mid-February. Connecticut currently leads the overall series with a record of 18-14-7.

Tonight’s game, with puck drop set for 6 p.m., is devoted to Alumni Weekend. Saturday’s game, starting at 3 p.m., is the Skating Strides game, helping raise money for kidney disease.

Both games will be at home at Toscano Family Ice Forum and will be able to stream on ESPN+. Following this series, the Huskies will be set for a home-and-home against Providence College to begin February.

Photo of the Day | Icy



The Huskies host CT Ice this year at the XL Center, playing the Sacred Heart Pioneers on Friday afternoon. Following that matchup, the Yale Bulldogs will play the reigning Quinnipiac Bobcats aka the battle of Whitney Ave. PHOTO BY SHELAGH LAVERTY, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Ava’s Angle: The impact of Ashlynn Shade and KK Arnold on UConn women’s basketball

by **Ava Inesta**
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Going into the season, the UConn women’s basketball team was set to be led by Paige Bueckers, who was coming back from her ACL injury and Azzi Fudd, who would be entering her junior season. The duo would be followed by the veteran leadership of Nika Mühl and Aaliyah Edwards. Aubrey Griffin and Caroline Ducharme were still healthy at the time, as well looking ahead to a new season. However, things took a turn for the worse for the Huskies, as Fudd went down with a season-ending ACL injury back in November. In the midst of this unfortunate situation for the Huskies, Ashlynn Shade and KK Arnold rose to the occasion as just freshman. Shade has become one of the Huskies more dependable offensive weapons, and she has been the team’s top scorer in several games. The Indiana native has an impact on the game both offensively and defensively with plays being made for Shade to get the ball. She has

built up confidence since November and has made a difference for the Huskies way earlier than they expected her to as she’s only in her rookie season. “I think I’m a totally different player than I was at the start of the season, and that’s because of my confidence and how I’ve grown throughout the season,” said Shade. “I couldn’t have done it without the leaders we have on the team with Nika, Paige and all of the coaches just building me up and showing me that I can go out there and compete just like everyone else can and even more.” Shade was named Big East Player of the Week for the fifth time this season. In two games last week, she averaged 13.0 points, 4.5 rebounds and 2.0 steals. Last Saturday against DePaul, she led the team on offense with 21 points and seven rebounds. With having limited options off the bench, Coach Geno Auriemma had to make some adjustments in order to put the team in the best position to succeed. At the start of the season, it was sometimes difficult for more than one freshman player to be on the court at the

same time. As time has gone on, all the freshman players have grown and have played valuable minutes for this UConn team in spite of five players being out for the season. Shade and Arnold are now starters for this Huskies team alongside seniors Mühl, Edwards and Bueckers. “I’ve almost forgotten that they are going through this for the first time,” said Auriemma. There was a time during November when it was really hard to function with them on the court. We tried to limit it to one at a time whether it was Q [Qadence], whether it was Ash or whether it was KK, even Ice, you throw Ice in there, she’s a freshman for all intensive purposes. And little by little now I don’t even look at them that way. I don’t even look at them as the new guys anymore, I just expect the same things from them as I do from our veterans.” Arnold has also had her fair share of Big East Honors. She’s been named Big East Freshman of the Week four times just this season. The Wisconsin native has been a consistent starter in the Huskies lineup. This season, Arnold has averaged 9.8 points,

3.1 assists and 2.3 rebounds per game. She currently leads the Huskies this season with 48 steals, with Bueckers right behind her with 46. Last week against Seton Hall, Arnold had one of the best games of her young career as a Husky. She hit a season-high five 3-pointers on six attempts which totaled 15 points. In addition, Arnold had four assists, two rebounds and a steal in the Huskies win over the Pirates on the road. In that game, Arnold showcased a lot of materiality with taking the right shots at the right time. She is usually the player creating lanes for her teammates, but her taking 3-pointers for herself and tallying points is huge for elevating her game and capabilities. Arnold has grown into a very major role for UConn in just her freshman season. She made her first career start against No. 5 UCLA in the Cayman Islands back on Nov. 24 after Fudd’s season ending injury. She has persistently been in the starting lineups ever since Dec. 6. “I don’t know where we would be without her,” said Auriemma on KK Arnold

following the Huskies win over Marquette on Tuesday. “KK is such a great player and we’re starting to figure each other out on the court better. It’s fun to see and it’s fun to play with her so much just cause she’s a great person, great player,” said Shade on Thursday. “It’s been really exciting.” The Huskies are still afloat and a lot of credit is due to the freshman players with their constant standout performances. UConn has made adjustments through the adversity and having four guards in their lineup has worked for them so far. The Huskies have a huge rivalry game coming up this Saturday for a top-15 matchup against Notre Dame. A white-out game at Gampel Pavilion will be a huge non-conference test game for the Huskies in the middle of Big East play. It will definitely measure where UConn is at in terms of the NCAA March Madness Tournament that is less than two months away. In the end, the resurgence of the freshman players with Shade and Arnold has been a huge lift for the Huskies when they needed it the most.

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

MATTHEW’S COLUMN: LOOKING AT THE FOUR QUARTERBACKS REMAINING

by **Matthew Chmura**
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After the Wild Card and Divisional rounds provided a few upsets and a couple of classics, four teams remain in the running for the Super Bowl. In the AFC, the Baltimore Ravens, led by MVP favorite Lamar Jackson, will face the defending champions, the Kansas City Chiefs. In the NFC, Brock Purdy and the San Francisco 49ers will square off against the fan-favorite Detroit Lions. Every NFL matchup throughout the season provides its fair share of storylines, but in these matchups, the storylines get more attention with the high stakes. With so many to choose from, it’s important to look at the most valuable position in sports — quarterback. This year, the confer-

ence championships feature QBs who have established themselves as some of the best in the league and those who have doubters, despite experiencing continued success. Below, we will look at each of the four quarterbacks remaining and determine what they have to prove. **Lamar Jackson** Jackson, in his sixth season in the NFL has battled his way back from injuries that caused him to miss time the last two seasons. He has re-established himself as one of the best players in the league. Jackson threw for 3,678 yards and 24 touchdowns while also rushing for 821 yards and five touchdowns. He has also led the Ravens to a 13-4 record, the best in the NFL. In the divisional round, he threw for 152 yards and two touchdowns with 100 rushing yards and two touchdowns on

the ground. The Ravens beat the Texans 34-10 to advance to play the Chiefs in Baltimore. Despite being well on his way to his second MVP, Jackson still has a lot to prove to his doubters. Jackson has an underwhelming playoff record of 2-3, and this is the farthest he has gone in the playoffs. Going into this weekend, he will face off against Patrick Mahomes, and if he takes down the Chiefs his doubters will be silenced. **Patrick Mahomes** A two-time MVP and two-time Super Bowl Champion, Mahomes finds himself in a very familiar position. The Chiefs have been to six straight AFC Championship games during the Mahomes/Reid era and are looking to repeat. Mahomes had possibly the worst year of his career, but still threw for 4,183 yards and 27 touchdowns with 14 interceptions. Despite his struggles,

Mahomes has been excellent in the playoffs, throwing for 477 yards and three touchdowns with no turnovers through two games. While many predicted this season to be the downfall of the Chiefs, that has been far from the truth as they look as dominant as ever. Mahomes has very little to prove heading into this weekend, but another Super Bowl appearance certainly does not hurt as he makes his way into the GOAT conversation. **Brock Purdy** The former Mr. Irrelevant came into his second season with much skepticism on if he can be a full-time starter in the NFL. Purdy quickly put that to rest and had one of the best seasons of any quarterback in the league. He threw for 4,280 yards and 31 touchdowns with 11 interceptions on the season. In the divisional round against the Packers, Purdy struggled throughout the game but eventually led the

49ers on a game winning drive. Heading into this weekend, Purdy still has much to prove as the Niners are heavy favorites to win the Super Bowl. If the former last pick can perform well this weekend and lead the Niners to the super bowl, it will be difficult to argue with his skill. If not, an offseason of questions regarding his place as a starter in the league will follow him. **Jared Goff** The former first overall pick has had criticism following him throughout his whole career. After playing well with the Rams, he was traded to the Lions in a package that included Matthew Stafford. Stafford went on to win a Super Bowl in his first year with the Rams and Goff has helped lead an unbelievable rebuild in Detroit. This regular season, Goff threw for 4,575 yards and 30 touchdowns with 12 interceptions. He is now trying to lead Detroit to its first ever Super Bowl appearance, as they are the only NFC team in the Super Bowl era not to have appeared in the big game at least once. Goff, the former first overall pick, will take on Purdy, the last overall pick, in this week’s game. The former has been stellar through the first two rounds of the playoffs and is looking to continue his hot streak against one of the best defenses in the NFL. The Ravens face the Chiefs this Sunday at 3 p.m., followed by the Lions and the 49ers at 6:30 p.m.

TRACK AND FIELD: HUSKIES SPLIT THE SQUAD FOR A WEEKEND IN BEANTOWN AND THE BIG APPLE

by Avery Becker
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After a tremendous showing in Boston last weekend, the UConn Men's and Women's track and field team will split their squad this weekend on Jan. 26 and 27. One group will head back to Boston to compete in the Boston University John Thomas Terrier Classic. The other half will head to the Big Apple for the Dr. Sander Columbia Challenge. The Boston University John Thomas Terrier Classic is named after late BU alum John Thomas, who set the world high-jump record as a fresh-

man. The Brockton, Mass. native was a loyal alumni of BU athletics, always attending and supporting the Terriers at various events. This meet is on the larger side with multiple collegiate teams from across New England and the Tri-State area. It will begin with all the men's events beginning on Friday at 11 a.m. with an expected finish at 9 p.m. The women's events will participate on Saturday with the same expected start and finish times. The Dr. Sander Columbia Challenge will take place at the New York Armory. When Connecticut competed in this event

last year, they brought record-breaking results back to Storrs. There were 23 top-five results, with the men finishing second and the women finishing third. On the men's side, Travis Snyder had a record-breaking performance in the pole vault event with a 5.47-meter jump, placing first and breaking his previous school record from the 2022 season. On the women's side, Caroline Webb and A'liyah Thomas both set personal records in each of their respective events. Jasmine Barrow also improved from the No.5 spot all-time at UConn, moving up to No.3 in the triple jump.

Even with the meet last week, freshman Josh Mooney crushed his 60-meter hurdle personal best, finishing in 7.99 seconds. This performance established him well in the top-10 UConn all-time list and he currently possesses the third best time in the Big East. Last weekend, on the women's side, Barrow finished first place in the triple jump, showing her strength in that event. As the Huskies look to repeat history with their record-breaking winning ways, this should be a great weekend for Connecticut.



CLIPART COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: NO. 8 UCONN CONTINUES RIVALRY AGAINST NO. 15 NOTRE DAME IN STORRS

by Cole Stefan
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During the 2012-13 season, the UConn women's basketball team played the Notre Dame Fighting Irish four times. Notre Dame won the first three matchups, one of them being the Big East Championship game at the XL Center. UConn got their revenge in the Final Four, setting up the path to their eighth national title and first of four straights. 11 years later, that team will not be the only championship squad recognized. The 2013-14 national championship team, which beat the Fighting Irish in the title game, will also be entering the Huskies of Honor. It all occurs at halftime of the 54th all-time battle between the No. 8 Huskies and No. 15 Notre Dame at Gampel Pavilion on Saturday. The 2002-03 and 2003-04 national championship teams will also be attending to celebrate

their 20th anniversary. Both programs combined for a 2-1 record against the Fighting Irish in that span, all in the regular season. Connecticut leads the all-time series 39-14 and holds a 5-2 record against Notre Dame in the NCAA Tournament. The Huskies have won all but three meetings since that 2013 Final Four, with the Fighting Irish taking last season's duel at Purcell Pavilion. Undefeated heading into that battle, UConn struggled after then-sophomore Azzi Fudd suffered a knee injury late in the first quarter. Over the final 32 minutes, the Fighting Irish outscored the Huskies 65-49 for their first victory at home in 10 years. Connecticut hopes for a different outcome with four national championship teams in attendance and redshirt junior Paige Bueckers back in the mix. In her last four games, Bueckers has shot 38-54 from the field and dropped 20+ points in each contest. Already an efficient scorer this season and throughout her career,

the Ann Meyers Drysdale Award candidate has made strides this season on the defensive end. On top of shooting 38-54 in that four-game span, Bueckers is averaging over a block and two steals a night. Senior forward Aaliyah Edwards brings her own balanced attack. Even though she ranks second on the team in points and blocks behind the redshirt junior, the Katrina McClain Award candidate can cause headaches in the post. At 16.4 points and 8.3 rebounds a night along with nine double-doubles, her presence down low does not go unnoticed. Neither does the impact from first-years KK Arnold and Ashlynn Shade. Both top 15 recruits are shooting better than 53% from the field and affect the game from a different spot on the court. For Arnold, that impact comes in transition with 62 assists and 48 steals in 14 starts. As for Shade, her 32 three-pointers and under-the-radar defensive aggression (14 steals; three blocks) make her hard to guard.

When all the attention goes toward those four impact players, it allows senior guard Nika Mühl to bury a wide-open three-pointer. The two-time Big East Defensive Player of the Year's 43.5% clip from downtown complements her 123 assists (6.15 a night) and 22 steals. Beyond their starting five, UConn needs major contributions from redshirt freshman Ice Brady and first-year guard Qadence Samuels. Strong games from both players, which may be necessary should the Huskies get into foul trouble, significantly increase their chances of winning. Do not let Notre Dame's ranking fool you; they are as dangerous as any Top 10 team. Their three losses have come against No. 1 South Carolina (who were then No. 6) in Paris and two Atlantic Coast Conference foes who have been in the Top 25 this season. Junior guard Olivia Miles has not played since suffering a knee injury against the Louisville Cardinals in last year's regular-

season finale. Enter true freshman Hannah Hidalgo. The No. 5 recruit leads the Fighting Irish in almost every major category, from points per game (23.9 as of 6 p.m. Thursday) to steals (94) and sits one spot ahead of Arnold in ESPNW's Class of 2023 rankings. The two-time ACC Player of the Week is, almost literally, Notre Dame's version of the four-time Big East Freshman of the Week. Each first-year phenom facilitates the offense and consistently goes after the ball on defense. Although Connecticut runs a four-guard starting lineup and may put Bueckers on her, do not be surprised if Arnold is the one defending Hidalgo. Junior guard Sonia Citron has played in eight total games heading into Notre Dame's eighth conference contest. She has scored in double figures every time, including a 28-point performance against the Virginia Cavaliers back on Jan. 18. The Fighting Irish force their opponents to commit 18 fouls a game. When she is at the charity stripe, the New York native is almost certainly making the free throw as she has done on 33 of 35 attempts. Senior forward Maddy Westbeld is Edwards' equivalent for Notre Dame. On top of attacking the bucket and ranking second on the team in total points, Westbeld ruthlessly guards the glass and grabs 9.5 boards a night. Westbeld can also let it fly from downtown; her 38.5% clip from beyond the arc ranks second on the team among players who have taken 15+ attempts behind Citron. Also watch for graduate guard Anna DeWolfe, sophomore guard KK Bransford and senior forward Kylee Watson. Instead of making her living on the glass, DeWolfe deals most of her attention toward getting the ball to her teammates with 58 assists. Opponents that might want to double team the graduate guard may have a hard time shutting down the Fighting Irish offensively as a result. Even with Citron back, Bransford still plays over half of the game. Unless she enters some foul trouble early, expect the sophomore guard to play around 30 minutes. Watson's 4.7 rebounds and team-leading 23 blocks make her a major problem for anyone trying to score in the post. Tip-off in the 34th regular-season meeting between these two championship-winning programs is at 8 p.m. on FOX.



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 versus Big East teams this season. PHOTOGRAPH BY ZACH MOLLER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Daily

Sports

MEN'S BASKETBALL:
NO. 1 UCONN LOOKS TO COMPLETE THE
SEASON SWEEP AGAINST UNRANKED XAVIER

The UConn men's basketball team shows everyone why they are the national champions in a game against Stonehill College at the XL Center in Hartford, Conn. on Nov. 11, 2023. The Huskies start and finish off strong making it into the triple digits and winning 107-67.
PHOTOGRAPH BY SIHAM NEDLOUSSI, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



by Connor Sargeant
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Up to this point in Big East play, no other team has fared quite as well as the UConn men's basketball team. Fresh off their nail-biting 66-65 win over the Villanova Wildcats, the Huskies look to extend their winning streak to eight in a row. In order to do so, they will have to take care of business against the Xavier Musketeers.

Sunday will not be the first time these teams have squared away against each other this season. On Jan. 10, the Huskies visited the Cintas Center and came away with a solid 80-75 victory. In that contest, the Huskies were without starting center Donovan Clingan. As a result, they didn't just lose the war on the boards — they got hammered. The Musketeers outrebounded Connecticut by double digits, which helped make that matchup much closer than Husky fans would like.

UConn's struggles on the boards have not been unique to that Xavier game; it has been a recurring theme ever since the Bristol native fell with an injury. However, Clingan is back and looks to build off his encouraging outing against Villanova.

In that contest, the 7-foot-2 big man scored six points on 3-4 shooting with seven rebounds. However, the biggest

takeaway was that Connecticut left Clingan on the floor for over 20 minutes, meaning that his conditioning is improving. From \$2 beer night against Creighton to the Villanova game, the Bristol native has improved every time he is on the floor. The steps he takes this Sunday is something that Husky fans will want to keep tabs on. Even if he doesn't come away with numerous rebounds, his enormous frame creates a highly disruptive presence for any opponent on both sides of the ball. Clingan playing more minutes also means there is more flexibility in scheming Samson Johnson, who was briefly thrust into a tremendous role. While having both bigs in the fold provides a different look, we will likely not see the "small ball lineup" that played a significant factor in why the Huskies were getting outrebounded.

How will the Huskies contain Quincy Olivari? This is a looming question heading into Sunday because the transfer guard has torched defenses all season long — including the Huskies.

Olivari is averaging 18 points per game on 44% shooting. In 35 minutes of play, the senior guard scored 24 points on 6-15 shooting last time out against UConn. Olivari also came away with seven rebounds. However, the most impressive part of his performance was his abil-

ity to draw contact on the way up to the rim. The 6-foot-3 guard attempted a staggering 12 free throws, converting on 10 of those chances. Olivari was a significant reason why this was only a five-point game. If the Huskies wish to win their eighth straight on Sunday, the defense must step up and not concede poor fouls, though having Clingan back will give them more freedom to do so.

Connecticut has a chance to flip last year's Big East script completely. Not only have they dominated the month of January, but they have an opportunity to "reverse the sweep," as Xavier went 2-0 against the Huskies a season prior. UConn is up a game and a half of second-place Creighton, and holding onto that advantage is crucial if the program wishes to win the Big East regular season for the first time since returning. Despite their 4-4 in-conference record, Xavier is an underrated squad that could give the Huskies problems. No game is a given in the Big East. There is much uncertainty heading in because even poor Big East squads are very good (sorry DePaul). What is certain is that Connecticut fans should expect nothing short of a 40-minute nailbiter, and you won't want to miss it. The action will occur this Sunday at noon at the XL Center and can be viewed on FS1.



WHAT TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS WEEK

UPCOMING GAMES



Women's Basketball,
8 p.m. Saturday
Storrs, Conn.

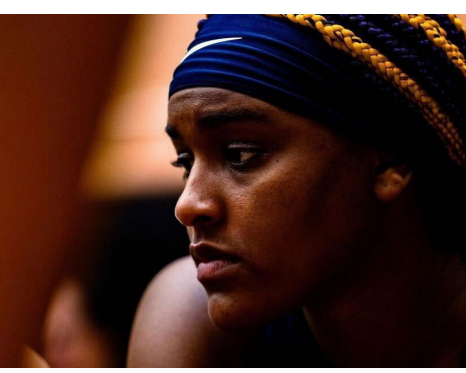


Men's Ice Hockey,
4 p.m. Friday
Hartford, Conn.



Women's Ice Hockey,
6 p.m. Friday
Storrs, Conn.

INSTAGRAM OF THE DAY



@uconnwbb
MVLI is back at it again
Aaliyah Edwards is a Katrina McClain
Award Top 10 Candidate!

TWEETS OF THE DAY

Zaysai
@247ChrisHoops
Kansas and UConn are college basketball.

The downfall of Duke and UK has been hilarious to watch.

Sir Mac
@Rosa_taxidriver
Tomorrow we can start voting for paige and aaliyah UConn!!

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