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UConn students to attend budget hearing

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University of Connecticut students are attending the Connecticut General Assembly's public hearing on Tuesday to support better funding for higher education in Connecticut.

The hearing is to decide whether Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont's budget recommendations for the state's budget will be approved. The public hearing for higher education on Tuesday is taking place at the Capitol building at 5 p.m.

The appropriations committee also has multiple meetings earlier in the day for state agency budget presentations from the Office of Higher Education, UConn and UConn Health and Connecticut State Colleges and Universities. The agency presentations and the public hearings will both be available via YouTube Live.

Students will leave at 3:45 p.m. from outside the Student Union on Hillside Road. Transportation will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Buses for students will be returning at approximately 8 p.m.

The public hearing will include testimony from students, professors and other members of the public. There were 31 testimonies submitted in opposition to the current suggestions from Lamont.

The testimonies opposing Lamont's suggestions are largely from students and professors from Connecticut state universities. They focus on the importance of accessible higher education and personal experiences with how budget cuts affect students' lives.

Michael Bartone, an associate professor of elementary education at Central Connecticut State University, said in his written testimony that the current economic landscape mixed with budget cuts were already harming the environment at Connecticut universities.

"The Board of Regents have approved a budget mitigation plan that cuts resources while at the same time raising tuition by 5%. This means students are paying more for less, and this will not improve enrollment or help students succeed," Bartone wrote. "All CSU campuses have already felt cuts over the past few years, from unfilled positions to fewer support services to larger class sizes. Mitigation plans promise to accelerate those cuts making it harder for all on campus."

Many testimonies emphasized how decreasing funding for higher education would have a negative effect on the economy of the state as a whole. Aimee Pozorski, an English professor at Central Connecticut State University, wrote in her testimony that she has "seen firsthand" how higher education cuts affect the most vulnerable students more than anyone, such as housing-insecure or first-generation students.

"Affordable public education is one significant factor that can help strengthen the workforce in Connecticut, drawing talent from all backgrounds and zip codes," Pozorski wrote. "Even though there is a lot to be cynical about in our current political climate, I still believe that a state education is a strong force in creating an upwardly mobile working community."

Five testimonies were submitted in support of the governor's



On Feb. 5, 2024, members from the UConn community provide their opinions on topics involving budget cuts, USG across regional campuses and the effectiveness of the hybrid meeting format. UConn students have expressed concerns over the impact of budget cuts on their academic experiences.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTIAN WELCOME, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

recommendations. All five of these testimonies mentioned particular support for the funds that were going to the Roberta Willis scholarship program and the resolving of a timing issue with the scholarship funds. Four of the five testimonies focused their support mainly on this issue. Rhona Free, president of the University of Saint Joseph, said that the program was a positive force for encouraging students to stay and excel in college.

"We appreciate the legislature's continued support of the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships for Connecticut students to attend in-state public or private, non-profit colleges," Free wrote

in her testimony. "At the University of Saint Joseph, 138 Connecticut resident students received a Roberta Willis grant in the 2022-2023 academic year and for many the funds were critical to their ability to begin or complete their degree programs."

Eight students from UConn Health submitted testimonies explaining why they chose this program and how state funding benefits students. Madison Witt, a first-year dental student at UConn Health, said that the program allowed her to give back to the community and to Connecticut.

"The School of Dental Medicine is the only dental school in the state, a pipeline for high education employment in the

state of Connecticut and remains educating on the most advanced dental technology. It is an affordable option for people like me, and I cannot wait to see what's in store," Witt wrote in her testimony.

Mars Plater, a history professor at UConn Stamford, said in their testimony that the current budget plan threatens the experiences that students have at college.

"UConn is a special place and it breaks my heart to imagine the many, devastating losses that this budget would force upon the university. I don't understand why one of the wealthiest states in the nation would betray its young people this way," Plater wrote.

US circulates rival UN resolution for temporary Gaza cease-fire after rejecting Arab proposal

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States has circulated a rival U.N. Security Council resolution that would support a temporary cease-fire in Gaza after rejecting an Arab-backed resolution demanding an immediate humanitarian cease-fire in the conflict-racked territory.

The U.S. draft resolution, obtained Monday by The Associated Press, would underscore that a temporary cease-fire "as soon as practicable" requires the release of all hostages taken from Israel after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, and calls for the lifting of all restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian aid.

The U.S. draft says both of those actions "would help to create the conditions for a sustainable cessation of hostilities" as called for in a resolution adopted by the council on Dec. 22.

The proposed resolution says Israel's planned major ground offensive into the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where some 1.5 million Palestinians have sought safety,

"should not proceed under current circumstances." And it warns that further displacement of civilians, "including potentially into neighboring countries," a reference to Egypt, would have serious implications for regional peace and security.

The Security Council is expected to vote Tuesday morning on the Arab-backed draft resolution circulated by Algeria, which represents the 22 Arab nations in the U.N.'s most powerful body.

In addition to a cease-fire, the final Algerian draft, obtained by AP, also demands the immediate release of all hostages and reiterates council demands that Israel and Hamas "scrupulously comply" with international law, especially the protection of civilians, and rejects the forced displacement of Palestinian civilians.

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said in a statement Sunday that the United States has been working on a hostage deal for months that would bring at least a six-week period of calm

"from which we could then take the time and the steps to build a more enduring peace."

She said U.S. President Joe Biden has had multiple calls over the last week with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the leaders of Egypt and Qatar to push the deal forward. Qatar said Saturday the talks "have not been progressing as expected."

"I don't think you can expect anything to happen tomorrow."

U.S. DEPUTY AMBASSADOR

ROBERT WOOD

"Though gaps remain," Thomas-Greenfield said, "the key elements are on the table" and it remains the best opportunity to reunite hostages with their families and enable a prolonged pause in fighting that would allow lifesaving aid to get to Palestinian civilians who desperately need it.

By contrast, the Arab-backed resolution wouldn't

achieve those outcomes, "and indeed, may run counter to them," she said. "For that reason, the United States does not support action on this draft resolution. Should it come up for a vote as drafted, it will not be adopted."

U.S. deputy ambassador Robert Wood told several reporters Monday that the Algerian draft is not "an effective mechanism for trying to do the three things that we want to see happen — which is get hostages out, more aid in, and a lengthy pause to this conflict."

With the U.S. draft, "what we're looking at is another possible option and we'll be discussing this with friends going forward," Wood said. "I don't think you can expect anything to happen tomorrow."

Arab nations, supported by many of the 193 U.N. member countries, have been demanding a cease-fire for months as Israel's military offensive in response to the Hamas attack has intensified, with the number of Palestinians killed now surpassing 29,000, according to the Gaza Health Ministry,

which doesn't distinguish between civilians and combatants but says the majority are women and children.

The Arab Group chair this month, Tunisia's U.N. Ambassador Tarek Ladeb, told U.N. reporters last Wednesday that some 1.5 million Palestinians who sought safety in Gaza's southern city of Rafah face a "catastrophic scenario" if Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu goes ahead with a potential evacuation of civilians and military offensive in the area bordering Egypt.

Netanyahu ordered the military to come up with a plan for Rafah's evacuation, but Israel hasn't announced a plan or timeline.

The Algeria draft resolution also expresses "grave concern over the dire and urgently deteriorating humanitarian situation" in Gaza and reiterates the council's call for unhindered humanitarian access throughout the territory, where U.N. officials say a quarter of the 2.3 million population are facing starvation.

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ROUNDTABLE | PAGE 6

Where does leap day come from?



MASS MOOD | PAGE 7

Life from an airplane window



WBB RECAP | PAGE 12

Clawing past Creighton



THE DAILY CAMPUS
NEWSLETTER

STUDENTS AND PARENTS ARE FRUSTRATED BY DELAYS IN HEARING ABOUT FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID FOR COLLEGE

NEW YORK (AP) — For many students, the excitement of being accepted into their first-choice college is being tempered this year by a troublesome uncertainty over whether they'll get the financial aid they need to attend.

The financial aid decisions that usually go out with acceptance letters are being delayed because of a later-than-expected rollout of a revised Free Application for Federal Student Aid, the form commonly known as FAFSA that schools use to compute financial aid.

The result: Students and their parents are putting off their college decisions.

"We are not going to make a decision without knowing what we're committing to financially; it would be irresponsible to do that," said Jenny Nicholas of Keene, New Hampshire. She wants to make sure that her son, a high school senior, goes to a college that is most affordable for their family.

The Education Department said the form would be easier for parents to fill out and used a new formula to compute eligibility for aid that took inflation into account. But it wasn't ready in October, when the forms for the coming school year are usually released. During a soft launch in December, it was difficult for many people to access the form. And the initial release didn't include the updated inflation tool.

Schools won't get the informa-

tion they need to award financial aid until next month, forcing them to adapt. Some have moved away from the popular May 1 deadline for students to accept their offers of admission.

Just this past week, Virginia Tech, for example, said it had moved its admissions deposit deadline for first-year college students to May 15. "Understandably so, families are concerned about the FAFSA process this year, and they are telling us that they need more time to make fully informed decisions," Juan Espinoza, interim vice provost for enrollment management, said in a statement.

The school said it anticipated notifying families about financial aid in mid-April.

"We can't make a decision until we see a financial aid package," said Agata James, a mother of a New York high school senior from Queens. "Everything is in limbo."

James' son decision is torn between two colleges, one in his home state and the other an out-of-state university that is his dream school. But James says the decision will come down to what she can afford without accumulating a large amount of student loan debt.

The Education Department has said it is working to alleviate the consequences of the delays. Some of these steps taken are reducing verification requirements, sending federal experts to under-resourced schools and allocat-

ing money for technical assistance to non-profit groups.

"We are determined to get this right," Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said in a statement this month. "We must, and we will."

More than 17 million students use the FAFSA every year to receive financial aid for their college education. As of mid-February, more than 4 million forms have been successfully submitted, the department said.

"What ends up happening is that our underrepresented and most fragile populations are the ones that are disproportionately affected"

TRAVIS HILL

Rachel Reniva of Dothan, Alabama, said the financial aid decision will affect not only her son's future but also her entire family's.

Even though the Education Department said the new application would be simpler to use, some students and parents still are having trouble filing.

Jesus Noyola, a sophomore attending Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, said he hasn't been able to submit his form because of



Jesus Noyola, a sophomore attending Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, poses for a portrait outside the Folsom Library. A later-than-expected rollout of a revised Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, that schools use to compute financial aid, is resulting in students and their parents putting off college decisions. (PENNINK/AP)

an error in the parent portion of the application.

"It's disappointing and so stressful since all these issues are taking forever to be resolved," said Noyola, who receives grants and work-study to fund his education.

Other errors have been linked to Social Security numbers, said Travis Hill, director for Dallas County Promise, a college success program in Texas.

Parents without legal immigration status are not able to submit their portion of the application because they don't have a Social Security number. Other parents are also encountering errors

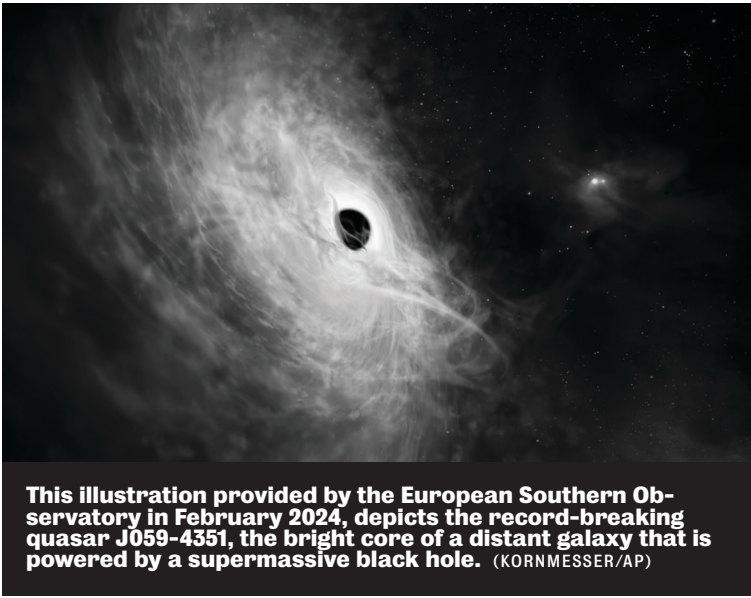
linking their Social Security number with their child's FAFSA application.

"I'm feeling stressed," said Lorenzo Jaramillo, 17, a high school senior who is looking to major in computer engineering. Although Jaramillo lives in Toronto, he is a U.S. citizen and thus eligible for financial aid.

Helen Faith, director of the Office of Financial Aid at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said she worries that the delays will harm both students and schools.

"What ends up happening is that our underrepresented and most fragile populations are the ones that are disproportionately affected," said Hill.

Astronomers find what may be the universe's brightest object with a black hole devouring a sun a day



This illustration provided by the European Southern Observatory in February 2024, depicts the record-breaking quasar J059-4351, the bright core of a distant galaxy that is powered by a supermassive black hole. (KORNMESSER/AP)

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Astronomers have discovered what may be the

brightest object in the universe, a quasar with a black hole at its heart growing so

fast that it swallows the equivalent of a sun a day.

The record-breaking quasar shines 500 trillion times brighter than our sun. The black hole powering this distant quasar is more than 17 billion times more immense than our sun, an Australian-led team reported Monday in the journal Nature Astronomy.

While the quasar resembles a mere dot in images, scientists envision a ferocious place.

The rotating disk around the quasar's black hole — the luminous swirling gas and other matter from gobbled-up stars — is like a cosmic hurricane.

"This quasar is the most violent place that we know in the universe," lead author

Christian Wolf of Australian National University said in an email.

The European Southern Observatory spotted the object, J0529-4351, during a 1980 sky survey, but it was thought to be a star. It was not identified as a quasar — the extremely active and luminous core of a galaxy — until last year. Observations by telescopes in Australia and Chile's Atacama Desert clinched it.

"The exciting thing about this quasar is that it was hiding in plain sight and was misclassified as a star previously," Yale University's Priyamvada Natarajan, who was not involved in the study, said in an email.

These later observations and computer modeling have

"This quasar is the most violent place that we know in the universe."

CHRISTIAN WOLF

determined that the quasar is gobbling up the equivalent of 370 suns a year — roughly one a day. Further analysis shows the mass of the black hole to be 17 to 19 billion times that of our sun, according to the team. More observations are needed to understand its growth rate.

The quasar is 12 billion light-years away and has been around since the early days of the universe. A light-year is 5.8 trillion miles.

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CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Stretched the truth
- 5 Takes a break
- 10 Garçon’s workplace
- 14 Actress Kendrick
- 15 Love, in French
- 16 Operatic high point
- 17 Folk singer Joan
- 18 *Many stadium screens
- 20 GI field fare
- 22 Phoenix suburb
- 23 Fannie __: federal mortgage agency
- 24 *Seven-star pattern in Ursa Major
- 27 Little League precursor
- 29 “__ thoughts?”
- 30 Vegetable in a pod
- 31 Fr. holy woman
- 32 Ballet garb
- 34 Piece of advice
- 36 Insensitive, in a way
- 39 *Curly-haired dogs
- 43 Spreadsheet software
- 44 “Low” rapper __ Rida
- 45 “Smooth Operator” singer
- 46 Actor Pacino and singer Green
- 47 Alias letters
- 49 Summer shade
- 50 Nile Valley country
- 53 *Skimpy garment credited to fashion designer Mary Quant
- 56 Summer sign
- 57 “Firefly” actor Tudyk
- 59 Brad of “Moneyball”
- 60 Cornerstone of the Konmari method, and the progression found at the starts of the answers to the starred clues
- 64 Draw (in)
- 66 Nurse Jackie portrayer Falco
- 67 Spanish title
- 68 Poems of praise
- 69 Wetlands plant
- 70 “Fire away!”
- 71 Flow slowly

DOWN

- 1 R&D setting
- 2 “Almost ready”
- 3 Fuel surcharge, e.g.
- 4 Stunned
- 5 “The Big Bang Theory” chum of Sheldon and Leonard
- 6 6-foot Aussie bird
- 7 WWI battle site in France
- 8 Potato or yam
- 9 Low-budget hotels, for short
- 10 Mustang or Pinto
- 11 Enticing odor
- 12 End-of-term exam
- 13 Equipment used in oil production?
- 19 Result of some needlework
- 21 Opposite of guzzle
- 24 Clubs for 27-Across
- 25 Blossom parts
- 26 Duo
- 28 Road curves
- 31 “Jersey Shore” nickname
- 33 Take the lid off
- 35 Adobe creation
- 37 Insipid remark

- 38 Source of fragrant wood
- 40 Triangular river formations
- 41 Strategy
- 42 Inbox subfolder
- 48 Snake once sacred in 50-Across
- 50 Respected leader
- 51 Rock with inner beauty
- 52 “That smarts!”

- 53 Some puzzle book offerings
- 54 How paper contracts are signed
- 55 Metric weights
- 58 Middle Simpson kid
- 61 Actor Beatty
- 62 Snack, in slang
- 63 Higher ed hurdle
- 65 Telepath’s claim

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02/20/24

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56				57	58					59				
60			61					62	63		64			65
66					67						68			
69					70						71			

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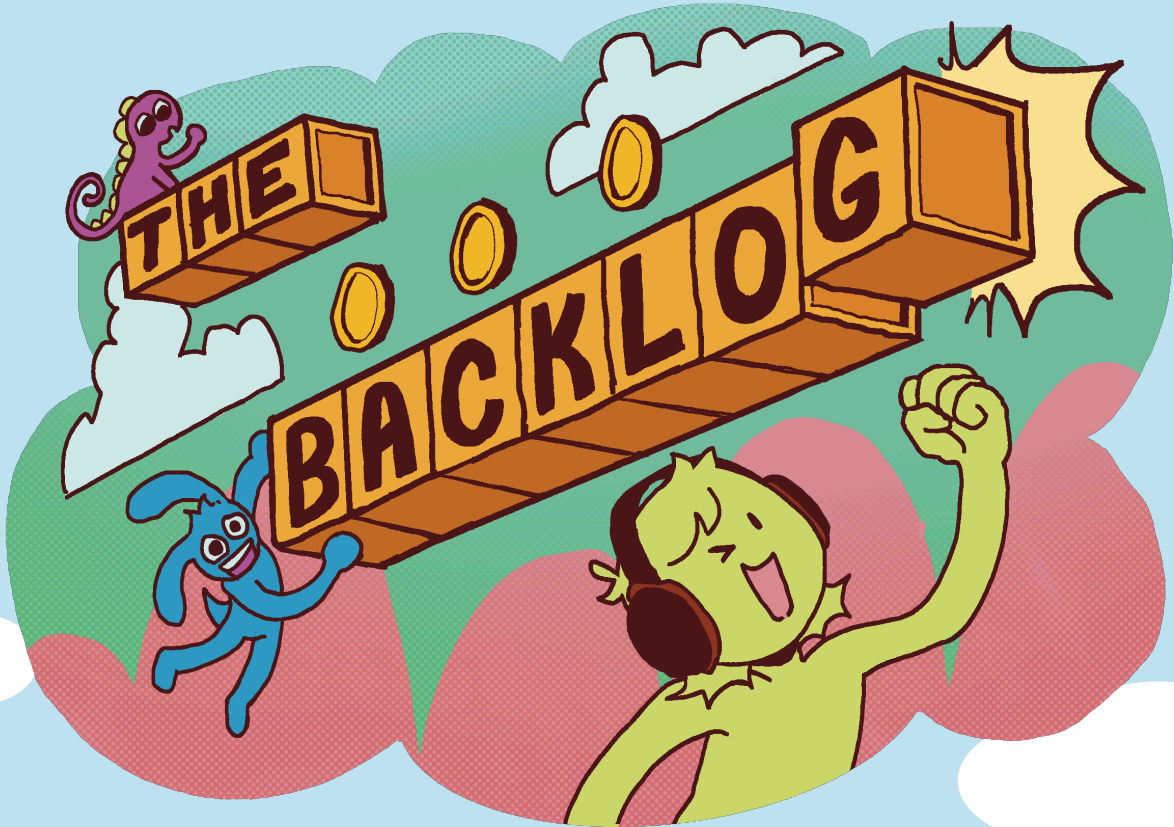
BLAST AWAY RAVING RABBIDS IN

by Desirae Sin
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Hello and welcome to The Backlog, where we review video games based on a certain word or genre each month. For February, we’ve been looking at strategy games, and today, we will take a break from the dark tones of “Buckshot Roulette” and “Inscription,” by looking at “Mario + Rabbids Kingdom Battle.” Only available on the Nintendo Switch, “Mario + Rabbids Kingdom Battle” is a crossover between Nintendo and Ubisoft. Released in 2017, it won the year’s award for Best Sim/Strategy Game and was nominated for Best Family Game. The gameplay is

turn-based and pushes the player to think every action through. The player can control up to three characters in their party and each one possesses unique abilities. The closest thing I could compare it to is a game of chess with blasters, crazy Rabbids and a robotic vacuum cleaner named Beep-o to guide you. Each turn, the three characters chosen can perform three moves. This includes moving to a different spot, attacking and using their power. Some aspects that can change the way you play are that you can melee enemies if you are close enough, and thus doing more damage, or that you can use another character to jump off of and allow your character to move further than usual.

Each one also possesses special abilities — Mario can use Hero Sight to instantly shoot at any enemy he spots moving by — not to mention that he’s useful when moving because he can land on enemies and cause damage. Other characters include Luigi, Princess Peach, Yoshi, Rabbid Luigi, Rabbid Peach, Rabbid Yoshi and Rabbid Mario. If you already didn’t guess, all of the Rabbid characters are just them wearing the outfits of the “Mario” characters. As you progress, you can level up their skill trees, giving them more health, stronger attacks or generally making their special abilities more effective. Because of this, you may find yourself using only a few characters instead of



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

Mario + Rabbids Kingdom Battle

cycling through them. Personally, I find that it's best to reorganize your party every now and then to better combat certain enemies and obstacles. As a family game, there isn't much of a story to "Mario + Rabbids Kingdom Battle" beyond what is necessary to explain why the two franchises are in one game. Basically, the two universes collide and the group of heroes of the Mushroom Kingdom and Rabbids must work together to stop invading Rabbids from wreaking havoc, which is essentially their only goal. As a staple point of "Mario" games, your group traverses various king-

doms and landscapes in order to reach the final boss. This includes the Ancient Gardens, Sherbet Desert, Spooky Trails and in typical Nintendo fashion, ending at a volcano-based biome called the Lava Pit. The game is mainly a single player experience but you can do a versus mode to fight against one other player. Despite this, I find that "Mario + Rabbids Kingdom Battle" can get the whole family to play together. It's easy to pass the remote to the next person in line or switch at every battle. It's best to work as a group in case you get stuck, which is often be-

cause the levels can become difficult quickly. Anyone of any age can enjoy this game, and games are best experienced with people beside you. Because of the nature of the gameplay, it can take quite a long time to finish it, but that is normal for most Nintendo family games. Anybody who's finished a "Mario" game in one day did so due to sheer determination and willpower. The sequel, "Mario + Rabbids Sparks of Hope," released in October of 2022. Hopefully, I will get the chance to play it — once the price goes down — and review it for you faithful readers.

RATING:





Life

@dailycampuslife

Roundtable: Where does Leap Day come from?

The Daily Campus Life section produces roundtables that cover a variety of silly yet strangely controversial topics. Whether these question the reliability of the groundhog’s weather forecast, or investigate if red supersedes pink as the most suitable color for Valentine’s Day, the Life section does not hold back their thoughts. Today’s roundtable questions the origins of Leap Day, which will make its comeback after its traditional four-year hiatus in two weeks’ time.



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

by Karla Perez
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For those of you who don’t know, 2024 is a leap year, meaning that February gets a 29th day added to the calendar. Despite what science and history tell us, it’s fair to argue that this extra day is confusing and random. Why does it exist? Why do we need it? Who made it up? Why does February only have 28 days to begin with? While I understand the actual reasoning behind Leap Day, I find it fun to indulge in conspiracy every once in a while.

I think that the scientists and mathematicians got it wrong. The number 365.2422 is so precise, so how can they be certain that that’s exactly how long it takes for the earth to make one revolution, yet no one has a logical explanation *deja vu*, rush hour traffic or men (sorry)? I don’t buy it. I think at some point, the scientists and mathematicians realized their calculations were off, but decided to keep the day because they have a personal vendetta against leap year babies. You can’t just cut off the day because then you would also cut off their birth date. So instead of hitting the reset button, the scientists decided to give leap year babies the gift of having to give a monologue explanation for how their birthday works. That, and the trying string of follow-up questions such as “So how old are you... technically?”

Nevertheless, for my fellow leap year babies out there, our long awaited birthdays are finally back. Celebrate big this year because it won’t come around again until 2028.

by Patrick Boots
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It’s quite obvious that Leap Days are meant to distract us from the greater plot to move the start of the winter season from October and November to February and March. Think about it: When’s the last time you saw snowfall on Christmas?

Some may say it’s because we have to make up for the nominal differences between how we measure a year and the Earth’s actual revolution around the Sun. It’s all just a cover-up of how over time, winter has been pushed further and further away from when we all originally understood it to be. Connecticut is experiencing one of the warmest “winters” on record!

Who is behind this meteorological scheme, you may ask? Punxsutawney Phil, the most famous weather-predicting groundhog. He’s making sure that we all lose sight of when the seasons really start and end, and ensuring kids born on Feb. 29 never grow up. Haters and historians say there’s math that supports leap years but remember, someone came up with “Monday” too!

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I found it.

by Desirae Sin
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Leap Day is designed to promote the toy company, LeapFrog. They’re the ones that created the old educational gadgets and toys meant to teach children how to spell, read and even do math. Feb. 29 is an elaborate scheme to get kids to think about the phrase “Leap Day,” which in turn reminds them of words similar to it like “LeapFrog.” Any explanation that centers around the Earth’s orbit or Julius Caesar’s implementation of the calendar is a conspiracy, designed to condition young minds to rationalize their mental connection between Leap Day and LeapFrog.

The competition between toy companies is much more complex than people think. Just recently we saw the power of promotion from Mattel with the 2023 hit movie, “Barbie.” From just this movie alone, it spurred on audience members to attend movie theaters dressed in pink or reminisce about their experiences with Barbie dolls. Despite coming from humble beginnings centered around teaching children how to read effectively, LeapFrog’s name was chosen to specifically take advantage of the fact that our brains will make instantaneous decisions to fill in gaps in our knowledge. The jump from Leap Day to LeapFrog is not a big one, pun intended.

by Benjamin Lassy
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Nobody understands Leap Days. They come, they go, but above all, they make calendars difficult to read. As a history major, there is only reason to enjoy the Leap Day — it’s an easy way to segue into long dialogues about the Roman Empire. Seriously, can you believe that Sosigenes, Julius Caesar’s astronomer, was able to sort out all the complex mathematics behind adding the days to the calendar?

Rome had long used the 355 day lunar calendar, which worked quite well in terms of keeping general seasons categorized into times of the year. However, when it came time for a feast or celebration related to the seasons, they were constantly missing the mark and days had to be rearranged. Consequently, Sosigenes worked to add a few extra days scattered throughout the year to accommodate the year’s length. This brought the calendar length to 365 days. Yet, Sosigenes encountered issues with the precise measurements of Earth’s seasonal orbit that required on every fourth year, the addition of a 29th day to Februarius (February). This would line all the seasons up with their respective listed dates; a very clever and successful solution to a complex orbit-related problem.

So now you know the basics behind the Leap Day, but, as any good history major would, let’s keep talking about the Roman Empire. Did you know that Romulus Augustulus was technically not the last...

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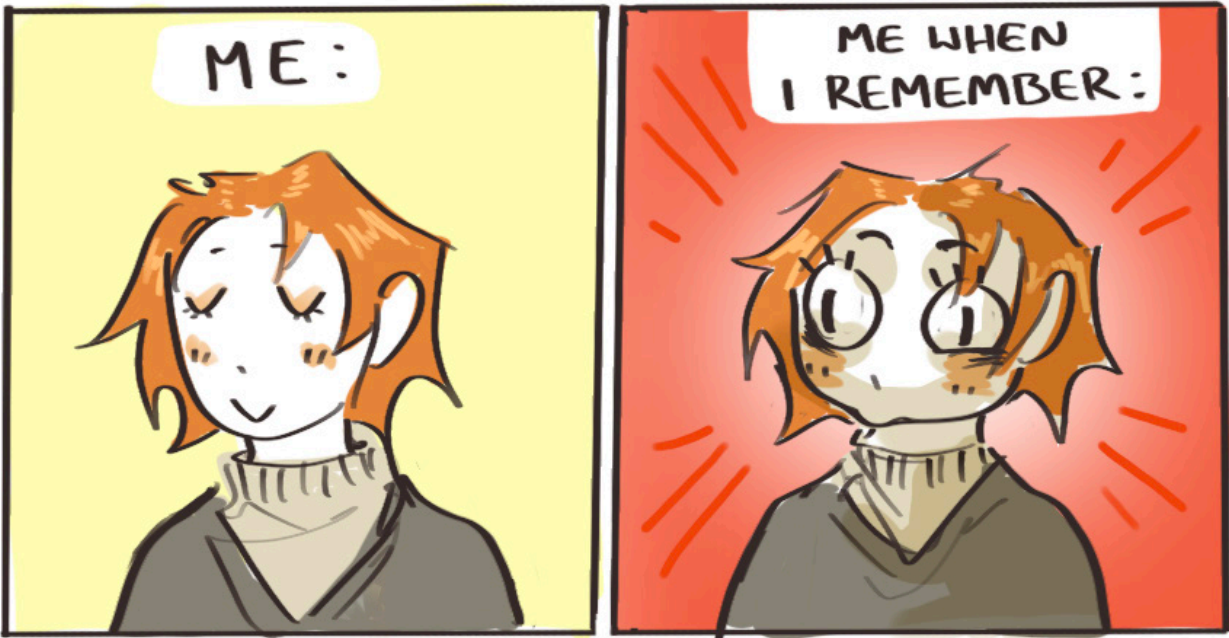
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COMIC BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

LIFE FROM AN AIRPLANE WINDOW

by Nell Srinath
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I’m visiting India for the first time in six-and-a-half years this week, meaning my usual capacity for a research-heavy, analytical column is pretty diminished. So instead of dissecting the guts of some current event, I’ll be doing exactly the opposite: talking about rocks.

For the first hour after departing from Zayed International Airport in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, my eyes were glued to the ground. A scarcity of clouds revealed a vast expanse of land unfurling some 30,000 feet below, its geographic features creating a beautifully uneven texture like an oil painting. Crossing into the northeast of Oman, we began to follow Al Hajar mountain range from the skies.

From my viewpoint, the red-gray soil looked as though it had been carved and folded in on itself by the delicate hand work of a sculptor. Jebel Akhdar, one of tallest mountains in Oman, towered over the mining towns, tourist traps and vehicles dotting the desert, humanity’s most recent playthings strewn across the ageless floor. The mountains had a consistency that I’d never had the privilege of witnessing in person, almost as if I was being shown the exposed flesh and arteries of planet Earth, inviting me to venture further into its beating heart (now I know how geologists feel).

The roads connecting Oman’s natural tourist destinations to the nearby cities of Muscat and Salalah dwindled in number as we approached the coast; skinny belts of asphalt were gradually replaced by the serpentine remnants of a river left upon the land like the stroke of a wet paint brush. The low tide of the Arabian sea left behind hair-like deposits of sediment and moisture exploding out from the valleys, provoking the question of how the landscape changes when the tide swells and parts of the river fill in. What’s more — the riverbed and surrounding towns were cradled by a wider depression in the land, calling up ghostly images of a giant river or sea that may have once existed there.

As I later found out, this wasn’t too far from the truth — albeit geology isn’t all that glamorous. Al Hajar mountains and the scientific insights it offers were shaped by millions of years of

slow, dispassionate glacial and tectonic plate activity. Indeed, now-blistering Oman may have once been covered in ice, lending substantial credence to the hypothesis that this planet could have been a “Snowball Earth” 700 million years ago. Additionally, Oman’s mountains are largely exposed portions of the earth’s mantle — quite literally its flesh — and those winding valleys, also known as wadi, are composed of pillow basalt, which is igneous rock formed by undersea volcanic activity. In other words, Oman’s beautiful wadi are parts of the sea floor that you can walk on.

Even though I knew I’d be pressed for time to research this week on account of attending a wedding abroad, I broke my promise. I couldn’t resist delving into the wide array of academic research and travel accounts of Oman’s geological history, and was taken aback by the sheer history of the landmass that I only perused for a short while cruising overhead in an airplane. But it’s because of the fact that geological time is so vast that physical geography is so awe-inspiring. The human lifetime is barely even a blip in the time it takes for these formations to shape the planet the way they do. Some people might take this to mean that our lives are insignificant, and to an extent, I don’t disagree. After all, when our moments of pleasure, hatred, excitement and lethargy are all but dust in the wind, the mountains and wadi will still be there.

But at the same time, it’s the brevity of our time on this planet that makes each day all the more valuable. We have a profoundly unique opportunity as a people — a collection of individuals with a common interest in keeping this planet livable — to extend our influence long beyond the

time our lives begin and end. We are at a pivotal moment in history. Day in and day out we are presented with unambiguous evidence that the dominant economic system, capitalism, is having a devastating social and environmental impact. In India, where I’m writing this, hazardous air quality has been linked to as many as 1.67 million deaths in 2019 alone, placing most of the burden on poor homes with multiple children and no toilets, as well as Indians with disabilities. The main drivers of this intense air pollution are industrial and vehicular emissions — those that are deemed necessary to maintain the flow of commerce and movement of capital.

Even after landing in Bangalore and recovering from a hellish bout of jet lag, my mind still wanders to Jebel Akhdar. The exposed mantle making up the mountains are actually part of an ambitious research initiative by geologists to capture atmospheric carbon dioxide by “mineralizing” it in the rock. As such, Al Hajar has immense potential to aid our technological capacities in the fight against climate change. However, we must also remain cognizant of the dangers of instrumentalizing nature for human gain in a supposedly eco-friendly way (i.e. by turning carbon capture into another industry to amass wealth without solving the social inequalities that make climate change so acutely dangerous). We’re not here for a terrifically long time; we have a responsibility to wrest the fate of the Earth from those who have a vested interest in destroying it, thus securing something to leave behind for those short-fated beings who come after.

I guess it was an eventful flight.

FILE LOGO/THE DAILY CAMPUS

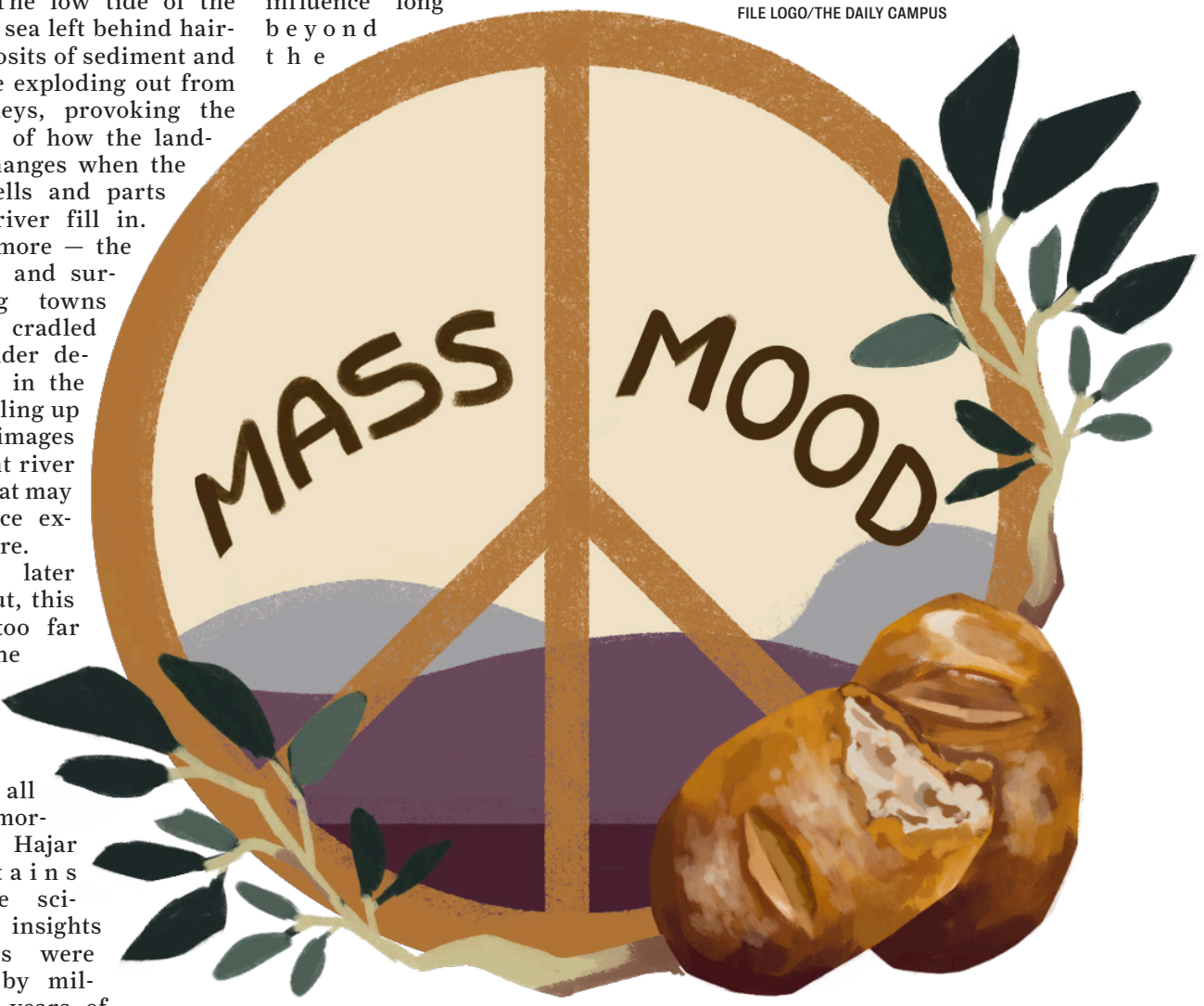


Photo of the Day | Mirror mirror



Snow and ice melt on Mirror Lake on Monday, Feb. 19, 2024. Many students have skated on Mirror Lake as it freezes over throughout the spring semester.
PHOTO BY ZACHARY MOLLER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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COMIC BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



COMIC BY VAN NGUYEN, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Women's Tennis: Huskies handle Stony Brook, but fall to Rutgers

by Caleb Cook
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Coming off a 7-0 loss to Xavier, the UConn women's tennis team had a chance to get back to their winning ways this past weekend. On Friday, they welcomed Stony Brook University to town and took care of business, securing a 5-2 victory. On Sunday, in another home match, Rutgers got the better of UConn in a matchup that also finished 5-2.

Stony Brook Results

Things kicked off with three doubles matches, two of which went in the favor of UConn. The third remained unfinished, but senior Nansi Toskova and freshman Isabella Asenov were winning 5-2 against freshmen Cornelia Bruu-Syversen and Darian Perfiliev of Stony Brook prior to the match being cut short.

Junior Isabel Petri Bere and freshman Caroline Hinshaw set the tone for the Huskies in the first match of the day, defeating sophomore Debby Mastrodima and freshman Mia Palladino 6-0. In match No. 2, juniors Olivia Wright and Maria Constantinou kept the wins rolling for Connecticut, getting the better of sophomore Kristi Boro and freshman Elena Lobo-Corral, 6-3.

After snatching up all the doubles points, the Huskies kept the wins coming in singles play. They rattled off four straight wins to push their lead, only dropping the last two on their way to victory. Petri Bere and Hinshaw each won their matches in straight sets. Petri Bere won against Boro without dropping a single game (6-0, 6-0) and Hinshaw defeated Perfiliev 6-3, 6-0.

Every other singles match in this one ended up going to a tiebreaker set, starting with Wright versus Palladino. Palladino won the first tightly contested set 7-5, but Wright bounced back with 6-2 and 6-3 wins to win the match. Up next was Constantinou who took on Lobo-Coral. Constantinou secured the first set by a score of 6-2, but Lobo-Coral

came roaring back with a 6-4 result in her favor. In the tiebreaker, Constantinou was in the driver's seat the whole time and won 6-3.

The Seawolves weren't looking to be shutout, so Mastrodima and Bruu-Syversen made sure to grab some wins in the last two matches of the day. Mastrodima got the first win for Stony Brook against freshman Victoria Matos with a 6-3, 4-6, 6-4 score. In the last matchup, Bruu-Syversen and Asenov had one of the closest matches for either team in the entire season. The first set was a back-and-forth affair, but it went Asenov's way 6-7 (5-7). Bruu-Syvers showed great resilience in the second set with a 7-5 win but set three was the real nailbiter. It took 10 wins to decide a winner in the tiebreaker set and Bruu-

Syversen stepped up to the challenge with a 10-8 victory.

Rutgers Results

As has been the story all year for UConn, they started off by securing the doubles point in this matchup. They won the first two matches and were on their way to a third thanks again to the pairings of Constantinou/Wright and Petri Bere/Hinshaw. Both matches finished with a score of 6-3 and the unfinished third match ended 5-3 with Asenov and Toskova leading. After dominating doubles play, UConn came out swinging in singles. Wright added

to her team's best wins total, defeating junior Jackeline Lopez in straight sets (6-0, 6-2) for overall win No. 19 on the year. After that big win, however, things began to get worse for the Huskies. Next up, junior Minchae Kim and senior Daira Cardenas beat Hinshaw and Asenov, respectively, in straight sets (6-2, 7-5, and 6-4, 6-2). Sophomore Mai Nguyen defeated Petri Bere in a match that had to go to three sets. That match-up finished 7-6 (7-5), 1-6, 6-3, dropping Petri Bere's team-leading singles record to 16-6. In another game that needed a tiebreaker set, freshman Naomi Karki outlasted sophomore Cameron Didion by a score of 6-7 (3-7), 6-2, 6-3. Lastly, Senior Amira Badawi defeated Constantinou in another three-set thriller that finished with a score of 3-6, 7-5, 7-5. After starting winless through three matches, Rutgers came storming back and won all five remaining singles matches to snatch the victory away from the Huskies. That leaves Connecticut with a 5-3 record heading into their next matchup.

Up Next

UConn will be back in action on Friday, Feb. 23 as they travel to Chicago, IL for a Big East matchup against DePaul.



UConn's women's tennis team celebrate a 6-1 win against Fairfield on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024. Junior Olivia Wright continued her undefeated streak, going 2-0 in her match.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNWTENNIS ON INSTAGRAM



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

THE PUCK DROP: NHL FANS' NEW FAD APPEARS IN ARRIVAL OUTFITS

by Avery Becker | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER/HERS | avery.becker@uconn.edu

After events like the Met Gala and various award shows, it's customary for various accounts on X or Instagram to comment on celebrities' outfits from these occasions. Just like these traditions, it has become a ritual at NHL outdoor games for players to wear matching outfits, keeping fans on their feet wondering what outfits they'll wear.

This year, the NHL teams have definitely exceeded their fans' expectations.

This past Saturday at the annual NHL Stadium series, the New Jersey Devils wore outfits to resemble characters from the show 'The Sopranos.' Players wore navy or neon green tracksuits, white tank tops and even slicked their hair back. Accompanying their outfits, some players also carried around cigars or little espresso cups.

Their fellow Metropolitan Division foes and opponents on Friday, the Philadelphia Flyers, wore a beanie and gray sweatpants and sweatshirts while catching a running start as they exited the team bus. This was to resemble Sylvester Stallone in the famous scene from the movie 'Rocky' with the song "Gonna Fly Now" in the background.



Players on the New Jersey Devils walk into their game on Saturday, Feb. 17, 2024. They won this game 6-3.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @NJDEVILS ON INSTAGRAM

It launched a plethora of comments all over social media, and fans were fascinated by these iconic "arrival outfits" by the teams competing in outdoor games this season.

After the Devils took the win 6-3, captain Nico Hischier was asked by ESPN reporter Emily Kaplan what their idea was behind these outfits and what he has learned

about New Jersey. "Great state, I love it here. It's my second home. Sopranos, that's how we roll," Hischier answered.

The idea of arrival outfits has taken the NHL by storm, like at the Winter Classic last month when the Seattle Kraken arrived dressed as fishermen from Pike Place Market.

Brandon Tanev, a winger for the

Kraken, said to GQ, "We wanted to do something that showcased the outdoors of Seattle, something fun, something vibrant...We decided on doing something with fishing vibes. Pike Place is a staple place for tourists that people to go down to visit. You always see the individuals there out at the market, chucking fish. It's a famous thing. So we wanted an outfit that

represented that, along with being on the water. Fishermen on vessels, that's what they're wearing."

With these rituals, the league and its teams are integrating pop culture into their traditions, expanding their horizons for the future. It's a fantastic marketing strategy while elevating the league and its events to gain more traction and viewership.

BIG EAST, cont. from p. 10

Providence holds to beat St. John's, 75-72

Josh Oduro has been huge for the Friars this season. The George Mason transfer put up 28 points, including 26 in the second half. Former UConn Husky Corey Floyd Jr. made a layup, followed by a one-handed jumper from Oduro, giving Providence a four-point lead with 41 seconds remaining. Daniss Jenkins missed a shot from 3-point range with ten seconds left. Jordan Dingle's prayer from long range was blocked by Oduro, putting a cherry on top of the Gainesville, Va. native. RJ Luis had

an excellent game at the Amica Mutual Pavilion for the Red Storm, finishing with 16 points and 14 rebounds.

Seton Hall makes St. John's reach breaking point, 68-62

Up until now, St. John's was considered a bubble team. Head coach Rick Pitino has seen enough, going off on his team's effort following the press conference on Sunday. He called the season "the most unenjoyable experience of my lifetime." He called out the players that he recruited and the facilities that St. John's has to offer. The Johnnies could not contain the backcourt of Al-Amir Dawes and Kadary

Richmond. Dawes put up 19 points, while Richmond continued his All-Big East-caliber season with an 18-point, 11-rebound double-double. Jenkins and Joel Soriano were bright spots for Pitino's squad. Jenkins put up 17 points, six assists and three steals, while Soriano recorded 13 points, 12 rebounds and three blocks. Even though Soriano recorded his 12th double-double of the season, Pitino called him out for being "slow laterally" and "not fast on the court."

Upcoming Games (outside of two big UConn games this week. Check out the previews from our beat writers!)

Butler at Villanova (6:30 p.m., FS1)

According to Bracket Matrix, a site that compiles 174 bracketologies, Butler is considered a 10-seed on average. In the "other at-larges" category, Villanova has been considered one of the last teams in the field of 68 by some sites. It will be a battle of two Big East bubble teams tonight at the Finneran Pavilion. Villanova is 8-4 in home games and looks to gain momentum heading to Storrs on Saturday night.

Butler at Seton Hall (Saturday, 8:30 p.m., FS2)

Both teams have been inconsistent, but they look to be tournament teams in the eyes of many bracketologists. Seton

Hall is one of few teams with at least five quad-1 wins and at least five road wins this season. Butler is looking to make one final push towards the Big Dance as head coach Thad Matta looks to improve his case for Big East Coach of the Year.

No. 15 Creighton at St. John's (Sunday, noon, CBS/Paramount+)

Creighton is on a three-game win streak, while St. John's is on a cold three-game losing streak. Following the Bluejays' biggest game of the season against No. 1 UConn tonight, they will look to prepare for the Red Storm, searching for any momentum.

Photo of the Day | My face when midterm grades start coming out



The Huskies take on Sacred Heart University in the CT Ice Championship at the XL Center on Friday, Jan. 26, 2024. Tattle sealed the win by scoring on an empty net in the last period, leading the Huskies to a 6-2 victory.
PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Women’s Basketball: Which Huskies could get selected in the 2024 WNBA draft?

by Stratton Stave
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It’s that time of year again. As women’s college basketball begins to wind down, we head towards the WNBA draft, which is less than two months away. This means that the Connecticut Huskies have yet another chance to add to their long list of over 40 players who have been selected to the WNBA in the league’s nearly three decades. Though this season hasn’t been anything close to what was expected, there are still a number of names on UConn’s roster that could bolster any of the teams in the WNBA. Who are these players and where could they be expected to be drafted? Let’s take a look, while also discussing which Huskies may exercise—or have already announced—their extra year of eligibility thanks to COVID-19.

Paige Bueckers, 6-foot guard
Everywhere you look, there are mocks that have Bueckers at the top of the 2024 draft, right next to Caitlin Clark. That’s great—and her generational talent makes her worthy of this selection. However, she gave any number of indications that she’s planning on staying for her fifth year, and if that wasn’t clear enough, she officially announced her return on senior night. Not only did she miss last year with an ACL tear, but she also has her COVID season. On top of that, with the number of eyes on women’s college basketball and her NIL worth, she’s likely to be earning more in college than in the pros. Her choice of staying makes a ton of sense.

In the scenario that she was on the board for whatever reason since she is eligible, Bueckers would be firmly in the top three. Clark is a foregone conclusion at No. 1 given her historic excellence as a passer and scorer. Bueckers would fight with Stanford’s Cameron Brink for the No. 2 spot, though LA is looking for a big, which gives the upper hand to Brink. Bueckers gives teams everything they could ask for from a point guard though. She has a pass-first mindset when the appropriate weapons are around her and can score at ease when she needs to. The former national POTY also offers great positional size and defense. With Bueckers out of the fold in 2024, she’s likely to be No. 1 pick in 2025.

Aaliyah Edwards, 6-foot-3 forward
Having played all four years available so far, Edwards seems likely to depart, unless she feels like she has unfinished business. Mock drafts generally have the 2023 All-America selection in the top five, and she’s deserving of that position. Edwards offers a diverse offensive profile that has



The Huskies play Creighton at the XL Center on Feb. 19, 2024. UConn won the game 73-53.
PHOTO BY JORDAN ARNOLD, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

grown over her years in Storrs. Her freshman year was promising, with a 10-5-1 line, but she took a significant step back in her sophomore year. Her junior campaign was as if she continued her progression from her first season, earning All-American honors on a 16-9-1 line. This time around, she’s essentially the same player as last year but slightly better. Her efficiency has improved slightly and she’s scoring an extra point per game. Perhaps some of that can be attributed to the departure of center Dorka Juhasz, without a clear replacement in the rotation. Either way, WNBA-ready.



FILE ILLUSTRATION/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The biggest issue Edwards will face is the fact that she’s a touch undersized without a 3-point jumper. Her 15-footers are as sure a thing as death or taxes, but getting a shot from downtown would really help space the floor. And no, her 100% shooting from deep on a single attempt last year doesn’t count. Even with that flaw, Edwards remains an exceptional talent. She would thrive somewhere where she could be a four, perhaps as a tertiary offensive threat, but should be able to carve out minutes anywhere.

Aubrey Griffin, 6-foot-1 forward
Griffin has had a career riddled with injuries, so it’s not surprising that she’s taking another year, as was announced on senior night. The 2019 five-star recruit is in her fifth year of school, but has only managed 110 games. In her freshman and sophomore years, she served as a key defensive piece while averaging a modest six points and five boards, only starting five games. Back problems kept Griffin out of the 2022 season, but she returned for 2023. Her 11

points, 6.6 boards and 1.4 steals were big for the Huskies and she looked to build on it this year.

Instead of doing that, she exited the starting lineup five games into the year and began to find herself again as a sparkplug. And then came an ACL tear. Griffin’s rehab will likely take her into next year’s fall to winter months, so it makes sense that she’s using another year as she finds her footing and recovers. That way, she’s readjusting to basketball in a familiar atmosphere. If she did elect to depart though, she could end up in the third round or undrafted. Though she’s been an incredibly valuable player in stretches, her inconsistency and injury history don’t make her a perfect prospect. The intrigue of an athletic 2-way defensive anchor off the bench does exist with Griffin, but the number of question marks that surround her health is likely a big factor in her staying.

Nika Mühl, 5-foot-11 guard
The final player we’ll discuss is Mühl, who has her name in the record books in Storrs as the single-season assist leader. We know what she brings to the table on that front as the premier passer in the draft class. The bigger question is what else she can do at the WNBA level. The way teams are forced to guard a facilitating threat like Mühl opens up the 3-point shots, so she’s needed to take a step up there this year.

After shooting exactly 34.3% in each of her first three years, the point guard upped it to 42.9% this year on the same number of attempts, which should be a welcome sign to suitors. Mühl can often be a hesitant shooter, but her capability isn’t a question. She does also have some issues turning the ball over, but that isn’t concerning. Broadly speaking, Mühl is a great prospect for a team that needs a reliable and selfless facilitator. She won’t do much on the scoring end, but can be the glue for a squad looking to tie a number of pieces together. That puts her in the second (more likely) or third round territory.

Big East Baller Update No. 10: St. John’s plays itself out of NCAA picture

by Sam Calhoun
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As we get closer to March, the Big East’s bids for the NCAA Tournament are getting clearer. UConn, Marquette and Creighton are all locks, while Seton Hall, Butler and Providence look to improve their resumes.

St. John’s is in the top 50 in the NET rankings and in the top 40 in the KenPom ratings. However, the Red Storm have disappointed, considering the haul that head coach Rick Pitino brought in.

On this edition of Big East Baller Update, we will look at the biggest games from the past week and name our Big East Player and Freshman of the Week.

Player of the Week: Baylor Scheierman, G, Creighton (21 PPG, 10.5 RPG, 7 APG, 57.1 FG%, 35.7 3P%, 83.3 FT% in two games)
The Big East’s weekly release went with Providence guard Devin Carter, but there is an argument that it should have been Baylor Scheierman as the Big East Player of the Week. The former South Dakota State Jackrabbit posted a triple-double in the blowout win over Georgetown with 15 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists. In the Bluejays’ dominant victory over Butler, the Aurora, Neb. native had 27 points and ten boards.

Freshman of the Week: Stephon Castle, G, UConn (9 PPG, 4.5 APG, 3.5 RPG, 47 FG%)

Castle is getting closer to a Big East record. Syracuse legend Carmelo Anthony holds the record for most Big East Freshman of the Week honors in a season, with ten during the 2002-03 season. Castle sits at eight, with three more weekly releases remaining. In a blowout win at DePaul, the Covington, Ga. native had 15 points and six assists. The Huskies did not need his five-star talent in Saturday’s statement win over No. 4 Marquette, with Castle getting into foul trouble.

Top Games
No. 4 Marquette fends off Butler, 78-72

On Jan. 10, Butler shocked the Golden Eagles in Milwaukee with a 69-62 victory. Tyler Kolek did not shine in that game, only scoring one basket. Last week, the reigning Big East Player of the Year got his redemption. Kolek scored 27 points, including a game-changing 3-pointer with 90 seconds remaining. Oso Ighodaro finished with a double-double, scoring 17 points and grabbing ten boards. Marquette extended its win streak to eight games heading into Hartford last Saturday.

See BIG EAST, p. 9



The Huskies hosted Marquette on Feb. 17, 2024 at the XL Center. UConn won the game 81-53.
PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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

The Weekly Reed:

Sabrina Ionescu and Steph Curry saved NBA All-Star Weekend

by Noah Reed
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The NBA all-star festivities took place over the weekend and were met with some pushback from the fans. This year's dunk contest was relatively boring, with some interesting moves but nothing special. Anthony Edwards of the Timberwolves was shooting left-handed, Scottie Barnes of the Raptors tripped while trying to dribble the basketball in the skills challenge and Luka Dončić of the Mavericks shot a full court shot with plenty of time left on the shot clock. It was all just very chaotic. To me, the highlight of the weekend was the much-anticipated battle between WNBA star Sabrina Ionescu and NBA legend Steph Curry of the Golden State Warriors. It was one of the better marketed segments from this past weekend, and it was completely worth the watch.

Ionescu gave Curry a run for his money in a highly competitive battle. She went toe-to-toe with the best shooter in NBA history, a guy who has won two NBA 3-point



WNBA star Sabrina Ionescu hugs NBA star Steph Curry after a hard fought battle at the 2024 NBA All-Star Weekend. Curry won their three-point shooting contest 29-26.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @SABRINA_I ON INSTAGRAM

of talent in the league to a broader audience and is only a positive for the league itself. After Ionescu and Curry's matchup on Saturday, you can easily compare the shooting talent between the two. The few critics of the event will point to Ionescu using a women's ball in the contest. She still shot from the NBA line and made 26, more than a lot of the NBA players could say they made this weekend.

Having a larger audience in turn should generate more fans for the WNBA, increasing their revenues to allow players and workers to get the raise in pay they deserve. People this weekend gained a lot of respect for the WNBA based off one challenge alone and helps continue to push women's sports to the forefront of the sporting world.

The event is a win-win for both sides, and it's only the first time it's been done. Expanding the field has already been hinted at and should continue to be built upon after this year's success. I'm hoping that this becomes the next staple of the NBA all-star festivities in the years to come.

29

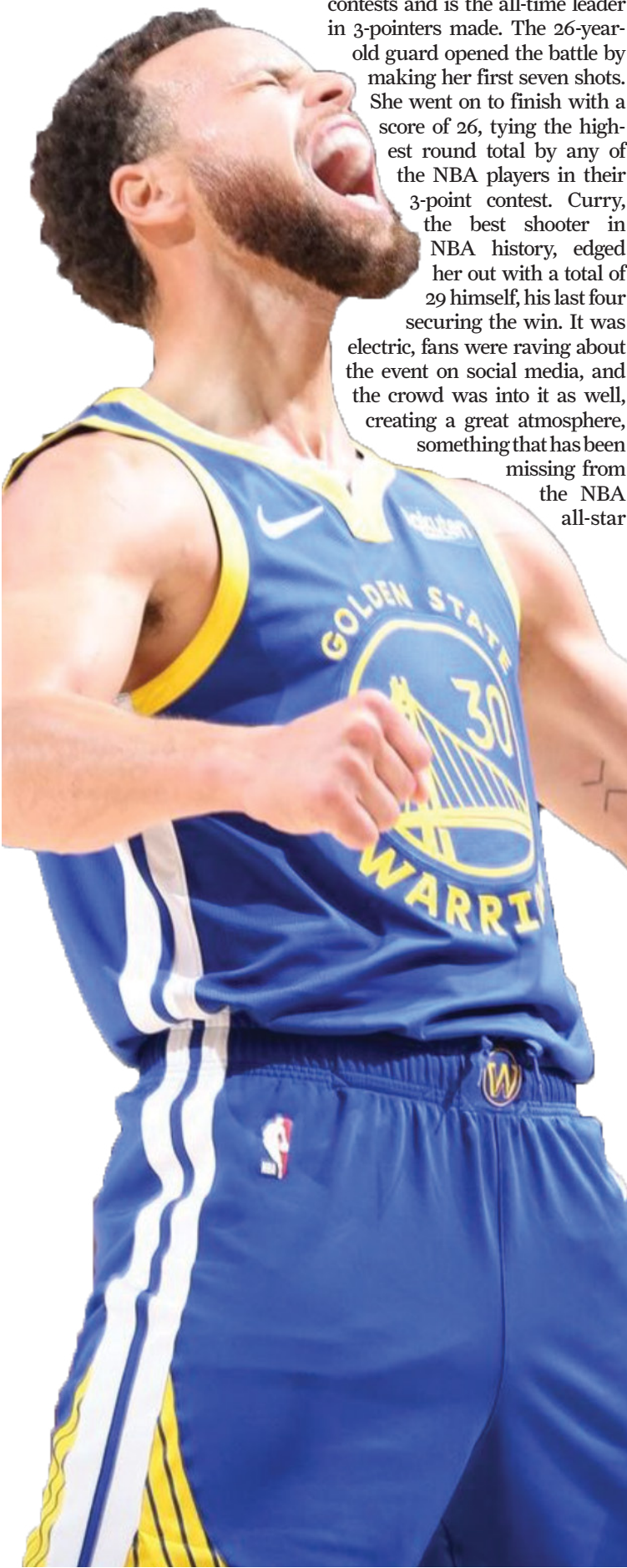


IMAGE COURTESY OF @STEPHENCURRY30 ON INSTAGRAM

weekend the past couple of years.

While the actual game itself, played on Sunday, finished with an absurd final of 211-186 in favor of the Eastern Contest, it was Ionescu versus Curry that was still getting recognized online. The two of them even teased a sequel next year where they'd bring someone else into the fold to compete, with many thinking they're hinting at Caitlyn Clark of Iowa who'll get drafted at the end of the year.

This collaboration between the two leagues is mutually beneficial in multiple facets. For the NBA, it helps solve the issue of making their all-star weekend entertaining and marketable. The format has changed so much in the past couple years, but fans continue to rank it as one of the worst all-star festivities across the four major sports. Baseball and Hockey tend to get a better reception with the home run derby and skills challenge they both offer. With the dunk contest falling off in recent years, this 'Battle of the Sexes' type format brings in the NBA and WNBA audiences together to watch this product.

As for the WNBA, the implications from this are much more important as professional women's sports are relatively newer. The WNBA played their first professional season in 1997, compared to the NBA which has been around since 1946. This year marked the inaugural season of the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL) which opened with just

26

six teams. Right now, the average WNBA salary for the 2023-2024 season is \$116,580 while the NBA is \$10,821,680. There are notable gaps in viewership, advertising, wages, etc.

A challenge between WNBA and NBA players exposes the level



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Sports

Women's Basketball:

No. 15 Connecticut claws past No. 21 Creighton

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About a minute into the second half, the No. 15 UConn women's basketball team found themselves in a hole. Their offense had not scored in over four minutes, head coach Geno Auriemma had received a technical foul and the No. 21 Creighton Bluejays were on a 13-0 run dating back to the first half. Despite having a sellout XL Center crowd supporting them, it felt like a five-point deficit with 18 minutes left was insurmountable.

That's when redshirt junior Paige Bueckers heated up. Bueckers was one of two Huskies with a team-high eight points at halftime, but it was at a less-than-efficient 3-8 mark. As the redshirt junior took over the game, so did UConn's offense.

Over the next six minutes, the Huskies went on a 17-0 run and turned a five-point deficit into a double-digit advantage. Creighton pulled within single digits once from there, but never really had a chance as Connecticut collected a critical 73-53 victory.

"Today was one of our more gratifying wins," Auriemma said after the game. "The first half was a real slog, ... Halftime came at the right time."

When the dust settled in Hartford, Bueckers shot 50% from the floor and led all players with 24 points. Riding off the high of announcing her return for next season, the redshirt junior spearheaded the Husky offense more than once in the second half at a 6-10 mark. The number of high-light-reel shots that she landed, especially in the fourth quarter, kept the crowd on their feet and impressed everyone who saw them.

"When you get a close game and she makes a few baskets that nobody else in the league can make,

that gives them [the Huskies] a mental edge," Creighton head coach Jim Flanery commented.

Senior forward Aaliyah Edwards only played 27 minutes, but was also a difference-maker with her own 20-piece at a 7-15 clip. What makes her final line even more impressive is that for the first nine minutes, Edwards had almost no path to the hoop from her typical office: the paint. The Bluejays clamped the senior forward down low early and often, and the one great opportunity she had in that span got called back for an offensive foul.

Edwards was just one of many players who started Monday's matinee sluggish in a clash between the Big East Conference's two ranked programs. Senior guard Nika Mühl provided UConn with an early spark offensively, but that went away after she crunched down for a few seconds following a Lauren Jensen three. Over a three-minute window, the Huskies missed many good looks and committed several sloppy turnovers that gave the Bluejays more opportunities.

Connecticut only got back in business when Mühl buried her second triple of the game and the senior forward got on the board. The Huskies made up for shooting less than 50% from the field in the second quarter with a relentless defense that forced the Bluejays into several bad looks.

As halftime neared, however, Creighton picked up steam. The Bluejays took a 31-31 dead-lock into the locker rooms behind an 8-0 run, capitalizing on a momentum swing after Auriemma's technical foul. Senior Morgan Maly did the most damage by making one of her two free throws and scoring on Creighton's ensuing possession. Fellow senior Molly Mogensen tied the game in the paint.

UConn, meanwhile, did not score in the final 3:21 and made just one of their last eight shots. Once Bueckers took over in the third quarter, though, it was a completely different story for the Huskies.

Across the final nine minutes of the frame, Connecticut shot 10-19 from the floor and created some separation against their Big East foe. Even when the Bluejays thought they had stopped the bleeding, the Huskies kept pouring it on with three straight triples.

Edwards ran into severe foul trouble during that offensive explosion. It provided more of an opening for Bueckers to dominate.

The redshirt junior scored UConn's first nine points of the final frame, staying on the court until sophomore guard Ines Betten-court checked in for her with 1:19 left. Bueckers departed to a roar of

applause from the capacity crowd as the Huskies secured a 20-point win and at least a share of the Big East regular-season title. The final outcome was much different from the overall tone of this battle.

"It was a grind the whole game, but it was nothing that we were not expecting," the senior forward explained afterward.

The most unexpected part came on the glass. For the first time this season, Connecticut's five starters each grabbed at least six rebounds. Two of those five had at least three offensive boards. Ashlynn Shade played all 40 minutes for the first time in three weeks and grabbed a career-best nine rebounds on top of her 15 points. Fellow first-year guard KK Arnold had half of the Huskies' six steals and dealt out five assists to go with her boards.

"They [Arnold and Shade] have been lifesavers," Auriemma ex-

pressed. "I do not know where we would be without those two."

The Bluejays are a dangerous team from downtown, but they shot just 6-30 from beyond the arc in Hartford. Maly had half of them and finished with 16 points. Senior Lauren Jensen was the only other Creighton player in double figures with 18. Despite a very disciplined start, the Bluejays turned the ball over more times than UConn and only had seven assists on their 19 field goals. Creighton has been held under 60 points in Big East play three times; the Huskies' defense is responsible for two of them.

Connecticut goes on their longest break since Christmas with five days between now and their next conference clash. For the Huskies, that contest is in Chicago for a second duel with the DePaul Blue Demons. Tip-off on Sunday is at 6 p.m. EST on CBSN.



UConn beats Creighton at the XL Center on Feb. 19, 2024 with a score of 73-53. UConn will face off against DePaul on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2024.
PHOTO BY JORDAN ARNOLD, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

MEN'S BASKETBALL:

No. 1 Huskies look to stay hot in Omaha versus No. 15 Creighton

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The UConn men's basketball team may have just been named as the unanimous No. 1 team in the country, but coach Dan Hurley knows that the task ahead, a battle with No. 15 Creighton on the road, won't be an easy one.

"This rivals Kansas as far as the toughest road game

of the year to this point," remarked Hurley.

Despite being ranked as the top dog in the nation, Connecticut is remaining focused on its upcoming schedule. With games like Marquette on the road and their next matchup against the Blue Jays, the only logical move is to lock in and the advice that UConn's coaching staff gives to its players is simple.

"Get off the phone, get the dopamine from putting in the

great work. It's a way better feeling to play great together, that feeling post-locker room, than 'likes' on posts and getting new followers."

The Huskies have done well with the challenges they've encountered up to this point. Their only two losses have been on the road, and with the gritty nature of a Big East away matchup, this team knows that they have to keep their eyes on the prize. The

last matchup between both teams ended with a 62-48 win on \$2 beer night in front of a rowdy Gampel Pavilion crowd. This time, Creighton fans will have their opportunity for a revenge game.

Since that January loss to Connecticut, the Blue Jays have still looked like a strong unit, even with two brutal single-digit losses to Providence and Butler. They've been able to withstand various tests, including one of the games of the year that ended in a win for Creighton after a triple-overtime blockbuster. Fans need to remember that this team has three players on their roster who are in the top 10 in scoring in the Big East and with the momentum of the home crowd on their side, that's an extremely scary sight.

At the top of that list stands Baylor Scheierman. His second season has been nothing short of spectacular for Greg McDermott and co., averaging 18.7 points and 8.7 rebounds per contest. He's continued to improve as a three-point shooter while being effective with attacking the paint consistently. As the top scorer for the Blue Jays, he's been one of the better options for a bucket from beyond the arc with a 37.1 mark in that department.

As one of the mainstays in Creighton's starting lineup,

Trey Alexander remains one of the most important players on this roster. His play-making abilities have allowed him to lead his squad in assists, while also notching 1.2 steals per game. That's without even mentioning the 17.2 points per game he's secured, good for fourth in the Big East conference.

Yet, everything always goes back to this team's man in the middle, Ryan Kalkbrenner. He's been a huge reason why the Blue Jays are the third-best team in the nation in 2-point percentage and is also massive on the defensive end. Like Scheierman, Kalkbrenner has gotten even better than last year, improving as both a rebounder and defender. Notably, his 2.6 blocks per contest rank top five in the nation.

And don't forget about Steven Ashworth either. The Creighton lead guard led his squad in scoring in the last contest between these two teams. As one of the key play-makers on this team, he'll look to keep the Blue Jays in rhythm throughout the night.

It will certainly be a tough challenge for Hurley and the Huskies, but if this team continues to play to their standard, they'll certainly be ready to face the Blue Jays. Tipoff is set for 8:30 p.m. and can be streamed on Fox Sports 1.



The UConn Huskies hosted the Marquette Golden Eagles at the XL Center on Feb. 17, 2024. After an evenly matched start, the Huskies pulled ahead of the Golden Eagles and finished with a score of 81 to 53.
PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS