The Daily Campus

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Monday, January 27, 2025

United Way of CT continues assistance in tax filing, claiming COVID benefits through April

by Aiza Shaikh
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The nonprofit organization United Way of Connecticut launched a statewide campaign, "Get Your Refund CT," with the purpose of helping Connecticut families claim enhanced COVID tax benefits that they were owed from 2021, according to a United Way press release. The United Way of Connecticut claimed that the campaign connected more than 400 families with free tax preparation services that helped them receive over $500,000 in unclaimed COVID benefits.

Though the campaign lasted from September through November 2024, the organization said it is still providing free assistance for filing taxes and claiming COVID benefits throughout the 2025 season.

"Although the Campaign has ended, it is important to note that many of these Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) professionals work year-round to help file back taxes, and more will be available to help in January for the 2025 season," United Way of Connecticut wrote in their press release.

Since earlier this month, United Way of Connecticut has been offering pre-registration for free tax preparation appointments. The link to the pre-registration questionnaire is on their website, though tax filers can also call 2-1-1 and press "Option 3," followed by "Option 6," to schedule an appointment.

The enhanced COVID federal tax benefits, as explained on the organization's website, are regarding the 2021 Child Tax Credit, provided by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Internal Revenue Service website, the 2021 Child Tax Credit allows benefits of up to $3,600 for each qualifying child. Eligible families have until this year's Tax Day, which is Apr. 15, 2025, to fill out a federal tax return and claim the credit.

According to the United Way of Connecticut's website, anyone who is unsure whether they filed a tax return or are eligible for the refunds can contact 860-590-8910 or visit SimplifyCT's website with questions.

The United Way of Connecticut's website also includes answers to frequently asked questions regarding topics such as how much money Connecticut residents can expect to receive, how tax filing would affect other government-provided benefits, the impact of tax filing on immigration status and what to do if someone does not have a Social Security number.

The organization's website also claims that if someone makes up to $67,000 a year, has a disability or speaks limited English, they can work with an IRS-certified tax preparer to assist in claiming cash benefits. Additionally, the IRS website has a tax withholding estimator that tax filers can use to determine if they will get a refund or have due balance.

United Way of Connecticut's campaign is a partnership with other state tax preparation and financial assistance programs including SimplifyCT, Advancing Connecticut Together, the Village for Children and Families; Human Resources Agency of New Britain and the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut, Coastal and Western Connecticut, Greater New Haven and Greater Waterbury, according to the press release. Additionally, The Connecticut Project and the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood funded the campaign.

IMAGE COURTESY OF @UNITEDWAYCT ON X

Connecticut takes part in lawsuit to protect birthright citizenship

by Jenna Outcalt
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The Connecticut attorney general joined a lawsuit to block Donald Trump's executive order to end birthright citizenship on Tuesday, Jan. 21, according to a press release from the attorney general's office.

On Monday, Jan. 20, Trump signed 26 executive orders on his first day in office. Among them was an executive order that stated the government should no longer recognize the citizenship of those who were born in the U.S. "when that person's mother was unlawfully present in the United States and the person's father was not a United States citizen or lawful permanent resident at the time of said person's birth" or when the mother was there lawfully but temporarily and the father was not a lawful permanent resident.

The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution says "all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside." The executive order claims the amendment "has never been interpreted to extend citizenship universally to everyone born within the United States."

"The Fourteenth Amendment has always excluded from birthright citizenship persons who were born in the United States but not 'subject to the jurisdiction thereof,'" the order says.

The next day, Connecticut Attorney General William Tong filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts to invalidate the order as unconstitutional. California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Vermont and Wisconsin are all part of the lawsuit, as well as the District of Columbia and the city of San Francisco.

The lawsuit states that birthright citizenship has been recognized and enshrined in American law and practice for well over 100 years, citing cases in which Congress, the executive branch and the Supreme Court all acknowledge that birthright citizenship extends to the children of noncitizens. According to the suit, Trump "has no authority to rewrite or nullify a constitutional amendment or duly enacted statute."

The states of Arizona, Washington, Oregon and Illinois also sued Trump for the executive order. The judge in the suit issued a temporary restraining order against the order, declaring that no one could enforce the order until the court can consider the plaintiff's request for a preliminary injunction. In the temporary restraining order decision, the judge ruled that states were "likely to suffer irreparable harm" if the executive order was enforced and that "there is a strong likelihood" the states would succeed in their argument that the order violates the 14th Amendment.

The press release from Tong said "this fight is personal" for him, as he became the first American citizen in his immediate family through birthright citizenship. He said eliminating birthright citizenship "will cause chaos across Connecticut and the United States."

"This is a war on American families waged by a President with zero respect for our Constitution. We have sued, and I have every confidence we will win. The 14th Amendment says what it means, and it means what it says—if you are born on American soil, you are an American. Period. Full stop," Tong said in the press release. "There is no legitimate legal debate on this question. But the fact that Trump is dead wrong will not prevent him from inflicting serious harm right now on American families like my own."

The press release said that the executive order would strip thousands of children of the benefits of American citizenship and inflict unnecessary harm on the states themselves. Tong said his own life would not be possible without birthright citizenship.

"This is the core of the American dream, and part of the essential character of our nation. We knew this fight was coming, and we are prepared," Tong said.

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SUDOKU!

Answer Key

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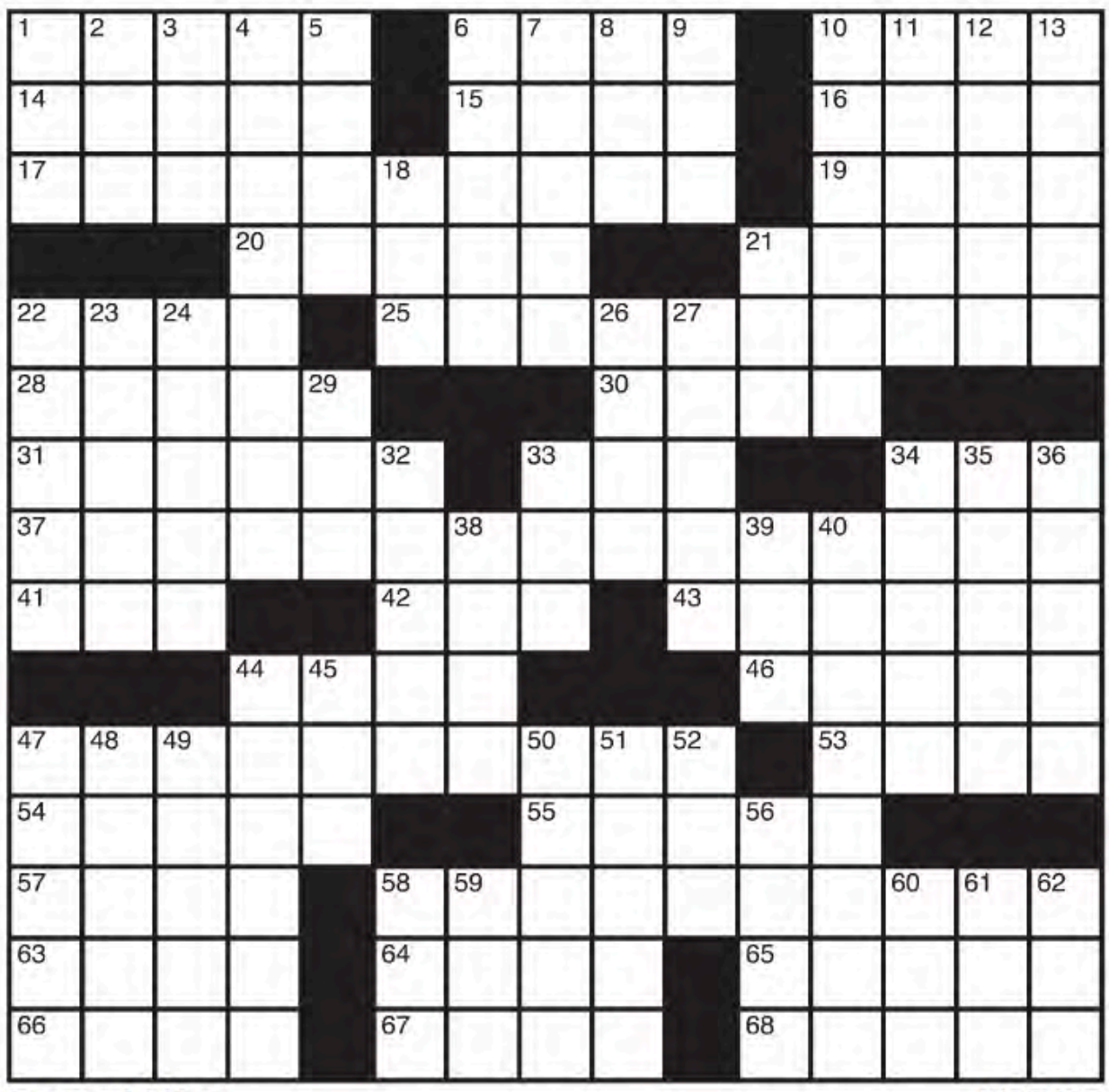
Crossword!

FOR RELEASE JANUARY 27, 2025

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Patti Varol



By David Karp

1/27/25

ACROSS

1 Lively Brazilian dance
6 Diet that's high in 10-Across
10 Macronutrients that may be saturated
14 Inbox filler
15 Disney snowman voiced by Josh Gad
16 Taj Mahal city
17 Prerequisite for going into labor?
19 "Hacks" Emmy winner Smart
20 __ Lauder
21 Dice finely
22 Recipe amt.
25 Hypothetical stuff in space
28 Bother
30 __ Scotia, Canada
31 Flirt with
33 First __ tent
34 Co. such as Google Fiber
37 Requiring a lot of careful attention
41 "__ queen!"
42 Part of LGBTQ+
43 More irate
44 Conference freebies
46 Home Depot department
47 Unvarying background sound
53 Combinatorics discipline
54 Big name in boxers
55 Some party shenanigans
57 Native of ancient Peru
58 Deal made with shrewd bargaining, or a swap that could be made with the ends of 17-, 25-, 37-, and 47-Across?
63 Free kick cause
64 Line on a graph
65 Camera giant
66 Fragrant trees
67 Prying
68 Die down

DOWN

1 Do some needlework
2 "Yo te __"
3 Damage
4 Cyclist's route through a park
5 Swiss mountains
6 Divided Asian peninsula
7 Wabbit hunter Fudd
8 __ chi: martial art
9 Frequently, in poems
10 Sizzling Tex-Mex fare
11 Customer service representative
12 Tiny amount
13 More reasonable
18 Takeoff approx.
21 Big D cager
22 Futuristic
23 Brazilian state where the 1-Across originated
24 Bucks
26 Do some needlework
27 Surfer's gear?
29 Stomach, cutely
32 Winter solstice celebrant
33 One or more
34 World's most populous country
35 Aromatherapy choice
36 Capital of Western Australia
38 "Othello" villain
39 Day break?
40 Tracy/Hepburn romantic comedy
44 Amazing deals
45 Director Anderson
47 Faint smell
48 Vietnam's capital
49 Rack up
50 Actor Elba
51 Full of attitude
52 Before, in poems
56 Sicilian volcano
58 Solo of "Star Wars"
59 Kitchen gadget brand
60 Pseudonym letters
61 Decimal point
62 Opposite of WSW

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

1/27/25

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This Week in History: Jan. 26 – Feb. 1 'Black Maria'

by Benjamin Lassy
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Hello, and welcome back to This Week in History! Writing this column always feels like an adventure, especially after returning from nearly a two-month break. I never know just what history will pop up on any given day or week, and now that this column has covered most major events at least once, the more obvious and popular history is crossed off the list. So, this week, we'll be looking at one of the most exciting periods of innovation in all of history. We're going to explore a location that quite literally set the stage for a century of filmmaking: the "Black Maria."

Whenever you watch a kids' show — or perhaps a comedy with some top-tier editing — whenever a character has a bright idea, they literally light up with a light bulb turning on above their head. Well, in history, that light bulb was the invention of a man who understood just how temporal the limits of humanity's technology are.

Thomas Edison always had a beaming light bulb over his head, especially in the 1890s when his ideas became so profitable that his name was plastered on countless enterprises in new technology industries. Edison's influence and ability to endure countless non-profitable ideas pulled geniuses from all over the world to his ranks and enabled him to pioneer technologies with minimal risk to his overall finances.

Understanding the scale of Edison's foresight and creative genius can be difficult if you're not in a museum, but his designs extend far beyond the light bulb. From an early age, Edison worked as a telegraph operator, although not through education as one might think.

While working on a railroad track, Edison saved a three-year-old from a rolling boxcar. The boy's father taught him telegraphy as a reward for his daring act, which soon led Edison to create a remarkable piece of technology: the phonograph.

While only in its initial stages in 1877 — and using easily damaged tinfoil disks to play sound — the phonograph would become an essential component in humanity's ability to hear itself. Not only did Edison enable humanity to illuminate the world around them; he also enabled someone to preserve their voice and music for others to hear. This invention, in my estimation, was just as significant as the light bulb.

In 1887, Edison and his namesake company started a concrete location from which to experiment and design inventions in West Orange, New Jersey. This lab would provide Edison and his assistants with the ability to quickly devise an invention and provide it to factories for production. Although Edison had several labs he tinkered with, the West Orange lab is exceptionally significant this week in history.

Edison pursued motion pictures with audio playback as his next goal, combining the audio-recording technology of the phonograph with another major innovation from Edison and his employee William Kennedy Laurie Dickson: the Kinetoscope.

The Kinetoscope was not a typical media-viewing device as we may now think, and the concept and technology for modern video playback were far from developed. However, the Kinetoscope still allowed one viewer at a time to view a high-shutter film playback that appeared as motion capture.

All of this technology blossomed with the newfound infrastructure of the Edison lab in West Orange. By around Feb. 1, 1893, the lab completed the construction of the world's first motion picture studio. The studio was built on a turntable so that the building could angle itself towards peak sunlight, while its retractable roof could allow as much sunlight into the space as possible.

This sun-centric focus was derived from the limitation of early films, since they required bright environments to effectively capture an image. Edison and Dickson created the space by assembling the light framing of the structure on the turntable, and then layering a dark outer tarpaper on the outside to keep light in. That tarpaper gave the studio its name, as the dark outer layer looked like the police cars that brought prisoners to jails known as "Black Marias."

The studio was cramped and hot, yet it remained an influential stage for performers of all kinds to congregate, perform and get their movements recorded in what was for a time, the only recording studio in the world.

Hundreds of films were recorded here, and many can be viewed through archives or public videos, like dancer Annabelle Whitford's "Serpentine Dance."

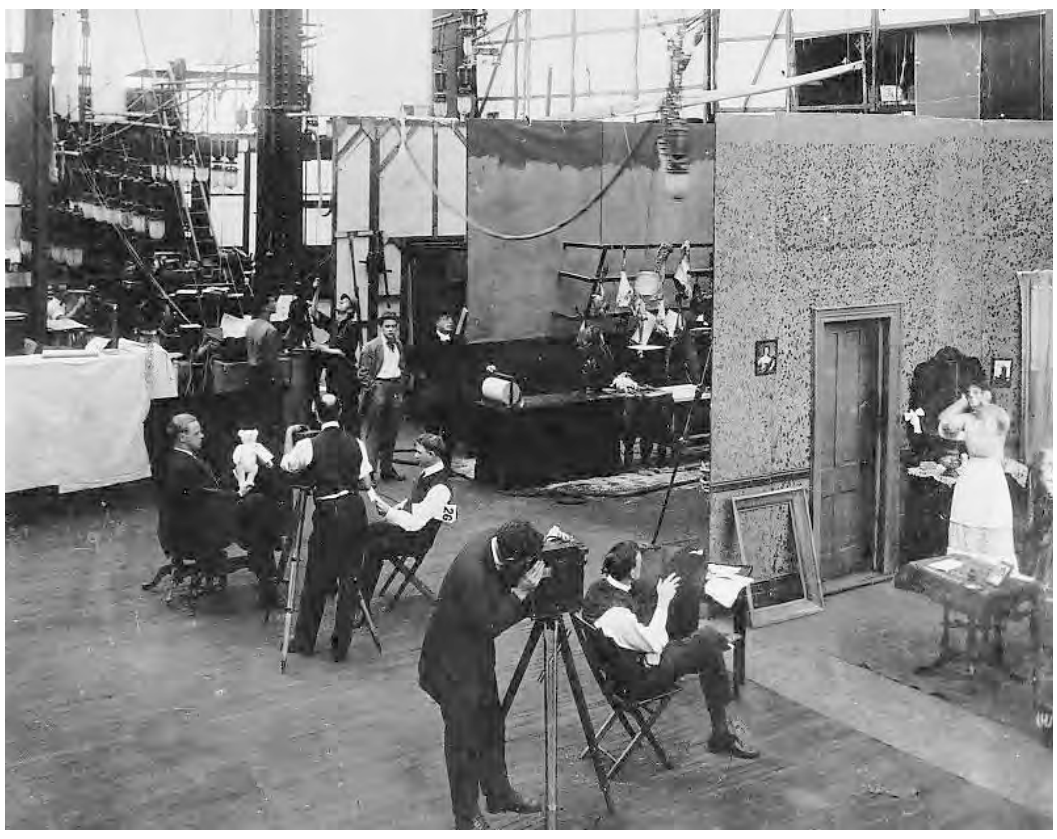
Once again blending technologies, Dickson used the "Black Maria," the Kinetophone and the phonograph in 1894 to record "The Dickson Experimental Sound Film." Dickson plays a violin into a phonograph, now using wax instead of tinfoil (which solved many issues with the initial design) and enabling two dancers to not only dance to the music, but to be seen dancing to it by those living over a hundred years later.

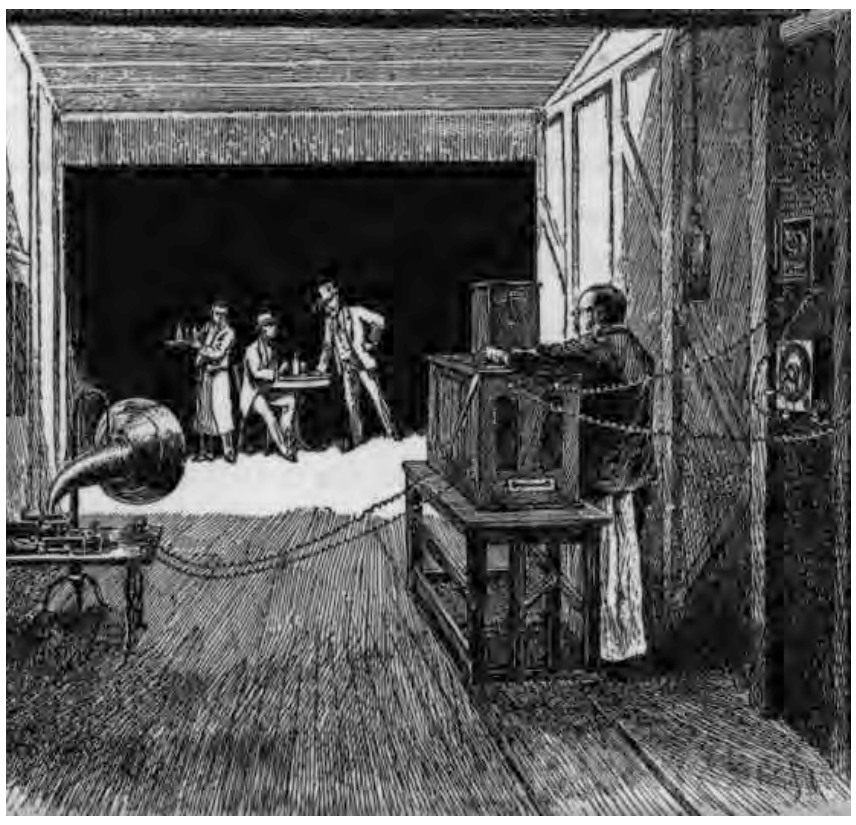
One final dancer runs across behind the phonograph horn towards the end of the 17-second film, and his brief appearance is worth remembering; it's like he's in the film just to be in it. And that's not an insult to the man's acting, after all. Who wouldn't want to be able to see themselves recorded? In a way, it would be like a modern human jumping into a time machine that was only able to jump about five minutes ahead. Though perhaps only a novelty, such a technology would elevate the human experience in a profound way.

The "Black Maria" is just as profound. It has given us a time machine through which to view the past, and it is thanks to the ingenuity and collaborative creativity that poured out of Edison and his labs that we can view those who lived a century before us.

Today, the National Parks Service began reconstruction of the studio (which was torn down by Edison in 1903 after a new studio in New York City was constructed) only a few years ago, which is also home to the Thomas Edison Film Festival.

That's all for This Week in History. May the spirit of unbridled creativity continue this year. I'll catch you on the next historical adventure!





The Black Maria was a film studio created by Thomas Edison in the late 1800s. The production was based out of West Orange, New Jersey.
Photos Courtesy of @edisonmuckers blog

NO SKIPS: BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD DOES IT AGAIN

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Here we are yet again. Welcome back to the University of Connecticut for a fun-filled semester and another edition of No Skips, where we take albums track-by-track and see whether they contain any skippable songs. Before launching what fans claim to be one of the best solo music careers of all time, Neil Young was part of Buffalo Springfield in the mid to late 1960s with future frequent collaborator Stephen Stills, among others. Though the band only has three albums to their name, the middle child, "Buffalo Springfield Again" is touted as their best, and for good reason.

As is the case with most of my reviews, I like to look at these albums in isolation from the rest of an artist's or band's discography, and this will especially be the case here, since this is the only Buffalo Springfield album I've heard, and I only know a few of Young's songs. Needless to say, there's enough genius here to chew on for an article, so here it goes!

Perhaps an unoriginal observation to start the review with, the rhythm on the introductory track, "Mr. Soul," is undeniably similar to the Rolling Stones' classic "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction." Whether that parallel is why this is the album's most popular cut is beyond me, yet there's plenty to glean from the song's lyrics.

The second verse involves Young receiving a letter from a fan who claims, "'You're strange, but don't change,'" a reflection on the positives in embracing the weird in other people as well as the increasingly outdated practice of sending physical fan mail. Nowadays, sending a celebrity their 1000th appreciation email of the day is the equivalent of adding to the pile of envelopes they would receive and rarely have time to read. I'd like to think that down-to-earth celebrities understand that the people writing to them are just as valuable as themselves, hence my belief that Young is still one of those people, taking this backhanded compliment in stride.

One thing you'll notice on the liner notes of this record is the disjointed contributions of each musician, as there's only one writer and one or two lead vocalists on every song. The songs are mostly played by all members of the five-piece, but the formation of each track was individualistic, considering Young was in and out of the band during this time, among other lineup troubles.

The folky second track, "A Child's Claim to Fame," is where I started to enjoy this album. Richie Furay takes charge of writing and vocals, and I specifically like the Americana tinge brought on by the Dobro guitar played by James Burton. Additionally, the innocent tone set by the crooning and instrumentation makes it easy to glaze over the fact that one of the lyrics reads, "I can't believe what you say, 'cause tomorrow's lullaby can't pacify my lonesome crying." That's just sad, no elaboration needed.

While it's listed as a live version on Spotify, the recording quality of "Everydays" is impeccable with Stills' intimate vocals and the beautifully played piano. I can relate to the sentiment in the second verse of 10 grocery store clerks making pocket change, showing despite how the economy may change, service jobs were and still are undesirable to many people.

"Expecting to Fly" touches on the artsy side of the band with echoey instrumentation that features one-time inclusions on the project like the harpsichord, timpani drum and a half-dozen backing vocalists that only add more layers. The epic slower-paced tune concludes with 15 seconds of pure angelic bliss that makes the entire track a worthy listen from start to finish.

The lighthearted mood is brought back with "Bluebird" even though Stills comments on his crying "bluebird," a metaphor for a romantic interest. A majority of the song is instrumental until the closing minute where session musician Charlie Chin plays banjo, enforcing the bluesy vibes cultivated by the group. "Hung Upside Down" is off-putting at first with one of the guitars only coming through the right channel; however, the vocal performances by Stills and Furay are timeless, enhanced by energetic grunts and shouts in the song's outro.

"Sad Memory" is an acoustic ballad that is better outside of this album's context because it fails to offer anything unique when paired with the preceding six tracks. Nevertheless, it's pleasant, albeit tacky in the lyrical department with a verse like "Did you ever love a girl who walked right out on you? / You should know just how I feel then / Why I'm so blue."

"Good Time Boy" might as well be off a soulful funk album. It also stands out for being the only track to star drummer Dewey Martin as the lead vocalist. He appears to be less versatile than Young, Stills or Furay but I wonder what this record would've sounded like if two songs were sung by each one of the band's five members. Bassist Bruce Palmer never got his chance to shine on "Buffalo Springfield Again," but it wouldn't surprise me if he was a gifted vocalist who happened to be designated a predominately non-vocal role, like Martin.

The rhyme scheme on "Rock & Roll Woman" was likely a secondary priority for Stills, who also plays electric piano and organ on this one. The first and last lines of the first verse end with "know," but so do the first two out of three lines on the song's bridge. The song sounds good, but details like these are representative of how rushed and chaotic this album's recording likely was.

"Broken Arrow" is a six-minute closer interspersed with crowd noises, drum rolls and moments of silence. The most tangible structure is found in the verse-chorus segments, with each verse telling its own story that all become loosely connected by the mantra of "Did you see them?" The jazzy outro rides the point home that this is just a collection of songs above anything else, and it could've benefitted from more cohesion.

Stills and Young would later form one-half of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, and Furay would help found the band Poco, both of which were prolific for decades to come. There are plenty of '60s groups — some of whom were bearers of haphazard material — that saw the first efforts of future music legends, so it's fun to see where the history begins. I don't think Buffalo Springfield will be releasing further material, so this sequel to their self-titled record will be one to cherish.

CLIPART COURTESY OF CREAZILLA

Stephen Stills reflects on the legacy of Buffalo Springfield ahead of 'What's That Sound?,' a new remastered collection of the band's studio albums.
Photo courtesy of Rolling Stone

"FERRIS BUELLER" SHOWN AT THE STUDENT UNION THEATER

by Samantha Brody
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The University of Connecticut's Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG) recently held a series of movie screenings at the Student Union Theater. The first movie, "National Lampoon's Vacation," was shown on Jan. 23, followed by "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" the next day and "Planes, Trains, and Automobiles" the day after.

All three movies shown at the Union have associations with famed director and writer John Hughes. Hughes is well known for his teen-focused 1980s movies, such as "Pretty in Pink" and "The Breakfast Club." Just like these movies, "Ferris Bueller" is ultimately a teenage coming-of-age movie, often featuring a villainous adult for the teens to outsmart.

"Ferris Bueller," which Hughes directed, tells the story of the titular Ferris (Matthew Broderick), a teenage boy who pretends to be sick to get a day off school, which he spends in the city of Chicago with his best friend Cameron Frye (Alan Ruck) and girlfriend Sloane Peterson (Mia Sara). Throughout the movie, Ferris' principal Ed Rooney (Jeffrey Jones) tries to expose Ferris's deception while Ferris's sister Jeanie (Jennifer Grey) laments Ferris' ability to seemingly skate through life while she has to remain the responsible sibling.

The movie itself perfectly captures the teenage fantasy of an escape from school. Ferris, Cameron and Sloane get up to seemingly impossible hijinks while they blaze through Chicago. Ferris is also incredibly well-liked by his peers and teachers and has a solid relationship with Sloane. He's everything a teenager could want to be, living out the best day a teenager could dream of. What makes this movie so great, however, is Ferris's sobering outlook on reality.

"Life moves pretty fast," Ferris says after he secures his free day off from school. "If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it." Ferris is fully aware that he is growing up. As a senior in high school, he's approaching a major life change that all college students can relate to — he's going to have to leave the world he knows. This recontextualizes the entire movie as not just a fun romp in the city with Ferris and company, but as a story of a teenage boy desperately trying to secure another fun day with the people he cares about before life pulls them apart. When Ferris repeats his iconic line at the end of the movie, he does so after having made memories that will last a lifetime for him, Cameron and Sloane.

"Time with the people you care about is precious and fleeting," UConn student Colleen Kinneavy said when describing her experience with the movie. "Cameron is very representative about how a lot of kids feel when they're leaving high school and going to college." Kinneavy is a sixth-semester student majoring in psychology with a minor in Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies.

"It's a bittersweet movie because they're grappling with the fact that they're graduating and won't see each other as much, so there're trying to enjoy the time they have together, which is relatable," Kinneavy added. "I think especially college seniors can relate to it."

Kinneavy also noted the benefits of SUBOG hosting events such as movie nights. "I think it's a great opportunity for people to come together and enjoy a shared experience," she said.

SUBOG will return to their regular film series on Jan. 30, with the movie "The Hangover."

The classic comedy, "Ferris Bueller's Day Off." Released in 1986 by John Hughes. Ferris is furthest left. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROLLING STONE

Daily Life

@dailycampuslife

‘LOWER’: Benjamin Booker’s first album in eight years feels like he never left

by Lilith Rampertab
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Content warning for references to lynching, slavery, racism and bigotry.

Benjamin Booker is an eclectic singer with influences across the board soundwise. Equally inspired by rock, electronic, pop and R&B, it’s difficult to pinpoint what a new Benjamin Booker album would sound like and what subject material it would draw upon. However, he returned with singles and eventually released a full album. “LOWER” is his first project release in eight years after he disappeared with 2017’s “Witness,” though he resurfaced with features on art rapper billy woods and producer Kenny Segal’s song “Baby Steps” in 2023, as well as experimental art rap duo Armand Hammer’s song “Doves” in 2024.

“BLACK OPPS,” the name likely being a reference to the “Call of Duty” video game franchise, reintroduces the hazy, raspy and borderline wheezy voice that Booker had previously used on “Doves.” The voice will stay for almost the entire album, but it’s executed in a way that is pleasant to the ears. Programmed drums and a chaotically abrasive electric guitar greet the audience.

The lyrics juxtapose idealistic expressions of giving love and having dreams, but right after those words, there are lyrics paired with them that paint a picture of brutal violence and paranoia. Booker is likely commenting on how positivity, especially by those who want to change the world, oftentimes are met with toxic negativity that manifests physically into violence. The chorus “And before I get away, I’ll be buried in this place. Hallelujah, dying fighting for a life I ain’t had yet” further drives home the point of the struggle for human and civil rights, along with the martyrdom many have unfortunately faced because of such goals for a better world that is more hospitable for all.

“LWA IN THE TRAILER PARK” begins with a juicy synth before an electric guitar and programmed drums are added into the mix. The lyrics are simple but impactful. Booker highlights the stigma that people from (presumably) inner-city or otherwise “urban” backgrounds have, singing “I see the way they talk about people on this side of town” and “No one will ever love me.” Booker repeatedly confesses “I wanna live a good life” which is pitted in juxtaposition against the “No one will ever love me” line.

“POMPEII STATUES” has a beautiful acoustic guitar playing with more programmed drums, later including piano and electronic synths. This mixture of organic and produced sounds feels typical for Benjamin Booker, but it’s nonetheless well-executed. This song is nothing short of gorgeous. The lyrics feel like poetry in this song, particularly with its vivid descriptions of “We see a woman screaming, spirits above her head / A guitarrón is playing a ballad for the dead.”

“SLOW DANCE IN A GAY BAR” is certainly an anthem for gay men. With a relaxed production that almost sounds like lo-fi hip-hop, Booker’s voice is front-and-center in the best way possible. His goal to “start a modern family” by finding “a good man” through “hanging out in gay bars” is admirable.

Although this entire song is beautiful by all means, the bridge’s lyrics may just be the most beautiful part: “I am beginning to see the beauty all around me / What this life can be.” When juxtaposed with all the lyrics from the songs prior about race-motivated murders, bigotry and self-loathing, something so simple can be so effective.

“REBECCA LATIMER FELTON TAKES A BBC” is quite the provocative title to say the least, if a little humorous. Rebecca Latimer Felton was the first woman to hold a seat in the United States Senate, serving for only one day. Although she was a feminist, she was also a white supremacist who supported lynching and “owned” enslaved people, being the last member of the United States Congress to do so. “BBC” certainly does not refer to the British Broadcasting Corporation in the title. For those who know what a BBC is in this context — can you also find the humor in this to cope with the cruelty and bigotry of this world?

Booker has quite a multilayered sense of humor, which ties into his saddening lyrics to drive his point home. Depressed people who are sick and jaded of this world tend to have interesting senses of humor, after all. The song itself plays with the idea that Felton enslaved the protagonist, though it initially masquerades as a bitter break-up song. The outro line, “Just like you wanted” is repeated four times after detailing imagery of lynchings, which makes the song even more haunting. This song is super creative: brilliant, even. Booker can tackle complex issues poignantly and succinctly.

“NEW WORLD” flips the colonial idea of the “New World” (which was only “new” to the colonizers) on its head. Booker proclaims, “I’m the new world” and “I know you can’t look in the mirror / You can’t be who you are without me / Without me beneath you” in reference to trans-Atlantic slavery.

“SAME KIND OF LONELY” returns to the topics of love and dreams, as depicted in the opener for the album. There is an unnerving sample of someone shooting a firearm and people screaming. It is unknown why this sample was included, but it’s likely a callback to the gun violence in “BLACK OPPS.” Still, it’s understandable why the edgy sample puts people off from liking this song.

The song itself is phenomenal: five-and-a-half minutes of bliss with drums, bass and an electric guitar under experimental pop conventions about the pursuit of love. The twist is that both parties are lonely, but not the same type of lonely.

Good art can be time-consuming. I’m glad Benjamin Booker wasn’t influenced to drop an album every two years like most musicians, but instead took his time to perfect his craft. These are important messages to convey with great instrumentation. Welcome back, Booker.

Rating: 4.25/5

Benjamin Booker is a Blues Rock artist who brings soul into his music. Recently, he released his new album, “LOWER.” Photo courtesy of Rolling Stone.

CLIPART COURTESY OF CREAZILLA

Daily Opinion

PHOTO BY KRISTA MITCHELL, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

'A Complete Unknown' breaks biopic confines

by Isaac Grad | STAFF WRITER | HE/HIM/HIS | isaac.grad@uconn.edu

"A Complete Unknown" starring Timothée Chalamet as cultural powerhouse Bob Dylan was released in theaters Dec. 25, 2024. While there have been many biopics about musicians, many have failed to impress viewers. "A Complete Unknown," however, managed to tell the story of a man whose life remains a mystery to just about everyone, without making up stories or over-embellishing to make the movie more interesting.

Throughout his decades of fame, Bob Dylan has chosen to keep private about a lot of his life. This was depicted in the film very well; we see numerous situations where Dylan talks about changing — not necessarily for the better, just different. He shows a clear disinterest in knowing about others' pasts, which is in line with him not sharing much about his own past with others. This is done masterfully in the film, as it not only accurately depicts Dylan, but also prepares the viewer to better understand the end of the film and why Dylan was so adamant about performing his electric set, despite clear disapproval from the audience and his management. He didn't seem preoccupied with whether or not his change was better or worse; he seemed to have accepted early on that people simply change, and that's that.

The film did a very good job of not putting Dylan on a pedestal. Despite his overwhelming and undeniable talent, they also showed us his nuances and flaws. We often see talented artists viewed as morally superior by others. This can easily lead to two beliefs: art made by bad people is bad, and those who make good art are good people. Bob Dylan is a very talented artist, as shown throughout the movie, but it was also shown how he made many mistakes. This balance was done very well, which many biopics fail to do.

Dylan also talked about having to be a freak to maintain the attention of others. This provides more context as to why Dylan behaves the way he does, which may seem peculiar to some. The film doesn't at any point attempt to define Dylan in one way or another; they allow his music to speak for him, as well as his activities. This is much preferable in my opinion, as many biopics try to create a clear, but untruthful character of their subject, leaving audiences with a misconstrued idea of a person.

Another aspect where this film soared compared to other biopics of musicians is in its ability to integrate the musician's songs without overdoing it or failing to integrate it enough. In making a biopic about Bob Dylan, it seems logical to use his music as the main way to give the viewers an understanding of his inner workings. Many people felt he was portrayed hollowly, seeing as he doesn't speak much and when he does, he is relatively monotone. This is realistic to the actual Bob Dylan, who as previously mentioned, is very private. However, whatever insight we may have into his inner psyche is learned through his songs and their lyrics. The movie reflects this.

Despite most having little information about Dylan's past, the film subtly mentioned tidbits that those who are knowledgeable about Dylan would pick up on. We are reminded throughout the film about Dylan's view on people changing, which ultimately led to the finale of his performance at the Newport folk festival that angered many attendees due to him playing electric. I found the early references to his beliefs that people change and aren't necessarily better, but different, to be important in his switch to electric. A lot of people were upset by this change and were adamant that it was a change for the worse, but Dylan made it clear that he wasn't interested in that line of thinking. He didn't want to be defined by his past as a folk musician. The film did a good job setting that up and showing the viewers that this is Dylan's line of thinking.

Of course, the acting makes this film stand out, especially in a genre where viewers are easily taken out of the film; knowing it's about a real person makes it easy to remember it's an actor on screen, especially one as well-known as Timothée Chalamet. The singing and performances of each character were amazing.

The film managed to create a well-balanced biopic in a post "Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story" world, in which just about all biopics describing lives of famous musicians look like a joke. If you're looking for a more subtle biopic that doesn't lean into drug use and over-dramatic scenes, while still telling an engaging story about a real-life musical icon, I recommend this film.

'Work Hard, Play Hard' – College fixation around the fast-paced lifestyle

by James Watson | CONTRIBUTOR | HE/HIM/HIS | mip24003@uconn.edu

As an exchange student at the University of Connecticut, the first thing I was struck by was how big the campus is. The second thing was how busy it is. In a university with 24,356 undergraduates, it is easy to be a little overwhelmed. However, as you begin to settle into the day-to-day of life at this university, you realize that the business of university life here is normalized and routinized. It is easy to become swept up in the pace of life in this otherwise quiet pocket of Storrs, so much so that you find yourself wondering where all free time has gone. Ultimately, what I have found is that this campus runs on a "work hard, play hard" culture, one this article seeks to digest.

After a few weeks at UConn, I found that students all over the campus embody this duality. Attending lectures, you see a flurry of faces all eagerly chasing a 4.0 GPA. Then you would undoubtedly see the same faces at the next bar or frat party you would attend. At the UConn Storrs campus, there are a total of 41 different sororities and fraternity chapters that are college affiliated. After speaking to several friends and different fraternities and sororities last semester, one thing became abundantly clear: They live for this duality of a 'work hard, play hard' lifestyle. They would often be the last one dancing on a table at a party and the first one in a lecture hall, in the library or at the gym the next morning.

However, there were an equal number of people who told me that they struggled to sustain this balance. At first it can feel great, like you are meeting every obstacle head on. By the middle of the semester though, many of my friends who had so much energy in the preceding weeks now just seemed drained. Some of the freshman pledges for fraternities that I had spoken to, either at the end of a party or in the run up to the next one, informed me that the entirety of their semester had either been spent pledging or cramming for the next quiz, test or essay.

Adding to this is a sports culture at UConn that is particularly pervasive. As a Division 1 sports school, the majority of the students I ran into as I began to find my feet at this giant school were fanatical about sports. Basketball takes the crown as the most popular sport on campus, with students religiously attending games, no matter how overworked they are or how busy their schedules get. This is exacerbated by the wave of advertisement and encouragement from the university for students to support the teams. Both through word of mouth and through social media pushes, the incentive to support UConn athletics looms incredibly large. Every third post on UConn's Instagram page is related to sports, and every game I was able to attend in the fall packed to capacity.

With both the academic rigor, the intensity of sports and the prevalence of the social scene at UConn you begin to wonder: When do students get the time to rest? The answer is a simple one: They do not. Most of the people I was speaking to across my different classes said they were regularly getting less than six hours sleep a night. In a 16-week semester, this "all go" structure is bound to leave students fatigued.

For those Huskies who are brave enough to begin their days with a 9:30 AM lecture and end after the closing call of Ted's Bar or Huskies Tavern at 1:30 AM, the cost and the reward are one and the same. The teetering possibility of exhaustion, mixed with the intoxicating thrill of being able to design your life however you want, is what makes university such a great time. I myself have found a lot to love with this philosophy.

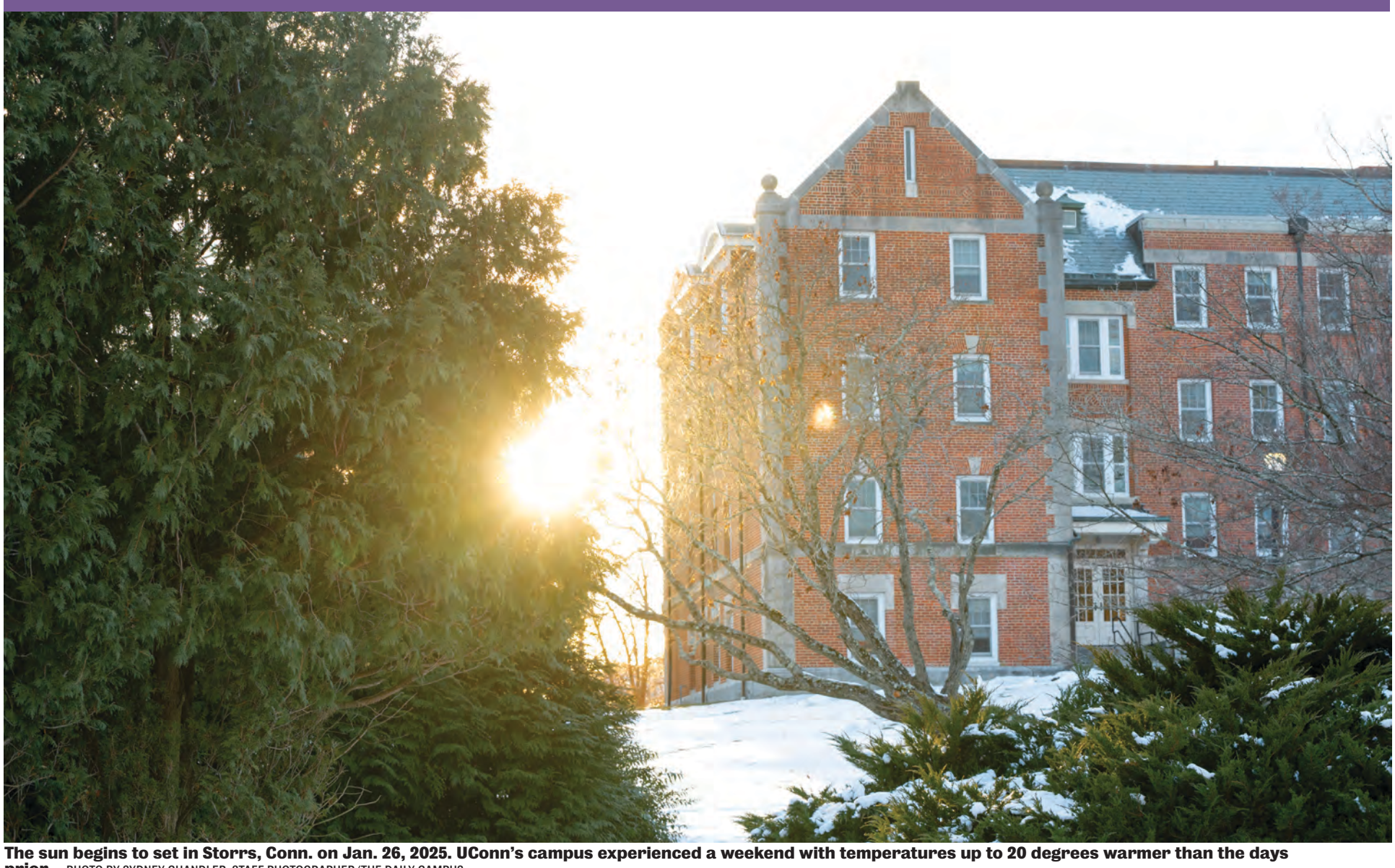
It is often difficult to remember that a big part of university life is learning how to balance your time. Two years at my home university, the University of Warwick, taught me this. You go into the experience with a 'kid in a candy store' mentality. Wide-eyed freshmen gorge on as many new experiences as possible, only to find themselves in need of a lot of mental and physical rest on the other side. Being at UConn from August until December, without my immediate family or friendship network, taught me the need to find this again. It is different for everyone, but when you do, everything else falls into place.

Arriving back at Storrs in the early hours of Saturday morning after a five-week break, I found the campus brought back to life. There was a new cohort of exchange students and several new faces in my classes and lectures. After just one week at college though, you begin to feel that familiar sense of business baying, whether in the packed recreation centre at 7 p.m. on a Monday night, the classes where students are tripping over each other to find something intelligent to say or in the bars that are crowded three rows deep to get a drink.

I have no doubt that the coming semester at UConn's Storrs campus will be a busy one. My lesson to the undergraduate students is this though: 'Work hard, play hard', but make sure you maintain equilibrium. Whatever that may look like for you. There is a lot of diversity in thinking, ideas and paths taken at this university. However, if there is one thing that people unify behind it is a "students today, Huskies forever" mindset. College may end after four years, but the lessons it gives you are with you forever. Learning how to contend with the business of life now may be one of the best things that Huskies of all ages can do.

Opinion

Photo of the Day | Sunny, snowy Storrs

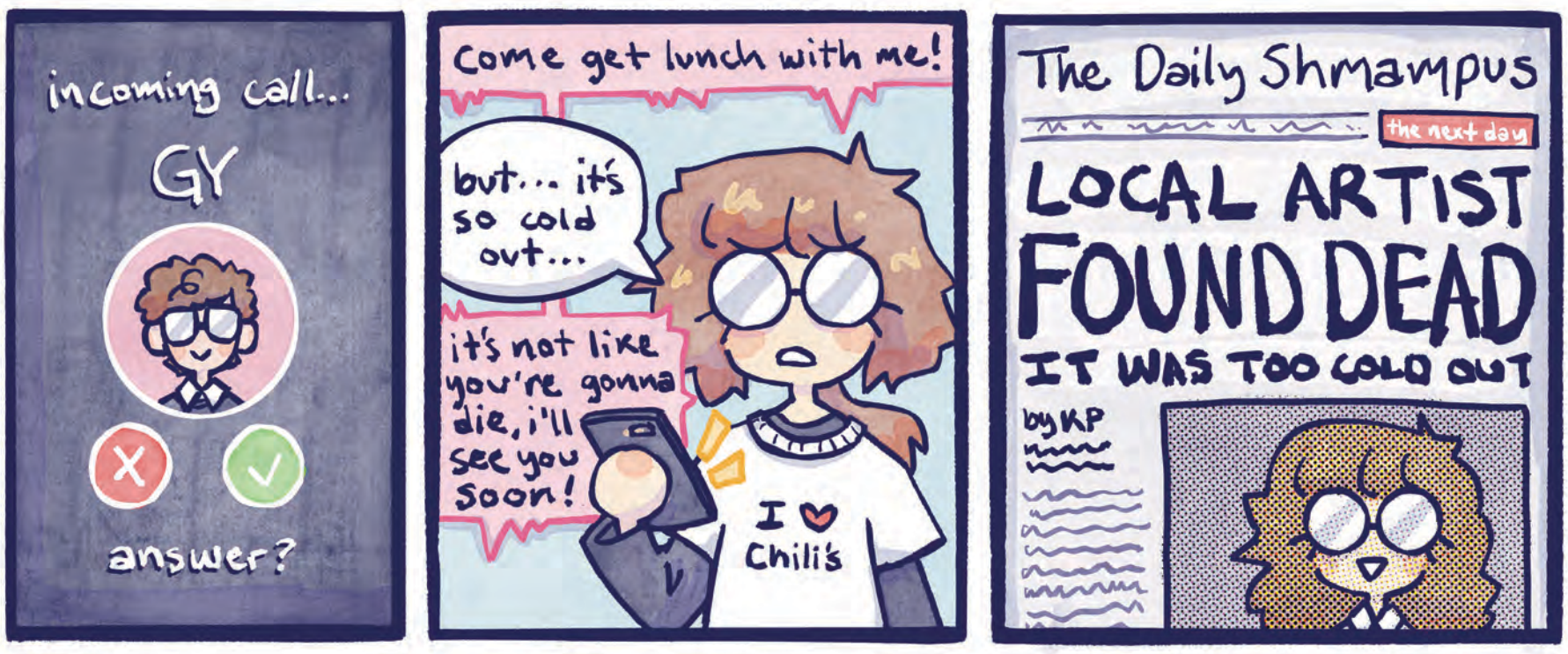


The sun begins to set in Storrs, Conn. on Jan. 26, 2025. UConn's campus experienced a weekend with temperatures up to 20 degrees warmer than the days prior. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

COMICS

COMIC BY KRISTA MITCHELL, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

COMIC BY ALEXA PAPPAS, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



COMIC BY COLBI LORANGER, ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

TRACK & FIELD: RECORD-SETTING DAY-FOR-THE-HUSKIES AT UPENN INVITE

by Brayden Gorski
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In a field consisting of 10 of the best track and field colleges in the Northeast, UConn performed exceptionally well in both the track events and the field events. Some of the top teams in the invitational included Cornell, Harvard, Penn State, Princeton, Virginia and Big East foe Villanova.

The action began on Saturday with the women's weight throw, where Natalia Surdej earned a third-place finish. The senior's best throw traveled almost 61 feet. Emily Alty rounded out the top 10 with a throw of 54.5 feet.

The men's competition began in the high jump with Dar Jankovic finishing second out of 10 competitors. Jankovic and Robert Allen of Penn State both jumped 6 feet 8.75 inches. However, the Husky did it in fewer attempts than the Nittany Lion. Connecticut also had Enaji Muhammad and Kasey Savage jump 6 feet 6.75 inches. These jumps were good for a fourth-place finish for Muhammad and a sixth-place finish for Savage.

In the women's long jump, A'liyah Thomas jumped 19 feet 9.5 inches, just shy of the top two. Sophomore Audrey Kozak finished in 12th place with a top jump of 17 feet 8 inches. Thomas also participated in the 60-meter hurdles, where she qualified for the finals. The senior finished fifth in a very competitive final heat.

Kyle Johnson was a quarter of an inch short of a first-place finish in triple jump. Johnson's 49 feet 8.25 inches was just shy of Caleb Holman of Virginia. The sophomore also finished seventh in the long jump.

Jenna Zydanowicz got the action on the track started for the Huskies with a third-place finish in the women's one-mile. The senior had a time of 4:38.3, good for the 30th best time in all of Division 1 track and field this season. The West Hartford native is also chasing the school record in what could be her last campaign in a Connecticut uniform. Zydanowicz's time on Saturday is second all-time behind her former teammate, Mia Nahom, who ran 4:35.27 in 2022.

UConn's Terrel Williams wiped away the competition in both the prelims and finals of the men's 60-meter hurdles. Williams improved on his 7.79 preliminary time by completing the finals in just 7.72 seconds. Jaia James finished fourth in the prelims and finals of the women's 60-meter dash. The junior was just five-1000ths of a second behind Cornell's Jada Smith for third place. James also participated in the 200-meter dash where she placed 15th.

The men's team was all over the leaderboard in the long jump. Marc Morrison jumped nearly 26 feet, smashing the meet record and giving him the fourth best jump in Division 1 competition this year. This jump also gave Morrison the school record for the farthest long jump ever, which is a very coveted record for a program that has been around since the 1970s. Two spots behind Morrison was Savage, who also broke the meet record, jumping almost 25 feet. Savage's jump got him inside of the top 10 in school history as well, ranking eight. Also competing for the Huskies was William Wiafe who finished in a solid 11th place.

More meet records were toppled by Connecticut, this time in the men's 400-meter. Both Mekhi Stone and Orenthal Singletary broke the meet record of 47.95 seconds. Stone finished in third with a time of 47.6, good for seventh all-time in UConn history, while Singletary was seventh, clocking in at 47.81 seconds. The duo returned for the 4x400-meter relay, joined by Del Lindsay and Gabriel Cuffey. In a highly competitive field, the men's team grabbed a seventh-place finish, right behind Penn State and Villanova. All four runners went under 50 seconds in their leg of the relay, an incredibly impressive feat considering each one of them competed in a race prior to the relay.

Wrapping up the competition in the men's 800-meter, Mahamed Sharif fell a hair short of first place behind Princeton's Samuel Rodman. Sharif's time of 1 minute and 49 seconds also barely places him outside of the top 25 best in Division 1 this season.

UConn's next meet will be at Boston University on Friday, Jan. 31. They will be competing in the John Thomas Terrier Classic. The Huskies immediately follow that up on Feb. 1, as they host the Coach Greg Royal Rumble in Storrs, Conn. For live tracking of these events, live.athletic.net will have up to the minute results of the action. up boards come March.

The UConn track and field team competing in the long jump on Dec. 6. A long jumper for the team, Marc Morrison recently broke a long jump record in Philadelphia.
PHOTO BY FRANCESCA BAZIL, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WOMEN'S SWIM AND DIVE: HUSKIES DOMINATE DURING IN-STATE MATCHUP AGAINST CCSU

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With their regular season coming to a close, UConn women's swim and dive made sure to take the lead early on in their meet against CCSU on Saturday. With continued energy throughout the matchup, Connecticut secured the win with a final score of 225-75.

Right out of the gates, the Huskies kicked things off on a high note. With the first event, one-meter diving, senior Julia Pioso claimed the top spot. Her teammates, juniors Darah Ostrom and Olivia Denery, were right behind her in second and third place, earning the Huskies 16 points.

Despite this strong start, the Huskies failed to keep up this momentum in the next two events. In the 200-yard relay, the Blue Devils took first place with a team of sophomores Sophie Milhomens, Grace Young, Lauryn Cowing and Katrine O'Leary. In the 1000-yard freestyle, Connecticut's Jordyn Ricciotti finished second place behind CCSU sophomore Maggie Rutledge who beat out the Huskies to earn first place, with a final time of 10:33.35.

However, after these two events, UConn went on to dominate every other event in the meet. In the 200-yard freestyle, freshman Zoey Griffin secured first place with a time of 1:55.08, just .31 seconds ahead of her teammate, junior Norah Rome. Freshman Jessica Sheng, a key swimmer for the Huskies in the 100-yard backstroke, dominated early on, placing first with a time of 56.60. Right behind her was graduate student Kayla Mendonca with a time of 58.23. CCSU junior Megan Dunnigan came in fourth place with a time of 59.43.

Sophomore Maggie Rhodes constantly stands out in meets for the Huskies in the 200-yard butterfly. The Minnesota native finished with a time of 2:08.26 and right behind her was her freshman teammate, Julia Fondersmith with a time of 2:09.62.

Senior Maggie Donlevy is another member of the Huskies who has been putting on stellar performances in her meets. In the 50-yard freestyle, Donlevy placed at the top again with a time of 24.43. Behind her was Cowing, with a time of 24.90.

UConn has counted on veterans like Mendonca and Pioso to earn these points, but the freshmen on the team have more than proved that they can consistently contribute to its success as well.

Griffin placed first in the 200-yard backstroke, an event she has consistently performed well in. Fellow teammate freshman Sydney Perkins swam her way to the top of the leaderboard in the 200-yard breaststroke with a time of 2:20.02. Following suit of her Husky classmate was freshman Nadine Amin with a time of 2:27.39.

With the combination of strong upperclassmen leaders and their dominating freshman class, the Huskies came out on top in their second-to-last meet of the regular season.

UConn will close out their regular season at home against Providence College on Saturday, Feb. 8.

The meet will kick off at 12 p.m. in the Wolff-Zackin Natatorium, where the Huskies will look to end their regular season off on a high before heading to the Big East Championship in Ohio.

UConn Swim and Dive takes on Sacred Heart Uniiversity and Central Connecticut State University on Oct. 3, 2024, in Storrs, Conn. UConn fans showed up and cheered on the team and watched as they had an impressive performance.
PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Sports

Photo of the Day | Let's go Huskies!

University of Connecticut's men's basketball takes on the Butler Bulldogs at Hartford's XL Center on Jan. 21, 2025. UConn defeated Butler in overtime with a score of 80-78. PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

MEN'S ICE HOCKEY: NO. 4 UCONN CLAIMS FIRST CONNECTICUT *ICE TITLE* OVER SACRED HEART

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The University of Connecticut men's ice hockey claimed supremacy over the constitution state at the fifth Connecticut Ice Championship this weekend.

This was UConn's first ever title in the four-team tournament, which features the state's four NCAA Division I ice hockey programs. The Huskies snapped a three-year streak of finishing as the runners-up. Third-year goalie Tyler Muszelik was named the Outstanding Player of the tournament. This victory has nestled UConn into the No. 4 slot in the PairWise Division I rankings.

The Huskies opened the weekend on Friday by defeating the reigning tournament champions, Quinnipiac University, who had sent them home the past three years. UConn was finally able to take down their Connecticut rivals after losing the last eight straight meetings.

The first period ended in a scoreless draw after a strong showing from both teams' penalty kill units. An early penalty from the Huskies gave Quinnipiac a man advantage which they were able to thwart. UConn had a two-man up opportunity of their own later in the period after back-to-back penalties, which they were not able to capitalize on.

The action heated up in the second period, as third-year Ryan Tattle was able to outmaneuver the two Quinnipiac defensemen in front of him with a toe drag before burying the first UConn goal of the tournament. Later in the period, an uncalled trip prevented the Huskies from extending their lead to two. In the subsequent possession, Quinnipiac was able to tie the game after Davis Pennington fired towards the net where Travis Treloar was waiting for the tip in the goal.

The game remained tied throughout the following period, as Muszelik finished the game with 35 saves, repelling several breakaways in the third. It seemed as though the game was heading for overtime as the clock wound down. But with just 17.7 seconds on the clock, Quinnipiac committed a penalty which gave the Huskies a power play, and likely just one more chance to win the game in regulation. With the puck in the corner and time expiring, fifth-year Hudson Schandor found Tattle in front of the goal as he was able to sneak the puck backhanded past the netminder for the game winning goal, leaving less than a second on the clock.

The Sacred Heart Pioneers dropped off the Yale Bulldogs 8-2 later that day, setting the stage for the championship game on Saturday.

The Huskies scored the contest's lone goal just six minutes into the opening period. Third-year Tristan Fraser ripped a shot that was deflected by second-year goaltender Cullen DeYoung. After Fraser let his potential rebound slip through his skates, first-year Filip Sitar fielded the puck out of the scrum and snuck his first career goal past DeYoung. The Pios looked to respond in the same period putting seven shots on goal, but Muszelik was lying in wait to fend off the barrage.

UConn went into the second with 1:16 remaining on a power play carried over from the previous period, but the Sacred Heart penalty kill unit held strong. UConn's defense was put on full display in the second, a slashing penalty on Ethan Whitcomb resulted in a power play opportunity for the Pioneers. On the power play third-year Jake Percival made a heroic play at the goal line, pushing the puck out of the crease and protecting the Huskies one goal lead.

In the third period, neither squad could gain an upper hand. The Pios peppered the goal in the early minutes, but Muszelik held strong in the net, not allowing anything to get by. UConn flipped the ice, getting several chances to score, but DeYoung would not give them the chance to extend their lead. With less than two minutes to play Sacred Heart pulled DeYoung out of goal in a last-ditch effort to score the equalizer. The Pioneers nearly tied the game with eight seconds to go, but Muszelik was able to cover up the loose puck out of the mess in front of the crease. They managed to get one more shot off following the face off, by second-year Jake Richard batted the puck down as time ran out, clinching the tournament championship.

Muszelik totaled 23 saves in the contest and was named to the all-tournament first-team, alongside Tattle, as the Huskies were crowned the top dogs of Connecticut ice hockey. UConn will look to carry on their recent momentum into their upcoming weekend series with Providence College.

The puck drop is scheduled for Friday at 7:00 p.m., with game one to be played in Providence, Rhode Island, at Schneider Arena.

WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY: HUSKIES CONTINUE TO ROLL, SWEEPING VERMONT IN HOCKEY EAST WEEKEND

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The 14th-ranked UConn women's ice hockey team shut out the University of Vermont Catamounts 1-0 on Saturday, polishing off a two-game road sweep. The win brought the Huskies' record to 14-3-2 in Hockey East conference play and 16-8-2 overall. The Huskies continued an unbeaten streak of nine games this weekend, during which UConn hasd seven wins and two ties. Connecticut's last loss was to Yale on Nov. 29, and the Huskies have ridden a hot streak since then, which has vaulted them to the top of the Hockey East standings.

UConn's first game against Vermont in the series on Friday began with a tough start for the Huskies t, as the Catamounts struck quickly in the first period. With only four minutes gone into the game, an attempted snipe to the left of goal from Vermont's Kyla Bent deflected off the stick of Cecilia DesLauriers and into the top right corner of the net, putting the Catamounts up 1-0. This score would hold through the end of the first period.

In the second period, UConn found their stride and bounced back. In a mirroring of the previous goal, Huskies' defenseman Emma Eryou took the puck and fired a powerful shot from a distance. This strike received no deflection, slotting past Vermont goalie Sydney Correa on the left side, knotting the game up at 1-1.

The back-and-forth continued as the Catamounts wasted little time in regaining the lead, this time capitalizing on a power play opportunity, with a deflected shot from Vermont's Maddy Skelton arcing its way over the head of Huskies' goalie Tia Chan for the goal, making the score 2-1. Penalties would remain an issue for UConn all game, as they racked up five to Vermont's two. Three of those penalties occurred in the second period, but thanks to the efforts of Chan, who made 12 saves after the power play goal, the Catamounts were unable to extend their lead heading into the third and final frame.

UConn looked to equalize early in the third period, as Megan Woodworth stole the puck at center ice and rushed towards the goal, only to have her shot saved by Correa. However, the Huskies would not be denied. Just 40 seconds later, a shot from Kyla Josifovic was saved but not corralled, and Ashley Allard was right there to put the puck in the back of the net for her seventh goal of the season. The score of 2-2 remained for the rest of regulation, despite a flurry of shots from Vermont in the final two minutes.

In overtime, Woodworth got the chance to avenge her missed opportunity, as she received a pass from Maya Serdachny. Woodworth took the puck and ran with it, racing straight at Vermont's Correa and decisively smashing the puck into the net, winning the game 3-2. It marked the second overtime win for the Huskies this season, following a 2-1 victory against Holy Cross on Nov. 1.

In their second bout with Vermont the next day, Connecticut came out swinging. Skillful passes from Allard and Josifovic led to freshman Claire Murdoch holding the puck near the right side of the net, and she drifted left before flicking a shot straight past Vermont goalie Jane Gervais. The goal was Murdoch's team-leading 11th of the season, putting her at 20 points overall.

As it turned out, one goal was all the Huskies needed to close out the contest, because the rest of the game belonged to UConn goalie Megan Warrener. She made 20 saves, six of them in the third period, to secure her second shutout of the campaign.

Vermont's best chance to tie the game might have come a minute into the third frame, as the Catamounts' Julia Mesplède corralled a pass off the wall in front of the net and fired, only to be denied as Warrener made the save. The Huskies had opportunities to extend their lead throughout the game, holding a 28-20 shot advantage over the Catamounts overall, but ultimately held on through a nervy finish. After Vermont pulled their goalie with a minute and a half remaining in regulation, they won a faceoff and Mesplède was able to get off a shot, but the effort was blocked by UConn defenseman Brooke Campbell, preserving the win and the sweep for Connecticut.

After the two defeats, Vermont remains in eighth place in the Hockey East with 18 points from 19 games played. Their next matchup will be played against Northeastern on Feb. 1. UConn, on the other hand, sits on top of the conference, having accrued 42 points in 19 games. The Huskies will return to Storrs on Jan. 31 versus Merrimack at the Toscano Family Ice Forum. Puck drop is scheduled for 6 p.m. and Husky fans can tune in on ESPN+.

MEN'S BASKETBALL: NO. 19 UCONN FALLS AGAIN, LOSES AT XAVIER 76-72

by Sam Calhoun
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The No. 19 UConn men's basketball team (14-6, 6-3 Big East) lost for the third time in January, with the Xavier Musketeers (13-8, 5-5 Big East) getting revenge from a month ago.

Even though UConn won the tip, Xavier dominated the first four minutes of the game, shooting 60% from the field and making every possession hard for the Huskies. Connecticut began the game 1-6 from the field. The great start for Xavier got the Cintas Center crowd into the game.

"This is a really hard place to play," UConn head coach Dan Hurley said. "But it's also a very fun place to play. That atmosphere is like an octagon in there. I love it, I love that environment."

Following a 9-0 run that gave the Musketeers a 10 -point lead, Hurley brought Hassan Diarra back into the game after committing two early fouls. Behind Diarra and Solo Ball, who would drain a second-chance 3-pointer that forced Xavier head coach Sean Miller to call timeout, the Huskies went on a 7-0 run to cut the lead to three.

Xavier punched back, scoring seven unanswered points in less than a minute to bring the lead back up to 10.

Aidan Mahaney played terrific for the final 3:53 of the first half. He scored all eight of his first-half points and handed out three assists. He drilled two 3-pointers, including one at the end of the shot clock which seemed to have been from across the Ohio River in Kentucky.

"I don't think we brought him in to play exactly like he just played," Hurley said. "He let the threes go today. As far as our guards go, he has the most offensive talent."

Xavier guard Dayvion McKnight came in up clutch in the final seconds of the half, knocking down a shot from mid-range as the Musketeers closed the half making their last three shots to cut Connecticut's lead to one. UConn made its last five shots of the first half.

The game was full of runs, including a 7-0 run from Xavier to go up four points early in the second half.

Samson Johnson had a strong outing, scoring 12 points on 5-5 shooting. He had a career-high five blocks, all of which came at important moments.

Ball had a double-double, scoring 20 points and grabbing 11 rebounds on 6-17 shooting. He, along with Mahaney, came up massive when the Huskies had their backs against the wall. Mahaney scored 14 points on 4-7 shooting off the bench.

Dante Maddox Jr. is emerging as a Husky killer. In the first meeting of the year, the Toledo transfer scored 22 points on 5-9 shooting from deep. In the second meeting, he scored 14 points and went 3-3 from the field in the second half.

"That guy has killed us this year," Hurley said. "So, he likes our jerseys."

Dailyn Swain was a game-time decision for the Musketeers but took full advantage of the opportunity to take down a ranked opponent. The sophomore from Columbus, Ohio scored 15 points on 6-7 shooting, with zero 3-pointers attempted.

Alex Karaban had a quiet night, scoring just nine points on 4-13 shooting. He was slowed down due to foul trouble, fouling out with 3:27 remaining in the game.

"Whatever type of offensive game he's having, we need him on the court," Hurley said. "He just can't pick up the fourth foul or the fifth foul."

Connecticut had a chance to tie or win the game with 21 seconds left in regulation. After a missed 3-pointer by Ball with 25 seconds to go, Diarra grabbed the clutch offensive rebound despite being the smallest player on the court, which led to Hurley calling timeout to try and draw up a play.

Xavier's defense was relentless out of the timeout. It was clear that the play was not drawn up for Jayden Ross, but he had the best opportunity to tie the game, with a path on the baseline to put up a shot. However, the shot clock expired before the ball left his hands, which led to free throws from Marcus Foster to seal the game for the Musketeers.

"That last possession was again regrettable and failure to execute something," Hurley said, who also alluded to the turnovers and the "ballhawk" ability of McKnight, who had two steals to add to his 11-point performance. "We wanted the ball in Aidan's hands."

UConn will likely fall out of the AP Top 25 on Monday and are still missing Liam McNeeley, who has only played one game in 2025.

"If we could get Liam back and we could get some consistency from Aidan there, we could be a much different-looking team," Hurley said.

UConn is now 7-5 against Xavier, a series that first started in the 1991 NCAA Tournament. The Musketeers have now won four of their last five games, including another top-25 win at Marquette.

[Xavier is] playing to the form of a team that was picked pretty high in the league," Hurley said. The Musketeers were picked to finish third in the league.

The Huskies will be back at home to host DePaul on Wednesday night at the XL Center.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: UCONN LEANS ON DEFENSE TO PULL AWAY FROM CREIGHTON 72-61 ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON

by Jake McCreven
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Outside of a lackluster 6/18 mark from the field in the first quarter, the sixth-ranked UConn women's basketball team (19-2, 10-0) played its typical style of basketball in its 11-point win over Creighton.

Sarah Strong patrolled the glass on both sides of the floor, KK Arnold was a pest in UConn's backcourt defense and Paige Bueckers drilled eight second half field goals as the Huskies took sole control of first place in the Big East on Saturday.

Strong recorded her fourth double-double of 20-plus points on the season (and fifth overall), as the seven- time Big East Freshman of the Week put her bid in for an eighth selection after scoring 26 points, grabbing 12 rebounds and nabbing five steals in the win.

Bueckers caught fire in the second half, taking the reins from Strong (who scored 16 first half points). The redshirt senior scored 19 of her 22 points in the second half, including a stretch of pullups from the top of the key that aided in the Huskies' second half surge.

Arnold also got involved on the offensive end early, hitting the team's first three-pointer of the game from the right wing. The sophomore made her mark – as she usually does – on the defensive end by grabbing four rebounds snaring two steals in her time off the bench.

Arnold, however, was not the sixth man, as freshman Morgan Cheli was the first off the bench for Auriemma. Arnold, Ashlynn Shade and Ice Brady all checked in shortly thereafter.

Creighton started the afternoon's scoring with a triple from first-time starter Jayme Horan. Connecticut swiftly took the lead with baskets from Fudd and Strong, never giving it back as the Huskies climbed further away from the Bluejays each quarter.

The two best – and most efficient – offenses in the Big East started a combined 5/16 from the field as the first quarter media timeout commenced. After Creighton scored a quick four to knot things up at 11, UConn found baskets from Strong and Arnold down low to re-claim its four -point lead.

Bueckers and Chen missed three-point looks as the Huskies started 0/6 as a team in the period. The first-quarter shooting blunders allowed Creighton to stick around offensively, as Morgan Maly found her first points as the quarter expired with a teardrop from the block to bring the Jays within two.

Chen missed a look from deep to open the second quarter before Arnold ended the drought from three on just her fourth make of the season to put the Huskies up five. Strong and Bueckers combined for the team's next five, stretching the Husky lead to six before the second quarter media timeout.

Both the Huskies (9/27) and Blue Jays (8/24) started 33% from the field and were tied in rebounds at 18 a piece at the mid-point of the second. The Huskies were generating open looks offensively but could not hit, clanking shots off the rim from deep when not finding open looks under the basket with Strong.

Creighton was struggling to free up leading scorers Morgan Maly and Lauren Jensen, with Arnold holding Jensen to a 2/6 start from the field in the first half.

The "Two-Jays" (Maly and Jensen) averaged over 35 points per game coming into the night but were held to a combined 18 on 10/27 shooting.

Out of the break, Chen read a Bluejay screen and poked the ball free before taking it to the rim at the other end to reach 1,400 career points. The basket was the catalyst in UConn's 11-0 run that was made up of fastbreak layups under the rim.

Connecticut ended the half on a 15-2 run over the final 7:09, holding the Blue Jays scoreless for periods of three minutes twice while forcing eight turnovers – 12 overall – and taking a 33-19 lead to the locker room.

Bueckers surged in the third period – scoring the team's first seven points of the half -- behind a 12-point, 5/8 mark from the field -- as the Huskies hung its lead as high as 20 points before Creighton band-aided it to 18 at the end of the quarter.

Connecticut upped its shooting percentage by over 15% from the middle of the second quarter, reaching as high as a 42% mark from the field on 53 attempts. Bueckers and Arnold scored pivotal baskets that swung momentum in Connecticut's favor, including an and-one off a fast break for Arnold that upped the lead to 18.

The fourth quarter saw Connecticut hold off the Blue Jays while trying to run down the clock offensively, with Strong, Bueckers and Chen combining for all 15 Husky points.

UConn defeated Creighton by 11 points to remain perfect in Big East play (10-0), marking only the second time the Huskies have won by less than 20 in conference play.

Connecticut will next be in action on Jan. 29, traveling to Chicago to take on the DePaul Blue Demons at 7 p.m.

Daily Sports

MCCREVEN'S MASHUP: MY SUPER-SECRET CRUSHES EARLY THIS NFL DRAFT CYCLE

by Jake McCreven
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Promise me one thing – don't tell anyone about these players. They're my super-secret crushes, okay? Even you aren't supposed to know, but I guess I'm allowing it this one time.

Just kidding, that's what I'm here for. Being a college football fanatic pays off come NFL Draft time, since I've already had the pleasure of watching these players for up to 12 weeks.

Below are five players I've been high on that for some reason are not receiving the same attention from the mock drafts I have seen across the internet.

Anthony Tyus III, RB, University of Ohio

Tyus rumbled for 1,352 scrimmage yards and 11 touchdowns in his lone year with the Bobcats after spending three years in the Big 10. The Northwestern transfer exploded in the season opener against Syracuse, shoving would-be tacklers to the ground with ease while rushing for 203 yards and two scores.

The MAC rushing leader carved apart conference foes all season long on the ground, displaying forceful one-cut ability and decisive downhill drive as a rusher. Tyus runs through his pads and is not afraid of contact, oftentimes bouncing off arm tackles and racking up YAC.

The fourth-year player is also more than willing to protect his quarterback, displaying adequate pass protection skills behind his sturdy 6-foot-1, 215-pound frame.

Tyus' raw power and capable hands in the receiving game are reminiscent of Latavius Murray and should serve well on any running back-needy team.

Billy Bowman Jr., S, University of Oklahoma

The mean-faced Bowman flashed signs of elite coverage play in 2023, recording six interceptions and three pick-sixes en route to being named a first-team All-American.

While the interception numbers dipped down to two in 2024, Bowman developed more as a run supporting safety, catapulting himself through the box on many occasions to sling down the ball carrier to the tune of three tackles-for-loss.

The savvy veteran safety plays with anticipation in coverage regardless of position. Bowman took 397 snaps as a pure safety, 184 in the box and 156 from the slot in 2024. His six interceptions (and three pick-sixes) in 2023 led the nation, with a handful coming at opportunistic times that ended up flipping the game in the Sooners' favor.

Bowman developed as a closing safety in 2024, flying downhill in run support and on flat/quick passes. Most notably, Bowman threw down notoriously slippery Missouri receiver Luther Burden III in the open field during a November matchup.

Bowman's versatility should warrant a higher draft placement. Pairing that versatility with his elite instinctual play sounds like a match made in heaven for a Brian Flores-led defense in Minnesota.

Chris Paul Jr., ILB, University of Mississippi

Paul was a standout presence on the Rebel defense, utilizing a unique and versatile skillset to line up all over the field and wreak havoc on the quarterback.

Paul (6-foot-1, 230 pounds) tallied 73 tackles on 268 run defense snaps, rushed the passer 75 times and missed only four tackles on 621 total snaps in 2024. While defensive coordinator Pete Golding lined Paul up primarily as an off-ball linebacker, he would sometimes slide the junior down to the defensive front, or even outside in the slot (Jalon Walker, anyone?).

The fourth-year linebacker is a quick-footed, instinctual threat as a blitzer and is a sure-handed tackler. Paul uses his plus athleticism to shift into coverage – quickly at that – and drives on the ball once thrown.

Paul has four years of SEC experience under his belt (Arkansas, Mississippi) as an off-ball linebacker and can quickly serve as a dynamic special teamer at the next level.

Tory Horton, WR, Colorado State University

The Fresno native solidified himself as one of the best receivers in Colorado State history before his season-ending knee injury in 2024, racking up 2,620 yards as a Ram in three years with the program after notching 995 yards for Nevada in two seasons prior.

The lanky pass catcher played in just five games this season but still managed over 350 yards on 26 receptions. Horton is just as much of a threat on the outside as he is from the slot, taking snaps from both positions before injuring his knee in October.

Horton uses his excellent size (6-foot-2, 175 pounds), to win with physicality. The veteran receiver displayed elite ball skills in 2023 and routinely won over the middle of the field with hard cutting in routes.

Horton is also effective in the open field and knows how to use blockers to his advantage. Look for Horton in the middle of day two or beginning of day three.

Jason Marshall Jr., CB, University of Florida

Marshall's boxy frame (6-foot-1, 200 pounds) will intrigue teams looking to bolster its secondary's run support. The three-year Gator starter compiled 98 tackles (68 solo), eight tackles-for-loss and 25 passes defended in 45 career games. The interception numbers don't jump off the stat sheet, but that's more a product of pass break-ups than a lack of ball skills.

Marshall is a hard-nosed, physical corner who isn't afraid to get dirty in the run game. Using his length, Marshall continuously wins at the line of scrimmage, whether it be in press man coverage or block shedding in the run game to stun his receiver and win immediately.

A practitioner of the "eat off the floor" mentality, Marshall's nastiness oftentimes gives him the confidence required to be an outside cornerback in the SEC.

Marshall fared well against Florida State's Johnny Wilson last season and matched up against top-level SEC competition all of this season, earning an invite to the East-West Shrine Bowl.

The Florida-product projects as a mid-day two selection as of now but could very well vault up boards come March.

Florida Gators celebrating after scoring a touchdown. 25 was the one to punch the ball into the endzone.
Photo Credits @gatorsfb on Instagram

Anthony Tyus III practicing before gameday. He began playing football at a young age and eventually made it to the collegiate level.
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