

# The Daily Campus



THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT SINCE 1896 • VOLUME CXXVIII, NO. 77

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

# JOIN

## THE DAILY CAMPUS

EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL

As students return from winter break and begin their classes, many have a fresh vision of what they hope their next semester will look like. The involvement fair can be a great place to start the year off strong by joining a club or finding a new hobby. Whether it be music, sport, craft or game clubs, everyone will find a group or organization at the University of Connecticut that suits them. If you are a creative person who loves to write, photograph, illustrate, design, edit or collaborate with others, consider joining The Daily Campus!

The Daily Campus is UConn's independent, student-run newspaper, and there are a multitude of opportunities to get involved. Any student can get involved with the paper regardless of their major and prior experience is not required. The Daily Campus has four main written sections: news, life, sports and opinion. The news section covers events on campus and breaking news that impacts the UConn community. In the life section, writers can choose to cover arts and humanities related campus events, write reviews on music albums, movies and TV shows or talk about anything revolving campus life. The sports section provides coverage and analysis on every UConn athletic



team  
a n d  
features  
columns that  
cover professional  
sport teams. Lastly,  
our opinion section focuses  
on argumentative writing and is  
a place to make every student's  
voice heard.

The newspaper has more than  
just writing. For those who enjoy  
taking photos or creating art, we  
have photo and art sections that  
focus on creating media and images  
to accompany stories. We often send our  
photographers to cover UConn sporting events,  
such as the men's basketball national  
championship last year, and our artists illustrate  
drawings for written pieces, draw  
comics and create logos for col-

u m -  
nists.  
Our six sec-  
tions meet weekly on

Sunday evenings. Opinion is at  
5 p.m., News is at 6 p.m., Life is at  
7 p.m., Sports is at 8 p.m. and  
our photo and art sections meet  
at 10 p.m. Meetings take place at  
the Daily Campus on 1266 Storrs  
Road, next to Moe's and Buckley  
in Downtown Storrs.

All sections offer the opportunity for students to get compensated for their work. Each section has staff writers/photographers/artists who get paid for their work each week. All section contributors start as unpaid, but once you develop experience, you

can apply for paid content contributing roles throughout the semester.

Another way to get involved is through our production team, which is responsible for preparing the paper for print and digital publication on Mondays through Fridays each week. Copy editors review all articles for grammar and AP Style, designers create layouts for print editions, digital producers upload content to our website

and photo producers select which graphics will pair with the articles. For those interested in an early morning shift, we have delivery drivers to distribute the paper to various locations around campus.

Production and delivery driver roles are hired on a semester basis, so keep an eye out for those applications in August and January. We post hiring announcements on our Instagram and all postings will be available on JobX.

If you are interested in getting involved, come visit us at the involvement fair today at Gampel Pavilion from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Feel free to reach out to eic@dailycampus.com if you have any questions.



The Daily Campus building located in Storrs, Conn. The student-run newspaper has been publishing since 1896.

PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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

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MUSIC NEVER STOPS | PAGE 6

Hazel Allik



RETURN OF THE CHIEF | PAGE 7

Trump's week-one brings swift  
action



BASKETBALL | PAGE 12

UConn's men and women look  
to win



THE DAILY CAMPUS  
NEWSLETTER

## News

# The 2025 Spring Involvement Fair is here!

by Gianni Salsbury

SHE/HER  
STAFF WRITER  
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The University of Connecticut annual Spring 2025 Involvement Fair is happening today from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. in Gampel Pavilion, according to the Department of Student Activities.

The event is free to attend and will feature more than 400 student organizations, as stated by the Involvement Fair's UConnContact. Student Activities encourages students, faculty and staff to attend.

The Involvement Fair occurs twice a year at the beginning of each semester. Student Activities stated on its website that it holds this event to give students the opportunity to get involved, make friends, build a resume, expand horizons, develop leadership skills and have fun.

Each organization will be lined up around Gampel at booths and students will be able to make their way through the crowd to visit each club. The fair will feature "academic, volunteer, performance, sporting, and many special interest groups," according to the Involvement Fair's UConnContact. There are 350 registered student organizations and more than 25 UConn departments and programs that plan to attend.

The UConn Her Campus chapter is just one of the many groups aimed to attending the event and encouraged people to come learn about their organization at the fair on group's Instagram.

Her Campus is an all-female online national magazine that

has college chapters around the country. UConn's chapter is an "elite" level chapter and holds meetings every Wednesday night. Their Instagram post states that students should join Her Campus because it is a great place to make new best friends, campus connections, is a creative outlet, has bonding events and is a great place for networking.

The UConn Sweeter Than Fiction book club will also be at the fair and encourage people to come visit their booth, as stated on the group's Instagram. According to their UConnContact, the club "picks books to read together and hosts discussions, along with other book-related activities," such as book movie nights, borrowing books from the club library and book jeopardy.

Another group aiming to attend the fair is UConn Paws and Claws. The group is a student-run club that "promotes animal welfare through education, fundraising, and fun," according to Instagram. Members of the club can volunteer with animal rescue organizations and the group has raised over \$3,000 for animals over the past few years, as stated on its website.

Many other clubs will be featured at the event, including diversity organizations, pop culture clubs and academic groups. A full list of the UConn organizations can be found on the UConnContact page.

Those looking for more information on the Involvement Fair can email UConn Student Activities at [solid@uconn.edu](mailto:solid@uconn.edu).



Fairfield Way at the University of Connecticut Storrs campus on Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024. The Involvement Fair is an event where UConn's many clubs can recruit new members and showcase their activities to the student body.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## UConn mourns loss of graduate student Nan Zhang

by Aiza Shaikh

SHE/HER  
NEWS EDITOR  
[azia.shaikh@uconn.edu](mailto:azia.shaikh@uconn.edu)

The University of Connecticut is mourning the loss of Nan Zhang, a doctoral student in the statistics program. Zhang, who was originally from Shenzhen, China, passed away unexpectedly.

Zhang enrolled at UConn in the Fall 2023 semester, according to a university statement. Before coming to UConn, she earned a Master of Arts in statistics at Columbia University. Before that, Zhang earned a Bachelor of Science degree in computer science and engineering, with a double major in math and a minor in studio art at Ohio State University.

Zhang had a research as-

sistantship in statistics and was working in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' Academic Services Center.

She was also the first graduate student to work with the university's new sports statistics experiential learning program, which provides undergraduate students with hands-on experience in the field of sports analytics while working with UConn's athletics teams, according to the statistics department's website.

Regarding Zhang's involvement with the program, the university wrote, "She was excited to jump on board with a project that was young and still learning how to operate, working [to] help to build it up. Nan has been described as a sweet and dedicated individual who will be greatly

missed."

Condolences to Zhang's family can be addressed to the UConn Graduate School, located on the second floor of the Whetten Graduate Center, at 438 Whitney Road Extension, Unit 1152, Storrs, CT 06269-1152.

The university stated that any graduate students needing guidance or support can reach out to the Graduate School by phone at 860-486-3617 or email at [gradschool@uconn.edu](mailto:gradschool@uconn.edu). Undergraduate students can find support at the Dean of Students Office, located on the second floor of Wilbur Cross in room 203.

According to the statement, the drop-in hours for undergraduate students are "Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 1 p.m.- 3 p.m., Thursdays from 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. and

Wednesdays from 5 p.m.- 7 p.m. in the Cultural Centers, no appointment needed at those times." Students can also call 860-486-3426 to request a meeting with an assistant dean.

Staff, faculty and graduate students can reach out to the university's employee assistance program for support. Additional information is listed on the UConn Human Resources website.

"Please remember that as a university community we are here for each other," the university stated. "These messages are so difficult to share as the loss of a community member is never easy. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Nan's family and friends during this time."

Other Resources:  
Student Health & Well-

ness Mental Health Services, 4th floor of Arjona, is available to provide support to the students who may be struggling. There are several ways students can connect with SHaW. To make an appointment with SHaW-Mental Health, call 860-486-4705 or schedule an appointment through the SHaW portal.

If you need help more immediately, resources including BeWell, the 24/7/365 mental health support line, can be accessed on the SHaW website.

Let's Talk Mental Health Office Hours is a drop-in service available to students. Visit the SHaW website for dates, times and locations.

Information about managing grief is also located on the SHaW-Mental Health website.

# The Daily Campus

Printing since 1896, The Daily Campus is the oldest and largest independent student publication at the University of Connecticut. The Daily Campus circulates 1,500 newspapers daily and strives to serve the student body by delivering accurate, relevant and timely news and content, both in print and online at [DailyCampus.com](http://DailyCampus.com). Our staff is comprised entirely of students, with roughly 200 undergraduates gaining professional development while contributing to the daily production of the paper, with positions including writers, photographers, copy editors, page layout designers, graphic designers, advertisement representatives, receptionists, delivery drivers and digital producers. Thanks for reading.

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**Corrections and Clarifications:**  
Send Corrections to [EIC@DailyCampus.com](mailto:EIC@DailyCampus.com)

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**Want to write, photograph or draw for The Daily Campus?**

The Daily Campus welcomes writers, photographers and artists of all backgrounds, interests, majors and levels of experience. To get involved, it's as easy as attending section meetings on Sunday nights, all at the Daily Campus building, (1266 Storrs Road) or reaching out to an email below:

**Opinion (Meetings at 5 p.m.)**

[opinion@dailycampus.com](mailto:opinion@dailycampus.com)

**News (Meetings at 6 p.m.)**

[news@dailycampus.com](mailto:news@dailycampus.com)

**Life (Meetings at 7 p.m.)**

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**Sports (Meetings at 8 p.m.)**

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**Photo (Meetings at 10 p.m.)**

[photo@dailycampus.com](mailto:photo@dailycampus.com)

**Artists (Meetings at 10 p.m.)**

[artists@dailycampus.com](mailto:artists@dailycampus.com)

For more information about getting involved as an editorial, business or digital employee:  
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## Study Break

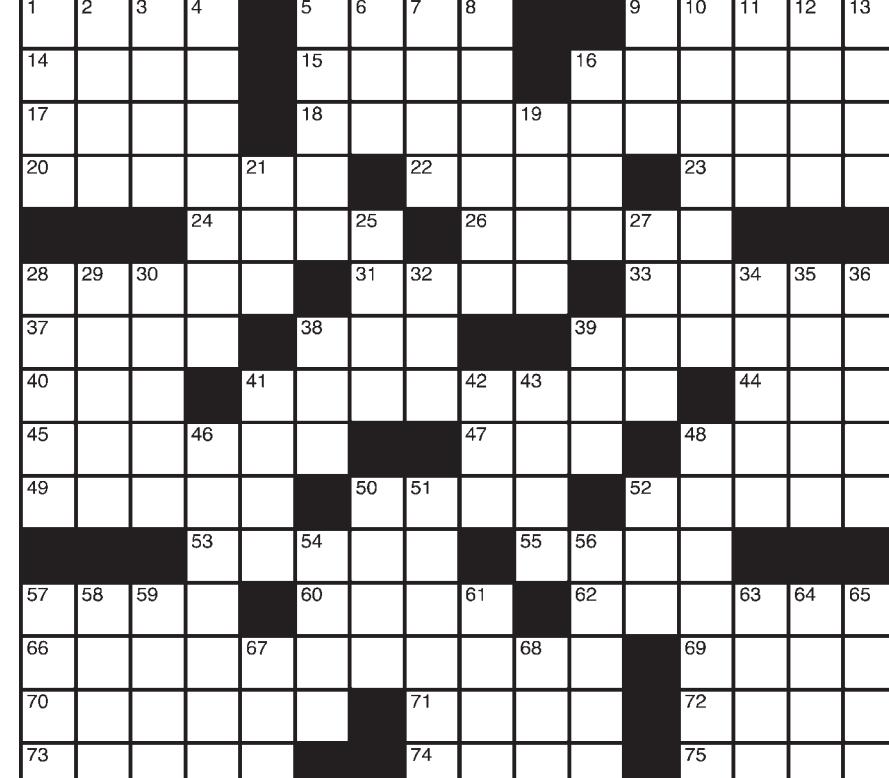
# The Daily Campus Crossword and Sudoku

**ACROSS**

1 Fireplace fuel  
5 Bath and body work locations?  
9 Carne \_\_  
14 Hardly working  
15 Bucks  
16 \_\_ roll  
17 Animating spirit  
18 Backup plan  
20 Like better  
22 Personalizable cookie  
23 Orator's platform  
24 \_\_ facto  
26 Spot for a backyard barbecue  
28 St. Louis team  
31 Catch in a cage  
33 Playground fixture where pushing is encouraged  
37 House mems.  
38 Epitome of ease  
39 Red-letter  
40 Tiebreakers, briefly  
41 Nashville district with historic recording studios, or what can be found four times in this puzzle  
44 Blvd. kin  
45 Titania's husband  
47 Quick snooze  
48 Dart  
49 Gold or silver  
50 Feature of some cheeses  
52 Chip dip  
53 Some viral content  
55 Devilish  
57 Sheer delight  
60 Bills tracked at WheresGeorge.com  
62 Sunset hue  
66 Get the show on the road  
69 People  
70 Second-most populous continent  
71 "Sure about that?"  
72 Coastal Pennsylvania town  
73 Double take?  
74 Pointillism units  
75 2024 WNBA champs

**DOWN**

1 Speech therapy subject



By Rebecca Goldstein

1/29/25

## Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

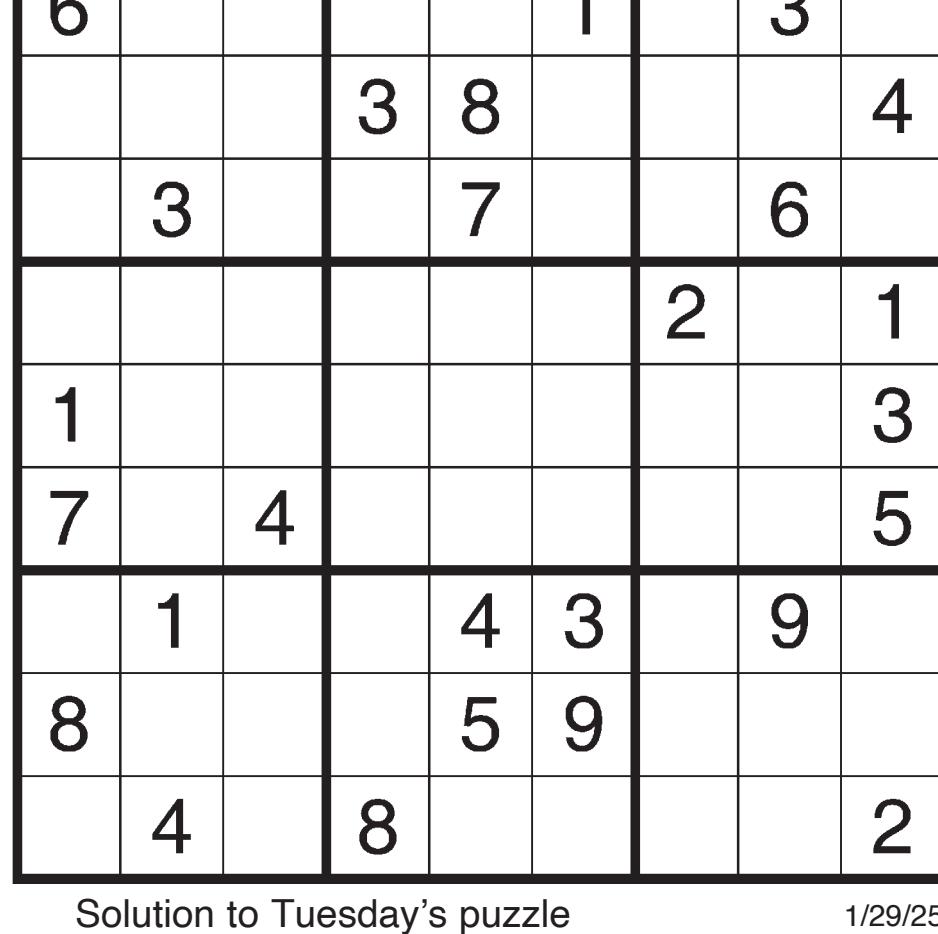
A	G	E	S		C	H	I	P	S		A	B	U	T
B	O	N	O		R	O	M	E	O		L	U	B	E
R	O	T	I		A	P	A	R	T		A	R	E	A
O	D	E	L	L	B	E	C	K	H	A	M	J	R	
A	I	R		O	P	S		E	M	O				
D	E	A	R	T	O		H	E	R	O	D	E	S	
		P	O	S	T	M	O	D	E	R	N	I	S	M
P	E	L	T		A	R	I			A	M	P	S	
G	O	E	S	B	E	A	S	T	M	O	D	E		
A	N	A		E	M	M	E			O	R	A	N	G
		B	A	E			I	R	S	S	R	O		
P	O	E	T	R	Y	I	N	M	O	T	I	N	T	O
J	A	V	A		G	O	T	T	O		R	O	M	A
O	P	E	N		E	L	L	E	N		U	N	I	T
B	A	R	S		D	O	L	L	S		E	S	T	A

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1/29/25

2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

56	Electricity units
57	Mardi __
58	Raised bed, maybe
59	Greige hue
61	Only okay
63	Seaweed snack
64	Insincere
65	Squeaks (by)
67	Do something
68	Course with a long reading list, for short



Solution to Tuesday's puzzle

1/29/25

2	6	1	3	8	7	5	4	9
3	4	5	2	9	6	7	8	1
8	7	9	5	4	1	6	3	2
9	3	8	1	7	5	4	2	6
7	5	6	9	2	4	3	1	8
4	1	2	6	3	8	9	7	5
1	8	4	7	6	9	2	5	3
5	9	3	4	1	2	8	6	7
6	2	7	8	5	3	1	9	4

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [sudoku.org.uk](http://sudoku.org.uk).

## CLASSIFIEDS

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# AN AUDIENCE OF COMEDIANS: IMPROV AT THE STUDENT UNION

by Maleena Muzio

SHE/HER/HERS  
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An improv comedy show assembled by the Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG) hit the Student Union Theater on Jan. 27. Comedic duo Adam Cawley and Rob Norman took to the stage to share their unscripted performance with students at the University of Connecticut.

Enthusiastically welcoming students to the show, Cawley and Norman encouraged audience members to participate in the gig. The pair stressed the importance of their acts having no pre-planning, with adaptability being one of the key aspects of improv comedy.

Cawley and Norman are both well-known multi-tal-

ents from Canada; Cawley is an award-winning actor, writer and improviser and Norman has been recognized for his screen writing and acting.

The opening act of the show was created entirely by audience suggestions. The subject of "boy trouble" was the focus of the segment, with Cawley and Norman pretending to be two college-aged girls discussing boys on campus. This topic was suggested by students. Two audience members were brought on stage, being tapped occasionally for words to finish the pair's sentences. This portion of the show was a hit.

Ava Keogh, a second-semester marketing and German studies major said, "The first act was my favorite because it flowed better than the rest and was easier with the audience. The guests on stage had similar humor styles."

Also ranking this portion of the show as her favorite was Kristina Ivezaj, a second-semester math major. "I enjoyed the first act, it had me saying 'wow' the most because the improv they created based on what the girls were saying was so funny," she explained.

Following this were two brief acts, again directly involving the audience. Three students sat on the stage, being asked to explain their scientific findings, using the "one-word-at-a-time" method. The comedians asked questions that were answered with humorous responses. Trailing after was a bit in which Cawley played a UConn basketball player, with Norman as the coach. However, Norman's dialogue was limited to threads of the group chat of an audience member. This act gained many laughs

from the students.

The final act of the show was described by the comedians as being a more theater-esque performance. It ran and was more continuous. The audience was asked to shoutout several topics that they would like to see the pair cover in their skit, prompting Keogh to yell "Prostitute!"

When asked about her suggestion, Keogh shared, "My high school did improv shows, and I always went. I used to sit with my friends and one time the dad behind me yelled, 'prostitute,' and it was the funniest thing we had ever heard, so I thought that it would be a good suggestion."

However, the final performance did not seem to incorporate the audience's suggestions. Instead, the act delved into topics of consent and sexual health, with a strange but amusing "Twilight" twist.

The story followed the life of the character Jonathan, the wolf-boy on campus, seemingly drawing inspiration from the university mascot. Still, the show was a success.

"I did not see the audience suggestions in the last part and would like to see more direct reference to them. I was confused on why they asked if they did not plan to use them," Ivezaj stated. "It was an interesting show, though. Definitely not what I was expecting. I had never been to improv and after seeing the show, I would go to more."

SUBOG Comedy Chair Sarah Kavarnos organized the show. More events, including comedy writing and the Spring Weekend comedy shows will be coming to UConn soon. Be sure to be on the lookout for more hilarious events on the UConn events calendar.

# PINK SIIFU CONTINUES TO INNOVATE AND CELEBRATE BLACK CULTURE ON 'BLACK'!ANTIQUE'

by Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab | SHE/HER/HERS | STAFF WRITER | [llilith.rampertab@uconn.edu](mailto:llilith.rampertab@uconn.edu)

Pink Siifu is, to put it lightly, a generational artist on a creative streak with one of the best discographies out there. Siifu's expression, whether it's under the Pink Siifu name or iife, has a quality of authenticity with each new release.

Within a musical career spanning almost 11 years, Siifu released a lo-fi punk album, multiple rap albums in different styles, numerous hip-hop production EPs under the iife name, project collaborations with Fly Anakin, YUNGMORPHEUS, Real Bad Man and Turich Benjy and numerous collaborations in various songs with several artists of a variety of genres that would be too numerous to exhaustively list.

The point is that Siifu is much more than an interlude and is not only prolific, but also earnest in his craft, working with so many other creative types and making beautiful things out of the interactions. The same can be said about his newest album, "BLACK'!ANTIQUE," released on Jan. 27.

The album's title track and opener, "BLACK'!ANTIQUE," begins with distorted vocal samples and a nasty synth wall that is reminiscent of a horror video game or movie soundtrack with how jarring it is. After the synths, there's only melodic percussion similar to "See You Sweat" by alternative rap trio Injury Reserve and Siifu's graceful rapping to orient the listener to the album.

Throughout the track, Siifu expresses his creativity and how other people steal his sound instead of being creative themselves. He also shouts out some Black artists who have influenced the culture by making classic art pieces with the bar: "I feel like Ol' Dirty, I feel like Spike Lee."

Following the opener, "ALIVE & DIRECT!" sounds like it uses the musical instrument Otamaton at first, but then there's a deep and dark synth followed by more distorted vocals. It feels like a dystopian soundscape, especially when there's screaming. There's an electric guitar later in the song that makes the song sound even more like a hip-hop adjacent reimagining of a song

by the experimental rock band Swans.

"1:[FKDUP.BEZEL]" follows and sounds less experimental comparatively since it doesn't use the synth layers, but it continues to build up by the second half. The percussion is reminiscent of the reversed drums on "Volcano" by Swans. The electronic melody near the end of the song slightly sounds like "Critical Mass Error" by experimental rap artist Sybry with its glitchy beat. "I am not politically correct, please excuse the fucking grammar" as said by Conquest Tony Phillips is a humorous line.

Next, "Sacrifice'!BonAppétit" sounds like it uses a synth from experimental electronic artist Arca's "kick" series. The beat captures the feeling of anxiety very well. The beat reversing is disorienting in an awe-inspiring way.

"SCREW4LIFE! RIP-JALEN!" is a tribute to two people: the Texan producer DJ Screw, who pioneered the chopped and screwed subgenre of Southern hip-hop and influenced a plethora of rappers and sounds, most notably cloud rap and Siifu's cousin named Jalen.

The beat in the first half is reminiscent of chopped and screwed production, perfect for riding slow in the night. The second half of the song is a nasty trap beat with an amazing pairing between the 808 and the melody that sounds like an owl. Unfortunately, Siifu said a slur directed at lesbian women in one of his bars.

The next track's title, "4DOE[47]," seems to reference the late conscious rapper Capital STEEZ's number 47, which represents the unity of the heart and mind chakras. Since Siifu can get spiritual at times especially with an ethereal and hazy production like this, it fits.

"WHOUWITHHO+" sounds like a spiritual successor to the Southern hip-hop masterpiece "Roscoe!" from 2021's "GUM-BO!" except less abrasive.

"TRANSLATION!" opens with sounds from Latine culture like — but not exactly — bachata at the beginning with a beautifully played bass. Much of the song is this airy, atmospheric production with a per-



Livingston Lemorie Matthews, known as Pink Siifu, is an American rapper, singer, and songwriter from Ohio and Alabama.

IMAGE COURTESY OF @JACKMCKAIN & @PINKSIIFU ON INSTAGRAM

cussive instrument that sounds like a deer scarer.

"Girls Fall Out Tha Sky," with its lush cloud rap production, has a great feature from rapper 454.

"PSA!" is five minutes of heavenly bliss to the ears. From the lush trumpet sample to the electronic keyboard playing later into the song with the sample drill hi-hats, this is certainly one of the best songs on the album.

Rapper Vayda's verse flows well,

being a great addition to the song.

Siifu matches her flow with his raspy voice, but it somehow also

sounds soothing to listen to despite the abrasive texture.

"FACECARD!" sounds like an older song by electronic producer Flying Lotus with the melody and upbeat percussion.

The minimalist production works in the song's favor. It's followed by "LOCKED IN!" — a track kind

of sounds like a hip-hop reimagining of a song by dark ambient producer Father2006.

With short run times, "OUT-SIDE!" and "SleepAtThe-Wheel!" are like honorary interludes that follow, barely clocking in at 1:30 and 1:40 respectively.

However, the guitar is soothing to listen to in both songs.

"LAST ONE ALIVE!" is proof

that Siifu is a talented and gifted

rapper; there is so much passion

in his voice. The line "From the

city where n\*\*\*as get shot before

they son die" is emphasized in

a way that's very impactful and

profound. The tract that follows,

"8," sounds like an acid trip — it's such a unique and exper-

imental soundscape.

"BLACKWATER!" is another eerie soundscape, but this

time there's the sound of moving

water and an acoustic gui-

tar fluctuating between notes. "Mama's dying, dying slow" Siifu sings. Here, "Mama" could represent many things, but with the nature sample, it would make sense if Siifu is referring to Mother Nature. The album ends with a well-executed spoken word outro by past collaborator Big Rube that empowers the Black community, saying "Keep rising, like some Black antiques."

Pink Siifu is incredibly talented at what he does. He continues to innovate in unexpected ways with almost every project he drops while keeping it real to his culture. Pink Siifu has one of the greatest discographies in recent memory, and without a doubt, future historians will find value and worth in his lyrics and production.

Rating: 4.5/5

# EAR 2 DA SKY: FROM STANFORD TO STAGES, 'LIFE THRU NEW LENS'

by Hayden Cromer  
HE/HIM/HIS  
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT  
hayden.cromer@uconn.edu

Welcome to Ear 2 Da Sky! Each week, I will be going over topics within music culture and reviewing albums and EPs across genres, eras and artists that are submitted by readers like you, and listeners of my radio show every Monday at 11 p.m. on WHUS 91.7 FM! For this week's submission, I'll be listening to MiLES's EP "Life Thru New Lens."

MiLES is a name that you may not have heard of, but I believe it is a name that everyone will soon become familiar with. The East Atlanta based artist is not producing a sound you would normally expect coming from a place that also produced the likes of Future, Young Nudy and Gucci Mane, just to name a few. A little over a year ago, the Stanford University student released his first of three EPs of 2024 titled "Life Thru New Lens." Coming in at just under 18 minutes, this five-track project is short but sweet, packed full of quality production and vocals from the undergraduate student.

The EP's title could allude to a few things, whether it's a new understanding for music, college life as an artist or an altered view on life after a romantic involvement. Track one, "Running in A Circle," follows a common theme you'll find in his music: yearning, begging and pleading.

He spends his time trying to convince someone who has nowhere as much interest in him as he does to them, that he is worth their time, and they shouldn't be playing with his time. Like the title suggests, he feels as though he

is in an endless cycle, leaving the song with a simple request to this love interest: "Want you to give me all your love."

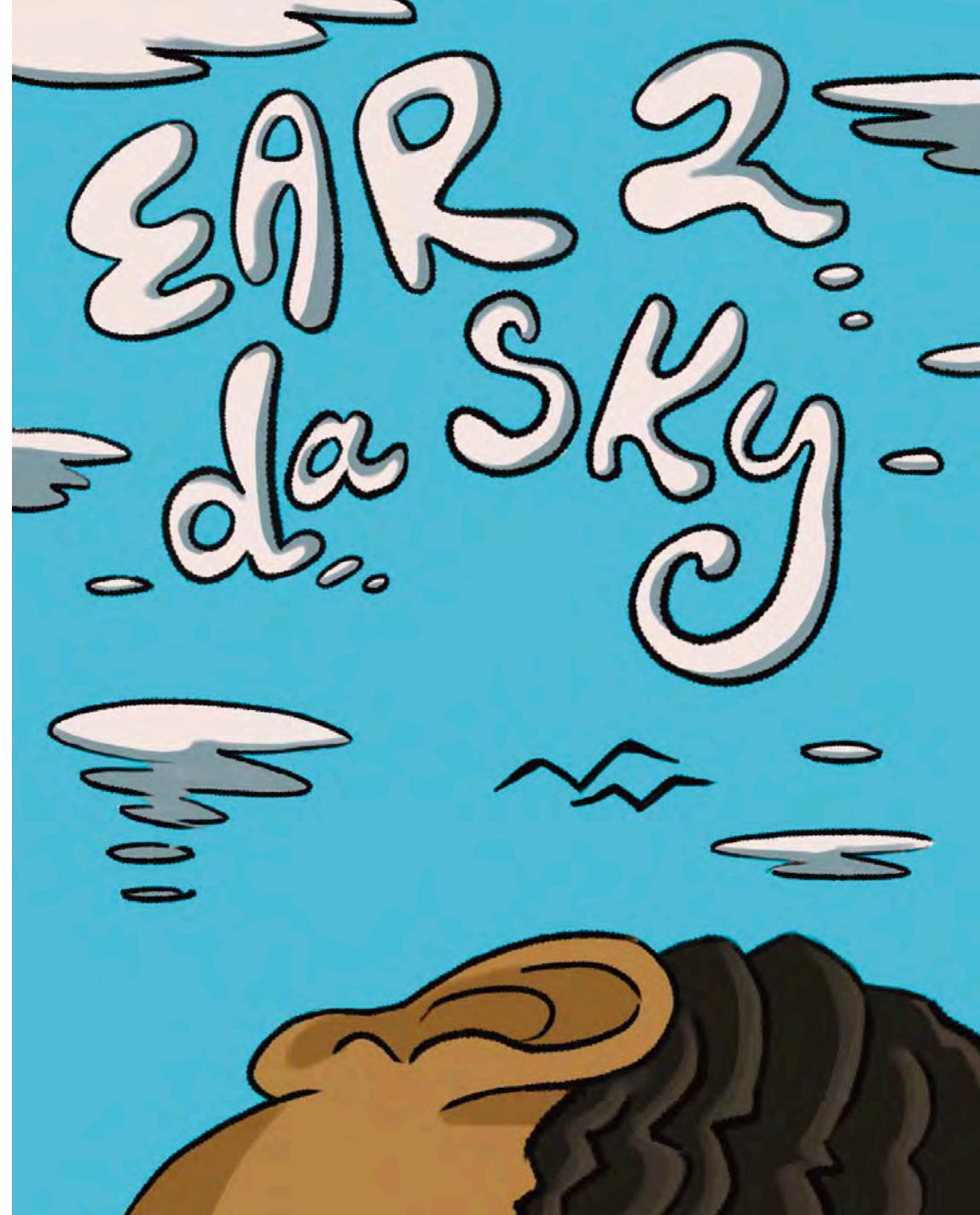
Track three, "Baby Blue," was one of the more popular songs off the EP. It picks up the pace, thanks to some busy drums. One thing I've noticed after tracking his career and past works is that he really favors his falsetto delivery. He would drop a taste of his falsetto every now and then in his early tracks.

But in more recent years, it seems as though he has fully found confidence in it. Following MiLES's fashion, it is packed with romantic desire on this track, pleading that he "wants to be yours" on the hook, audibly on his hands and knees. He exclaims that this love interest possesses the key to a proverbial open door.

Bouncing from home to campus life, traveling from state to state, performing on stage and trying to maintain a respectable GPA, life has been everything but normal for the incredibly talented MiLES. Taking a dive into his past projects will show you nothing but growth and experimentation: a young artist who truly enjoys what they do. He is one of the artists that I have followed closely once I found him, since he is a profoundly interesting artist, consistently producing talent filled tracks. MiLES has nothing but time on his hands and I'm confident he knows what to do with it.

If you want to submit something to my radio show, ask for advice, hear your music on the radio and possibly even see an album or EP you submitted get reviewed in the paper, submit it here: <https://bit.ly/ear2dasky>

LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Rating: 4/5

## Life Thru New Lens

The album cover for "Life Thru New Lens" by MiLES. As a young, up-and-coming artist, MiLES is someone to keep an eye on in the music scene.

IMAGE COURTESY OF @WHEREUSMILES\_ ON INSTAGRAM



# Life

@dailycampuslife

# THE MUSIC NEVER STOPS: HAZEL ALLIK

by Dan Stark

HE/HIM/HIS  
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Most musicians use music as an escape from the pressures of their lives and the issues that they're going through. For Hazel Allik, music has been her escape from her health issues, and she has used it as a source of motivation and inspiration to keep doing what she loves.

Allik is a singer known for her expressive blues and jazz-inflected vocal style, as well as her stylistic versatility. Allik is currently the frontwoman of the rock group Venus Teal and is an active member of the University of Connecticut's jazz program, as well as being a former member of East on Eleven.

Allik's musical journey began when she started playing piano when she was six years old, an instrument that she still holds in high regard. She also started playing drums when she was 13. As she went through high school, singing came to the forefront of her life as she was became involved with her school's choir and musical theater productions. She said that being involved in these helped increase her confidence as a singer, something that she lacked before.

But by the end of her senior year of high school, she began developing crippling joint pain in her wrists, fingers and other joints, leading her to stop participating in musical theater and temporarily give up piano. The pain worsened as she went to Wellesley College for her first semester in fall 2021 before being diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, a condition that weakens the body's connective tissues in joints. She then dropped out of Wellesley, taking a year off to heal and attend physical therapy.

She said that "it was a relief that I finally knew what was going on, but it changed my whole life to find that out." During her time away from school, her doctors advised her against playing piano, which was tough for her to digest.

"It was really hard to be told by my doctors 'music's not for you,'" she said. "There's a lot of other things I couldn't do too. I stopped acting since I couldn't be on my feet for a long time."

After her year off, Allik enrolled at UConn's Avery Point campus in Groton, Conn., hungry to get music back in her life again. She found an advertisement on Craigslist from Boston-based band East on Eleven looking for a singer influenced by Amy Winehouse. Allik was immediately interested since Winehouse is her favorite singer, noting that she immersed herself in Winehouse's catalog while she wasn't in school.

After successfully auditioning and joining the band, Allik performed with East on Eleven from summer 2023 to spring 2024. In the band, Allik performed original jazz-influenced singer-songwriter songs by the group's guitarist Gary Rubin. She got to perform in various clubs, lounges and venues in the Greater Bos-

ton area, including The Jungle in Somerville, Mass. and The LilyPad in Cambridge, Mass.

Commuting up to Boston on a weekly basis for shows took its toll, especially during the school year. Allik recalled one time when she had a show on a Tuesday night before having to race back down to Avery Point for an exam at 8 a.m. the next morning. But her experience with the band made her realize how important music is in her life.

"It was definitely a lot, especially with my health, going up and down to Boston and being in classes at the same time," she said. "But that's when I realized that regardless of what's going on, I can't live without music. And that's how you know you should do it: if you can't see yourself living a fulfilling life without it."

Not only did performing with the group make her realize the importance of music for her mental health; it was vital to her physical health as well. She shared, "When I was singing, I realized that's when I feel my pain the least physically."

Around the same time she joined East on Eleven, she found another ad on Craigslist for another group looking for a singer: Venus Teal. She admitted that she was skeptical if the grunge-based alternative rock group would be interested in a jazz-inspired singer like her. Her skepticism was proved wrong, as she joined the band in the summer of 2023 and has remained their frontwoman since.

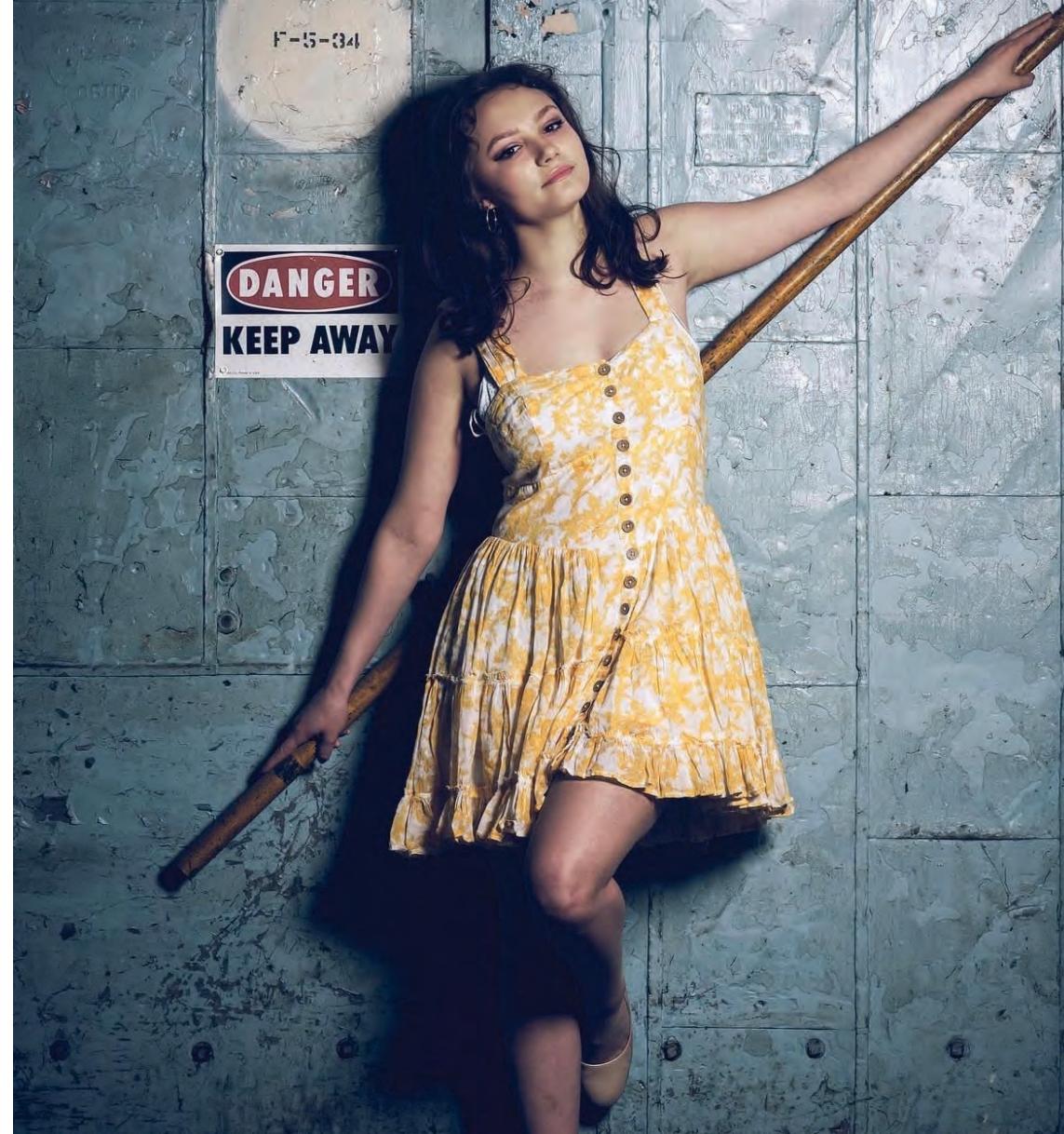
Allik said that joining a rock band like this was "definitely different" from any other projects she had been involved in. She claimed she didn't change her voice to fit the style, instead juxtaposing her vocals against the heavier instrumentation, creating a mix of sounds few bands offer in the Connecticut scene. She has also been the group's main lyricist, a role that "was kind of thrown at me," but one that she has embraced.

In addition to her work in Venus Teal and East on Eleven, Allik is also in the jazz program at UConn while pursuing a bachelor of music in jazz. Her involvement is notable because she is the first person who is in the program primarily as a singer, who performs with the program's jazz combos. She is also slated to perform with the full UConn Jazz Ensemble this semester.

At the center of all of Allik's musical endeavors is a passion for performing live. She shared that there's nothing better for her than being able to connect with audiences and put on a good show, regardless of how many people are there.

"More than anything, the audience is what really makes it for me, having people recognize you sometimes or just making them happy and feel special," she said. "And I love audience participation, making people have a good time and feel connected to each other."

"And no matter how few people are there, if I can make one person's night a little bit better by showing them some tunes, then it's worth it for me," she said.



Hazel Allik is a singer and student at the University of Connecticut. For Allik, music has been an escape from her health challenges and her source of motivation.

IMAGE COURTESY OF @NIKONCAMERACT & @HAZELALLIK ON INSTAGRAM



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Daily

# Opinion

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# Companies never truly cared about DEI

by Amber Greene

SHE/HER/HERS | CONTRIBUTOR | amg23053@uconn.edu

Inclusion and representation is a standard that should be upheld by everyone, but with President Donald Trump's executive order 13985, it has become clear that in corporate America, a check was always more important than diversity. This executive order, which put an end to government Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs, issued several companies to roll back their own DEI efforts. This quick turnaround was abrupt but not completely unexpected, showing how temporary these programs were in the first place.

DEI was introduced during the Civil Rights movement to reduce restrictions that may keep people of color, people of different gender identities and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds from holding higher up positions. In the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement that had a resurgence in 2020, there was a push to make companies more inclusive. George Floyd and Breonna Taylor's murders brought national attention to the need for more diversity in virtually every space. 88 of the S&P 100 companies calculated job growth in 2020 and 2021 where it was reported that over 300,000 jobs were added with 94% of them belonging to people of color.

This growth continued all throughout former President Joe Biden's term where in 2021 he declared an executive order to promote equal opportunity. In his term the percentage of managerial and professional roles that people of color held increased by 2%.

In accordance with decisions on the federal level, support of DEI initiatives was at an all-time high during the Biden administration.

On Jan. 20, Trump signed an executive order called "Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing" and immediately fired all federal DEI staff. Other governmental organizations including the Air Force complied. For example, they took down training ideas that included the Tuskegee Airmen and other black Women Airforce Service Pilots in.

This quick erasure of years of history suggests the ease of removing DEI initiatives and reveals just how performative these videos were.

While some quickly protested, many companies did not wait to comply with the removal of DEI. Amazon has removed mentions of Black

people, LGBTQ+ people and DEI from its websites. On Jan. 24, not even a week after the executive order, Target announced a roll back of their programs after three years of agreeing to spend billions on Black-owned brands and hiring more people of color. Similar to other brands that mirrored Biden's support of DEI in 2020, Target CEO Brian Cornell said George Floyd's murder felt "personal" and in turn, he decided to intensify their diversity and equity efforts.

If the Black Lives Matter protests were truly as personal as Cornell claims they were, one would argue that more would be done to keep them in place. As is being done with other executive orders on a state level, Target could reject the order and keep their DEI temporarily in place. For example, companies like Costco have rejected the push against DEI instead of making the immediate switch.

Repealing the programs these companies were seemingly in full support of at the height of the Black Lives Matter movement and under a democratic administration seems all too convenient. But now, in a disheartening sign of the times, these companies can stop pretending to care.

Since the new president deemed DEI on a federal level as "radical" and "wasteful," many brands, companies and services seem to think their initiatives are as well. While the executive order is not a legal compliance to take away DEI, they see its use in the workplace as a fad that changes based on what is popular and profitable. If DEI can be removed this quickly it goes to show there was a lack of heart behind the installation of these programs. People whose jobs counted on them being given a chance in places that would have overlooked them - thanks to the protection of DEI - are affected when these beliefs are challenged in favor of a less diverse workplace.

This is more than just companies complying with executive orders; it is showing the true colors of businesses that put on a mask of sincerity when to them, it was only a trend. The livelihood of minority workers and the diversity of our workplaces will be criminally affected by these changes. Who can say that with a new executive order further down the line companies will not go back and pretend to care again?

## Return of the Chief: Trump's week-one brings swift action

by John Stevens

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With it officially being one week into President Donald J. Trump's second term, we see a refreshing taste of an active executive branch. During his inaugural address last Monday, Trump proclaimed that his mandate was to "reverse a horrible betrayal" by the state with issues such as inflation, immigration and criminal justice. To fulfill this, week one contained a litany of base pleasing policy measures tapping into campaign promises. These policies have certified Trump's goal for an America-First agenda centered around his nationalist pledges. Though the decisiveness and expediency of action from the Trump administration in one week certainly shows potential, I remain skeptical of the longevity of some of the executive orders.

President Trump was elected with a historic mandate surrounding a few key issues. Particularly when it comes to immigration, President Trump goes hand and hand with an immigration-restrictionism agenda. To lay an immediate groundwork to

Against Invasion" executive order. This ordered the deportation of all illegal aliens, construction of detention facilities for the migrants, and instituting financial penalties for "sanctuary cities" who harbor them. So far, according to the department of Homeland Security, over 7,000 migrants have been deported, mostly consisting of violent and sexual offenders. Though 7,000 may sound like a lot, in one week it averages out to 1,000 a day. At that rate, Trump is well under half a million deportations every year, despite his calls for ICE to increase deportations to around 1,500 a day. Even with the increases, Trump is far behind to deport even the over 10 million estimated illegal aliens that came in during the Biden administration. If Trump is going to meet his promised "mass deportations" then he is going to have to ramp up deportations to around 7,000 a day to reduce the undocumented population to the level it was when he left office.

Skepticism for the longevity of some of his orders also surrounds his ending the interpretation of the 14th amendment regarding birthright

citizenship through executive order. This order broadens the scope of the President's power to rectify the crisis, including the facilitation of energy products such as energy production through land leases and pipeline construction. Along with this, Trump has prioritized Alaska for crude oil production, defying Biden-era restrictions on drilling and mining. Trump has also again withdrawn from the Paris Climate Accords, all to unleash American energy and remove the boundaries that restrict energy production and usage.

Week one also consisted of many other culture-war and base appeasing goodies. This includes the federal recognition of two genders, rollback of federal diversity equity and inclusion offices, the establishment of Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) and ending federal funding of abortion through the Hyde amendment. Trump has also controversially pardoned nearly 1,500 of the Jan. 6 Capitol protesters, claiming many of the protesters were being held as political prisoners. Only six



Donald Trump, the 47th president of the United States. Trump began his second term as president on Jan. 20, 2025. PHOTO COURTESY OF @REALDONALDTRUMP ON INSTAGRAM

his immigration agenda, President Trump has totally closed the border and ordered a barrier constructed. To do this, he has signed orders to deploy both federal law enforcement and the military to secure the border, along with instituting a 90-day suspension on the refugee admittance program, with prospects to continue the suspension for even longer. Barring refugee admittance is essential to ending illegal immigration, as many illegal migrants circumvent deportation by claiming refugee status. When entering the country, migrants are subject to passing a low bar "fear screening" where an immigration officer determines whether the migrant may have a claim to refugee status. The migrants are then given a court date far into the future due to backlog, released into the interior of the country, and disappear from the radar of authorities. According to the America First Policy Institute, because only 15% of refugees are given their status by a court, many illegal aliens do not show up to their court date and are rarely deported. For other methods used by incoming migrants, Trump has called on agencies to apply more strict guidelines on admittance and granting of visas. Trump has also instituted the "Protecting the American People

citizenship. As a Trump-voter myself, I recognize the erroneous nature of birthright citizenship and the abuse of so-called "anchor-babies." That being said, I sincerely doubt that the Supreme Court will uphold the President's authority to change the interpretation of a Constitutional amendment with an executive order. Though they may agree with Trump's stance, that is still a big maybe that will likely be shot down by a lower court. Though Trump's week-one immigration policies demonstrate his sincerity of action regarding immigration policy and indicate a positive direction, I await to see the long term follow through on things like a border wall, "mass deportations" and birthright citizenship.

As far as economic policy goes, "Drill baby drill" was a phrase that commonly echoed through Trump campaign events, highlighting his interest in increasing domestic oil production and establishing energy independence. Trump has often linked the rising energy prices under Biden to be the primary cause of the occurrences of inflation and the more expensive cost of living. To set the tone of the urgency of the cost increases, Trump has declared a na-

tion energy emergency through executive order. This order broadens the scope of the President's power to rectify the crisis, including the facilitation of energy products such as energy production through land leases and pipeline construction. Along with this, Trump has prioritized Alaska for crude oil production, defying Biden-era restrictions on drilling and mining. Trump has also again withdrawn from the Paris Climate Accords, all to unleash American energy and remove the boundaries that restrict energy production and usage.

After four long years of a slow-moving executive, President Trump has delivered a quick-acting and energetic presidential administration which displays a genuine follow through of promises to his base. As an America-First conservative, there's a lot to cherish and be excited about from week one, with a grand potential of continued success as we go into the remainder of the administration. Yet, I still have my reservations of the longevity of certain goals such as mass deportations, revocation of birthright citizenship and improvement of the economy from oil production alone.

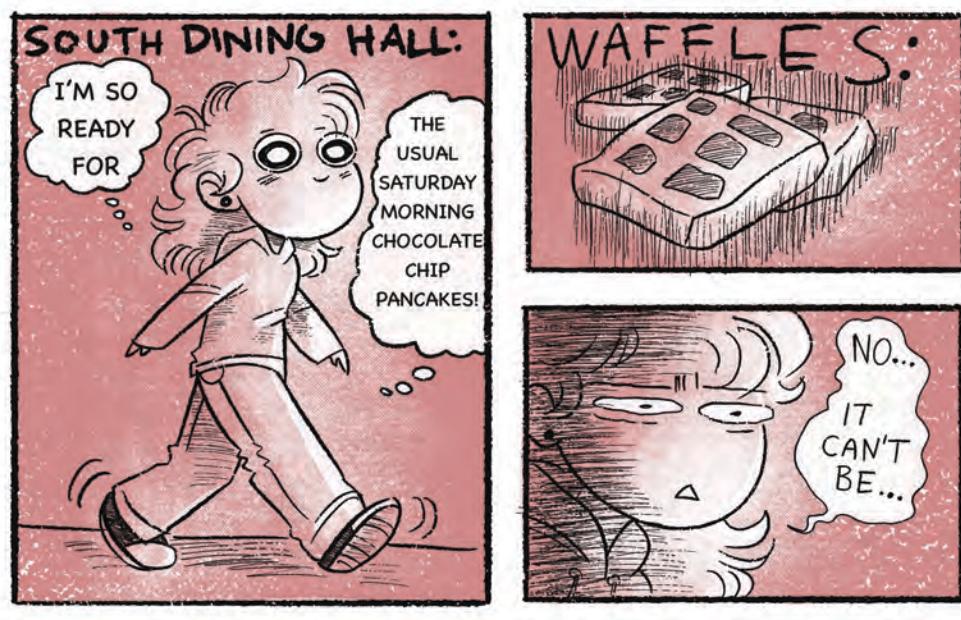
Photo of the Day | Sunshine through the clouds



The sun shines over snow-covered South Campus dorms at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, Conn., on Jan. 28, 2025. The spring semester is off to a chilling start with snow on the ground and high wind speeds. PHOTO BY ZACHARY MOLLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# The Daily Campus Comics

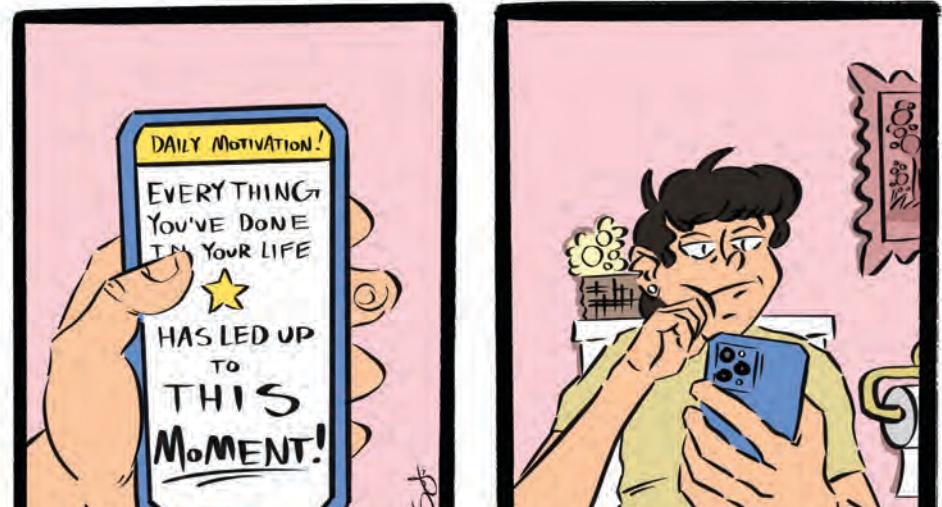
by Nicholas D'Amore  
CONTRIBUTING ARTIST



by Connor Szrejna  
STAFF ARTIST



by Samantha Hass  
ARTIST EDITOR





A group of racing cars during a race. The NASCAR preseason starts on Sunday, Feb. 2.

IMAGE COURTESY OF PICRYL.COM

## NASCAR 2025: A Preview

by Alex Klancko

HE/HIM  
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The NASCAR season is upon us with the preseason starting Sunday, Feb. 2. In this article we will get into what you need to know about the Cup Series before the Cook Out Clash at Bowman Gray Stadium.

The NASCAR season is 39 total races, one preseason race, one all-star race, 26 regular season races and 10 playoff races. There are three types of track NASCAR races that take place on: Oval, Road and Street. Oval Tracks are between 160 and 500 laps, Road Tracks are between 68 and 110 laps and the only street course in Chicago is 75 laps.

In the Cup Series, there are 15 full-time teams with 36 full-time drivers in the Cup Series, so let's get into each one.

The first four-car team is Hendrick Motorsports, run by Rick Hendrick and former five-time NASCAR champion Jeff Gordon. It has four full-time cars the No. 5 2021 Cup Series Champion Kyle Larson; No. 9 2020 Cup Series Champion, Chase Elliott; No. 24 William Byron and No. 48 Alex Bowman. Hendrick's is always near the top of the standings and has some of the best drivers in the sport in Larson

and Elliott.

The second four-car team is Joe Gibbs Racing, founded by three-time Super Bowl Champion head coach Joe Gibbs. The drivers for JGR are No. 11 Denny Hamlin, No. 19 Chase Briscoe, No. 20 for Christopher Bell and No. 54 for Ty Gibbs, grandson of Joe Gibbs.

The first three-car team is Spire Motorsports which sports No. 7 for Justin Haley, No. 71 Michael McDowell and No. 77 Carson Hocevar.

The second three-car team is RFK Racing, owned by Jack Roush and current Cup Series driver Brad Keselowski. They sport the No. 6 2012 Cup Series Champion Brad Keselowski; No. 17 Chris Buescher and No. 60 Ryan Preece.

Then there is the team part-owned by six-time NBA Champion Michael Jordan, 23XI Racing. They sport No. 23 for "Bubba" Wallace, No. 45 for Tyler Reddick and No. 35 for Riley Herbst.

There is also Front Row Motorsports, who has No. 34 Todd Gilliland, No. 4 Noah Gragson and No. 38 Zane Smith competing for them.

The penultimate three car team is Trackhouse Racing, with the musical artist Pitbull as a

part owner. They will have No. 1 Ross Chastain, No. 99 Daniel Suárez and No. 88 Shane Van Gisbergen competing for Mr. Worldwide's team.

The final three car team is Team Penske, owned by Roger Penske. Penske's team has drivers No. 2 Austin Cindric, No. 12 2023 Cup Series Champion Ryan Blaney. Of course, how can you forget the Connecticut native, who is also the 2018, 2022 and 2024 Cup Series Champion, No. 22 Joey Logano.

There are five two-car teams, the first being Kaulig Racing, who sports drivers No. 16 A. J. Allmendinger and No. 10 for Ty Dillon.

The penultimate two-car team is Richard Childress Racing, who bring No. 3 Austin Dillon and the No. 8 2015 and 2019 Cup Series Champion Kyle Busch.

Finally, Legacy Motor Club who has No. 42 John Nemechek and No. 43 Erik Jones competing for them this season.

There are four single-car teams in the Cup Series with the Wood Brothers Racing crew hosting No. 21 Josh Berry, Haas Factory Team bringing No. 41 Cole Custer, Hyak Motorsports having No. 47 Ricky Stenhouse Jr and Rick Ware Racing choosing No. 51 Cody Ware to represent.

sent them.

There are also a couple of part-time teams, the most notable one being No. 84 Jimmie Johnson of Legacy Motor Clubs who is also a seven-time Cup Series Champion.

Some of the more prominent drivers mentioned above are Larson, who underwent some controversy in 2020 after saying a racial slur on a livestream. Larson then signed with Hendrick Motorsports in 2021 following his six-month ban from NASCAR, winning a championship that same year.

Busch, a.k.a. "Rowdy," joined the Cup Series in 2004 and has been one of NASCAR's biggest menaces since. Busch has been one of the most successful drivers in NASCAR history, winning two championships in 2015 and 2019, with the former coming after he broke his leg earlier that year.

Logano, born in Middletown, Connecticut, won his third championship in 2024. He has consistently won the past decade, winning his first championship in 2018 and his second in 2022. Many fans think his most recent championship is undeserved since he did not meet the statistical feats of previous champions.

Hamlin, who turns 45 this

year, might not have much left in him. Hamlin has 54 wins and 358 top ten finishes to his name but still does not have a championship. He got close in 2010, finishing second, but has not come close to that since. Hamlin still has some left in the tank, but is it enough to get a championship? Only time will tell.

Then, there's NASCAR's golden boy: Chase Elliott. The 2020 Cup Series Champion has captured the hearts of fans ever since he got promoted to the Cup Series in 2015. Elliott was also the 2022 Cup Series Regular Season Champion in 2022, but failed to win the championship, finishing fourth that year. Elliott will always be in contention for a championship, so it will be fun to see what he will do this year.

Finally, there is the "Watermelon Man." When some people think of watermelon, they think of a hot summer's day; when NASCAR fans hear it, they think of Ross Chastain, who celebrates his wins by smashing a watermelon on top of his car. Chastain has not won a championship yet, but he has become a fan favorite in the NASCAR community. He even got a maneuver banned after he pulled off a literal "wall ride" in Martinsville to secure a spot in the Championship Four in 2022.

## A New Tournament In College Hoops: The College Basketball Crown

by Ryan Lombardi

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As March approaches, the excitement of college basketball builds as teams across the country fight for a coveted spot in the postseason spotlight. While every squad hopes to secure a spot in the NCAA tournament, there has always been the National Invitation Tournament (NIT) for those who miss the cut. However, this year signals a shift in the college hoops post-season landscape. A new rival tournament is set to enter the scene, challenging the NIT and giving more opportunities for bubble teams to compete on national television.

In April 2024, FOX Sports and AEG announced the "College Basketball Crown", a new postseason tournament for programs that just missed March Madness. Set to debut in Las Vegas this March, the tournament will feature 16 of the best teams not in the NCAA tournament. People immediately pointed out the similarities to the NIT in its "best of the rest" format. The introduction of a new tournament raises questions about the future of the NIT, how this affects smaller programs and the fight for broadcasting dominance in college hoops.

FOX has secured agreements with the Big East, Big

Ten and Big 12, ensuring the top two remaining schools from each conference spots in the College Basketball Crown.

The last 10 spots will consist of at-large bids from all conferences. Even before the College Basketball Crown debuted, a clear rivalry emerged between FOX's new tournament and ESPN's longstanding partnership with the 85-year-old NIT.

As early as 2023, directors of the NIT expressed concerns about the possibility of a new rival tournament emerging. On top of this was speculation that the NCAA tournament may expand to include more at-large bids, reducing the number of power conference teams in the NIT.

The prospect of fewer big-name programs in their event would diminish the NIT's prestige and viewership, forcing them to take action.

The NIT made a controversial decision last November,

removing auto bids for all regular season conference champions. Instead, the first 12 spots now only go to the top two teams from each of the Power Five conferences.

Mid-major programs pointed out that this move was a direct threat to their chances of participating in the NIT. Directors of the tournament even acknowledged that the decision was intended to benefit bigger name programs

the other will become clearer as March approaches.

The introduction of the College Basketball Crown presents both new opportunities and challenges in college basketball. As this tournament and the NIT seek to establish



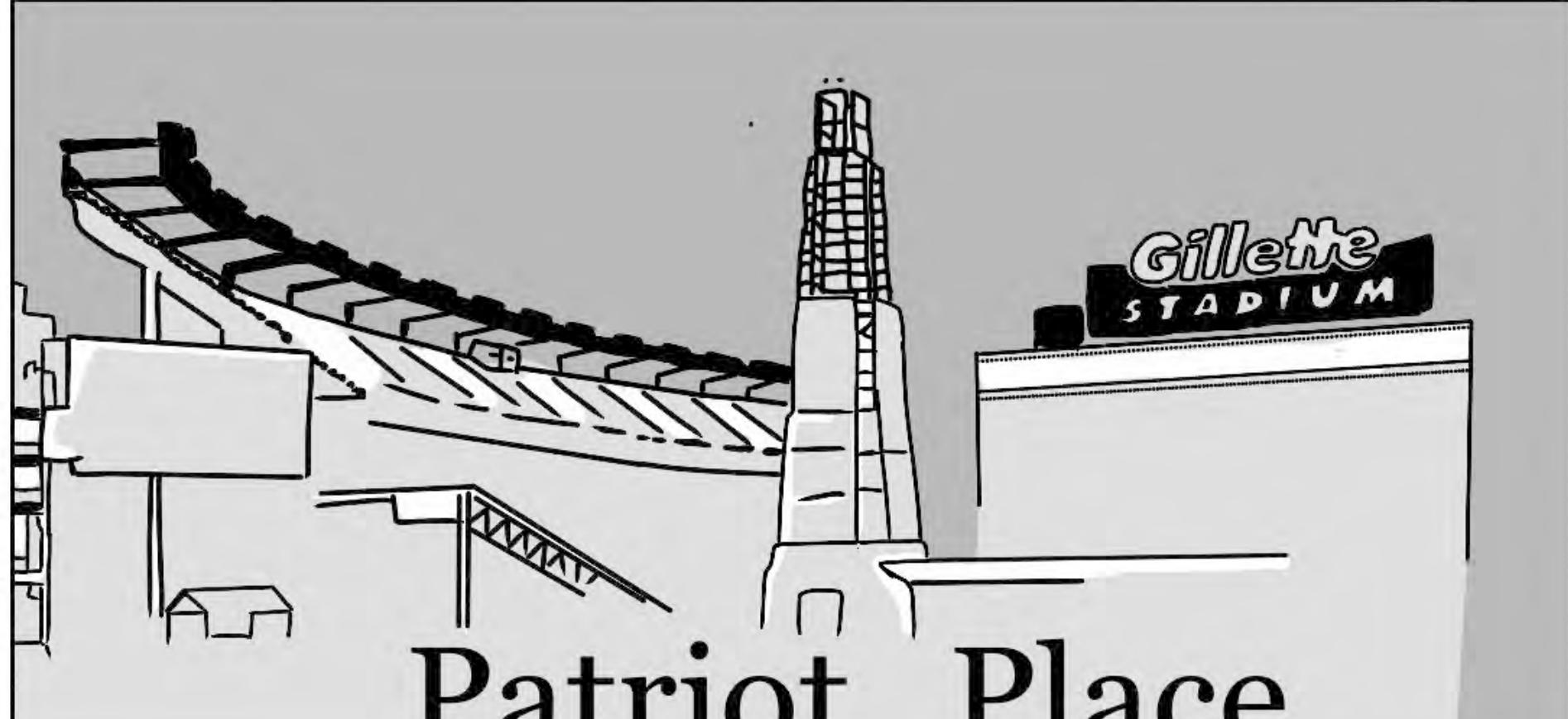
CLIPART COURTESY OF OPENCLIPART

## Photo of the Day |



**UConn women's basketball stays undefeated in conference play. The Huskies defeated the Seton Hall Pirates by 60 points in the Big East matchup in Storrs, Conn. on Jan. 19, 2025.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



LOGO BY LILLIAN LAFEMINA, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# Patriot Place: Mock Draft 1.0 sees the Patriots land two offensive linemen

by Graham Wilker

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With the offseason starting early for the New England Patriots, draft preparation for fans comes early too. After the Patriots finished strong with Joe Milton at the helm with a win over the Bills in Week 18, they solidified their position at the fourth pick in the draft. The unimpressive 4-13 finish exposed just how many holes the Patriots have. Scarier yet, the 2024 draft class looks very uninspiring apart from Drake Maye. It's obvious they have lots of holes to fill, and this season's draft will be one of the avenues to fill them.

A disclaimer: this draft is three rounds, with no trades. Given that the season isn't over yet and neither free agency nor the combine have begun, naturally we'll have changes to the order and needs for each team. With that being said, here's Mock Draft

1.0.

**Round 1, Pick 4: Abdul Carter, Edge Defender, Penn State**

The Patriots struggled to put pressure on the quarterback this season, recording a dismal 1.6 sacks per game, the fewest in the league. Carter, a 6-foot-3, 259-pound monster, wreaked havoc on opposing offensive lines all year, recording 12 sacks, a joint best in the Big 10. To go along with his sack numbers, he also forced a pair of fumbles and had an excellent 91.2 overall PFF grade. Deatrich Wise is a pending free agent and four of Keion White's sacks on the season came in the first two games. Anfernee Jennings seems to be the only sure thing on the edge for the team at the moment, but they could change that with Carter.

**Round 2, Pick 37: Matthew Golden, Wide Receiver, Texas**

The Patriots took the overwhelming Ja'Lynn Polk

at this exact slot last draft, but they'll hope to capitalize on taking a better wideout this time around. The 6-foot, 195-pound receiver hauled in 58 catches for the Longhorns just shy of 1,000 yards and nine touchdowns, including seven for 149 and a touchdown against No. 4 Arizona State. Golden's deep threat ability and separation should catch the Patriots' eye and with a lack of explosiveness in their receiver room, he could certainly help. Kayshon Boutte and Pop Douglas proved to be reliable players in spurts last season, but adding a true deep threat could help transform the offense.

**Round 3, Pick 68: Tate Ratledge, Guard, Georgia**

I opted to pass on the offensive line in the first two rounds, but I couldn't further neglect it here. Cole Strange took over center duties for the last few weeks from Ben Brown following David Andrews' injury early in the sea-

son and Mike Onwenu is the only locked-in starter for next year. Should Andrews retire, a center and right guard are not enough to cobble together a solid offensive line. Ratledge offers experience and ability at the guard position and is a plug and play starter on the left side of the interior. Between ankle and knee injuries, Ratledge struggled to stay on the field during his final season at Georgia, but that's a risk the Patriots should be willing to take given his ceiling as a top tier guard.

**Round 3, Pick 77 (Via ATL, Matt Judon trade): Anthony Belton, Offensive Tackle, NC State**

More top 100 line help for Drake Maye! Tackle was a struggle last season even more so than guard for the team. 3.1 sacks allowed per game slots them tied for the six most in the league, a number that seems pretty friendly given Maye's ability to escape pressure. Vederian Lowe

proved he isn't a starting caliber tackle, and pending free agent Demontrey Jacobs will likely look for other options following a very poor season at right tackle. Rookie Caeden Wallace played through injury towards the end of the year and was underwhelming, though the jury's not out on his development yet. Belton's wide body with questionable feet, but with his athletic upside, he could be a starting caliber left tackle. While both he and Ratledge are risky picks for different reasons, proper development could bolster the offensive line very quickly with minimal initial investment.

Of course, this mock draft is still very early, and many are still not familiar with all the players. But regardless of free agency, the additions of a top-tier edge rusher and wide receiver along with a pair of top 100 linemen make for a very interesting and potentially franchise-altering draft.

# Lato's Lens: Biggest upsets, top performances and must-see matchups in men's college basketball

by Tyler Lato

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After a terrific college football season, it's time that Lato's Lens switches to a sport much different, yet just as exciting: men's college basketball. The college basketball season is currently at its peak, with in-conference matchups heating up and ultimately having huge implications for conference tournament seeding and even the March Madness Tournament. The one thing I enjoy about the sport the most is that any team can win on any given night—something that isn't seen too often in other college sports. With that being said, you know the drill: Here are some of the greatest upsets, top performances and must-see matchups for this week in NCAA men's college basketball.

## Biggest Upsets

**Vanderbilt 74, No. 6 Kentucky 69**

The Southeastern Conference produces crazy, jaw-dropping upsets nearly every week. The unranked Vanderbilt Commodores shocked the nation in a 74-69 defeat of the sixth-ranked Kentucky Wild-

cats', led by Head Coach Mark Pope. Despite being dominated in nearly every facet of the game, it was the Wildcats 17 turnovers that would be the difference in the game. Guard Jason Edwards led the way for the Commodores, scoring 18 points and racking up four assists.

## Kansas State 73, No. 23 West Virginia

In college basketball, sometimes it is nearly impossible to win an away game. This was the case for the No. 23 West Virginia after losing to unranked Kansas State in Kansas by a score of 73-60. For the K-State Wildcats, guard Dug McDaniel has an impressive stat line, dropping 15 points, six assists and two rebounds. Despite the loss, Mountaineer guard Javon Small scored 22 points and had five assists.

## Arizona 86, No. 3 Iowa State 75

Down by three with only 2.2 seconds left, Arizona guard Caleb Love launched an absolute snipe of a shot from well beyond halfcourt to send the game to overtime against the third-ranked Iowa State Cyclones. Led by Love's 22 points, two steals and two assists, the Wildcats would

prevail in overtime, defeating the Cyclones by a score of 86-75. This was a huge victory for the Wildcats, otherwise having a sub-par season per program standards.

## Top Performances

### Cooper Flagg, Duke

It's widely known that Duke's Cooper Flagg is a freak of nature, so much so that he's almost certainly going to be the top pick in the 2025 NBA Draft. After being down by 13 points to unranked rival NC State, Flagg exploded for 28 points, seven rebounds and three assists in the No. 2 Blue Devils' victory. This isn't surprising since Flagg is averaging 19 points, eight rebounds and 4.1 assists in his freshman campaign.

### Johni Broome, Auburn

After spraining his ankle earlier in the season, top-ranked Auburn's star forward Johni Broome returned from injury in spectacular fashion, recording a 16-point, 14 rebound double-double in an SEC showdown victory against the No. 6 Tennessee Volunteers. Broome has taken the college basketball world by storm throughout his career, solidifying himself as a NCAA Player of the Year candidate.

## Donovan Dent, New Mexico

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Despite being a lesser-known conference, the Mountain West produces quality talent each year. An example of which is New Mexico Lobos guard Donovan Dent, a potential conference player of the year candidate. In a 75-73 win over rival UNLV, Dent dropped a season-high 35 points, shooting 66.7% from the three-point line and drilling every foul shot. He's been a key component for the Lobos' success in conference play this season.

## Must-See Matchups

### Yale (11-6) at Princeton (14-5): Friday - 5 p.m.

The Ivy League is known for holding the nation's most prestigious academic institutions. What's hidden beneath the surface is extraordinary basketball talent. The game features star Princeton guard Xaivian Lee, who is projected to go in the second round in some mock drafts after lighting up Ivy League scoreboards for the past couple of years now. His counterpart from Yale, guard John Poulakidas, is also doing the same thing, averaging 19.4 points, 3.9 rebounds and 1.4 assists a game. Featuring two high-level guards, this game is certainly one to watch.

## UNC (13-8) at No. 2 Duke (18-2): Saturday - 6:30 p.m.

It's no doubt that Head Coach Huber Davis and his UNC Tarheels are having a mediocre season. However, an away win against their archrival Duke at Cameron Indoor Stadium will provide some life in the Tarheels locker room. Their game plan: stop Cooper Flagg. Although it's way easier said than done, the Tarheels defense will need to step up big time to win this highly anticipated rivalry matchup.

## No. 25 UConn (14-6) at No. 9 Marquette (17-3): Saturday - 8 p.m.

After dropping three out of their last five games, the No. 25 Huskies will look to secure a ginormous Big East ranked victory over No. 9 Marquette in Wisconsin this weekend. UConn is still without star freshman guard Liam McNeely, who has been injured with a high ankle sprain for the last couple of weeks. Marquette, on the other hand, has cruised to a 17-3 record led by senior guard and potential Big East Player of the Year Kam Jones. Defense has been a huge issue for the Huskies thus far, which needs to be fixed if they want to snag a gritty win at Marquette this weekend.

# Women's Tennis: Huskies to face Fairfield in regular season opener at home

by Julia Sasso

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UConn's Women's Tennis kicks off their 2025 regular season at home this week to face their in-state rivals, the Fairfield University Stags. The two programs have met nine previous times, and the Huskies currently stand undefeated against the Stags, with seven out of their nine wins from matches on Connecticut's home turf.

The last time these two programs faced one another was at the beginning of last season where the Huskies took the

win 6-1. sophomore Victoria Matos as well as senior Maria Constantinou both won straight sets in their singles matches to notch the win for their squad.

The Huskies have had mixed results in their preseason and currently stand with a singles preseason record of 48-42. Though that's not to say they haven't had strong players, such as freshman Chloe Lomans who holds a 10-2 overall record and has won nine out of her last 10 matches. Another player to look out for in the Huskies roster is sophomore Isabella Asenov who is currently on a two-game winning

streak and holds an 8-4 overall record.

However, UConn has found success in their doubles play, with a record of 34-14. With Lomans and Matos currently holding a six-match winning streak and a 7-4 record, another successful pairing has been Constantinou and senior Olivia Wright who won eight of their last 10 matches and hold a 10-2 overall record.

On the other hand, the Stags have faced difficulties as they start their season, already holding an 0-2 record overall record. After consecutive losses to St. John's and

Long Island University last weekend, Fairfield currently stands with a 44-61 singles match record and a 28-31 doubles record.

However, there are several players that stand out in their roster and that UConn will have to prepare for. One player the Huskies will need to look out for is sophomore Anna Neyestani. Despite Neyestani losing her last match, she still stands with a 11-5 singles record, as well as a 6-5 doubles record when playing alongside sophomore Maeve Cassidy. Another strong player in the program is sophomore

Nicolette Loeffler who holds a 6-8 single record and an 8-7 doubles record.

The Huskies will be hoping for a win to extend their winning streak over Fairfield and to start this season in the right direction, after having one of their most successful seasons under Head Coach Glenn Marshall in 2024. The Stags, on the other hand, will expect to turn the page on their losing streak and take to win, in hopes of turning their season around early on.

The match will take place on Wednesday, Jan. 29, at Magic Lincer Tennis Academy at 1 p.m.



The UConn women's tennis team plays against Fordham on the second day of the UConn Invitational on Sept. 14, 2024, in Storrs, Conn. The Huskies won the match 4-3.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAHANA GANESH, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



# Sports

## Women's Basketball: Huskies aim for 25th consecutive victory over DePaul in last game of January

by Jake McCreven

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The sixth-ranked UConn women's basketball team (19-2, 10-0) travels to Chicago for a Wednesday night match-up against the DePaul Blue Demons (11-11, 6-3) in Wintrust Arena.

The Huskies are 24-0 all-time against DePaul, 8-0 in conference play and 11-0 on the road. The last meeting in Chicago between the two Big East foes saw a decisive 104-67 win for Connecticut (Feb. 2024).

UConn is riding a nine-game winning streak (all Big East opponents), which has been aided by a historic offensive stretch of scoring and efficiency ratings. Since Jan. 5 – when Paige Bueckers was injured in a 31-point win over Villanova – the Huskies are second nationally in offensive efficiency rating (128), second in effective field goal percentage (61.8) and second in two-point percentage (62.8), per Bart Torvik.

Continuing its offensive firework display will be paramount against a DePaul offense that has struggled since the New Year. The Blue Demons have scored 70 points just twice since a Jan. 2 match-up against Xavier, ranking 279th nationally in effective field goal percentage (42.8) and in the ninth percentile over its last five outings (39.9).

Jumping out to an early lead will free up time for rotational

players looking to make more of an impact on the lineup, such as Aubrey Griffin.

"That's the whole point," Head Coach Geno Auriemma

said after the team's win over Villanova when asked about starting games on the right side offensively.

Playing with a lead is some-

thing the Huskies are all too familiar with. Aside from a first half deficit against Georgetown on Jan. 11, Connecticut led for every second

of the second, third and fourth period during its winning streak.

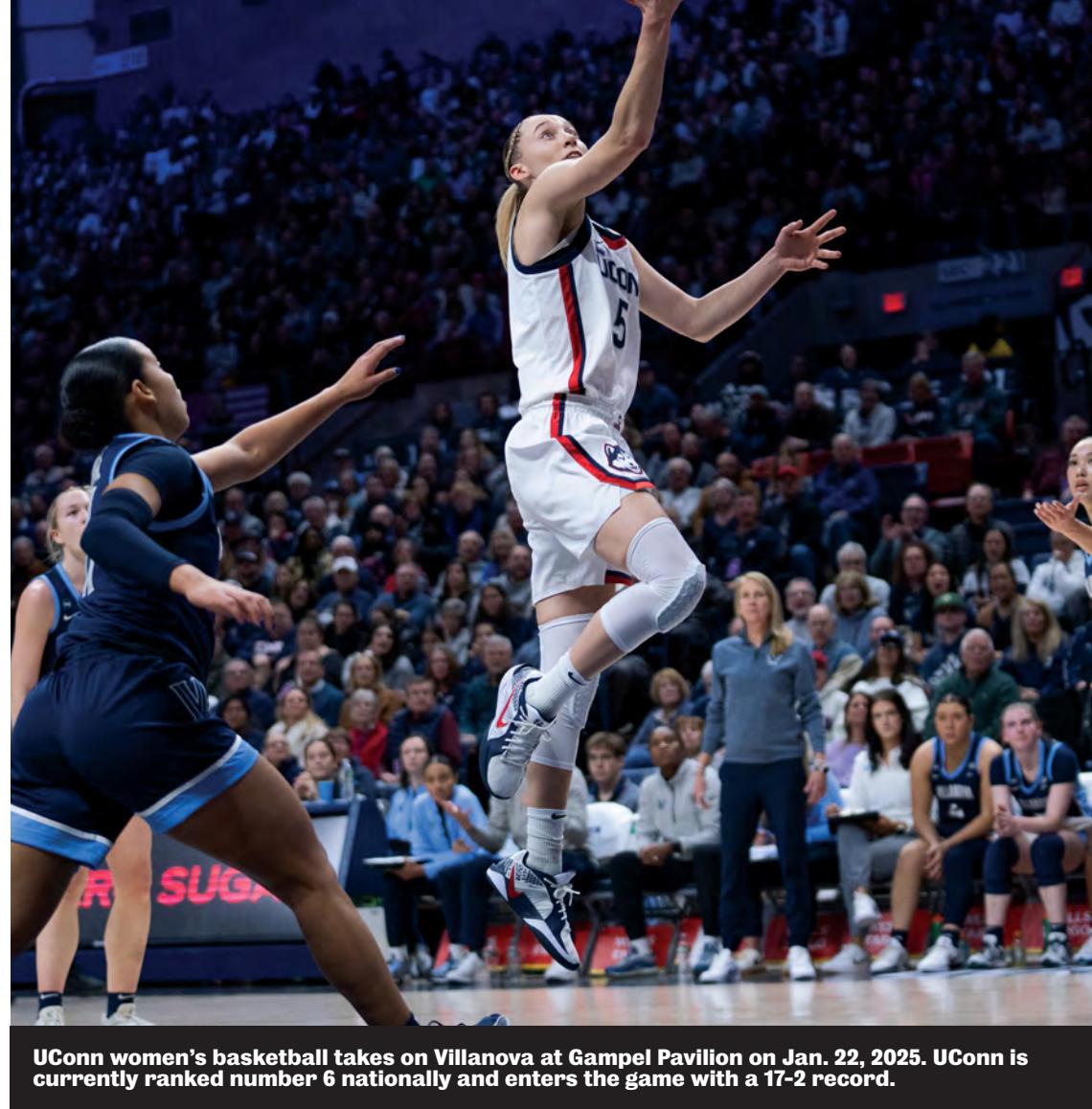
DePaul is led by the three-headed scoring monster Jorie Allen (19.5), Taylor Johnson-Matthews (14.2) and Kate Clarke (10.8), who contribute nearly 70% to the team's average of 64.6 points per game. Allen is among the Big East's best scorers and leads the team in points, assists, steals and blocks, while Johnson-Matthews and Clarke continue to develop during their junior seasons.

Another name to keep an eye out for is forward Meg Newman, the Blue Demons' leading rebounder. The 6-foot-2 junior parlays her near eight boards per game with 8.1 points per night and is a dynamic threat on the high post.

Still, the Blue Demons have struggled down low, shooting 13.3% below the D-I average in the paint offensively (38.9% on 38/72 shooting) and allowing 6.4% above D-I average to fall defensively. This could be an opportunity for Jana El Alfy and/or Ice Brady to get involved early and build confidence for future heavyweight bouts against Tennessee and South Carolina.

Nonetheless, the Huskies will still run through its dynamic – and terrifying – trio of Bueckers, Fudd and Strong. Finding open shots should be a luxury with its treasure trove of offensive fire power.

The game will be broadcasted on SNY. Coverage starts at 6:30 p.m., with post-game coverage concluding at 10 p.m.



UConn women's basketball takes on Villanova at Gampel Pavilion on Jan. 22, 2025. UConn is currently ranked number 6 nationally and enters the game with a 17-2 record.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## Men's Basketball: No. 25 UConn looks to get back in the win column at home against DePaul

by Connor Sargeant

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The UConn men's basketball team is coming off a brutal loss last Saturday on the road at Xavier. This was a contest where, yet again, the Huskies struggled defensively, fouling at a high level. It became so bad that Alex Karaban fouled out with three and a half minutes left in a tight ball game. Again, freshman Liam McNeely never suited up for the program, still nursing his high ankle sprain. However, Connecticut has a prime opportunity to get back into the win column this Wednesday at the XL Center, as the program will host the DePaul Blue Demons.

While Connecticut's 6-3 Big East record is not where the program would like it to be, the Blue Demons have struggled to generate any solid momentum in the conference. DePaul owns a 1-9 record, with their lone win coming over Georgetown. While UConn is expected to cruise towards victory, they did not play a complete game the last time these sides squared away.

While UConn dominated the first half of their New Year's Day showdown at DePaul, the second half did not go to plan. The Huskies dominated the first half, blowing the Blue Demons out of the water, putting up 43 points in the first half while only giving up 22. Yet, Connecticut's defense let DePaul crawl right back into that contest, conceding 46 second-half points. In fact, the Huskies were outplayed near the end of the game, being outscored by eight points in those 20 minutes. The Huskies being outplayed was also

due to the second-half scoring surge of Conor Enright, who shook off an unideal first half in a big way.

The junior guard accumulated 17 points on 6-7 shooting, including a 4-4 slash from the charity stripe. Despite only averaging slightly above seven points a night for DePaul, the Huskies will want to watch plenty of film on Enright to prevent a rerun of his second-half heater. Of course, the defense will want to ensure they contain DePaul's leading scorer, Jacob Meyer, who has struggled as of late. The sophomore guard has been amid a three-game cold streak, failing to crack double digits in any game in that span. Considering that he is a significant part of

the DePaul game plan, Dan Hurley's squad will want to center his defensive focus on

making Meyer uncomfortable offensively, allowing only low-percentage shots. On the other side of the ball, Hurley and the Huskies will be looking for a big game out of Karaban, who is coming off a tough performance.

The redshirt junior logged 31 minutes for Connecticut, though he was not his effective self, scoring only nine points on 4-13 shooting, including 1-6 from downtown. Despite Karaban's less-than-ideal performance, the McNeely-less Huskies kept it close, losing by only two possessions. If the program wishes to return to the winning side of things at home,

they will need Karaban's A-game, which he has brought

so many times before. In fact, the last time these Big East foes met, Karaban torched the DePaul defense. He found the bottom of the net at an efficient 6-13 clip, including an excellent 4-8 from beyond the arc to round out an excellent 18-point performance. Expect Wednesday to be a big bounce-back game from the two-time national champion, as the program will hope for Karaban to get back into the groove of things as more challenging games are just around the corner.

The Huskies will also be

looking for a more significant scoring boost out of their sophomore class as, outside of Solo Ball, whose scor-

ing production was lacking at Xavier. Jayden Ross and Jaylin Stewart logged a combined 37 minutes, yet they could not find the bottom of the net more than once. Both athletes have shown flashes of what Hurley has repeatedly discussed that he needs out of the pair. Ross was an instant spark plug off the bench for Connecticut with a seven-point flurry in the program's narrow 68-60 road win at Georgetown. On the other hand, Stewart has proved that when he's on, he can be an effective scorer, such as in the program loss at Creighton on Jan. 18. Without the Seattle native's 14-point performance, that contest would not have come down to the last few possessions but would have instead been decided much earlier. On both sides of the ball, the Huskies need more consistency from this pair, especially since McNeely will be a game-time decision for Wednesday's contest.

Looking at how these sophomores perform offensively on Wednesday since the success of the program without McNeely is highly correlated with how the wings score the basketball.

While Wednesday is expected to be the Huskies' seventh win of this season's Big East campaign, many long-term trends will emerge from this contest. Not to mention, the competition for the Huskies gets more challenging, and quicker. After Wednesday, UConn will face No. 9 Marquette, No. 15 St John's and Creighton, three games that will be an all-out war. UConn badly needs a win on Wednesday, and you can catch all the action at 8 p.m. at either the XL Center or on Peacock.



UConn men's basketball takes on the Butler Bulldogs at the XL Center in Hartford, Conn. on Jan. 21, 2025. UConn defeated Butler in overtime with a score of 80-78.

PHOTOGRAPH BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS