

The Daily Campus



THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT SINCE 1896 • VOLUME CXXVIII, NO. 71

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

ONE PLATE, TWO PLATES CLOSES, TO BE REPLACED BY BEAR'S SMOKEHOUSE BARBECUE

by **Gianni Salisbury**
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The University of Connecticut Student Union announced the closing of One Plate, Two Plates last December with plans to open a Bear's Smokehouse Barbecue in its place, according to Isaac Barber, who serves as the director of the Student Union and event services.

One Plate, Two Plates, one of the three eateries in the Student Union, officially closed toward the end of the fall 2024 semester. The location is now under construction with hopes of opening Bear's by Feb. 1. If not finished by then, the Union is aiming to open the location in early spring.

Bear's serves many types of foods, according to its website, including sandwiches, salads, soups, ribs and various types of barbecued meat. Though it is unknown which menu items will be served at the Union location, Barber stated they are planning to provide a variety of high-quality foods.

The Union location will also have a vegan option. They hope to offer a "diversity of food[s]," according to Barber.

Barber stressed that one of the improvements Bear's hopes to bring to Union food service is efficiency.

"They're going to be moving pretty quickly. One Plate, definitely, at times during the day, had long lines. Part of the long lines, even though they were popular, was because a ticket took a while to assemble the food and to cook the food. I think Bear's is going to move a bit faster and have definitely high quality, wonderful food," Barber said.

For those wondering about the gluten-free chicken tenders originally served at One Plate, Two Plates, they will still be sold at the Union Street Market, according to a post by UConn Dining's Instagram. In response to a student question, the Instagram also stated that the gluten-free tenders will continue to have their own fryer to protect cross-contamination.

As for how students can pay for food, Bear's will be independent of Dining Services and, therefore, students will not be able use their meal plan, points or flex passes. Their payment system will be the same as the other quick service restaurants such as

Dunkin', Subway and Starbucks, according to the UConn Dining Instagram.

However, students will be able to use Husky Bucks at the new Bear's location, according to Barber.

Plans to replace One Plate, Two Plates have been in talks for a while. Barber stated that the original purpose of the retail spaces in the Union was to be used for external vendors, such as places like Dunkin', Subway and other restaurants not under Dining Services.

Originally, external vendors did reside in these locations. But when these places closed, they were taken over by Dining Services, Barber said. In 2014, the Wendy's that was located in the Union closed and was taken over by Dining Services and turned into One Plate, Two Plates.

Barber said he took charge of bringing external vendors back to the Union.

"Since I got here or got into this role, I've been looking at those spaces and thinking about, what do we need to do to try to get them back to what the purpose of those spaces were supposed to be, which is having these retailers there," Barber stated.

A lot of factors went into choosing the right retail place to go into the Union, such as if the business would be able to sustain themselves throughout the summer, rent and percentages of sales, according to Barber.

The University has worked with Bear's in the past, as it has satellite locations at UConn sports facilities such as Pratt and Whitney Stadium, Gampel Pavilion and the Toscano Family Ice Forum, according to UConn Today. Barber stated that the University has a good relationship with the restaurant, and, over the years, they have been in talks to open a location around campus. It wasn't until now that these talks came to fruition.

The closing of One Plate, Two Plates has not resulted in anyone losing their job according to Barber. Everyone that previously worked at One Plate has been relocated. Barber stressed that this was one of the Union's main concerns when planning this transition.

"We worked very well with the particular unions that were involved to be able to come up with a plan. We could

not have moved forward if we didn't have that resolved in a positive way," Barber said.

Another change coming to the UConn Student Union is the addition of Acai bowls.

The UConn dining Instagram announced in a post Monday that a quick-serve concept will be opening on the lower level of the Student Union near the Market Cafe. The new service will sell SAMBAZON Açai Bowls and will be opening in early February. Students will be able to use their meal plan and points at this location.

Overall, Barber hopes that these changes will provide students with good food and give them a chance to give feedback on the food they are consuming.

"We just hope that the students enjoy the food. Our commitment to them is that we want to make sure that students have an opportunity to kind of give us the feedback that's probably more crucial than anything. Bear's is committed to being able to listen and to adjust," Barber said.

Upcoming announcements about the new openings can be found on the UConn Dining website.



One Plate, Two Plates is now closed and removed from the Student Union after announcing its closure in December 2024. Bear's Smokehouse Barbeque will operate in the vacant space as one of the three restaurant vendors in the Student Union. PHOTO COURTESY OF UCONN

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News

2025 Inauguration: A closer look

by **Harika Goteti**
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Donald Trump has returned to the White House on Monday, Jan. 20 for a non-consecutive second term, becoming only the second president in U.S. history after Grover Cleveland to achieve such a political comeback. Prior to 1937, inaugurations were held on March 4. Since then, Jan. 20 has been the official date for the transfer of presidential power.

The Associated Press livestreamed the presidential inauguration on YouTube, providing millions of viewers nationwide with real-time access to the historic transfer of power. Trump's 2025 inauguration drew notable attendees, including tech billionaires Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff Bezos, former presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary Clinton. While Michelle Obama chose not to attend, former Vice President Mike Pence, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris were present.

Two Supreme Court justices played an important role in this upcoming election. Chief Justice John Roberts administered the presidential

oath to Trump, while Justice Brett Kavanaugh swore in Vice President JD Vance.

Opera tenor Christopher Macchio performed the national anthem prior to Trump's oath of office. Upon entry, Trump was seen shaking hands with Biden and others while the crowd cheered, shouting "USA! USA! USA!"

Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) welcomed everyone and introduced Trump and Vance, expressing hope for "the peaceful transfer of power at the heart of our democracy." She thanked the committee for their hard work and stressed that the theme of "enduring democracy" should remain central, especially with many former presidents in attendance.

"Through war and peace, through adversity and prosperity, we hold this inauguration every four years, and today it falls on Martin Luther King Day," Klobuchar added, emphasizing the importance of recognizing the values enshrined in the Constitution.

Klobuchar further remarked that every citizen, regardless of political affiliation, "is in a position of responsibility as a citizen, which comes with the obligation not to seek out

malice, as President Lincoln once reminded us, but to view others with the generosity of spirit, despite our differences." Klobuchar ended her speech by saying that every citizen, not just politicians, has a say in democracy.

First, JD Vance took his oath, administered by Kavanaugh, with his wife Usha Vance and children by his side. Shortly after, Trump took his oath of office with his wife Melania, Trump, holding a Bible and his children by his side.

After a choir performance, Trump took the stage to deliver a speech where he pledged to "put America first" and build a nation that is "proud, prosperous and free." He assured the audience that "America will be greater, stronger and more exceptional than ever before," emphasizing his commitment to prioritizing hardworking Americans.

Trump also acknowledged the difficulties faced by those enduring disasters in states like California and North Carolina. He additionally claimed that the United States spends "more money on [public health] than any country anywhere in the world" and criticized the education system for teaching children to

"be ashamed of themselves and, in many cases, to hate our own country."

He vowed to change the education system quickly and promised to restore the American people's "faith, wealth, democracy and freedom." Trump further declared that "from this moment on, America's decline is over," and vowed to "immediately restore the integrity, competency and loyalty of America's government." Despite assassination attempts, Trump said he believes his life was saved for a reason, which was "by God, to make America great again."

During his speech, Trump made various promises during his presidency, including pledging to end the practice of catch and release and to send troops to the southern border to combat what he described as an invasion of the country. Additionally, he proposed designating cartels as foreign terrorist organizations to enhance law enforcement efforts against them.

"[The] American dream will soon be back and thriving like never before," Trump stated. He implemented a new Department of Government Efficiency which hopes to "restore competence and effectiveness

to our federal government." Trump said he hopes to implement free speech and ensure that race and gender are not a part of everyday life.

Trump's speech emphasized themes of unity, resilience and ambition. He urged Americans "to act with courage, vigor and the vitality of history's greatest civilization," calling for national harmony as a "peacemaker and a unifier."

Highlighting the power of determination, Trump stated, "I stand before you now as proof that you should never believe that something is impossible to do. In America, the impossible is what we do best." Trump concluded his speech by telling citizens that nothing will stand in their way and declaring that, according to him, the U.S.'s golden age has just begun.

After his speech, the Armed Forces Chorus and Carrie Underwood, a Grammy-winning country music superstar, performed "America the Beautiful." Shortly after, Reverend Franklin Graham, Rabbi Ari Berman and Reverend Lorenzo Sewell led prayers, emphasizing unity and shared values.

The inaugural address concluded with a rendition of the national anthem, performed



President-elect Donald Trump takes the oath of office as he is sworn in as president during the 60th Presidential Inauguration. This took place in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol in Washington on Monday, Jan. 20, 2025.

CHIP SOMODEVILLA/POOL PHOTO VIA AP

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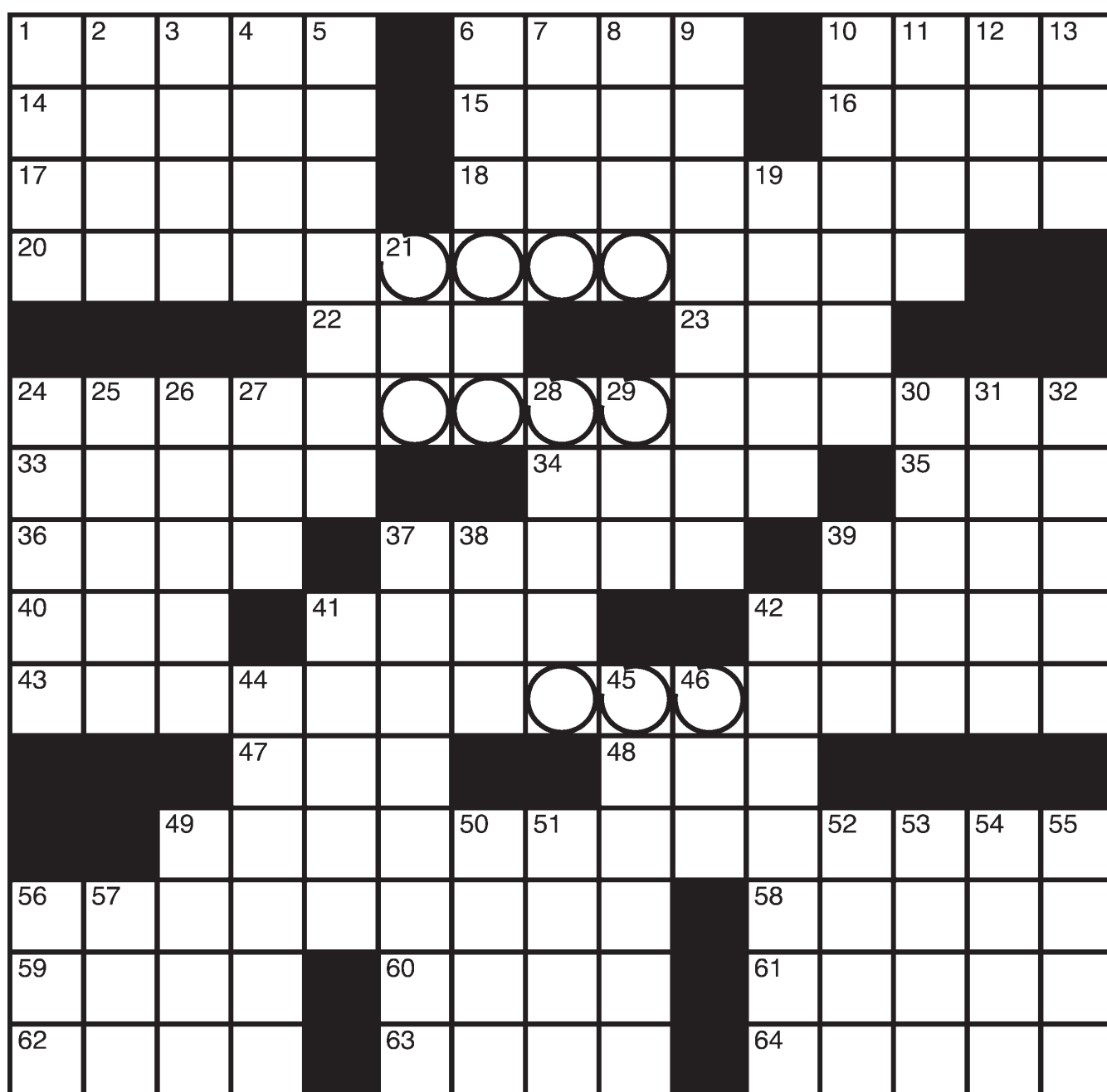
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- 6 Oscar winner Guinness
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- 14 Heartless
- 15 Showroom sample
- 16 Length x width
- 17 Soup scoop
- 18 "Sunflowers" and "Water Lilies"
- 20 Studio co-founded by Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, and others
- 22 Eggy holiday drink
- 23 Air traffic org.
- 24 Like Vera Wang and I.M. Pei
- 33 Luxury watch brand
- 34 The red planet
- 35 The "A" of IPA
- 36 Numbered musical composition
- 37 Manicure targets
- 39 Fencer's handful
- 40 Telluride or Escalade
- 41 Fireplace stack
- 42 Muscular strength
- 43 Completely unplanned
- 47 Always, poetically
- 48 Soak (up), as gravy
- 49 Social groups that work on embroidery projects, or what can be found three times in this puzzle?
- 56 Careful examination
- 58 ___ and kicking
- 59 Assistant
- 60 Folk tales
- 61 Gymnast Comaneci
- 62 Paella vegetables
- 63 Absolut rival
- 64 Beginning stage



By Janice Luttrell

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- 7 Shakespearean king with three daughters
- 8 Give off
- 9 Many Christmas trees
- 10 Rum and curaçao cocktail
- 11 Large coffee dispensers
- 12 Table support
- 13 ___ Vegas
- 19 Former Russian rulers
- 21 Spanish two
- 24 Symbol of Christianity
- 25 Invitation to a dog while patting the bed, perhaps
- 26 Candy heart words
- 27 Super Mario Bros. console
- 28 Barn-raising sect
- 29 "Bad" prefix
- 30 "Alfie" star Michael
- 31 "The Bear" Emmy winner Jeremy ___ White
- 32 Food package abbr.
- 37 Without any extras
- 38 Simon Cowell's competition show, briefly

Monday's Puzzle Solved



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- 39 He/___ pronouns
- 41 "My Fair Lady" composer Frederick
- 42 Opera heroine, often
- 44 Big name in peanut butter candy
- 45 "Get me outta here" button
- 46 "Pretentious? ___?"
- 49 Fountain drink
- 50 Alcove
- 51 Unpleasant, as details
- 52 Family
- 53 Tupperware toppers
- 54 Pop singer Sands
- 55 Airplane assignment
- 56 Ballplayer's hat
- 57 Fib

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THE NINTENDO SWITCH 2: THE NEXT COLLEGE CONSOLE

by Samantha Brody

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In the form of a first-look trailer on YouTube, the popular video game company Nintendo finally announced their brand-new console on Jan. 16 — the Nintendo Switch 2. The Japanese-based company is responsible for iconic video game characters such as Mario from “Super Mario Bros.” Link from “The Legend of Zelda,” and Pikachu from “Pokémon.”



Nintendo’s line of game consoles originated with the Nintendo Entertainment System, but has since included the GameCube, the Wii, and 2017’s Nintendo Switch, as documented by Nintendo’s website. Nintendo has become known for their home consoles, such as Wii, and their handheld consoles, such as the 3DS and the Game Boy Advance. The Nintendo Switch was a marriage of the two consoles — the console could connect to a television and act as a home console, or it could function as a handheld console with a bigger screen and improved graphics.



Nintendo traditionally has very unique console designs, but the company tends to follow up one console with a similar one before moving to a new idea. The Nintendo Entertainment System was succeeded by the Super Nintendo Entertainment System, and the Wii was replaced by the Wii U. As such, the idea of a Nintendo Switch 2 has always been a possibility, one that was only affirmed when details of the console were

leaked, as reported by IGN.

The Nintendo Switch 2 is filled to the brim with new features, although not all of them have been explained. The first-look trailer only acted as a reveal of hardware, not of future games the console might have. However, the question still remains: is the Nintendo Switch 2 worth it for college students?

The original Nintendo Switch’s portability has always been a plus for some players — especially for casual gamers as the Switch doesn’t require a television to use. This portability makes it perfect for college students. The Nintendo Switch 2 follows the exact same design model as its predecessor, playable as a handheld, a tabletop or a home console. It’s likely the console will lose some portability, however, due to its larger screen size.

Despite this, the Nintendo Switch 2 will be an improvement for those who prefer tabletop mode, as the pop-up stand on the console stretches the entire length of the device. The original Nintendo Switch’s stand was thin and attached to only one side of the console which led to instability and a tendency for the stand to snap off.

As for the overall appearance of the Nintendo Switch 2, there are few differences from the original. The Switch 2 is larger with a sleeker look. The Joy-Cons depicted in the first-look trailer are nearly all-black, instead of the original Switch’s classic blue and red. However, no other designs for the Switch 2’s Joy-Cons have been revealed at this time.

The Joy-Cons for the Ninten-

do Switch 2 also operate differently from the original Switch, snapping into the side of the screen as opposed to sliding in. Furthermore, the Joy-Cons for the Switch 2 might have added functionality, with many speculating they will be able to act as computer mice for the console.

Any college student looking for a console to use while in school will find the original Nintendo Switch to easily fit their needs. The ability to fully use the console without a television is perfect for college dorms, and Nintendo’s love of party games means there will always be something to play with friends. Based on the first-look trailer alone, the Nintendo Switch 2 is everything above and more.

One of the best features of the Nintendo Switch 2 is that many of the game cards for the original Switch will be usable in the Switch 2 through backwards compatibility. For anyone wondering if an upgrade is in-store for them, there at least won’t be the expense of purchasing an entirely new library of ports from the original Switch.

As it stands so far, the Nintendo Switch 2 will surpass its predecessor as a college-friendly console. For those who already own a Nintendo Switch, it’s possible an upgrade will be redundant, as these changes may not be significant enough to warrant one. However, for anyone who has been considering purchasing a Switch of their own, the Switch 2 might be worth the wait.

More information about the Nintendo Switch 2 will be revealed during the next Nintendo Direct on April 2 of this year.



‘Balloonerism’: Mac Miller’s authentic human reflections on death before his passing

by **Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab**
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Content warning for depictions of mental illness and drug addiction.

Mac Miller was a rapper, singer, producer and songwriter who was very active in the 2010s. It could be said that he was a defining force of the decade with his creativity and artistic prowess. When his life ended tragically from an accidental overdose in 2018, shortly after the release of his album, “Swimming,” many people realized just how much the artist was suffering in terms of mental illness and addiction. It showed in his music, especially during and after 2013’s “Watching Movies with the Sound Off” following the poor reception of the preceding “Blue Slide Park.”

Unlike other estates who have capitalized on the artist’s death with cash grabs and sloppily put together material that don’t do them justice, the Mac Miller estate has been nothing but respectful to his memory and ethos in their releasing of 2020’s “Circles,” previously released material on streaming services (such as the lauded “Faces” mixtape) and deluxe editions with short films to accompany the music.

“Balloonerism,” however, was an album that Miller created between 2013 and 2014 to be listened to in the event of his death. As such, this album gets dark, depressing, introspective and, most of all, profoundly human. This review will only be discussing some highlights.

“Tambourine Dream” is a simple intro to “Balloonerism,” only consisting of a percussive instrument being played for 30 seconds. If you listen closer, it sounds like other items are moving due to the tambourine. The sound itself is reminiscent of traditional cultural practices that are nature-oriented. A likely interpretation of this is how it’s a tacit reminder that Miller has returned to the source and the essence.

“DJ’s Chord Organ,” with DJ being the influential singer-songwriter Daniel Johnston since his chord organ was used on this song, is a slow burn, beginning humbly with some-

one saying what chords are being played on the chord organ. The song then builds up, with singers SZA and Thundercat repeating the lyric “Watch the world go ‘round,” providing a heavenly soundscape backed by the organ and bass.

The track goes silent for a few seconds before SZA delivers an excellent verse, also being the only verse on the song. The lyric “Tell us the truth about it, cocaine is ruthless” is haunting, considering Miller’s vices at the time. This request to “tell the truth,” would culminate in the next song.

“Do You Have A Destination?” is a brutally honest and confessional rap track highlighting the decadence of being an artist. There’s a common theme of Miller waking up from the juxtaposition of being high and famous, but the result is the same: becoming invisible. This could also be interpreted as Miller hallucinating. The lyrics “My thoughts is cynical, actions unpredictable” and “I gave my life to this shit, already killed myself” highlight his struggles with mental health as a famous and prolific musical artist in a very direct way. Considering how this song is on “Balloonerism,” it could be assumed that the “destination” Miller was thinking about is a place beyond the tangible world. Alternatively, the “destination” could be what Miller’s goals in this life are. Or maybe he’s asking this question to the audience so that they can make the most out of their lives.

“5 Dollar Pony Rides” is such a beautifully meaningful neo-soul song. It’s like a spiritual successor to Miller’s “Objects in the Mirror.” It may not have been the most representative single for the sound of “Balloonerism,” but thematically it’s like dipping your toes in the swimming pool that is mental illness and existentialism. Miller tries to support his love interest despite her likely depression or some other mental illness while also being depressed himself, as previously established.

The lyric “Girl, you wastin’ my time, and I am wastin’ your time, but that’s okay” is super comforting, probably also for others who also think that engaging with the people their care about is wasting their

time. The lyric “Killin’ yourself like this, goin’ crazy, keepin’ all of these secrets, how is that livin’?” shows the importance of not hiding your struggles from the entire world and especially those that love you. They would likely appreciate your vulnerability because they don’t want you to suffer alone, and if not, the snakes are weeded out. This song is thematically reminiscent of industrial rock band Nine Inch Nails’ “We’re In This Together.”

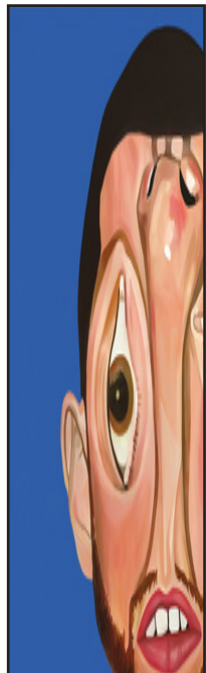
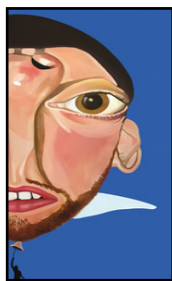
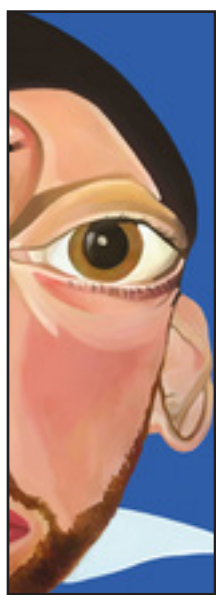
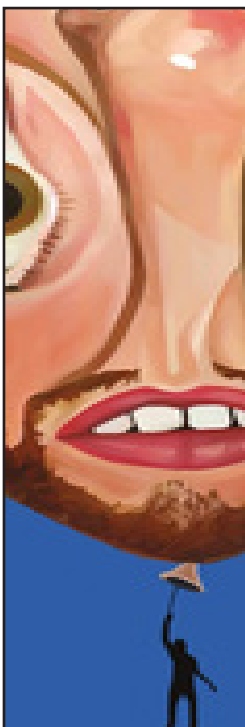
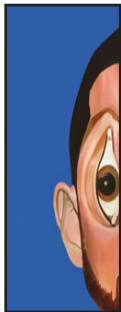
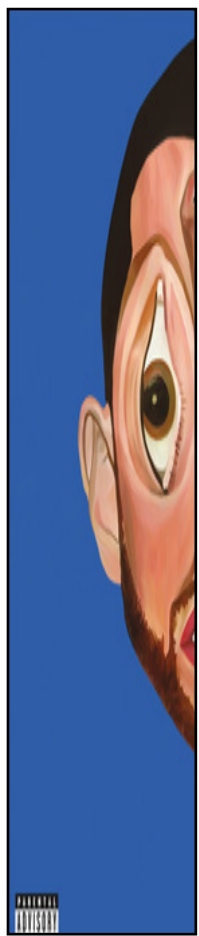
Hardcore Mac Miller fans would recognize the feature of “Transformations:” a feature from Miller’s horrorcore rap persona named Delusional Thomas, who has other uncredited features on “Balloonerism.” This would give context for the weird pitch shift Miller’s voice has as well as the graphic and edgy lyrics. It’s similar to the producer Madlib’s rap character, Quasimoto, except less comical.

An instrument similar to the chord organ is played on “Manakins.” The sound of the chord organ is much more fitting in this song, but both this and “DJ’s Chord Organ” are very pleasant to listen to in their own ways. The organ mixed with the harp plucking and violin plucking is transcendent. The lyric “Education system, but I feel we only learn from change” is super moving, showing that those in the education system can develop their characters and identities to improve the world. It’s empowering.

“Rick’s Piano,” named after producer Rick Rubin, is a depressing acknowledgement of life, death and change. Miller’s humbleness as an artist is inspiring, choosing not to revel in fame and instead focus on his craft.

“Tomorrow Will Never Know,” likely the longest song in Miller’s discography at nearly 12 minutes, is a solemn reflection on wanting to redo the past with the knowledge we have today. Phone voicemails and children playing can be heard in the background.

Thank you, Mac, for sharing your art with the world and influencing people to get their lives together. I don’t know you personally, but I do know we lost a genius. Your loved ones miss you dearly.



Rating:

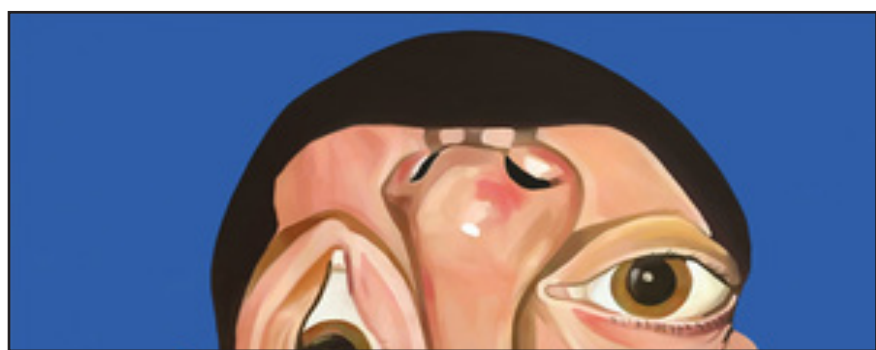


IMAGE COURTESY OF @MACMILLERMEMOIR ON INSTAGRAM.





Life

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LOGO BY ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The Backlog: Pay your rent as a werewolf in ‘The WereCleaner’

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Hello, and welcome back to The Backlog: the column where I review video games based on a certain genre each month. We're back from the winter break, and I'm sure everyone dreaded coming back to campus. I, for one, am tired of writing cover letters and putting information that's already on my resume onto a job application separately.

I digress; luckily, this column is my escape from reality and my chance to tell you about video games I enjoy. For the remaining two weeks of January, we'll be looking at a few mobile games that caught my attention over the break and drained my phone's battery. First up is "The WereCleaner."

This adorable game is also available through Steam for Mac and Microsoft Windows, but I played it on an iOS device. "The WereCleaner" is a stealth-comedy game developed by Howlin' Hugs and published by USC Games in May 2024. Players go through seven levels, each representing a day of the week, and live in the shoes of Kyle: a janitor with a fluffy secret.

Kyle works at a typical office building and cleans up the messes left by other employees, but suddenly the night shift is thrust upon him. Anyone living paycheck-to-paycheck can

understand Kyle's struggle to afford his rent. However, the bad news is that Kyle is a werewolf and must complete his duties without getting spotted.

Throughout the week, Kyle returns to the office and is greeted by the security guard, Daryl. Unfortunately, Daryl becomes obsessed with capturing what he thinks is a wild animal that snuck into the building. It's up to the player to get Kyle through the week without getting caught and getting that sweet minimum wage.

The gameplay (on mobile devices) involves dragging the movement joystick around to direct Kyle, and with several buttons that each have a different function. Kyle is equipped with a power washer for cleaning stains, a vacuum that can suck up and shoot out trash, as well as trash bags for capturing critters.

As with many jobs nowadays, employees in the office are putting in overtime and are around when Kyle is on the night shift. Players must traverse the office without getting caught, or else employees will cause a panic, and Kyle will instantly rush at them and kill them. After that, the only thing left to do is clean up the evidence by devouring their bodies and using his array of tools to finish the job.

Each level follows a five-star system based on how quickly the player completed it, and they can earn a sticker if they complete the level without kill-

ing anybody. There are also many collectibles for you to find throughout each level, as some areas of the office are unreachable at certain levels.

The collectibles reveal a small snippet of Kyle's life, especially his relations with people around the office. Aside from the murderous werewolf side to Kyle, he's friendly with the other employees yet actively tries to stay away from any form of attention.

Although it's a short experience, "The WereCleaner" is an adorable game for all ages. There is blood and gore, but it's done in a way that doesn't feel inherently violent or inappropriate to me. Howlin' Hugs outdid themselves by designing a satisfying experience that pulls players in to achieve five stars in each level.

Personally, I also adore the soundtrack to "The WereCleaner." The game combines the stealth aspect with typical office/elevator music. It's very catchy and keeps the game lighthearted despite the temptation to eat everyone in the office.

As a way to escape the reality of searching for a job or living with your minimum wage one, "The WereCleaner" succeeds tremendously. Kyle's life of earning \$119.50 each week is relatable, aside from turning into a werewolf at night. The game is short but sweet, and I hope Howlin' Hugs adds more or creates a sequel.



IMAGE COURTESY OF @THEWERECLEANER ON INSTAGRAM



IMAGE COURTESY OF @THEWERECLEANER ON INSTAGRAM



"The WereCleaner" is a game developed by Howlin' Hugs. Its unique blend of stealth and an adorable story. The game can be played on Steam for both Mac and Windows or on mobile

IMAGE COURTESY OF @THEWERECLEANER ON INSTAGRAM



Opinion

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What can be learned from the **TikTok** ban

by **Tomas Hinckley**
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After over five years and many battles with the United States government, TikTok was finally banned this past Sunday, Feb. 19. This most recent attempt to kill the app, a divest-or-ban law which started in March 2024, has come a long way since the idea was originally floated by then President Donald Trump in 2019. Yet, after barely 12 hours of being offline, TikTok was revived following promises to save the app by now incoming President Trump. It's a distinctly bizarre moment for many Gen Z-ers, myself included, with the many months of drawn-out tense build up towards the fated death of the beloved social media app, followed by an almost immediate reversal. Although cut extremely short, the impact of this cultural moment is still worth investigating. It's not every day that the most downloaded app in the world and one of most powerful drivers in American youth culture gets wiped off the map entirely, and the different actors in this event reveal several important themes for our generation today on the political forces of our country.

To start, the reactions coming from people regarding the app being banned fall generally into two categories which is important to note, those who recognize the political implications of the ban and those who don't. Whether those in former part lament its death and their ability to doomscroll before bed or celebrate it as being a good thing for the attention spans of youth everywhere, any reaction to the ban which doesn't recognize the political gravity of the situation is frankly missing the point. It'd be one thing if the app shut down on its own, but the case is that politicians didn't want you to be able to use this app anymore and it's particularly important to understand why.

The TikTok ban took away one of the greatest tools of youth discussion and organizing we've ever seen. It was a platform that was fundamentally different from any other in existence that promoted intra-platform group discussion capable of really mobilizing people. The signature features of the app such as the blue comment hyperlink search, video comment replies and even the experimentory nature of the algorithm itself meant the ability to affect the dominant conversations on the app was opened to everyone. As a result, the landscape on TikTok in terms of discussion on the dominant political topics, most importantly about Israel, was quite different from what

happened on other social media platforms and generally bent more progressive. It wasn't that the app artificially pushed such ideologies, it just gave more of a mouthpiece to a wider range of people, and that's what they came up with. Republicans have been very forthcoming about their dissatisfaction with this, as the original purveyors of the idea to ban TikTok. Former Republican Senator Mitt Romney plainly stated this past May that his support for the ban was because "If you look at the postings on T i k T o k and the number

of men-tions of Palestinians, relative to other social media sites — it's overwhelmingly so among TikTok broadcasts."

Also, for the record, the Pro-Israel lobby isn't the only force in killing TikTok. Many billionaires (Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, Peter Thiel, etc.) all have much to gain financially from killing this competitor, especially since it happens to have the majority of discussion being against them. It's not difficult to imagine the app, which showcased such overwhelming love for Luigi Mangione, might appear a bit undesirable to those of the same class as Brian Thompson, especially since this is the one platform they do not own.

Still, the point is that this is a matter of speech and the censorship of everyday young Americans who happened to threaten those in power enough after being given a real voice online.

Okay, back to reality. TikTok is not banned anymore. So what?

Well for starters, let's be clear that Trump coming in to save the day is a political chess move. It's not that he had a change of heart over the app in his new term, but rather the power dynamic over TikTok has greatly shifted in five years. Essentially, Democrats were able to do what he couldn't in 2019 and actually succeeded in killing it, but they didn't care that the ban was a widely unpopular

move among young people. This is a group Trump has historically not done great with, and he now has the choice to do something they'll like and benefit from it, or ignore it and not be at fault. It's clear in this situation that he has extreme leverage over TikTok. It's also already becoming clear that he used it in some way given the companies' overt public gratitude towards him and rumors of future American joint ownership in the app. In short, Trump saving TikTok means he can exploit his position to gain influence over it, completing his monopoly of popular social media sites, with Musk and Zuckerberg already in his corner. Although what will come of this remains to be seen, it's clear the political machinations surrounding TikTok are not as altruistic as they may seem.

Political actors on both sides seeking to use TikTok for certain ends is clearly one of the most important trends to recognize in this issue, but they're not the only ones playing games here. In the days and weeks leading up to the ban, there was a certain air of depressed and humorous resignation over the eventual end of the app. It was a distinct cultural moment which could be felt in every post on the platform, a looming reality over everyone's heads. Yet, one group I was surprised to see join in on the discussion was other

large corporations themselves. In about 15 minutes of scrolling on the Saturday before the ban, I personally saw posts from Paramount Pictures, Fandango, Sony, Duolingo, Drumstick and even Kentucky Fried Chicken, all making memes and sentimental comments about their time on the app. This is by no means the full list, as CNN found other companies such as The Ordinary, Jack in the Box, Walmart, Wendy's and more. All these posts attempted to connect with users over the common sadness, with the same goal of selling them more products. "What are we going to do with this extra time now that TikTok's gone?!" Maybe watch more movies on Paramount Plus while drowning our tears in buckets of KFC wings and Drumstick ice cream bars." The idea behind these disguised ads was clear: capitalize on the moment and sell hard. Even Meta started running ads just before the ban kicked in, trying to get

people to go to Instagram.

The one that I found the most pervasive though came in the form of Ben and Jerry's making political commentary on the situation. They made two separate posts, gaining a combined total of over 11 million views, showcasing their partnership with the People's March and telling viewers to get to the streets to defend their freedoms. I saw people all throughout different comment sections abuzz with how Ben and Jerry's was "resisting" and helping us fight back. Let's be clear about something though: Ultimately, they're a company with a profit incentive too. Becoming the official ice cream of one march does not make them an ally to the people, and it's important that we raise our collective political awareness to look past these distractions towards real efforts to make change. Just look at the fact that the very next post on their account was an advertisement for a new larger ice cream size and a corresponding sweepstakes for people to win some for themselves. This post received almost 7 million views, significantly higher than the rest of their posts, undoubtedly because of the increased traffic to their account after the rally announcement. If people want to make real change they need to understand when they're being sold something, even when the reality is sweet.

The final point worth mentioning is that although I refer to TikTok as being a great tool for young people today, ultimately it is also just a company trying to exploit us. All its choices are meant to keep us on the app for longer, show us more ads, increase our screentime and literally get us addicted to our phones. We might joke about "brain rot" but that is actually what happens when we use this stupid app too much. Any lamentation of TikTok should be focused on the loss of community and ability for people to organize themselves towards a purpose, because that connection is real in a way when taken in moderation, but not the app itself. It's more accurate to say that people were able to co-opt a tool meant to pacify them and, at least in some ways, turn it into a potential source of good.

When all of these angles are taken into account the point becomes this: No one has our best interests at heart. Democrats, Republicans and private companies, including even TikTok itself, are all just trying to get something from us. It's clear that one of the most important battles for the future of this nation is over the time, attention and ability to speak out of our generation. We can only rely on ourselves to steer it in a direction that will help us.



Opinion

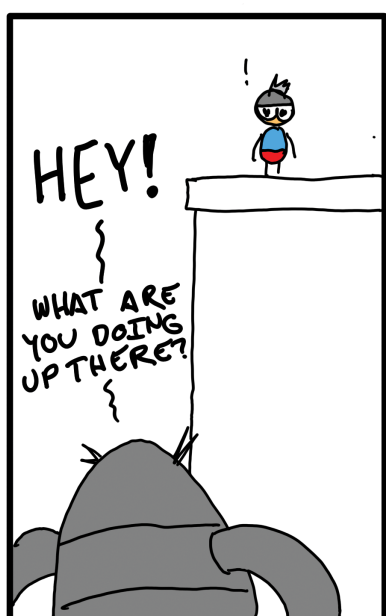
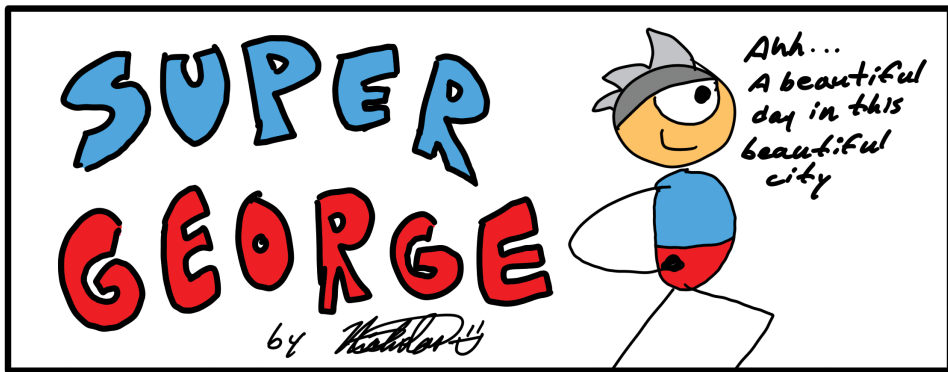
Photo of the Day |



A cold and snowy day in Storrs, Conn. on Jan. 20, 2025. It was a busy day as many UConn students were moving back to campus in preparation for the spring semester starting the next day. PHOTO BY BLAKE SYKES, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

DAILY CAMPUS

COMICS



COMIC BY NICHOLAS D'AMORE
CONTRIBUTING ARTIST

COMIC BY CONNOR SZREJNA
STAFF ARTIST

Sudoku

BY THE MEPHAM GROUP

Level **1** 2 3 4

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

Solution to Monday's puzzle

1/21/25

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

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.

Sports

MEN'S BASKETBALL

No. 19 UConn seeks bounce-back win vs. Butler on Tuesday night

by Sam Calhoun
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HE/HIM/HIS

After losing at home for the first time in two years, the No. 19th UConn men's basketball team (13-5, 5-2 Big East) returns to the XL Center for the first time since Dec. 18's overtime win over Xavier to take on the Butler Bulldogs (8-10, 1-6 Big East) on Tuesday night.

The Huskies suffered their first home loss since losing to Xavier on Jan. 25 at Gampel Pavilion. They have not lost in Hartford since Jan. 15 when they were stunned by St. John's.

Tuesday's matchup with the Bulldogs will complete the season series. In the first meeting of the season, the Huskies won a close one at Hinkle Fieldhouse in Indianapolis, Indiana, with Alex Karaban leading the way with 21 points and four 3-pointers.

Huskies won with Alex Karaban leading the way with 21 points and four 3-pointers.

For a team that has seen a setback in their offensive rebounding, UConn will have an opportunity to capitalize on the glass, with Butler having the lowest defensive rebounding percentage in the Big East at 70.3%. They also have the second-lowest offensive rebounding percentage in the league at 26.6%, which is only better than Creighton (25.5%).



UConn men's Basketball takes on Baylor University at Gampel Pavilion on Dec. 4, 2024. The Huskies secured a 76-72 win.

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

Butler is led by forward Jahmyl Telfort, who averages 15.2 points per game, tied for 9th in the Big East. Guard Pierre Brooks is not too far behind in scoring average, averaging 15.1 points per game (tied for 11th in the Big East).

One of the concerns going into the first matchup was facing seven-foot forward Andre Screen. He will be the most threatening player on the glass for the Bulldogs, averaging 5.6 per game (14th in the conference).

What stands out about Butler is the team's ability to get to the free throw line. They have a 44.9% free throw attempt rate, which ranks eighth in the country.

What the Huskies can take advantage of is the Bulldogs' defense. While Connecticut's defense is not much better statistically, Butler has some glaring weaknesses. They

rank last in Big East play in block percentage (6.3%) and steal percentage (5.7%), which alludes to a 10.1% turnover rate on defense, which also ranks last in the Big East.

After only attempting five free throws in Saturday's loss to Creighton, UConn will go up against a team that also avoids putting opponents at the free throw line. Butler ranks 14th in opponent free throw attempt rate (24.1%). They average 14.8 fouls per game, which ranks in the 92nd percentile, according to CBB Analytics.

The last five games could not have gone worse for UConn's defense. They rank in the second percentile in defensive rebounds per game (20), the sixth percentile in steals per personal fouls (0.28x), the third percentile in total rebounds per game (28.6) and the eighth percentile in steals

per game (5). Their defense in the last five games ranks in the 18th percentile nationally. These trends also are glaring as it does not help that Butler has been strong at retaining possession on offense, averaging 9.6 turnovers per game in the last five games (98th percentile nationally).

Their defense in the last five games ranks in the 18th percentile nationally.

Their offense has not been particularly better in the last five games. The Huskies struggle to get to the free throw line, with a free throw attempt rate of 22.3% which ranks in the first per-

centile in the country. They average 13.4 fouls drawn per game which ranks in the second percentile in the country.

However, their offense has had its positives. Their passing has been on point, averaging 18.2 assists per game in the last five games, which ranks in the 98th percentile nationally. Their effective field goal percentage is still one of the best in the country. In the previous five games, they have made 57.8% of their effective field goal attempts, which ranks in the 98th percentile nationally. Samson Johnson and Tarris Reed Jr. are two of the most efficient players on offense in the Big East. Johnson leads the conference with a 78.1% field goal percentage, while Reed is behind him at 66.6%. Butler has no player who cracked the top

Their effective field goal percentage is still one of the best in the country.

15 in field goal percentage.

Butler is coming off its first Big East win of the year after starting conference play 0-6. UConn seeks to keep another streak alive as they have never lost to the Bulldogs, with a 10-0 advantage in the series that began with the 2011 national championship game.

Connecticut welcomes head coach Thad Matta and the Bulldogs to Hartford at 7 p.m. The game will be televised on FS1.



UConn men's basketball takes on URI at Mohegan Sun for the Basketball Hall of Fame exhibition match.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



UConn men's basketball takes on Baylor University at Gampel Pavilion on Dec. 4, 2024. The Huskies secured a 76-72 win.

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

Men and Women's Basketball Photo Gallery



The Uconn's men basketball program throughout the past season. Currently ranked third in the Big East, the team has a solid record of 13-5.

PHOTOGRAPH FROM FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY CAMPUS



UConn women's basketball throughout its remarkable season. The team has an 8-0 streak in the Big East and sits at the top spot in the rankings.

PHOTOGRAPH FROM FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Sports

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Women's basketball: Bueckers' 2,000th point helps in UConn's 96-36 romp of Seton Hall

by **Jake McCreven**
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HE/HIM/HIS

Redshirt senior Paige Bueckers scored her 2,000th point as a Husky during UConn's 60-point win over conference-rival Seton Hall on Sunday afternoon.

Bueckers took a pass from Ashlynn Shade to the free throw line before pulling up and knocking down a jumper to put the Huskies up 32-9 over the Pirates early in the second period. The 2,000 point mark took Bueckers only 102 games to meet, making her the fastest Husky to 2,000 points in program history.

The 2,000 point mark took Bueckers only 102 games to meet, making her the fastest Husky to 2,000 points in program history.

The point guard's career milestone wasn't the only impressive feat accomplished during Sunday's win.

The 60-point margin of victory was the Huskies' largest since Jan. 2021, when Olivia Nelson-Ododa led the way with 18 points in a 103-35 beatdown of Butler.

Freshman Sarah Strong followed up her only single-digit scoring performance of the season last Wednesday with a first half double-double (16 points, 10 rebounds), and ended the game with a stout 23 points on 9/11 (81.8%) shooting from the field.

Veteran forward Aubrey Griffin made her long-awaited return to the court as well, checking in mid-way through the second period to a standing ovation from the crowd.

Veteran forward, Aubrey Griffin made her long awaited return to the court... "I was just happy to see her out there."

GENO AURIEMMA

"I thought she had fun," said Geno Auriemma post-game. "I was just happy to see her out there."

Griffin got on the board with a free throw, knocking down one of two at the line before checking out for Morgan Cheli after four minutes of game time.

Griffin checked back in mid-way through the final period and scored her first basket on a fast break layup.

Seven Huskies finished with a +/- higher than 30, including impressive +42 and +40 margins for Bueckers and Strong, respectively.

Connecticut led wire to wire, starting with a Bueckers-to-Strong under the basket layup after Jana El Alfy won the tip-off.

On the ensuing possession, Kaitlyn Chen found Strong for the same shot as the Huskies raced out to a 4-0 lead. The Pirates banked in a three-pointer to get on the board offensively, hitting their first attempt before going 3/25 the rest of the afternoon.



Kaitlyn Chen and Paige Bueckers during the UConn women's basketball team's win over Seton Hall (96-36). Bueckers scored her 2,000th point during the match.
PHOTOGRAPH BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



UConn Women's Basketball stays undefeated in conference play as they play Seton Hall in Storrs, Conn. on Jan. 19, 2025. The Huskies defeated the Pirates by 60 points in the Big East matchup.
PHOTOGRAPH BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



UConn's women's basketball celebrates a victory over Seton Hall on Sunday, Jan. 19. The game showcased the program's record breaking team of athletes.
PHOTOGRAPH BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The Pirates had open looks, but could not convert early, falling behind after failing to match the Huskies' three-point barrage from the likes of Bueckers, Strong and Azzi Fudd. Fudd started the afternoon 2/3 from deep and gave Connecticut its first 10-point lead with her second make.

Fudd started the afternoon 2/3 from deep and gave Connecticut its first 10-point lead with her second make.

The Huskies maintained the edge on the boards throughout the first quarter, edging Seton Hall 13-9 on the glass and 12-0 in paint points.

UConn shot an efficient 10/18 from the field and 4/8 from deep, blasting the Pirates' marks of 3/18 and 1/7 while taking a 26-7 lead into the second period.

The Huskies ended the period on an 8-0 run, holding Seton Hall scoreless through the final 3:17.

The Pirates' leading scorer, Faith Masonius, got on the board early in the second quarter after an 0/6 start from the field in the first. The star forward scored just eight points on three made field goals, being held nine points below her average after notching her second single-digit game of the season.

"Today was a really, really good day," Auriemma said post-game. And that it was, as the Huskies turned the ball over just four times in the first half while forcing ten and taking a +10 advantage on points off turnovers into the break.

After Bueckers broke the 2,000-point threshold mid-way through the second period, Shade and Fudd charged a scoring spurt that vaulted the Huskies up 31, which forced a Pirates timeout.

Connecticut ended the half on a 24-2 run over the final 7:38, holding Seton Hall scoreless for an additional 3:16 while shooting over 60% from the field.

The Huskies took a 40-point lead into the locker room, aided by Strong's double-double and Fudd's 15-point half.

After Strong's lay-in to start the third, Bueckers, Strong and Fudd went on a four possession streak of sinking triples as the Huskies built a 50-point lead mid-way through the third.

El Alfy was given an and-one opportunity on the next possession, and when the free throw missed off the back rim, Strong snared it and put it back up to once again hold a 50-point advantage.

The starters were pulled shortly thereafter, which prompted Auriemma to plug in freshmen Allie Ziebell and Morgan Cheli alongside Qadence Samuels, Shade and KK Arnold.

Riding the momentum built by the starters, Ziebell's three-pointers and Cheli's nifty paint work finalized the score at 96-36.

The Huskies will next be in action on Wednesday, hosting Villanova at 7 p.m. at Gampel Pavilion.

