



The Man Behind the Ice Cream: How one man's passion for ice cream led to him managing the UConn Creamery

by Gianni Salisbury

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When Bill Scituro retired from a 17-year career in health-care, he found himself wanting to return to his first love: ice cream. As a teenager in the 1980s, a young Scituro worked for a mom-and-pop ice cream shop called Dear Hearts in Warwick, R.I. For eight years he scooped, restocked and sold ice cream.

"I loved that job. I fell in love with ice cream because it makes people happy. Who is unhappy when they are getting ice cream? No one," Scituro says while talking to a UConn journalism class.

After retiring in 2007, Scituro applied for a part time job at the University of Connecticut Creamery. His job: making ice-cream for the UConn Dairy Bar. However, after working at the Creamery for only a short time, the 2008 recession hit. The manager quit and the Creamery could not fire Scituro, so he kept working, making it his mission to learn everything there was to know about ice-cream.

He taught himself the entire system and became an expert in how each machine in the Creamery worked. When the recession ended and the position for manager opened back up, Scituro applied for the job.

Scituro is the Creamery manager to this day, and as he stands in front of a glass window looking into the Creamery explaining its mechanics to the class, his knowledge and passion for ice cream is still evident.

He talked about how each ice cream flavor is developed and produced, what his responsi-

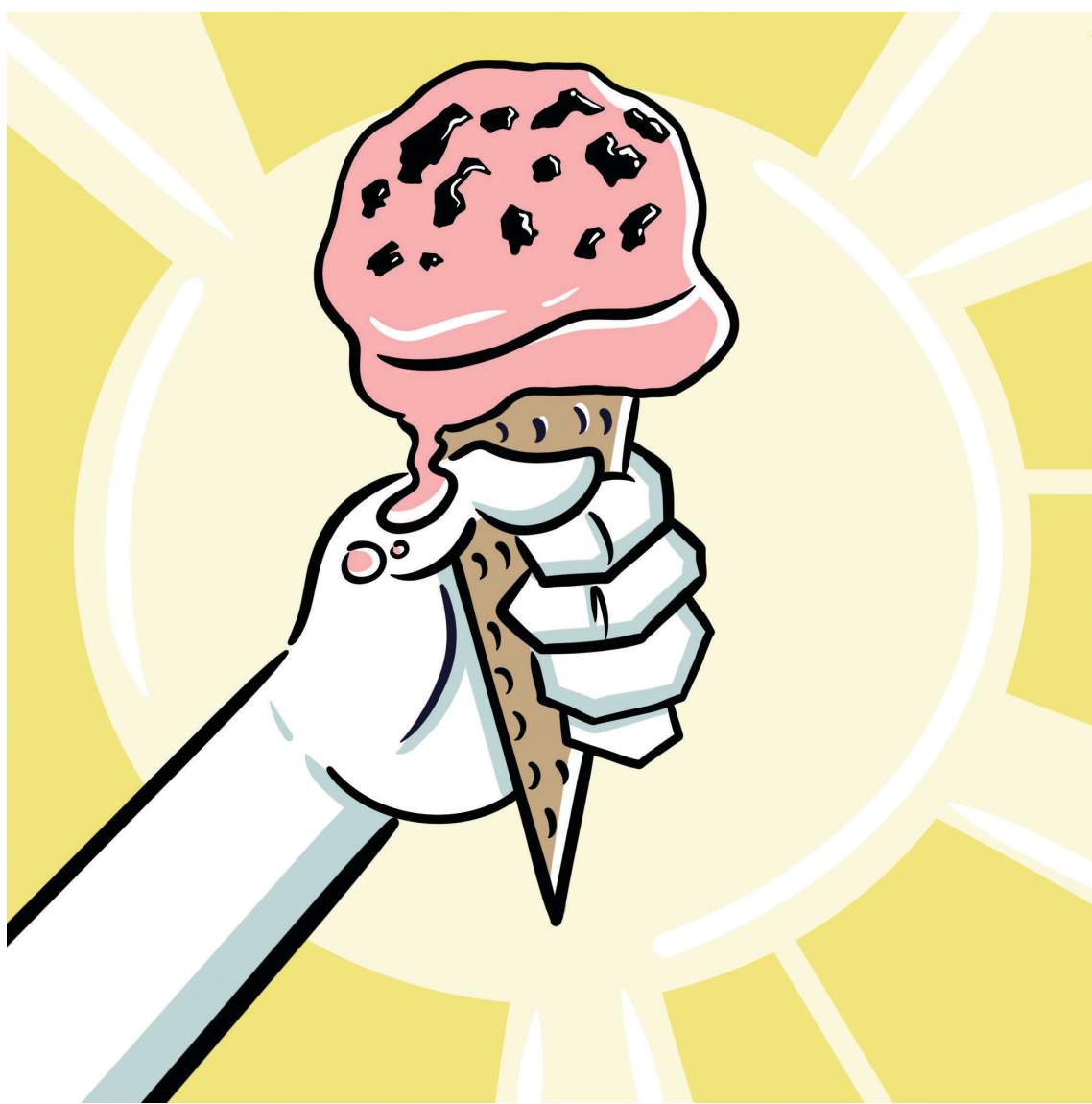


ILLUSTRATION BY CONNOR SZRENJA, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

bilities are as manager and what the mechanics are of making enough ice cream during different times of the year.

"When creating a new ice cream flavor, we start with what's popular and see what we want to make based on that," he said. "We make five small batches of the flavor and let people try them. Based on people's reactions, we decide if we want to make it a flavor."

He explained that the Dairy Bar only serves 24 flavors at a time, and to add new ones they have to remove others.

"Sometimes when we add specialty limited flavors, they become so popular that we make them permanent flavors," he said. "Salted Caramel Crunch was originally made just as a limited flavor, but it became so popular that it is now a permanent flavor on the menu."

As he talks, Scituro wears a grey shirt, blue pants, brown rubber boots and a hair net and stands in front of a glass window that looks into the Creamery. Through the window, a dozen grey machines manned by student workers can be seen churning away ice cream.

The flavor being made on this day? Mango Italian Ice. As the students watch employees guide the mango ice into large

tubs, Scituro explains that his duties as manager have become more business oriented over the years, but in turn, he has become focused on preventing food waste.

Food waste has been a major problem according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with food waste making up 30-40 percent of the food supply. According to Scituro, the UConn Creamery acknowledges and is working to prevent this in the ice cream production. They are doing this by working with a food scientist at UConn to "review products individually to determine whether the product has a real food spoilage risk or whether the best-by or exp. date is purely a business decision that has no impact on food safety," according to Scituro.

The creamery also tries to reduce food waste by working to "use up ingredients before they get close to any best buy dates or expiration dates to avoid having to evaluate anything."

After a long day of making ice cream, Creamery workers find another way to stop waste. Once the ice cream batch is done for the day, the workers get to eat whatever is left in the tubes.

Scituro tells the journalism class this, just as the workers behind the class begin to close down operations for the day.

They clean equipment and clear the excess ice cream in the tubes into a pale. Then each worker gathers around with a cup and a spoon and gathers to share the leftover ice cream.

"We don't get to take ice-cream home for free, but we do get to do that at the end of every shift and everybody looks forward to it," Scituro said.

EASTERN CONNECTICUT MAPLE FESTIVAL WILL HAVE OVER 120 VENDORS THIS WEEKEND

by Liliana French

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The Eastern Connecticut Maple Festival will take place on Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. outside E.O. Smith High School and will have over 120 vendors.

The festival will have a wide variety of maple-related foods and activities, according to event coordinator Diane Nadeau.

"We have been doing a festival like this for about 10 years and last year we moved to E.O. Smith High School because it was close to students, the campus and the downtown and we have a great working relationship with the town of Mansfield," Nadeau said.

She said that the Maple Festival is one of the fall-style agricultural festivals that people look forward to.

"We are focusing on maple syrup- how to make it, the history of it and everything else that can be made with it," Nadeau said. "We have over 120 differ-

ent vendors. Some are artists and crafters and makers, but many will have food."

Nadeau discussed the food options that will be available at the festival.

"So, there's pretty much everything maple you can think of," she said. "We have cotton candy, kettle corn, fudge, cupcakes, cookies, cakes, breads, cinnamon rolls, we have a donut person that makes maple glazed donuts with bacon on the top, there is maple bacon, there's maple bacon cheeseburgers. All of our food vendors have at least one item that is maple."

Nadeau said that there will be activities for young people and college students such as crafts and games.

The festival will also have vendors selling non-food items, such as T-shirts, tumblers, natural soaps, essential oils and cosmetics, according to Nadeau.

The UConn Woodsmen, which does axe-throwing competitions, will be doing demonstrations at the event, Nadeau said.

"This is really a community event that is meant to support and promote local businesses, organizations and students," Nadeau said. "For students, there are so many organizations, clubs and such that are involved with both Eastern [Connecticut State University] and UConn. We are here to give them an avenue to raise funds for their club or some activity or mission that they have."

Nadeau discussed the example of a 13-year-old who raised \$1,500 selling baked goods, which he donated to buy dog food for the local shelter. She said that the festival does not charge fees for student groups.

About 1,800 people attended last year's Maple Festival despite wind and freezing weather, according to Nadeau. She said that 3,000 to 4,000 people usually attend the event.

A different maple festival took place in Hebron, Conn., from March 15-16, which had maple treats, a tractor parade and live music, according to a city website.

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UConn Set to Pay Student Athletes: Athletic Director Can Now Sign NIL Contracts

by **Patrick Boots**
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The University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approved a proposal giving the university's athletic director the authority to enter into contracts with student athletes on Wednesday, March 26. The new deal sets the stage for UConn to start compensating student athletes for the commercial use of their name, image or likeness — more commonly known as NIL.

It's what makes possible Liam McNeeley's appearance in a commercial for JBL headphones and the women's basketball team sporting Madison Reed-colored hair — and getting paid for it.

Until this year, in Connecticut, the institution could not be a party to the actual earning relationship, giving rise to independent "NIL collective" organizations which act as fundraising and entrepreneurial support boosters. In a bill this February, the Connecticut General Assembly added language which allows the school to directly pay student athletes for endorsement contracts and

"revenue-sharing agreements" but prevents them from using state-appropriated funds.

"An institution of higher education, or an entity acting on behalf of such institution, may create, facilitate, negotiate, support, assist with or otherwise enable opportunities for a student athlete or a prospective student athlete to earn compensation for use of [their NIL]," the law says.

Student athletes are also required to notify the institution of their NIL activity when it occurs, but the law provides some privacies.

While technically possible since the enactment of the law, UConn could not enter into such an agreement with student athletes without the signature of University President Radenka Maric. The proposal submitted to the board of trustees is attributed to her, requesting that the "delegation of signature authority" be extended to UConn athletic director David Benedict.

"Beginning in the Spring of 2025, the university's division of athletics anticipates executing a high volume of endorsement contracts and revenue-sharing agreements with student ath-

letes," Maric's proposal states. "Prompt negotiation and execution of these agreements are critical, as student athletes often receive competing offers from multiple universities."

NIL is at the center of a crossroads in how colleges recruit and retain student athletes. UConn women's basketball star Paige Bueckers' NIL is valued at \$1.5 million, according to NIL ranking company On-3 says Sports Illustrated. She's been the spokesperson for a variety of clients like Dunkin' Donuts, CeraVe Lotions, Nike and Gatorade among others.

Initially critical over NIL's similarities to the still-prohibited "pay for play," UConn women's basketball head coach Geno Auriemma recently praised Bueckers as a model for NIL.

"I think Paige is the poster child for how it's supposed to be," Auriemma said in a post-game press conference following the Huskies' second round win in March Madness against South Dakota State on Monday.

Changes to state laws and school policies help mitigate the concern that NIL could potentially be used as a "pay for play" mechanism in comparison to

professional sports, where players earn a salary. NCAA rules and the law that allows NIL in Connecticut specifically prohibit likening payment to athletic or academic performance.

The NCAA, which governs college athletics nationwide, started allowing student athletes to get paid from endorsements in 2021 after years of prohibiting the practice when numerous states passed their own student athlete compensation laws, including Connecticut. The law here allows student athletes to be a part of these business relationships in concert with the institution's own policies, which provide they don't infringe on the institution trademarks and for certain disallowed endorsements, like for drugs or alcohol. Importantly, the law stated that schools like UConn and leagues like the Big East and NCAA could not restrict or revoke a student's athletic eligibility or scholarships because they're earning money from endorsement contracts.

The shift didn't come without hurdles. In federal court, the NCAA reached a settlement in the order of \$2.8 billion with former student athletes who

demanding back compensation on antitrust grounds. The payments will be made over the course of 10 years, funded by payments usually made by the NCAA to member institutions. UConn said that the reduction will cost approximately \$500,000 over the course of those 10 years.

"All of us want to provide our current student athletes with a magnificent college experience, filled with robust avenues of opportunity," athletic director David Benedict said in 2023 following one of many expansions of UConn's NIL commitments. "NIL has become an important part of the total experience, and we are building a strong track record of providing our Huskies with various ways to enhance their brand."

Benedict will also be responsible for developing an annual budget for the new endorsement and revenue-sharing deals with student athletes and will report that data alongside a report discussing NIL usage across UConn to the board of trustees.

UConn's policies and information on NIL can be found at s.uconn.edu/nil.



UConn men's basketball vs Creighton on March 15, 2025. PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The Daily Campus

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SPLIT RECORD REVIEW: WAND FRONTMAN MAKES MAGIC WITH HIS WAND

by James Fitzpatrick
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Welcome to the second half of this week's Split Record Review! Yesterday, Henry went over Cory Hanson's debut album, "Western Cum," and I'll be providing my coverage of it today. I was expecting something in the vein of Grant McDonald's "Ram Ranch" due to the title and art, but the record is a big upgrade from that song. Fresh off a road trip to Nashville, can this country-infused album strike my fancy?

"Wings" makes a few things apparent quickly. Technically speaking, the guitars and drums sound crisp and Hanson is an emotive singer. The tempo slows at the minute mark before he breaks into the chorus of "I'm on a wing." Following a solo further on, the guitar melody gets more technical and distortion takes center stage again. The song has every reason to maintain engagement for five minutes, yet it does feel long.

The riffs on "Housefly" are nasty, standing out even more with Hanson's higher register singing here. "Hoo"-ing in the background midway through takes the edge off the grungy atmosphere, and it's impressive how Hanson makes a housefly the villain of the song, ending each verse with different situations where such a harmless creature can be a nuisance. The first two instances see him try to kill it, but the third ends

with "Then a housefly comes circling from the stairs."

"Persuasion Architecture" begins with not the best noise rock I've heard in my days, though the energy is soon sapped, giving way to an incredible vocal performance by Hanson. After another noise rock derailing and instrumental section, Hanson concludes with "Nosferatu, lost in his castle / Waiting from behind the ruin." This is fitting since this song is more up and down than the 2024 remake of "Nosferatu."

The first two minutes of "Horsebait Sabotage" are great, featuring Hanson's creative writing prowess. The second verse is particularly enjoyable: "I got a job unloading / Blocks of ice melting in my van / Watching 'em slide out in the street / Like butter skating in the pan." The song's repeatability is hindered or helped by the soothing outro, depending on whether you vibe with it, but I do wish the non-vocal instrumental sections were shortened at this point.

The "Western" in the album's title becomes more apparent on "Ghost Ship," yet Hanson and crew still offer a personal spin. "The cocaine that you're carrying is taped down to your balls" offers crazy visualizations, though the dreamy vibes make this anything but tongue-in-cheek.

The pace picks up a tad on "Twins," keeping up the Americana flair that Henry pointed out on "Ghost Ship."

However, the track doesn't offer anything new, something that changes with the following song.

About a minute-and-a-half elapses on "Driving Through Heaven" before the guitars make their presence known, and while the jam is a pleasant listen, this is Hanson's album. Two-and-a-half minutes without his voice is a bit much

because these guys aren't King Crimson or CAN; they can't carry a composition without vocals for that long before it gets boring. Five-and-a-half minutes go by before Hanson's third verse, and by then, my mind is already off elsewhere.

Beginning like a laid-back Velvet Underground song, "Motion Sickness" gets more credit from me. It's slow to

pick up but the anthemic second half is perfect for a crowd setting, so I hope Hanson can book himself and Wand some larger venues. They did play at South by Southwest in Austin recently, hence Henry's recommendation to review this since he saw them, but I'm rooting for them to get in the big leagues!

Rating: 3.5/5



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Show Scanner: Where to catch live music 3/28-3/29

by Dan Stark

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Welcome back from spring break, Huskies! I hope you all enjoyed a week of catching up on sleep or getting into shenanigans. Either way, it's been quite a busy week, which means it's time to blow off some steam this weekend. What better way to do so than with this great lineup of shows? Here's a look at where to catch live music this weekend in Storrs and across Connecticut.

Friday 3/28: The Dog Pound - Storrs

The Dog Pound, Storrs' best and hottest basement venue,

keeps the streak of dynamite lineups they've had going with a great show happening on Friday, March 29. The lineup is highlighted by Tweed Sugar and The Rotting Twenties, two of the biggest names in the Storrs scene known for their respective brands of alternative rock. Also on the bill is Remedies and Voltage, who will be making their Storrs debut. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., music starts at 7:30 p.m. and admission is \$7. No parking is available on-site. For the address, message @thedogpound on Instagram.

Friday 3/28: Rockhopper Productions @ United Presbyterian Church - Milford

Yes, you read that right: a DIY show in a church. Rockhopper Productions, a Milford-based booking agency, is putting on a show at United Presbyterian Church in Milford, Conn., that's well worth the trek from Storrs. The four-band lineup features Ruby Leftstep, the alternative rock group fresh off their appearance at the legendary Mercury Lounge in New York City. Joining them on the bill is Adjust the Sails, Mighty Tortuga and Mikie Mayo. Doors open at 6 p.m., music starts at 7 p.m. and admission is \$15.

Saturday 3/29: The Dog Pound - Storrs

If you're looking for a

heavier show this weekend, then look no further than this one at The Dog Pound on Saturday, March 29. The four-band bill includes Elizabory, a metal band from Worcester, Mass., who competed in WHUS Radio's Battle of The Bands. Also on the bill is Lootbug, one of the most frequent performers at The Dog Pound. Rounding out the lineup is Funeral Doors and Blandest. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., music starts at 7:30 p.m. and admission is \$7. No parking is available on-site. For the address, message @thedogpound on Instagram.

Saturday 3/29: Drown in Sound Music and Arts Festival - Uncasville

We've got a festival this weekend! The Drown in Sound Music and Arts Festival is being held at Montville VFW Post 10060 in Uncasville, Conn.. The show features a whopping six bands on the lineup. Some names familiar to Storrs showgoers include reggae fusion band Sol Gyres and Tolland-based alternative rock group Done Right. The rest of the bill includes Sauce, Agonized, F.O.W. and Indigo Folly. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the music starts at 6:30 p.m. Admission is \$5 or guests can bring canned food; all proceeds and donations will go to the Gemma E. Moran United Way/Labor Food Center.



Students gather for the yearly SUBOG Sunset Fest on the Student Union lawn in Storrs, Conn. Everyone came out to support the six band line up on Friday, Oct. 11 2024.

PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

THE MODERN MONSTER: ASIMOV'S 'NIGHTFALL' AND WHY HUMANITY FEARS DEATH

by **Samantha Brody**

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"Have you ever experienced Darkness, young man?"

If you somehow haven't heard of him, Isaac Asimov was an incredibly prolific writer, best known for various science fiction stories, including the "Foundation" series and a book of short stories titled "I, Robot." He also wrote this week's topic, a short story about the collapse of civilization when faced with mass panic: 1941's "Nightfall."

The fictional planet of Lagash has six suns, numbered Alpha through Zeta. As such, the people living in a civilization on Lagash, including our main character Theremon 762, have never experienced total darkness. It's heavily implied that these people don't even have independent light sources, instead relying on light from windows.

Theremon, a reporter, arrives at Saro University in anticipation of a supposed apocalypse. A scientist named Sheerin 501 explains that their section of Lagash will soon be plunged into total darkness. Five suns have set and the final one, Beta, is entering an eclipse. This will result in the reveal of madness-inducing Stars, and the people of Lagash will soon burn their own cities to the ground in a desperate hope for light.

Although "Nightfall" isn't a horror story in the traditional sense, it's still massively unsettling. I chose to write about it for this column not because the story made me fearful, but because it's about fear itself. Humans are resistant to change, and we don't fare well when our circumstances are altered. When accustomed to eternal light, how do we react when night finally falls?

If the terrors of "Nightfall" had to be pinned down as any specific fears, I'd categorize it as claustrophobia (enclosed spaces) and astraphobia (outer space). The second is much more interesting, so let's start with the first one.

Theremon doubts Sheerin. Although he doesn't doubt the eclipse, he doesn't believe that darkness can cause insanity.

Sheerin dares Theremon to draw the curtains shut. Theremon does, and when the pair are plunged into complete darkness, Theremon begins to feel an intense feeling of claustrophobia. He panics.

"Nightfall" asks the reader to consider a world devoid of all light. A world in which humanity has been robbed entirely of sight, forcing us to stumble our way

tary "Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey" has a scene where the camera continuously zooms out to show our "cosmic address": suns, solar systems, galaxies and space upon space upon space. Tyson has us imagine our observable universe, containing countless galaxies, as a single drop of water in an ocean. Waterfalls upon waterfalls.

We can't even be sure that these

predicts about one or two dozen.

Theremon remarks on this idea. "Two dozen suns in a universe eight light years across," he said in the story. "Wow! That would shrink our world into insignificance."

The reason for only a dozen or two stars? "There just isn't any place in the universe you could put a million suns — unless they touch

This insignificance is what finally causes Theremon to break down.

Just as Sheerin predicted, Lagash's Saro City, positioned just outside of their windows, begins to burn.

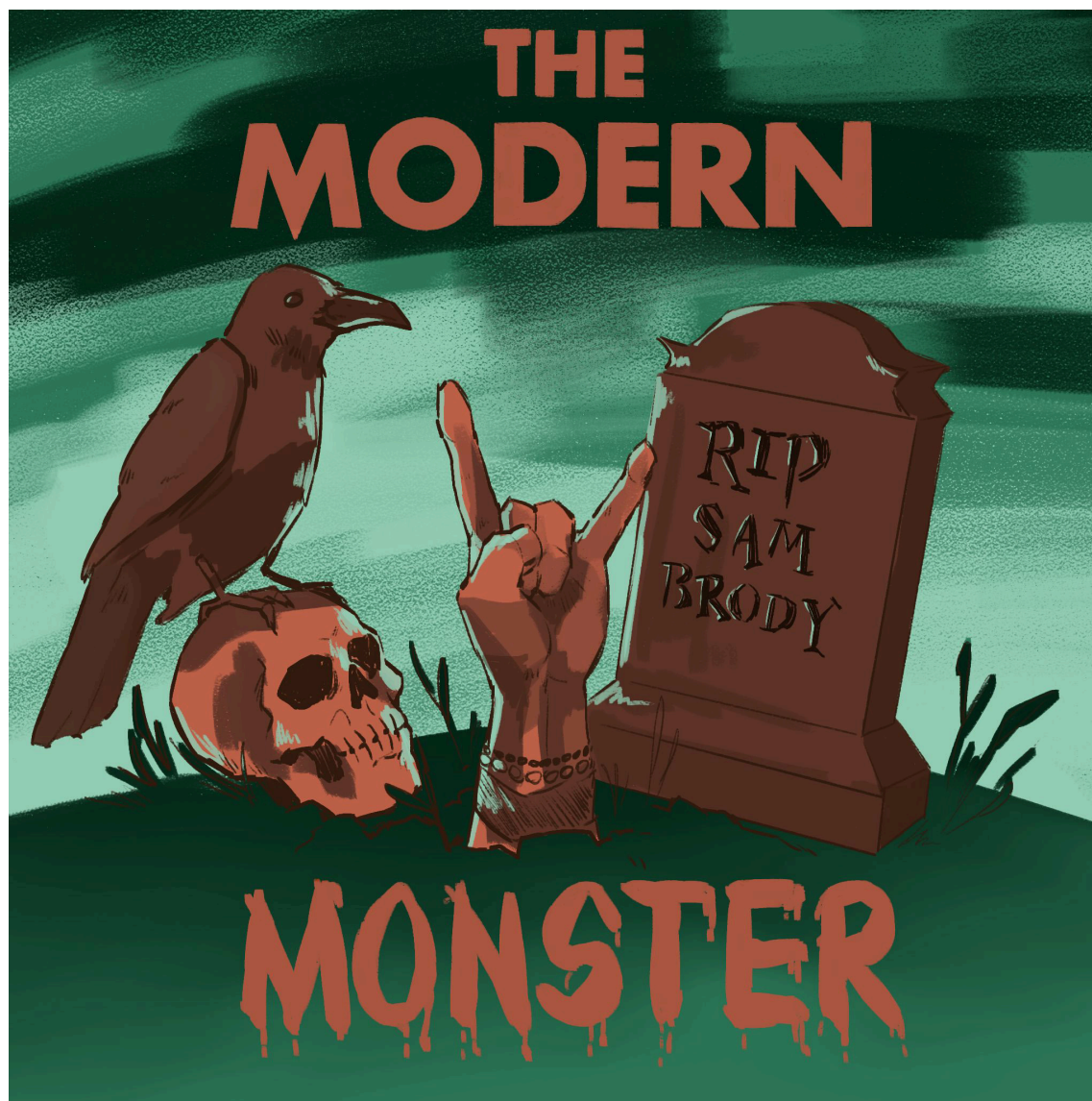
A key aspect of "Nightfall" is a religious group referred to as "the Cult." The Cultists have a text called "The Book of Revelations," which includes predictions and hymns about this apocalypse. Sheerin speculates that the book was written by the survivors of a previous iteration of this eclipse-born apocalypse — most likely madmen and children who have little coherent recollection of the event and instead describe it in fantastical ways.

The Cult is clearly an analogue to all sorts of real-world religions, but one specific belief stands out. Believers with a sacred book, hoping it will give them the tools to withstand the end of the world. The idea that the apocalypse is a recurring cycle, having already wiped the world with plans to do it again.

The Cult is meant to parallel Christianity and it teaches its followers to embrace the end of the world instead of rejecting it. We don't get to learn how this works out for them, but it's definitely a way to cope with the apocalypse, especially if you know it's going to happen one day. It's also very similar to the way the Bible provides ideas on what will happen to people after they die.

Humans don't like feeling insignificant or temporary. The unknown of death is a horrifying thought. The rest of the world will continue ticking on after you and everyone you know passes on. When Theremon looks to the sky and sees the endless universe before him, he is suddenly hit with the realization that the Stars do not care about him. Neil DeGrasse Tyson has finally zoomed out to show the waterfall, and Theremon sees how small he truly is. The infinite darkness is unforgiving, and he will soon be crushed by it. Theremon is insignificant; he may as well be dead.

Information for this article was sourced from Isaac Asimov's 1969 book, "Nightfall and Other Stories."



LOGO BY AH REUM KIDNESS, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

along paths unseen. Our perspective suddenly shrinks down to the things that we can hear and touch — and neither of those can be trusted. In those few moments of darkness, Theremon is powerless, and he is trapped.

Moving on: How big is space?

From my understanding as a journalist who has never taken a physics class, space is big. Neil deGrasse Tyson's 2014 documen-

worlds operate under the same rules as our world. Our modern understanding of the universe is that it might be infinite; but if it isn't, the boundary is so far away that we don't know if we'll ever find it.

When the characters of "Nightfall" speculate on the size of the universe, photographer Beenay correctly guesses what these speculated-about "Stars" are, but he gets the amount wrong. Beenay

one another," Beenay said.

When the eclipse reaches totality and the stars are revealed, it's unsurprising that Theremon's mind fractures at the sight. There are 30,000 stars in the sky — Lagash, and therefore Theremon, are meaningless in this colossal world.

The story's takes on astraphobia, claustrophobia and nyctophobia (fear of the dark) all connecting back into one fear: insignificance.

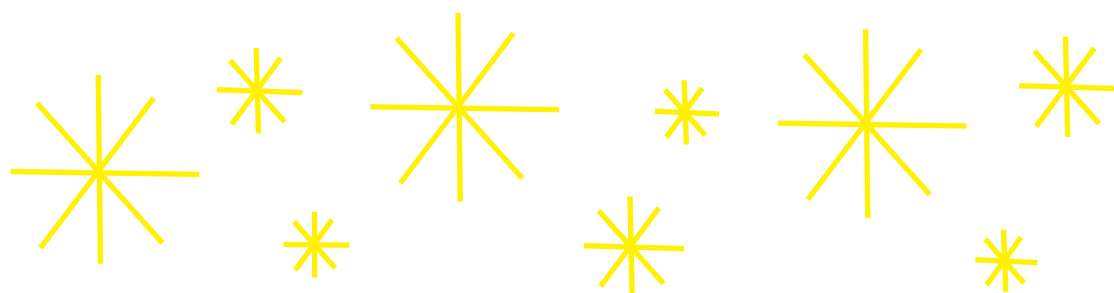


ILLUSTRATION BY CONNOR SZREJNA, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Life

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Nasim Basiri depicts the limitations of feminism in the Middle East



The UConn's Women's Center hosting a celebration in the Student Union Ballroom on Wednesday, March 25, 2025.
PHOTO BY KARLA PEREZ, ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Karla Perez
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The University of Connecticut Women's Center hosted a celebration for International Women's Day in the Student Union Ballroom on Tuesday, March 25. To close out the event, the center invited Nasim Basiri, a visiting assistant professor at the department of social and critical inquiry at UConn's Stamford campus and an Iranian native, to share what feminism looks like in the Middle East.

To begin her presentation, Basiri provided background of the 1979 Iranian Revolution. She said that the revolution initially began as a demonstration of solidarity among the civilians against the then Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and his dictatorship. However, she described that religious fundamentalist "stole" the revolution from the activists. The result was a

huge transformation of life for women and queer people, and for the worse.

According to Basiri, the religious fundamentalists who took control of Iran implemented a patriarchal interpretation of Islam into Iranian Law. She said that this new order shook whatever rights women had even under the dictatorship.

She talked about the ways women and girls are discouraged from going to school. Boys and girls have separate institutions from the time they're in kindergarten. Girls have limited access to various fields of study. While Basiri did not specify these fields in her presentation, women are barred from studying areas such as computer science, political science and business administration, according to the Human Rights Watch.

"The government is against knowledge," Basiri said.

Basiri comes from a family of activists and feminists.

She did not involve much of her personal story in her presentation, but she did say that many of her family members have been arrested, some even multiple times.

She said her father was arrested when he was a teenager after he was caught reading a book the government was against. Basiri shared that she had been arrested multiple times herself and called it "a psychopathic system of government."

Basiri also explained the role of morality police in Iran. She said that these officers search in crowded public places for women not properly wearing a hijab. If a woman is found breaking the dress code, she will be arrested and kept in a police station for days. Before being released, she will be asked to agree to recognize the dress code moving forward. If she is caught again, she will be arrested and/or fined.

Basiri said women are arrested every day in Iran for

breaking the dress code. Many women in Iran refuse to wear a hijab in public as a form of resistance, according to Basiri. She shared that none of her sisters wear a hijab, but her mother does.

During her presentation, Basiri shared two photographs. One featured her and a close friend visiting Iran in which they were not properly wearing hijabs. Though it appeared in the photo that they were in a more secluded area, Basiri described feeling scared that she would get arrested for breaking the dress code. In the other picture, Basiri, her sister and a few others stood in the middle of a very crowded street. Basiri's sister was standing tall without a hijab.

The purpose of Basiri's presentation was to show that feminism doesn't look the same worldwide — because it can't.

Iranian women practice feminism and resistance by

pursuing education and negotiating traditional expectations within their families, according to Basiri. These forms of resistance are possible due to the Iranian Feminist Revolution of 2022, the biggest, most recent push for the cause.

Basiri said that some western feminists often criticize Middle Eastern feminists, calling them Islamophobic. Basiri said that these critics don't often understand that the interpretations of Islam by the government and the people don't align.

Basiri said that the mass media often avoids covering violence and killings. She also said that the Iranian government has been trying to divert media attention toward the Israel-Palestine conflict to distract from what's happening in Iran. Because of this Basiri asks American universities to give space to Iranian activists to share their stories, saying that "Americans have a lot of power."



Opinion

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What happens to UConn if the women's basketball team loses?

by Tomas Hinckley

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The UConn men's basketball team was eliminated from the NCAA tournament last week in a heartbreaking two-point loss to the Florida Gators. This comes after a historic run over the past two years, securing back-to-back championships for the first time in men's college basketball since 2007. The women's basketball team is still in competition this year in the Sweet Sixteen, fighting for the program's 12th national championship. For the past two years, this school has been riding high on the men's victories, providing us with recognition and respect on a national level. Now, as the three-peat dreams have been dashed, this school has been brought back down to Earth. But the women are shaping up to be very strong contenders, so there is still hope among the UConn community that we will be able to experience the same pride and joy again. I think there's a more interesting question to ask in this situation: what happens if they don't?

To explain with a comparison, look at the economic troubles of Argentina. It is fairly easy to see when looking at the country that there are some long-term issues that have created structural instabilities in their economy that continue to affect the population to this day. Aside from that, Argentina is also home to the greatest national soccer team in the world. It is a well-studied phenomenon that whenever a national soccer team has a great international performance, such as at an event like the FIFA World Cup, it positively impacts the country's economy. In fact, Goldman Sachs' research has demonstrated that in the months after such a win, a country is expected to beat the stock market by 3.5% on average. As one of the strongest contenders year after year and a three-time winner, this country has personally seen these benefits. For example, in the 1990

World Cup, even after just being the runner-up against West Germany, the markets outperformed by 33% in the following months. In 2022, after Argentina most recently took home the trophy, the impact was expected to be an extra 0.25% in economic growth, an improvement to the tune of billions of dollars for the country's GDP over the next two quarters. A victory like this contributes to the "economic good mood" that distracts citizens from the general socio-political insecurities that to high

poles following both victories. On a broader level though, the ability to say that we are back-to-back national champions has contributed to a similar good mood for UConn students, alumni and arguably, the entire state of Connecticut. For students who were lucky enough to be able to attend a part or the entirety of this historic moment, it is undeniably a crucial part of their specific identity in relation to UConn. This is super influential to the further recruitment of students, as Vice President of Student Life & Enroll-

ment despite the shiny image we may provide to the outside world, things are not going very well at UConn. Academic departments are having their budgets cut and some are potentially facing faculty layoffs as well. Meanwhile our university has denied that this is happening and continues to accept rising numbers of students, spreading already limited resources across an even larger student body. As we are first and foremost a university, these issues ought to be of the utmost importance to students who

students and the many other institutional issues that truly govern student's lives here at UConn.

We have a gilded image because reality is largely glossed over by good public relations focusing on our biggest strength: our athletics. It is the institution of athletics which binds so much of this community, and so that is what we can point to all the time. So, again, what happens once we stop winning? Obviously, one year of no national championships won't kill a fanbase; but at that point, half of the student body will no longer know what it's like to have that winning experience. There will be less people able to reminisce on what it was like when we won, it'll move a little bit further into the past. Will UConn's promotional materials become a little less effective when we can no longer say we're the reigning champions? Will people focus more on what the rest of this school is like at that point? Will they take more action on those issues? It's a question worth thinking about not just for next year if we lose, but also in general considering that no sports program is on top forever.

If we consider athletics to be an institution that governs the culture of this school at the same level as Greek life, clubs or even student governments and social institutions, then it follows that the strength of this institution is clearly in how much our sports teams win generally. As institutions like these hold and maintain power in a space, they influence its dominant culture. UConn and sports are inseparable conceptually for most people because one is intrinsically connected to the other. As we move forward into potentially less successful straits for UConn basketball, it's worth questioning what this campus looks like if sports aren't the dominant factor. Although I am truthfully hoping that the UConn women take home another trophy for this school, I'm very much more curious about what happens if they don't.



Paige Bueckers playing her last home game at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. Bueckers scored 34 points in the game, leading the Huskies to a victory. PHOTOGRAPH BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

poverty rates and out of control inflation; but ultimately, it doesn't last. In all these cases, the impact of such a victory does not continue past a few months and the "mood" eventually ends as people return to look at things as they are.

UConn is in a very similar place right now. It is hard to deny that for the past two years, this school has existed in a state of frenzy because of our basketball success; just look at the sheer explosive ecstasy released on campus light

ment Nathan Fuerst noted that application numbers always spike in the cycle after a win. Ultimately, it's about brand recognition. A win in the athletics department has created positive associations for the UConn brand within the general public and put our name into the mind of the general population.

So, if we've been on such a high in terms of campus culture and brand recognition, what happens now that the party might be over?

Well, it's clear right now that de-

are here to learn. The amount of funding, resources and the overall quality of education available to us are ultimately going to be the factors that heavily influence our success in achieving our goals for after graduation. This is all not even to mention the ongoing housing crisis, our school's complete lack of commitment to its sustainability goals, the administration's suppression of free speech, the constant lack of communication between administration and stu-

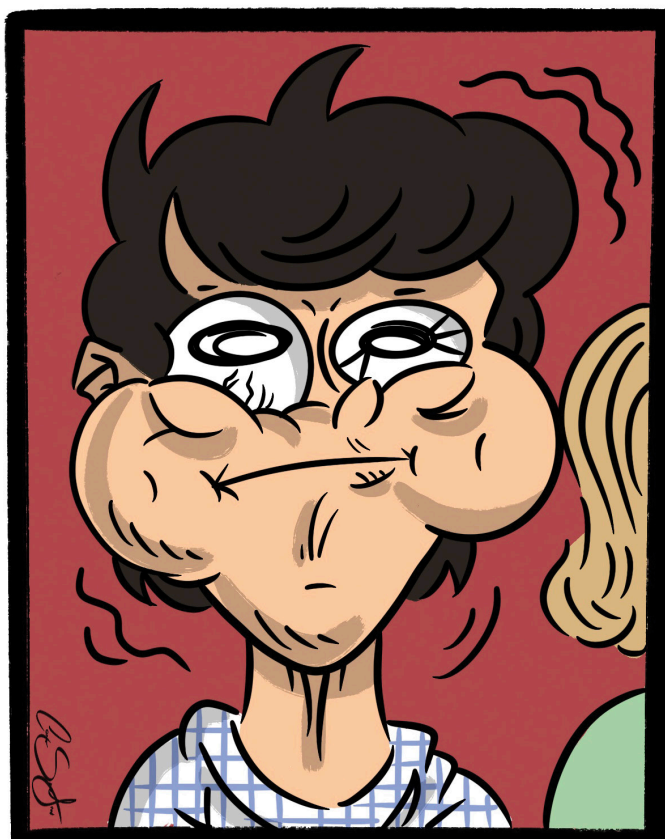
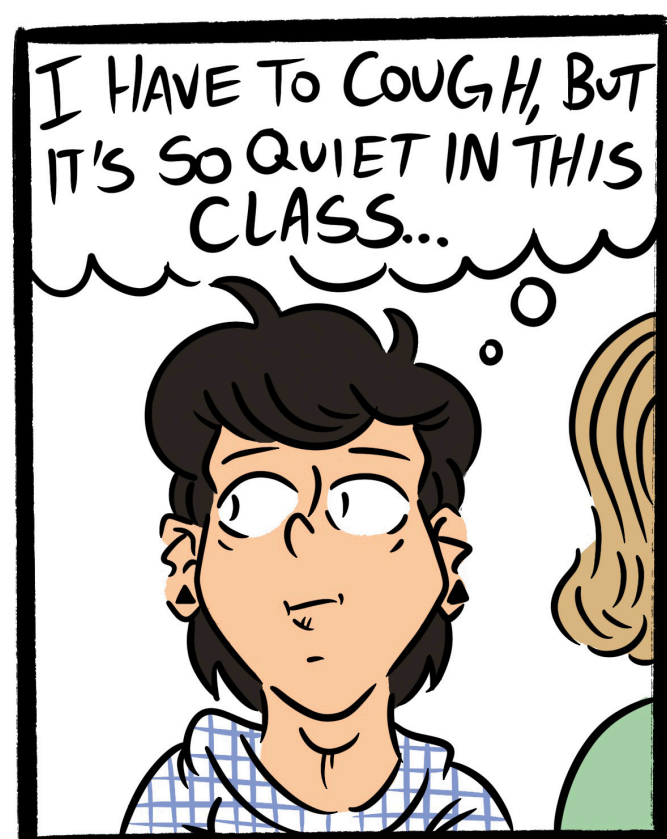
Talking With No Mouth

Opinion

Photo of the Day | Spring weather



A student rides their longboard down Mansfield Way on a sunny day in Storrs, Conn. on March 27, 2025. More students can be found outside during the day now that the weather is starting to get warmer. PHOTO BY MADISON HENDRICKS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Comic of the Day

by Connor Szrejna, Staff Artist

I doubt I have to explain the plot of "Superbad" as just about everyone our age knows this movie, but I will anyway because it's great. "Superbad," starring Jonah Hill as Seth and Michael Cera as Evan, is a comedy following two seniors as they finish up their last year of high school. Throughout the film, we feel the tension as the two boys begin to accept and realize that soon, they'll be living in different states and going to different schools, having never previously been apart. This is playing out as they're trying to get alcohol for a party that night in hopes of getting with their crushes.

This movie is inexplicably funny and I really don't know how better to describe the humor; it's just hilarious. Where this film shines is in its heartfelt backdrop. The relationship between Seth and Evan is beautiful and something that many people are able to relate to. The movie was written by Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg, two best friends who grew up with one another in Canada. They began writing the screenplay when they were just 13 and ultimately finished it in their 20s, which is also when they realized the core of the film was the relationship between the best friends.

The chemistry between Cera and Hill was incredible and felt very natural, almost like that between Rogen and Goldberg. Along with that, many have praised the riffing between Hill and Christopher Mintz-Plasse, who played Fogel, also known as McLovin. It was revealed that Hill truly disliked Mintz, which was a strong reason Mintz was hired for the role, making the fighting between the two characters feel even more genuine.

Ultimately, the clear focus on the relationship between Seth and Evan, as opposed to what

they wanted you to think the focus was, sex and partying, made this movie stronger than other high school movies. It often seems that adults graduate high school and completely forget

throughout high school and then not long after they graduated, doesn't fit this stereotype.

Most high school movies fall into the trap of creating distinct cliques into which the students

wasn't as though they couldn't interact with those who were more popular. Along with that, a lot of the more popular kids were actually nice and not douchebags like in every other high school movie.

ple we knew in high school. Certainly, the most unrealistic part of the film is the two cops, but even their ridiculous adventures with McLovin didn't take me out of the movie at any point.

Another thing that's refreshing and realistic about this movie is that it doesn't end on an impossibly happy note. The problem isn't solved by figuring out a way that the two guys can remain friends after high school, nor is it implied that they do. While this is heartbreaking when you think about it, it's often the reality for childhood friendships. What's great is that the viewer isn't left with a negative view of this, the two will go off to their respective schools, make friends there and never forget the time they spent together.

The movie captures this terrifying and difficult point in life when we leave behind something we didn't care much for in the first place, but upon leaving we know we can never go back. We know that the only life we've known is coming to an end and changing. It's hard to imagine a film with as many sex jokes as this one can also be dealing with such a tough universal experience, but it does. Because of this, this movie also stands the test of time, as it didn't rely on any era specific references that often turn annoying. This may be due to the extended time it took to write the film, but that's just speculation. There is some disagreement about how well some of the jokes hold up, but that's up to the individual.

Overall, this film is the best and most realistic movie that explores life in high school, particularly as a senior about to graduate. Not only is this one of the funniest movies I've seen, but it has a real core to it that we see throughout the movie, not just thrown in at the end.

'SUPERBAD'



HAWAII DRIVER LICENSE

NUMBER 01-47-87441

DOB 06/03/1981 EXP 06/03/2008

HT	WT	HAIR	EYES	SEX	CTY
5-10	150	BRO	BRO	M	0

ISSUE DATE	CLASS	RESTR	ENDORSE
06/18/1998	3		

McLOVIN
892 MOMONA ST
HONOLULU, HI 96820

IMAGE COURTESY OF @CINEMERALD ON INSTAGRAM

is the best high school movie ever made

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

what it was like. While teens certainly talk and act like all they're interested in is partying, their relationships are more important. This movie, again probably due to having been written by guys

fit. "Superbad" got it right when they instead opted to focus on how individuals viewed and treated one another. We are made aware that Seth and his two friends weren't "cool kids," but it

The realism in this movie is another domain it stands out in. The characters feel real while still being absurd enough to create funny scenes. In addition, they are distinct and mimic peo-

SEAN BRADY FINISHES FORMER CHAMP LEON EDWARDS IN HIS OWN BACKYARD

by **Cameron Cruz**
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This past weekend, the UFC traveled overseas to host a Fight Night at the O2 Arena in London, England. Highlighting this card was the former English champ, Leon Edwards, taking on fifth-ranked welterweight contender Sean Brady. The co-main event was a 3-round lightweight bout between UFC veteran and former light heavy-

weight champ Jan Blachowicz and rising star Carlos Ulberg. Other UFC veterans, such as Kevin Holland, Marcin Tybura and Molly “Meatball” McCann were featured on the fight card.

Overall, this fight card featured a total of nine fights going to the judges’ scorecards, with the remaining four ending via submission. The England Fight Night may not have been the best UFC event in the past few weeks, but it still delivered some amazing submission wins. I am going to talk about my three

favorite submissions from this past weekend.

Shauna Bannon vs. Puja Tomar

This three-round strawweight bout was the third fight on the prelims and was very entertaining during rounds one and two. Bannon came into this fight with a 1-1 record in the UFC, following a split-decision win at UFC 304. On the other hand, Puja Tomar had only one career fight with the UFC, a split decision win back in June 2024. Even with their lack of UFC fight experience, the two 31-year-old strawweights did not disappoint.

Bannon entered this fight with a six-inch reach advantage and did not waste any time using that to her benefit. During the first round, both fighters landed some pretty clean shots; Bannon used beautiful sidekicks to rack up a majority of her significant strikes, while Tomar was using both kicks and hooks to cause damage. After the bell rang, it was clear Bannon took the first round on the scorecards. However, Tomar was not far behind and put up a solid performance in the first as well.

As the second round started, the two still traded shots back and forth, but it was not until 2:45 in the round when Tomar threw an amazing head kick, knocking Bannon down. Bannon recovered quickly, keeping her hopes of winning alive by wrestling with Tomar. Almost a minute after the wonderful head kick, Bannon caught Tomar in an armbar, taking home the victory.

Jordan Vucenic vs. Chris Duncan

This Lightweight bout took place on the main card, between Scottish native Chris Duncan

and 29-year-old betting favorite Vucenic. The fight was scheduled for three rounds but was cut short with a minute remaining in the second round. After a unanimous decision loss back in August of 2024, Vucenic looked to get back into the win column this past weekend. Duncan, on the other hand, came off a submission win in September 2024, and looked to win his second fight in a row.

The first round began and about a minute in, fans were given action as Duncan threw a beautiful right hand that knocked Vucenic down. Once he was on the ground, Duncan controlled the whole first round, with a majority of the four minutes being spent on top of Vucenic. Duncan dominated the first round with ease. The second round began, and the two fighters traded brutal shots with each other while also showcasing some ground game. With about 1:30 left in the second Duncan was up against the fence, and as Vucenic entered the clinch, Duncan successfully jumped the guillotine. After a couple seconds of squirming, Vucenic was forced to tap. Duncan was victorious and had won back-to-back fights via submission.

Leon Edwards vs. Sean Brady

Brady came into the main event as the fifth ranked Welterweight contender and was coming off a unanimous decision win over Gilbert Burns in a Fight Night main event. The 32-year-old Philadelphia native specializes in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and was given his second straight main event fight against the former Welterweight champ. Edwards finally made his return to the octagon

after losing his belt back in July 2024 and looked to prove why his name still belonged at the top of the totem pole in the Welterweight Division.

Brady put on an amazing performance against the former champ, and essentially out-classed Edwards. Fans around the world saw how badly Edwards struggled against Belal Muhammad’s wrestling when he lost his title back at UFC 304, and it did not look like much changed since then. The first round was Edwards’ best performance of the fight, as it consisted of back and forth striking and a ton of clinch time. He still ended up losing round one on the scorecards, and it did not get better from there.

The second round began, and Brady immediately shot a take-down on Edwards and racked up four and a half minutes of control time. Round three was very similar to the second, with Brady just dominating the former champ. As the fourth round started, Brady wasted no time shooting another take-down on Edwards, but this time he would lock in a Guillotine choke, forcing the former champ to tap. Throughout the main event, Brady threw a ton of ground and pound strikes, which led to him having a total of 221 strikes and 11:10 minutes of control time by the end of the fight.

Brady put on a dominant performance and rightfully earned himself the number one contender spot in the Welterweight division. As the champ Muhammad looks to defend his title against Jack Della Maddalena at UFC 315 in May, fans can only ask what’s next for Brady. Shavkat Rakhmonov? Kamaru Usman? Joaquin Buckley?



Photo of the Day | Women’s basketball



UConn women’s basketball beat South Dakota State on March 24 to head to the Sweet 16.

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

Sports

Ava's Angle: Is MLB's annual Opening Day the best season opener in sports?

by **Ava Inesta**
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The day has finally come: MLB season has finally commenced with the official Opening Day on Thursday, March 27. For baseball fans, Opening Day serves as the start of something special and a symbol of rebirth. Many people feel that this is an occasion of starting fresh, with everyone back at the same level with a 0-0 record.

But Opening Day energizes the sports world and the baseball world like nothing else. From players to the coaching staff and everyone that surrounds them, Opening Day brings out the best in everyone. Opening Day marks the start of consistency; after today, there will be a baseball game almost every day for as long as the season goes along. So many people love the fact that baseball is consistent and has a long season. It brings comfort knowing that Opening Day is the start of the baseball season which is here to stay for months ahead.

Another side of Opening Day is remembering everything that you've missed since the last pitch of last season: missing letting a team affect your mood that day, judging all of the umpire's calls and being on edge all day waiting to see if your team wins or loses. But once all this

starts up again, many fans take it for granted, not realizing how good they have it until it's gone.

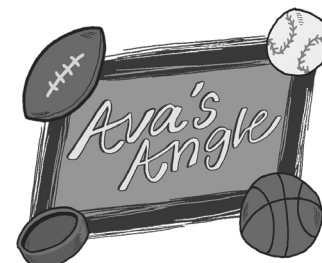
Baseball's bests are going to be front and center on Opening Day. Paul Skenes will start on the mound for the Pittsburgh Pirates, New York Yankees captain Aaron Judge is back, Shohei Ohtani returns for the Los Angeles Dodgers, Juan Soto will make his debut for the New York Mets, Alex Bregman will be in a Boston Red Sox Jersey and Blake Snell will be wearing Dodger blue. All your favorite players on your favorite teams running out of the dugout for the first time in what is a 162-game long season, and the best is only ahead.

All of the other professional leagues, the NFL, NBA and NHL, have their season openers, but no sport does it like the MLB. So, does that mean MLB has the best season opener in all of sports? Many teams have traditions within the annual season opener whether they host or start on the road. Even if a team does not open their season at their home stadium, their 'official home opener' is still a big deal whenever the time comes. Every team's traditions are different, but some include banner raisings, presidential first pitches, legendary team alumni in attendance, parades, tailgates and more. On Opening Day, you see the true joy of baseball and what will

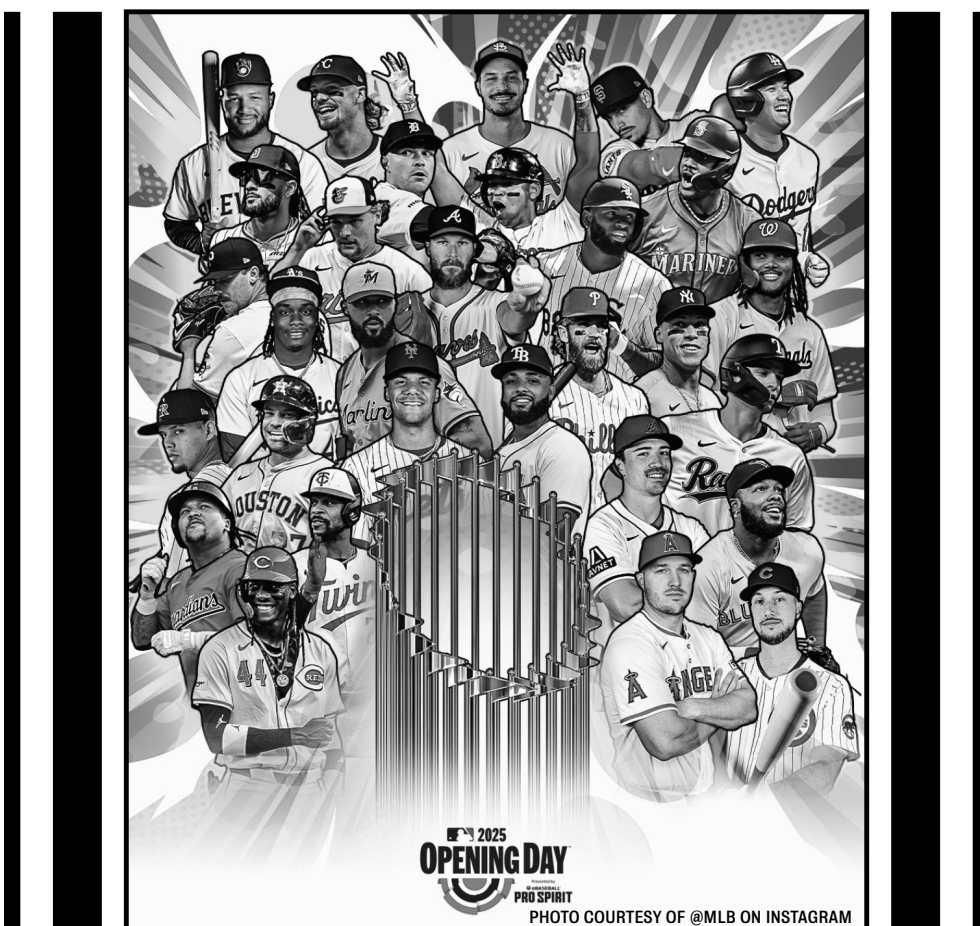
occur every day for the next six months. There were 14 games on Thursday, March 27 and will be nine games on Friday, 15 on Saturday, 13 on Sunday, and 14 on Monday. This continues until the end of September. People might have no idea what their September will look like, but one thing they can count on is baseball. The selected

MLB teams will still be playing through Halloween for the postseason, where it gets even more exciting with the anticipation of the World Series.

All you need to know is that baseball is officially back, and all 32 teams are taking the field this weekend. The best is yet to come, but the wait is finally over. Let's play ball!



FILE LOGO/THE DAILY CAMPUS



HUSKIES IN THE PROS: LOOKING AT HOW THE HUSKIES PERFORMED IN THE 2024-2025 NBA SEASON

by **Tyler Pruneau**
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Stephon Castle:

Week after week, Stephon Castle has improved immensely, continuing to become more of a problem in the league with the San Antonio Spurs. In October, the rookie contributed a little more than five and a half points, whereas in March, he dropped nearly 20 points per game. In addition, the guard rebounded a little more than four balls with four and a half assists per match. Rewinding to Feb. 7, Castle put on a career-high showing against the Charlotte Hornets. The Georgia native led the team with 33 points, cashing in three out of five attempts from deep and going seven for 10 within the arc. Additionally, in the team's recent clash with the Detroit Pistons, the 20-year-old knocked down just one of his four buckets from three, nailing six of 11 shots from two. The former Husky ended the night with 19 points, the second-highest mark for San Antonio. However, seeing the guard in the playoffs is unlikely, as San Antonio holds a 31-40 record, sitting at No. 13 in the Western Conference, and is without star center Victor Wembanyama. Regardless of this, Castle remains the favorite to win Rookie of the Year, per the NBA.

Donovan Clingan:

Similar to Castle, Donovan Clingan has improved each month, both in scoring and rebounding the ball. At the start of his campaign with the Portland Trail Blazers, the center averaged nearly five points per contest, which grew to a little more than six points in November. The big man declined in December and January but flipped the switch by registering seven and a half points in February and eight per match in March.

In addition, Clingan not only tops Portland with a little more than one and a half blocks, but also leads the team with nearly seven and a half boards per

game, according to ESPN. Despite losing their recent clash against the Cleveland Cavaliers, "Cling Kong" notched 18 points, cashing in two of his three shots beyond the arc and going four for seven within the field. Moreover, the former Husky snatched the rock 12 times and invited the Cavaliers to the block party three times. Regardless of potentially missing the postseason, as the team holds the No. 12 spot in the Western Conference, the future looks bright for the 21-year-old.

Cam Spencer:

Cam Spencer experienced an unusual rookie year with the Memphis Grizzlies after suffering an ankle injury in October and fracturing his thumb in January, per Fox Sports. In addition, the 24-year-old bounced between the G-League and the main roster, vying for a spot on Memphis' roster. Despite the setbacks, Spencer thrived with the Memphis Hustle G-League team, contributing nearly 20.5 points per contest.

Adding on, the former Husky drew attention against the Phoenix Suns on March 10 after tallying a career-high 16 points with Memphis. Spencer stuck around for the franchise's following six clashes but declined in on-court time. With that said, the Maryland native took advantage of every opportunity and knocked it out of the park. Additionally, the team's season is still alive, as they sit at the No. 5 seed in the Western Conference.

Jordan Hawkins:

Over the campaign, Jordan Hawkins has fluctuated in points scored. For example, in the New Orleans Pelicans' recent two matchups, the guard struggled to perform at the same level. Against the Pistons, Hawkins cashed in 25 points, hitting six of his 11 three-pointers while going perfect from two. However, against the Philadelphia 76ers the following night, the 22-year-old ended with nine points, only knocking down one of nine deep shots and finishing three of five attempts within the arc. Turning to the

playoffs, the Pelicans are mathematically eliminated, holding a 20-53 record and sitting at No. 14 in the Western Conference.

Andre Jackson Jr.:

Andre Jackson Jr. shined the most in January, racking up nearly four and a half points and snagging a little more than three and a half balls per game. However, Jackson's minutes slowly reduced to a little more

than four minutes per night. In addition, the former Husky last performed for seven minutes against the Los Angeles Lakers on March 20. The guard notched three points, two boards and stole two balls. Even though it looked like Jackson had secured a spot on the team, he continues fighting for an opportunity. As for the playoffs, the Milwaukee Bucks have clinched a spot in

the postseason, holding the No. 6 seed.

Adama Sanogo:

Adama Sanogo sits in free agency waiting to get picked up, after the Chicago Bulls waived him on Feb. 19. The team finalized the decision after finding out the 22-year-old will miss four weeks, after suffering a right ailing knee, per CBS Sports.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF @MEMGRIZZ, @BOOTKREWEMEDIA, @THEPELICANSREPORT, @CHICAGOBULLS, @STEPHCATLE, @TRAIL-BLAZERS, AND @ANDREJACKSON5 ON INSTAGRAM

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: HUSKIES SHIP OFF TO SPOKANE FOR A DANCE IN THE SWEET 16

by Avery Becker
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For the 31st consecutive time, the No. 2 seeded UConn women's basketball team survived and advanced to play in the Sweet 16.

How did the program get there? Paige Bueckers. In the graduate guard's last game in the Basketball Capital of the World, Bueckers, a finalist for the Naismith Trophy, tied a career high in points with 34 and a shooting split of 54/41/90, showing her tremendous accuracy from the field, beyond the arc and at the free throw line.

"It's incredible to watch, but you almost feel sorry for other teams, because, you know, when Paige is locked in, like there's nothing you can do to stop her," said Azzi Fudd to the media postgame on Monday evening.

With this tremendous performance on the offensive side, the Huskies defeated the South Dakota State Jackrabbits 91-57 on Monday, March 24, in front of a sold-out crowd at Gampel Pavilion.

Next up on the docket for the Huskies will be the No. 3 seeded Oklahoma Sooners. These two programs will go head-to-head for a bout in Spokane, Wash. on Saturday afternoon.

The last time these two squads faced one another was on Dec. 22, 2019, where the Huskies won 97-53 at Mohegan Sun Arena. In this game, the current Husky Aubrey Griffin notched

a total of 14 points in 14 minutes as a freshman. This matchup, at the time, was the tenth game ever that head coach Geno Auriemma missed in his tenure, as he could not attend due to surgery he was recovering from.

The current Sooners roster is coming off a 96-62 win over the Iowa Hawkeyes on Monday, where Skylar Vann scored 17 points.

In addition to Vann, a player the Huskies will need to keep an eye on is Raegan Beers, a 6-foot-4 center who is averaging 17.5 points per game. Beers was also named a WBCA, All-America finalist, along with Connecticut's Bueckers and Sarah Strong. Without question, the Sooners are the toughest team Connecticut has faced in March Madness, especially with their size.

In their starting lineup, almost every single player is above 6-foot besides forward Sahara Williams.

To win, the Huskies will need to maintain their composure by the boards and take advantage of the turnovers from the Sooners, where Oklahoma averages 18.8 turnovers a game.

The Huskies will also need to take advantage of the Sooners getting themselves in foul trouble, as Oklahoma averages around 18.9 personal fouls a game.

All in all, it is set to be an exciting matchup as the Huskies take their third consecutive trip to the West. Tip-off is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. EST and Husky fans can tune into this matchup on ESPN.



UConn women's basketball beats South Dakota State to head to the Sweet 16. PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

COLETTE'S COMMENTARY: WOMEN'S NCAA TOURNAMENT STARTS WITH A RECORD-BREAKING FIRST ROUND

by Colette Doyle
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The Women's NCAA Tournament has taken a dominant start with top seeds showing exactly why they are ranked at the top. The six top teams, South Carolina, Notre Dame, Tennessee, UConn, Texas and LSU, have all contributed to setting the record for most points scored in a single round of the tournament. These programs all scored more than 100 points in first round blowouts.

The title for the biggest blowout in the first round of the tour-

namment belongs to No. 2 UConn, who defeated Arkansas State by 69 points with a final score of 103-34; 35 points came off turnovers. This large margin of victory has tied the team for the seventh-largest margin of victory in women's March Madness history. The record was set in 2017 when No. 1 Baylor defeated No. 16 Texas Southern by 89 points with a final score of 119-30. Graduate student Azzi Fudd had a prominent start in her return to the tournament, scoring 27 points for Connecticut. Freshman Sarah Strong had a dominant debut to the tournament, scoring 20 points, 12 rebounds, five assists and five blocks.

The Duke Blue Devils also started the tournament off with intensity, defeating Lehigh by 61 points with a final score of 86-25. Lehigh's 25 points is the second-lowest point total in NCAA Women's Tournament history and is 44 points below Lehigh's scoring average. Three players scored in double digits for the Blue Devils: sophomore Oluchi Okananwa, freshman Toby Fournier and sophomore Delaney Thomas. Okananwa led with 15 points, followed by Fournier and Thomas each with 11 points. Thomas also dominated in rebounds, finishing with eight.

No. 1 South Carolina came in third for the largest margin of

victory, winning by 60 points to Tennessee Tech with a final score of 108-48. The Gamecocks came into the tournament with motivation after not being given the overall number one seed despite having a tough schedule throughout the season. The depth of the team was proven by 66 of the 108 points being scored by bench players, which is the most in NCAA Tournament history.

No. 3 LSU ended with an impressive 55-point lead against No. 14 San Diego State. LSU ended with 103 points, while San Diego State ended with 48 points. This was San Diego State's first tournament appearance in 13 years, but they proved

to be no match for LSU, who set a new program record for points scored in an NCAA tournament game. Junior guard Flau'Jae Johnson returned from injury and led the Tigers, scoring 22 points.

Next up was No. 3 Notre Dame, who finished 52 points ahead of Stephen F. Austin. The Fighting Irish entered the tournament in the midst of a slump, losing three of their last five games; however, this blowout showed they are still a dominant force. Senior Olivia Miles led in assists with eight but left towards the end suffering an ankle injury. The injury has not stopped Miles as she returned in the tournament's second round.

No. 1 USC came up next with a win margin of 46 points against UNC Greensboro, led by Sophomore guard JuJu Watkins. Watkins has been a dominant force, scoring double digits in every game this season. No. 5 Kansas State and No. 1 Texas tied for the next spot, both winning by 44 points with Texas finishing with 105 points. No. 1 UCLA took the next spot, beating Southern by 38 points.

The top seeds have mostly come out on top in the tournament so far; however, there have been a few surprises and upsets. In the second round, several No. 5 seeds dominated, upsetting No. 4 seeds in matchups. However, No. 5 Alabama was not one of the five seeds that came out on top, falling to Maryland in double overtime in the second round. In the first round, an upset occurred when No. 10 Oregon beat No. 7 Vanderbilt.

The tournament is just getting started, with the Sweet Sixteen coming up as teams fight to survive and move on to the next round for a chance to play for a national championship.



UConn women's basketball playing against South Dakota in the NCAA tournament. The Huskies won this game 91-57. PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS





Sports

MEN'S HOCKEY: No. 7 UCONN SET TO MAKE FIRST EVER NCAA TOURNAMENT APPEARANCE AGAINST No. 11 QUINNIPIAC IN ALLENTOWN REGION

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The UConn men's hockey team will make their first ever NCAA Tournament appearance this Friday, March 28 on the road. The Huskies were put into the Allentown Regional in Pennsylvania and will face off against in-state rival, No. 11 Quinnipiac in the opening round of the 2025 NCAA Frozen Four Tournament.

The Allentown Region will consist of four teams: Maine (#1 seed), UConn (#2 seed), Quinnipiac (#3 seed), and Penn State (#4 seed). These teams are set to compete at the PPL Center in Allentown, Pa. with a trip to the Frozen Four which will be hosted in St. Louis, Mo. on the line.

The Huskies broke program history as the team's first ever bid to the DI College Men's Ice Hockey NCAA Tournament. Prior to the national tournament, UConn is coming off a loss in the Hockey East Championship to No. 4 Maine, with a final score of 5-2 at TD Garden in Boston, Mass. However, the Huskies are looking ahead to the national tournament and are hungry for success.

"Lots of energy, they're certainly excited," said Head Coach Mike Cavanaugh. "It's new territory for us but I think it's something our guys are really looking forward to."

"Our whole team's very confident going into this, we know we can play with the best of the best in this league, I mean we showed it all year, being sixth in

the PairWise [rankings]," said freshman forward Kaden Shahan. "We have nothing but confidence going into this but it's just like I said, staying within our program, sticking to our script this whole tournament."

As for the national tournament opponent, UConn is already familiar with Quinnipiac as they defeated them earlier in the season in the semifinal round of the CT Ice Tournament. The first matchup was a thriller as junior Ryan Tattle sealed the deal for the Huskies with the game winning goal with five seconds left in regulation. The final score was 2-1 and the game sent the Huskies to the CT Ice Championship that they ended up winning for the first time ever after beating Sacred Heart.

"We've played them [Quinnipiac] every year," said Cavanaugh on Wednesday's media availability at Toscano Family Ice Forum. "So in some ways, it's great because you're familiar with the team. People have been asking me, 'Don't you want a different opponent?' Hey, I'm happy to be in the tournament, I'll play anybody. Like I said, in some ways it's nice knowing that we're familiar opponents."

"We just have to play like we did last time, play with our team, play with our program and just play hard," said Shahan.

This team has been described as special all season long. From the talent, team camaraderie and young additions, the team is prepared to reach new levels, and Coach Cavanaugh is fully aware of that. When asked about what has made this group

so special as to be able to accomplish this and get the program to where it's never been, Cavanaugh's answer was clear.

"Hudson Schandor and John Spetz. Very simple," Cavanaugh said. When they decided to come back last year when everybody thought the sky was falling because guys were transferring out of here, they decided to come back. When they did that, I think that really energized the group that was coming back and they set the tone for all our young kids. I mean, on any given night we could have eight freshmen in the lineup. They [Schandor and Spetz] make sure that they [freshmen] understand the expectations on and off the ice and they've held them to it and set an unbelievable example for those younger guys going forward."

"The program here is unbelievable, the family they have here is just unbelievable, the facilities, I didn't even think about it like that. I just came here because of how tight this program is," Kaden explained when asked about his decision to come to UConn.

Coach Cavanaugh has no doubt in his mind that UConn can be a hockey school. In his 12th season as head coach of the Huskies, Cavanaugh understands the culture of successful sports at the University of Connecticut, and it is his goal every day to get his players to adhere to that. Last week, the Hockey East Association announced that Cavanaugh was named the Bob Kullen Coach of the Year for the 2024-25 season after taking the Huskies to new territories.

A resource that Cavanaugh

has had in his time at UConn is his connection with the UConn women's basketball head coach, one of the most legendary coaches of all-time college sports, Geno Auriemma. Coach Auriemma has over 1,000 wins in his 40-year coaching career at UConn and Cavanaugh described them to have a good relationship as two coaches in Storrs, Conn. The two of them have discussed their game preparations, their teams and coaching philosophies. Coach Auriemma was in attendance at the Hockey East Quarterfinals between UConn and Providence at Toscano Family Ice Forum. He has been known to be a supporter of the UConn Hockey program.

Now to talk Quinnipiac, the Huskies are no strangers to the Bobcats as they are just an hour south of Storrs in Hamden, Conn. However, different from UConn, the Quinnipiac men's hockey team has a lot of experience in this tournament as they were crowned National Champions in 2023. The Bobcats head into the NCAA Tournament with a 24-11-2 overall record and 16-5-1 in ECAC action. The team earned the program's fifth consecutive Clearly Cup and regular season title. Quinnipiac is the first team in league history to win five straight trophies and have won nine regular season championships in 12 years since their first in the 2012-13 season.

Something that is integral to the Huskies' success in the NCAA Tournament is the availability of Schandor. The graduate-student captain was unavailable in the lineup through the semi-final and final of the

Hockey East Tournament. Cavanaugh described Schandor to be doing better, but it will most likely be the same situation as last week and they will not know the status of his availability until game day.

The Huskies will enter this matchup with a 22-11-4 overall record and they finished their Hockey East season with a 12-8-4 conference record. UConn saw many positives in their offense this season with sophomore Joey Muldowney setting the program record for goals in a season in the Hockey East era. Another program record was set by Schandor who now has the most assists in a season in the Huskies Hockey East era. Under Cavanaugh, UConn's penalty kill is boasting an 81% kill rate and the Huskies are also tied for the nation lead in short-handed goals with nine. UConn also has a strong goaltender rotation with junior Tyler Muszelek and freshman Callum Tung who have been holding down the fort on defense recently for the Ice Bus.

"Just enjoy the game, don't get caught in the spotlight, just enjoy it- we are here for a reason and we deserved it so just love it," said Shahan on Cavanaugh's message to the team prior to their first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance.

No. 7 UConn will take on No. 11 Quinnipiac in the first round of the 2025 NCAA Frozen Four Tournament. Puck drop is set for 5:00 p.m. in Allentown, Pa. The game will be available to stream live on ESPNU and on the radio at the UConn Sports Network from Learfield - Fox Sports 97.9 FM.

UConn men's hockey takes on Northeastern at Toscano Ice Forum on Feb. 28, 2025. The Huskies secured a 5-2 win. PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

