



## Free professional clothing closet opening Sept. 29

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The University of Connecticut Undergraduate Student Government is partnering with UConn brand partnerships, the UConn Career Center and Goodwill to re-open their free professional clothing closet on Sept. 29, according to USG Director of External Affairs Olivia Eshoo.

The closet, located on the second floor of the UConn Bookstore, will have a pop-up design. The hours will coincide with dates students needed clothing the most according to a Sept. 17 USG Senate report including the career fairs — which will run from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1 in the Student Union — and popular weeks for internship interviews. The closet is only open for undergraduate Storrs students.

Eshoo said that the closet works to provide students with professional clothes in an affordable, sustainable way.

“When we had the opportunity to kind of work with Goodwill to provide students free clothes, it was kind of a twofold of our mission,” Eshoo said. “It gets students the clothing they need to be successful in the professional world, and obviously it also helps promote sustainability in the clothing world.”

The closet will feature hundreds of items donated by Goodwill, including suit jackets, dresses, skirts, pants, tops, ties and other accessories, the report says. USG is also working with the Career Center to solicit donations from alumni and professors, according to Eshoo.

This semester, USG will be implementing a credit system to purchase items instead of allowing students to pick out three items from the closet throughout

the semester, Eshoo said. Every semester, students will automatically have 11 credits connected to their UConn ID.

“Everything’s kind of worth different values, like a suit jacket versus a tie,” Eshoo said. “We based it on [that] you can use 11 credits to get a full suit. Suit jackets and dresses will be five credits. Pants and skirts will be three, tops [are] two and then ties and any other accessories we may provide will be one.”

To redeem their credits, students must bring their UConn ID or their Peoplesoft number to the closet.

Eshoo said the credits don’t have to be used in one visit. Students can use some of their credits and then wait for restocks, which USG will announce on their Instagram page.

During the closet’s first semester on campus, 326 students got free professional clothing, Eshoo said. When each student was polled after using the closet, 99% of them said that they would like to see a permanent version of the closet on campus.

Eshoo said that USG is in the final stages of a three-year contract for a permanent clothing closet. In the meantime, Eshoo says they will continue doing pop-ups when students need professional clothing the most.

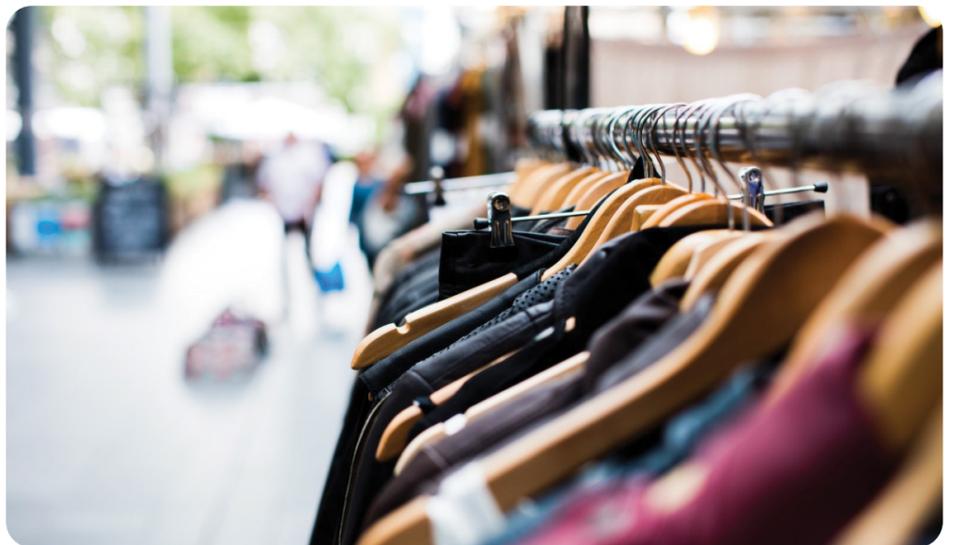
The clothing closet will be open from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1, Oct. 13-16 and Nov. 3-6 from 12-4 p.m., Eshoo said. The closet may open on additional dates based on student needs.

“We’re kind of just trying to figure out when students need clothing most, so we can prioritize our resources going to those times,” Eshoo said.

Updates on the closet’s hours can be found on USG’s Instagram page, @usgconn.



The UConn Bookstore on a sunny day. The bookstore will house the free professional clothing closet starting Sept. 29. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNBOOKSTORE ON INSTAGRAM



A rack of clothing at a store. The free professional clothing closet will open this year on Sept. 29. PHOTO COURTESY OF PXHERE.COM

## ‘It was life changing’: UConn student chosen for national land conservation scholars’ program

by Sara Bedigian  
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When Michael Chung was a kid, he always remembered his mom talking about climate change: the rising sea levels, the



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL CHUNG

melting ice caps or the growing acidity of coral reefs.

At a young age, he said climate change was overwhelming to think about, but as he grew older and spent time landscaping with his grandmother, it soon ignited a passion for environmental conservation and a desire to make a difference in his community.

Chung, a fifth-semester environmental engineering major at the University of Connecticut, applied and was chosen to participate in the Land Trust Alliance’s Scholars for Conservation Leadership Program, a national initiative to expand opportunities for students from communities underrepresented in the conservation field.

He had the opportunity to attend the National Land Conservation Conference in Cleveland during the first week in September, where he networked with professionals from the Environmental Protection Agency and other land conservation companies, participated in workshops and spent time outdoors learning to remediate habitats.

“It was life changing,” Chung said. “It was a really great experience just to go and network and meet people and just get your foot in the door.”

Chung is one of nine scholars chosen from around the country, who all have demonstrated a passion in conservation. Two of the scholars will be selected to participate in a paid, year-long fellowship with a land trust to gain work experience following graduation, according to a press release from the Land Trust Alliance.

“The scholars program is building the next generation of conservation leaders in a way that benefits both the students who participate and land conservation more broadly,” Ashley Demosthenes, CEO of the Land Trust Alliance, said in the press release. “These young people bring perspectives and life experience that expand the breadth of communities and professional expertise the conservation sector needs.”

Chung said he is interested in the Land Trust Alliance fellowship but is also open to any opportunity that comes his way, as long

as he is in the environment.

“My main drive is being out in the environment, collecting samples, testing samples, site remediation, clearing brownfields, environmental policy, basically everything revolving around the environment,” Chung said. “It doesn’t feel like work to me.”

Chung has dedicated his time at UConn to being a leader in underrepresented communities such as serving on the executive board for the UConn National Society of Black Engineers. He lived in the SCHOLARS learning community, a group of male students who identify as African American or Black, his freshman and sophomore year as well.

“I feel like at a predominately white institution, it’s very easy to kind of get lost,” he said. “So, I wanted to be with a group of like-minded individuals who would also share my personal experiences.”

Chung said he took his passion for the environment abroad through UConn in Switzerland last year, where he studied sustainable infrastructure, opening

his eyes to site remediation.

While he always knew he wanted to work in the environment, Chung said the conference and the scholars program allowed him to get a better idea of what he wants his future career to look like.

After Chung graduates, he said he would love to go back to where he grew up in New Haven, Conn. and spend his career helping underrepresented communities close to home. He said an example could be turning abandoned buildings into parks or recreational spaces that people in the community could enjoy.

When it comes to climate change, Chung said it is not about stopping it, because that is an unrealistic expectation; it is about uniting with other people who also want to make a small impact and start by making a difference at a local level.

“I can’t personally say this is happening and not do anything about it,” he said. “As long as we all make a little impact, that little impact is making a bigger impact over time.”

# News

NEW YORK (AP) — ABC will reinstate Jimmy Kimmel's late night show in the wake of criticism over his comments about the assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk, officials with the network said Monday.

"We have spent the last days having thoughtful conversations with Jimmy, and after those conversations, we reached the decision to return the show on Tuesday," said a statement from the network.

ABC suspended Kimmel indefinitely on Wednesday after comments he made about Kirk, who was killed Sept. 10, in a monologue. Kimmel said "many in MAGA land are working very hard to capitalize on the murder of Charlie Kirk" and that "the MAGA gang" was "desperately trying to characterize this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them."

Kimmel has hosted "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" on ABC since 2003 and has been a fixture in television and comedy for even longer. He is also well known as a presenter, having hosted the Academy Awards four times.

Backlash to Kimmel's comments was swift. Nexstar and Sinclair, two of ABC's largest affiliate owners, said they would be pulling "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" from their stations. Others, including several fellow comedians, came to his defense.

Sinclair said Monday that it would not air Kimmel's show Tuesday and would broadcast news programming instead. "Discussions with ABC are ongoing as we evaluate the show's potential return," the company said. There was no immediate comment from Nexstar on its plans for Kimmel's return.

Andrew Kolvet, a spokesperson for Turning Point USA, the organization founded by Kirk and now headed by his widow, posted on X about Kimmel's reinstatement: "Disney and ABC caving and allowing Kimmel back on the air is not surprising, but it's their mistake to make. Nexstar and Sinclair do not have to make the same choice."

President Donald Trump, one of Kimmel's frequent targets, posted on social media that Kimmel's suspension was "great news for America." He also called for other late night hosts to be fired. He has yet to comment on Kimmel's reinstatement.

Kimmel was asked in an interview with Variety this past summer if he was worried that the administration would come after comedians. He expressed concern that a crack-down could be on the way.

"Well, you'd have to be naive not to worry a little bit," he said. "But that can't change what you're doing."

Kimmel's suspension arrived in a time when Trump and his administration have

## ABC ends Jimmy Kimmel's suspension and his show will return Tuesday



Host Jimmy Kimmel speaks at the Oscars in Los Angeles on Feb. 26, 2017.

PHOTO BY CHRIS PIZZELLO/INVISION/AP

pursued threats, lawsuits and federal government pressure to try to exert more control over the media industry. Trump has reached settlements with ABC and CBS over their coverage.

Trump has also filed defamation lawsuits against The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times. Republicans in Congress stripped federal funding from NPR and PBS.

Brendan Carr, the head of the Federal Communications Commission, issued a warning prior to Kimmel's suspension that criticized Kimmel's remarks about the Kirk assassination.

"We can do this the easy way or the hard way," Carr said. "These companies can find ways to change conduct, to take action, frankly, on

Kimmel, or there is going to be additional work for the FCC ahead."

Carr denied on Monday that he threatened to revoke ABC's local station licenses because of Kimmel's remarks.

"Jimmy Kimmel is in the situation he's in because of his ratings. Not because of anything that's happened at the federal government level," Carr said at the Concordia Annual Summit.

Kimmel's suspension has cast a spotlight on the web of business interests that require approval from the U.S. government. Disney, for instance, needs approval from the Trump administration for ESPN to complete its acquisition of the NFL Network, while Nexstar needs the administration's approval

to complete its \$6.2 billion purchase of broadcast rival Tegna. Sinclair has petitioned the FCC to relax rules limiting broadcaster ownership of stations.

The suspension also happened at a time when the late night landscape is shifting. CBS announced the cancellation of Stephen Colbert's show over the summer.

Kimmel's contract with The Walt Disney Co.-owned network had been set to expire in May 2026. His representative did not return a message seeking comment Monday.

Word of the reinstatement came as hundreds of Hollywood and Broadway stars — including Robert De Niro, Ben Affleck, Jennifer Aniston, Selena Gomez, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Tom Hanks and

Meryl Streep — urged Americans "fight to defend and preserve our constitutionally protected rights" in the wake of Jimmy Kimmel's suspension.

More than 430 movie, TV and stage stars as well as comedians, directors and writers added their names to an open letter Monday from the American Civil Liberties Union that argues it is "a dark moment for freedom of speech in our nation."

Also Monday, ABC's "The View" weighed in on the controversy after not raising it for two episodes after Kimmel was suspended. Co-host Whoopi Goldberg opened the show saying: "No one silences us" and she and her fellow hosts condemned Disney's decision.

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  - 14 Give the \_\_\_-over
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  - 67 "The Star-Spangled Banner" topic
  - 68 Really rankles
  - 69 A little eccentric
  - 70 Doesn't gulp down
  - 71 Driver on a movie set
- DOWN**
- 1 Final \_\_\_: March Madness round

By Ben Zimmer

9/23/25

**Monday's Puzzle Solved**

W	A	L	T		L	I	M	U		I	T	Z	A				
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- 2 First stage
- 3 Speedy Northeast Corridor train
- 4 Olympian's haul
- 5 Worker with a daily grind?
- 6 Nueve preceder
- 7 Superheroes trained at Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters
- 8 Sourdough starter component
- 9 Little pet that may be pot-bellied
- 10 Boutique
- 11 Vox, Axios, Reuters, et al.
- 12 Barnyard bleat
- 13 React to a tearjerker
- 21 Squad
- 22 Audiophile's apparatus
- 26 Show remorse
- 27 Crusoe creator
- 29 Actress Falco
- 30 Midsize car
- 32 Org. with Kraken on ice
- 33 Get the ball rolling
- 34 Stratospheric shield
- 35 Metaphor for a bad start
- 37 Fictional archaeologist
- Croft
- 39 In the past
- 43 Newborn soother
- 44 Citation abbr.
- 45 Old news?
- 46 Comedian Kevin
- 50 Mexican flower
- 53 Issues to gripe about
- 55 Nordic cruise sight
- 56 Toy truck brand
- 58 Playing to break a tie, briefly
- 59 "Melting clocks" painter Salvador
- 60 Lunch order in a wheat tortilla
- 61 Old-timey assent
- 62 Trippy drug
- 63 Sustainability prefix

Level **1** 2 3 4

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Solution to Monday's puzzle

9/23/25

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

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

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## Life

# “Buckingham Nicks:” the prequel to Fleetwood Mac reissued



A New York Billboard advertising the re-release of *Buckingham Nicks*. The album was originally released in 1973 and assisted in Nick's and Buckingham's recruitment to Fleetwood Mac. PHOTO COURTESY OF @LINDSEYBUCKINGHAM ON INSTAGRAM

**“Buckingham Nicks,” the once forgotten album produced by rock icons and ex-lovers, Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham, was remastered and re-released on Friday, Sept. 19.**

by **Maleena Muzio**  
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“Buckingham Nicks” was originally released in September of 1973, in the pre-Fleetwood Mac era, when Nicks was just 25 and Buckingham was 24. The album was not a commercial success and was pulled from the shelves by Polydoor Records months after its release. The record has been a rare find since then, only existing on vinyl and bootleg digital sources.

Despite “Buckingham Nicks” being initially unsuccessful on the market, it is one of the major reasons as to why drummer Mick Fleetwood recruited Buckingham and Nicks into his band at the end of 1974, setting them up for a lifetime of fame and acknowledgement.

The album also served as a source of inspiration for Fleetwood Mac. “Crystal,” on “Buckingham Nicks” was originally written by Nicks and sung by Buckingham, and appears on the 1975 self-titled album, “Fleetwood Mac.” The song “Don’t Let Me Down Again” has extremely similar instrumentals as the hit “Second Hand News,” which opens Fleetwood Mac’s most popular album, “Rumors.”

“Lola (My Love),” a duet between Buckingham and Nicks, features the same guitar riffs in the intro as “The Chain,” which may be Fleetwood Mac’s most successful song.

Ten songs make up the entirety of “Buckingham Nicks,” only allowing it to play for 35 minutes total. The album is a short but energetic work of art. The album quite literally ends on a bang with the best and most intense song, “Frozen Love.”

“Frozen Love” is a duet cowritten by both artists and encapsulates the same energy that many live performances

of “The Chain” hold, introducing the passion between Buckingham and Nicks that we all know and love. It is also the longest song on the record, playing for seven minutes, including a climatic guitar solo.

The opening song of the album, “Crying in the Night,” is another highlight of the work, this time written and sung exclusively by Nicks (with Buckingham only on backing vocals). “Crying in the Night” contains hints of Nicks’ later solo career, reminding me of songs on her popular album, “Bella Donna.”

Other great songs on the album are “Long Distance Winner” and “Without a Leg to Stand On.”

“Long Distance Winner,” a song primarily sung by Nicks, is an honest confession about her relationship with Buckingham. With intense lyrics, like “Love somebody, save their soul // Tie them to your heaven, erase their hell” and truthful ones like, “Love their lifestyle if you feel it // Don’t try to change them, you never will” we get some poetic insight to the pair’s powerful relationship even before the Fleetwood Mac days.

“Without a Leg to Stand On” is a gentler duet between the two artists, showing a softer side of Buckingham and Nicks’ relationship. The song expresses the two depending on each other, which is ironic today, considering their very public breakup.

It is no wonder that this brief album snagged the interest of Mick Fleetwood, who was initially drawn to Buckingham’s guitar playing. The instrumentals are intricate and generally upbeat. However, the album nor Fleetwood Mac would have ever been complete without Nicks’ unique voice and songwriting. Together, Buckingham and Nicks proved themselves to be one of the greatest romantic and musical duos in rock.



The original *Buckingham Nicks* album cover. The album originally released in September of 1973.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @LINDSEYBUCKINGHAM ON INSTAGRAM

RATING: 4.75/4



# FALL IN CONNECTICUT: Embracing the season with smart tips



Students enjoying a fall day in Storrs. As the seasons change, students begin to prepare themselves for the shift in weather. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONN ON INSTAGRAM  
LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR

by Patrick Boots  
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Autumn is here! As the calendar turns, the University of Connecticut's campus is alive with seasonal change. The crisp air, colorful foliage, and shorter days mark the transition to fall — a time that can feel both refreshing and overwhelming for students adjusting to a busy semester.

Whether it's preparing for cooler weather, balancing academics, or finding ways to enjoy New England's autumn charm, Huskies have plenty to keep in mind during this seasonal shift.

## Layer Up and Stay Comfortable

Connecticut weather in the fall is famously unpredictable. Mornings may start in the low 40s, only to warm into the 70s by midday. To keep up with the swings, students should embrace layering — light jackets, hoodies, and scarves that can be added or removed throughout the day. The UConn Bookstore has a lot of spirited designs available — plus department stores like Kohl's at the East Brook Mall.

## Get Ahead on Academics

By mid-fall, course schedules move from introductory assignments to midterms, papers and group projects. Students can avoid last-minute stress by breaking work into smaller tasks and setting calendar reminders for upcoming deadlines. UConn's academic resources, such as the Writing Center and Q Center, are especially valuable this time of year for extra support. With shorter daylight hours, carving out consistent study times earlier in the day can also boost productivity!

## Stay Active and Healthy

As days grow colder, it can be tempting to hunker down indoors — yet regular movement helps fight off fatigue and seasonal blues. Amenities such as the Student Recreation Center offers group fitness classes, club sports and open gym hours, giving students a variety of ways to stay active. Eating balanced meals with seasonal produce — like apples, squash, and sweet potatoes — can also provide much-needed energy. Panera Bread's autumn squash soup — available at their restaurants and in supermarkets — is my favorite! With flu season looming, a quick stop at Student Health and Wellness' events for a flu shot is a wise preventative step.

## Take Advantage of Local Fall Traditions

One of the perks of attending UConn is its quintessential New England location. Huskies can enjoy campus events like the campus Pumpkinfest, Halloween events hosted by clubs and the ever-popular Dairy Bar fall-flavored ice cream. Save an apple crisp sundae for me! Off-campus, students often head to local orchards for apple-picking or to nearby hiking trails, such as Mansfield Hollow State Park for leaf-peeping. Why not visit a UConn football game too? Home games are played at Rensschler Field in East Hartford — with game transportation available.

## Prepare for Winter Before It Hits

Though fall feels cozy now, winter in Connecticut arrives quickly. Students can use this transition period to prepare: checking that their winter coats, hats and gloves are in good condition, and considering snow boots for icy sidewalks. Stocking up on essentials like hot drinks, blankets and study-friendly lamps can make dorm rooms or apartments more comfortable once the colder months set in. Students should check the weather forecast often and remain connected with vital information sources like UConn Alert.

## Finding Balance

Ultimately, the transition to fall is about balance — embracing the excitement of seasonal traditions while staying on top of responsibilities. For Huskies, that means savoring the pumpkin-flavored treats, cheering on UConn athletics, and soaking in the last weeks of autumn sunshine, all while keeping health, academics and well-being in focus.

With preparation and a little seasonal spirit, UConn students can thrive this fall and carry that energy into the months ahead. Enjoy your autumn — and stay cozy, Huskies!



# Life

## The Big E hosts the thrills, tastes and talent of New England

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WEST SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — Highlighting a collaboration between all six New England States, the Big E is open this year until Sept. 28, featuring games, food, rides, vendors and more.

“The Big E is the largest event on the East Coast and the fourth largest fair in North America,” according to the fair’s website. “Attendees can enjoy hours of free entertainment and attractions, terrific food, plus the best that New England — and beyond — has to offer.”

Tickets for the Big E are priced at \$20 when purchased at the gate, but attendees also have the option of purchasing tickets online for \$21.50. Those arriving late can spend \$11 if they visit after 5 p.m. on any day from Sunday to Thursday, for the fair’s evening rate.

Visitors hoping to save money at the Big E should note that the lines to buy tickets at the gate move fast, so buying at the door can be viable as opposed to online.

Attendees of The Big E should also plan for parking. Various businesses and parking lots around the fair offer paid parking spots, although free public parking is also available at Gate 9.

Once inside the fair, attendees can enjoy everything the fair has to offer. While there are some additional charges for enjoying the fair — food, games, rides and vendors — much of the fair can still be enjoyed without spending extra. This includes exploring the statehouses and the petting zoo, and for those who visited on Sept. 21, it also included a parade.

“The parade, it was fun,” UConn student Benjamin Burnham said. “We had no idea we would be the only band, so once we figured that out we knew we had to ... We had a lot of expectations, I guess. To be the only music in the parade with a bunch of floats.”

Burnham, a fifth-semester student studying music performance with a focus on the bass trombone, is one of seventeen members of East Rock Brass Band. The New Haven-based band plays New Orleans-style brass music, with instrumentation including the drums, tuba, trombone and trumpet.

“It’s made up from mostly UConn alum,” Burnham said. “Or current UConn students, in my case. So that’s how I kind of knew about the band and got into the band. We don’t tour, but we do a lot of gigs around the Connecticut area, the greater Connecticut area.”

While boasting seventeen members, East Rock Brass Band rotates the number of musicians attending each performance. Nine members were present at the Big E on Sunday, including Burnham and his tenor trombone.

“I had never been [to the Big E] before,” Burnham said. “Along with some of my bandmates, who had also never been before. So, it was a nice experience, to not only play there and entertain all these lovely people, but also just to explore and see what it’s about. And get a feel for what the Big E offers, which is a lot.”

The Big E offered free admission to the members of East Rock Brass Band, giving Burnham and his bandmates the opportunity to see more of the fair af-

ter their performance finished. Out of everything he saw, Burnham said his favorite aspect of the fair was the pig racing.

“We just kind of stumbled upon them, me and a couple of guys from the band,” Burnham said. “And we were looking for cows originally, but then we heard ‘pig race’ and we knew we had to see that. So that was definitely a highlight.”

Outside of the typical food, rides and games seen at most fairs, the Big E also offers the statehouses: a collection of buildings themed around products and experiences from the six New England states. The Connecticut building included a mannequin wearing a UConn basketball in a glass display case — situated next to a Final Four trophy.

Each statehouse also offered food from the individual states. The Maine building offered baked potatoes while the New Hampshire building showed off chocolate-covered fruits and apple cider.

In addition to the statehouses, the Big E hosts a variety of vendors in multiple halls. Items for sale included hats made from real alpaca fur, Yamaha pianos, hot tubs, DVDs and much, much more.

The Big E also offers plenty of live music for any potential visitors. A full list of the Big E’s entertainment offerings can be found on the organization’s website, but some upcoming acts this week include The Band Perry, The Kid LAROI, Train, MKTO and ZZTop.

The fair is open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. from Sunday to Thursday and stays open until 11 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights. The last day of the fair is Sunday, Sept. 28.



Food stands at the Big E festival in Springfield, Mass. The Big E will be open for the year until Sept. 28 2025. PHOTO BY SAM BRODY, ASSOCIATE LIFE EDITOR

## ‘The Summer I Turned Pretty:’ finale recap

by Michelle Pawlos  
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After three years, Belly has finally made her decision. On Sept. 17, “The Summer I Turned Pretty” concluded its three-season series with an episode titled “At Last.”

Warning: This review includes spoilers, so if you’ve yet to watch the finale, I’d maybe come back after having watched it.

“The Summer I Turned Pretty” is a coming-of-age drama series based on the novels written by Jenny Han. It follows Belly Conklin’s life in the span of six years through three seasons, and her complicated relationships with brothers Jeremiah and Conrad Fisher. Belly’s brother, Steven, and best friend, Taylor, are also huge characters in the series and key parts of her journey.

The previous episode ended with Conrad getting ready to travel to Paris and visit Belly

for her birthday. At this point, Belly and Benito seemed pretty smitten, and fans were desperately waiting to see if she would break Conrad’s heart.

If you are a fan of the show and spend a lot of time on social media, you’ve probably seen some memes about Belly’s new haircut, which was another cliffhanger from the last episode. Fans made tons of edits, including one that even edited a fade onto her. Lola Tung, Belly’s actress, had addressed this edit herself, admitting she found fans’ speculations funny.

Conrad and Belly finally reunite, and we see that she indeed did not get a fade but rather a French bob, symbolizing her attempt to really start over and put everything behind her. She decides to give him a tour of Paris before he leaves that same day for a conference in Brussels. Eventually, she invites him to her birthday dinner, where both Conrad and the fans find out that she had actually



ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXA PAPPAS, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST

broken it off with Benito not long ago — one point team “Bonrad.”

At the same time, the audience also gets to see what is going on with the rest of the characters. Jeremiah has a new passion for cooking — now it makes much more sense as to why he was so upset about a chocolate mirror glaze cake earlier in the season — though this passion could’ve been revealed more throughout the seasons instead of just the finale.

One problem that I have with the show is that a lot of the ideas are either rushed or unnecessary. They spent a lot of time focusing on minimal details that don’t appeal to the audience, while details that help develop characters or storylines weren’t focused on enough.

Taylor and Steven are still going strong, having decided to make a big commitment in their relationship due to the business plan idea that Steven has with coworker Denise. The plot twist, which many fans had predicted, was Denise and Jeremiah sparking a new romance as they made out in the kitchen.

The conflict between Adam and Jeremiah has settled with Adam admitting that he was proud of

Jeremiah despite their many disputes. It seems as though writer Jenny Han was tying up loose ends with the characters and ensuring everyone had a good ending.

Going back to “Bonrad,” Belly had finally let her guard down and started accepting her feelings for Conrad. So much so that they took a taxi back to her apartment, and well, if you’ve watched the episode, you’ll know what I mean.

This is the moment everyone has been waiting for, until Belly freaks out afterwards when Conrad starts talking about “forever.” She sends him on his way to take an early morning train to the conference, only to soon realize that she was making a huge mistake while holding her stuffed polar bear, Junior Mint.

It didn’t take Belly long to run out of her apartment and find Conrad’s train to profess her love to him. The two share a kiss and are shown at the concluding scene back at Cousins Beach. If you were hoping that she would continue her life in Paris, don’t worry. The scene at Cousins was just a trip, as fans see a photo album of Belly and Conrad spending Christmas happily to-

gether in Paris during the credits.

As a “Bonrad” fan myself, I was thrilled to see that their canon remained unchanged from the books. Fortunately, an unexpected movie announcement was made on the same day the finale was released, so their story has not come to an end just yet.

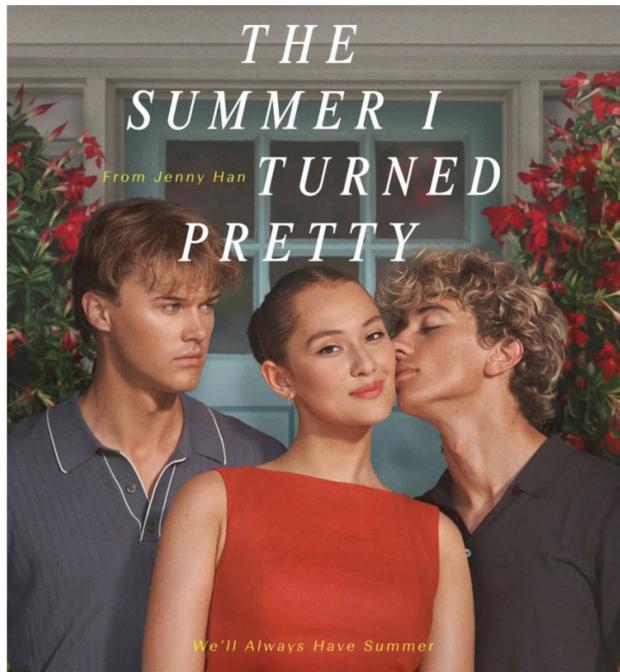
Overall, I really like how all the characters got something in the end and weren’t ignored to focus just on “Bonrad.” Still, I think this could’ve been done over the whole season rather than everyone getting their canon endings thrown in at the same time.

In the end, after all the stress that Jenny Han put fans through in season three, the desired ending did occur. I do wish we had more episodes with Belly and Conrad together instead of so many episodes of extra chaos.

RATING:



4.75/5



The poster for the final season of The Summer I Turned Pretty. The show began airing in June of 2022. PHOTO COURTESY OF @PRIMEVIDEO ON INSTAGRAM



# Opinion

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# RAPID FIRE

## WHAT WOULD YOU RATHER DO THAN GO TO A UCONN FOOTBALL GAME?

If we're lucky in the Opinion section, we work through our beliefs completely and support them with great arguments. But sometimes, we don't need a deeper reason or great explanation to hold our convictions. Rapid Fire is for those short takes that can be explained in just a few sentences — no more justification needed. As most people can attest to, the University of Connecticut Men's Football team kind of sucks and the games are kind of boring. I mean, has anyone ever even heard of Ball State University before? Are we still playing real teams? Either way, for today's rapid fire, our writers will answer the question: What would you rather do than go to a UConn football game?

### The Pearlman Cup

TOMAS HINKLEY, OPINION EDITOR

As much as a classic tailgate is a highlight of any UConn student's career here, I think there's a lot I'd rather do than go to a UConn football game. Frankly, I think you can find football that's a lot better on campus, like with the Pearlman Cup. I think THAT is really the pinnacle of football at this university, stay tuned for that come October folks. Trust, this is our year. \*prayer hand emoji\*



PHOTO BY OF CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR

“ I WILL BE THERE NO MATTER WHAT. ”

PATRICK MINNERLY ON ... G IN 2025-26

PHOTO COURTESY OF CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR  
GRAPHIC BY CONNOR LAFERTY, MANAGING EDITOR

## GO TO THE GAME

PATRICK MINNERLY, ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR

As a member of the UConn marching band, I would rather do nothing than go to a UConn football game! I love gamedays at the Rent, and I wouldn't trade anything for them! Clearly not enough people have experienced the epic highs and lows of college football, and not enough people have experienced a game while blasting the UConn fight song. However, I will admit we aren't playing real teams. Central Connecticut State University? What even is a Connecticut? Clearly that is a made-up place.

CLIPART COURTESY OF CREAZILLA

### Music & Art

BONNIBEL LILITH RAMPERTAB, CAMPUS CORRESPONDANT

Bringing the spirit of Life into the Opinion section, I would definitely be listening to the Midwest emo band American Football and continuing my patronage to The Benton Museum of Art instead of going to a UConn football game. But that's not necessarily because I think the football team sucks. It's because I'm allergic to watching sports in general and I find it to be mind-numbing entertainment if you're not participating for exercise. Good for you if you like it though. What's up with the bubble soccer team by the way? They should be going international.

### World Domination

ALEXANDER RENZULLI, CONTRIBUTOR

Instead of going to a UConn Football game, I'd probably throw my ticket and phone into Mirror Lake but only after buying a plane ticket to Indonesia. There I will purchase 5 dogs and train them for precisely 7 and a half years to become the greatest basketball team alive (challenging the likes of Air Buds). Only when they are ready will I swim back around North America to Storrs, Connecticut and challenge the UConn Men's basketball team to a match. After watching Dan Hurley cry (and getting an autograph), I will buy the University of Connecticut, dissolve our football program, and replace it with a world-renowned curling team.

### Attend Ball State

AMBER GREENE, CAMPUS CORRESPONDANT

I would rather spend a week at Ball State than go to a UConn football game. I have never been to the Midwest, and I am quite curious what makes them want to come to the Northeast, to play our school. I have no idea who a lot of the teams we have played are or where they are located, and frankly Indiana seems a lot more fun than spending 4 hours at the Rent. In my two-game experience I think we should accept that we are a basketball school and not force College Football Saturday.



LOGO AND PHOTO COURTESY OF BSU.EDU

## Opinion

Photo of the Day | A beautiful day in Storrs



The weather is perfect for students to enjoy the first official day of fall in Storrs, Conn. on Sept. 22, 2025. Students walked around campus and studied outside.  
PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# Let criticism and growth mindsets empower you

by **Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab** | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER/HERS | lilith.rampertab@uconn.edu

It's common to be avoidant of criticism especially when it has to do with yourself. As part of a culture engrained in success, we're conditioned to prioritize perfection; and there's little room for error. What people need to remind themselves of is that avoiding criticism instead of engaging with it is stifling, hurting us more than helping and promoting a lack of growth. It is for this reason that I believe that constructive criticism is a liberating force which promotes not only dialogue, but ways to improve. As a culture, we shouldn't fear opportunities to be better than who we were yesterday; positive changes in how we act and think in a growth mindset is a fundamental building block to achieving brighter futures, empowerment and liberation for everyone, including college students.

Why do some people refuse to change for the sake of being better? This is a lofty question that tends to vary from case to case, but one can assume that parts of the equation are apathy, fear, laziness and a general lack of drive to learn from mistakes and the world around us. Some

people want to believe they're always doing the right thing without looking at the facts and touching base with reason.

Another part of the issue beyond the individual is how we're raised, educated and conditioned. We're typically taught from a young age to obey and conform, whether that be within the family, the schooling system or both. To control children, many adults rigidly tell them how to act and how not to act. They could sometimes be harsh in their criticisms, leading to children becoming avoidant of conflict instead of seeing it as an opportunity to grow. It's baked into our psyches to achieve and succeed, and if we don't, we have little worth. If you're not diligent and careful, these self-defeating thoughts could lead to a negative self-fulfilling prophecy: a fixed mindset.

There are many dangers to the fixed mindset. Limiting yourself to a certain unwavering standard that doesn't move with you does not support your humanity nor your learning. In institutions we're paying to attend, a fixed mindset is an objectively bad frame of thinking

considering the way it strangles the capability to expand knowledge.

So, why does a growth mindset matter? Growth mindsets are the mindsets of personal liberation. Such a mindset empowers you to continue achieving, learning and most of all, to grow as the name suggests. We are bound to do wrong whether we like it or not. This is a natural fact, given that humanity is never perfect. But we don't need to achieve the myth of "perfection." We just need to keep doing better than before and continue changing in positive ways.

Where does criticism come into play with these fixed vs. growth states of mind? Criticism, in its rawest form, is a time to be honest, telling us certain opinions on what people dislike and would personally change. Genuinely listening to and seeking out constructive criticism is a sign of having a growth mindset, as those with fixed mindsets wouldn't have a purpose to engage with such a practice.

Of course, there are more and less emotionally digestible ways to convey ideas to personally

improve. On the positive end of the critical spectrum is well-intentioned constructive criticism, which has been used to help people improve their skills and expression in structured and straightforward ways not meant to attack people but to help them grow. Still, not everyone will want to be patient and understanding; the structure of the world doesn't incentivize such a concept except for personal gain. That's why on the opposite end of the spectrum and something we see increasingly more of on a daily basis is hateful rhetoric usually meant to degrade and put down others. This idea of dislike or outright hatred manifesting in expression may scare some people especially if it's a deeply emotional response, but it's incredibly important not to be filtered out by negativity if you want to grow and be better. It starts by reframing the berating as genuine criticism and looking at the arguments from a logical standpoint.

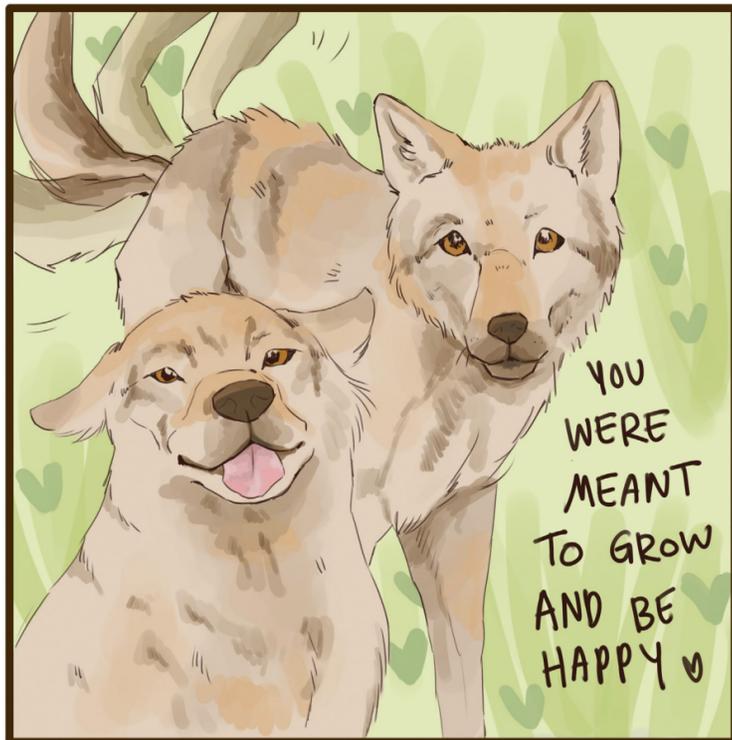
Remember that these are people's subjective opinions with emotions attached to them which they are entitled to. Lis-

tening to these thoughts, even if you don't necessarily agree with them, provides a wider perspective.

Listening to differing opinions to get to your own conclusions can be helpful to generate more ideas even if you don't agree with them. Learning about the rest of the world is a beneficial practice that will do you well in terms of understanding people and even yourself. Learning is an activity appreciated by all lifeforms with brains, so make the most of it.

Criticism is an empowering force that tells us potential avenues you could take to improve. We shouldn't take it too personally although it is easy to do so and is understandably scary for a lot of people. Criticism promotes learning as well as a growth mindset instead of a fixed one that makes us stay stagnant. In an ever-changing world, a little criticism can help us adapt and grow with the rest of the world instead of being stuck in the past. Isn't it exciting to learn and to change into a new, different and improved person every day, especially as college students?

COMIC BY AH REUM KINDNESS, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST



# THE HONOR ROLL: OKLAHOMA JUMPS TO NO. 8 AFTER WIN OVER AUBURN

by Sam Calhoun  
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Rivalries and top 25 matchups ruled a loaded Week 4. Teams that dropped out of the rankings included No. 20 Auburn and No. 21 Utah.

Ohio State (4-0) remains No. 1 despite being idle this week. The Buckeyes will visit Washington (2-0) on Sept. 27 at 3:30 p.m. on CBS and streaming on Paramount+.

LSU (4-0, 1-0 SEC) follows at No. 2 after an easy 56-10 rout over SE Louisiana. The Tigers visit No. 15 Ole Miss (4-0, 2-0 SEC) in a Magnolia Bowl showdown on Saturday at 3:30 p.m. on ABC.

Miami (Fla.) (4-0) held on to its No. 3 spot with a 26-7 win over in-state rival Florida. The Hurricanes' defense held the Gators to just 141 yards. They open ACC play against No. 9 Florida State (3-0) on Oct. 4 at 7:30 p.m. on ABC.

Georgia (3-0, 1-0 SEC) was idle this week and stayed at No. 4 in my rankings. The Bulldogs will host No. 16 Alabama (2-1) in a thrilling SEC opener on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. on ABC.

Oregon (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten) stays at No. 5 after a dominant effort against in-state rival Oregon State. The Ducks are back on the road on Saturday, this time against No. 6 Penn State (3-0) at 7:30 p.m. on NBC and streaming on Peacock.

Penn State (3-0) stands still at No. 6 after taking the week off to prepare for its Big Ten opener. College GameDay will come to Happy Valley for the Nittany Lions' battle with No. 5 Oregon (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten) on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. on NBC and streaming on Peacock.

Texas (3-1) remains at No. 7 following a shutout 55-0 win over Sam Houston, where quarterback Arch Manning looked sharp with 309 passing yards and three passing touch-

downs. The Longhorns are off this week, but open SEC play at Florida (1-3) on Oct. 4 at 3:30 p.m. on either ABC or ESPN.

Oklahoma (4-0, 1-0 SEC) jumped into the top 10 to No. 8 after a 24-17 win over then-No. 20 Auburn. The Sooners' defense was terrific, with nine sacks on former OU quarterback Jackson Arnold. They are off this week, but host Kent State (1-3, 0-1 MAC) on Oct. 4 at 4 p.m. on SEC Network.

Florida State (3-0) stays put at No. 9 after running all over Kent State last weekend. They open ACC play on Saturday at Virginia (3-1, 1-0 ACC) at 7 p.m. on ESPN.

Texas A&M (3-0) held on to the final spot in my top 10 despite not playing this past weekend. The Aggies open SEC play against Auburn (3-1, 0-1 SEC) on Saturday at 3:30 p.m. on ESPN.

Texas Tech (4-0, 1-0 Big 12) shot up to No. 11 after a 34-10 road win over then-No. 21 Utah. The Red Raiders will visit Houston (3-0, 1-0 Big 12) on Oct. 4 at 7 p.m. on ESPN.

Iowa State (4-0, 1-0 Big 12) stayed at No. 12 with the week off. The Cyclones will host Arizona (3-0) on Saturday at 7 p.m. on ESPN.

Indiana (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten) moved up to No. 13 after a 63-10 blowout win over then-No. 8 Illinois. The Hoosiers' first Big Ten road test comes this Saturday as they visit Iowa (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten) at 3:30 p.m., streaming exclusively on Peacock.

Michigan (3-1, 1-0 Big Ten) slid up to No. 14 after opening conference play with a thrilling 30-27 win over Nebraska. The Wolverines return to action on Oct. 4 against Wisconsin (2-2, 0-1 Big Ten) at noon on FOX.

Ole Miss (4-0, 2-0 SEC) swapped spots with Michigan and drops to No. 15 after defeating rival Tulane, 45-10. The Rebels host No. 2 LSU (4-0, 1-0 SEC) in the Magnolia Bowl on Saturday at 3:30 p.m. on ABC.

Alabama (2-1) dropped to No.

16 due to having the week off. The Crimson Tide open SEC play at No. 4 Georgia (3-0, 1-0 SEC) on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. on ABC.

Georgia Tech (4-0, 1-0 ACC) remains at No. 17 after a 45-24 win over Temple. The Yellow Jackets' first road test is Wake Forest (2-1, 0-1 ACC) on Saturday at noon on ESPN.

Illinois (3-1, 0-1 Big Ten) plummeted to No. 18 after getting embarrassed by Indiana, 63-10. The Fighting Illini continue Big Ten play with No. 23 USC (4-0, 2-0 Big Ten) on Saturday at noon on FOX.

Mississippi State (4-0) stayed at No. 19 after a 38-10 win over Northern Illinois. Competition gets tough, with No. 20 Tennessee (3-1, 0-1 SEC) coming to town for the SEC opener on Saturday at 4:15 p.m. on SEC Network.

Tennessee (3-1, 0-1 SEC) is next at No. 20 after a 56-24 win over UAB. The Volunteers head to Starkville to take on No. 19 Mississippi State (4-0) on Saturday at 4:15 p.m. on SEC Network.

South Florida (3-1) slid up to No. 21 following a 63-14 rout over South Carolina State. The Bulls open conference play with Charlotte (1-3, 0-1 American) on Friday at 7 p.m. on ESPN2.

Vanderbilt (4-0, 1-0 SEC) moved up to No. 22 after putting up 70 points on Georgia State this past weekend. The Commodores host Utah State (3-1, 1-0 Mountain West) on Saturday at 12:45 p.m. on SEC Network.

USC (4-0, 2-0 Big Ten) rose to No. 23 after a 45-31 win over Michigan State after dark. The Trojans have an early start at No. 18 Illinois (3-1, 0-1 Big Ten) on Saturday at noon on FOX.

Missouri (4-0, 1-0 SEC) comes back into the top 25 at No. 24 after a strong SEC-opener against South Carolina, a 29-20 win. The Tigers host UMass (0-3) on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. on ESPN2.

TCU (3-0) enters the ranking at No. 25 following a 35-24 win

over SMU to win the Iron Skillet. The Horned Frogs are 2-0 against ACC teams this season.

They open Big 12 play at Arizona (3-0, 1-0 Big 12) on Friday at 9 p.m. on FOX.



LSU's JuJuan Johnson during the LSU vs Southeastern Louisiana University football game. Johnson plays number 8 on the team. PHOTO COURTESY OF @LSUFOOTBALL ON INSTAGRAM



Ohio State's Carnell Tate showing his love for the game. Ohio State will face Washington on Sept. 27 at 3:30 p.m. PHOTO COURTESY OF @OHIOSTATEFB ON INSTAGRAM

# LOCKER ROOM: INDY RACING - COLTS SPEED BACK INTO THE FAST LANE

by Jake Loomis  
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The Indianapolis Colts came into the year with high expect-

tations from the public and the media, however these expectations did not hold true. When the Colts' Head Coach, Shane Steichen, chose to start veteran Daniel Jones over Anthony Richardson, the move raised

concerns. Jones, who had an underwhelming tenure with the Giants marked by inconsistency and turnovers, represented the safer, however less appealing option for the fanbase. Richardson on the other hand, was

viewed as the franchise's long-term future; however, the third-year QB has battled injuries and turnover through his first two years. The decision by Steichen raised questions about the team's direction; however, after their first three games, Indianapolis looks like a well-oiled wagon as they look to race to their best record in 10 years.

The Colts have longed for a franchise quarterback ever since Peyton Manning and Andrew Luck who were both Colts legends. Steichen, however, may have just found his answer, at least for the short term, in Jones. The signal caller has revitalized his career in Indianapolis as he used his fresh start to his advantage. In his first three games, Jones has not lit up the stat sheet; however, he has been efficient and made timely plays when needed. He has thrown a touchdown in each of their first three games with an average passer rating of 111.1.

Jones, however, does not work alone as the Colts offense has one of the most underrated running backs in the league, Jonathan Taylor. No. 28 has stood out so far and thrived in the offensive scheme. In his last two games, the running back accumulated 267 yards on the ground and even punched the ball three times this last weekend versus the Tennessee Titans. The wide receiving core has also been great as wideout, and veteran Michael Pittman Jr. and rookie tight end Tyler Warren have been reliable to start the year. Pittman Jr. has had four receptions or more in each of their first three games, with touchdowns versus Miami and

Tennessee in weeks one and three. For Warren, who is in his rookie year, he has been a good blocker in the run game but also flashed in the passing game. The tight end has not crossed into the end zone yet for his first NFL TD, however, in his last two games combined, he has totaled 155 yards receiving on 11 catches.

The Colt's defense has proven to be effective enough to win games as they've forced multiple turnovers in the first few games to keep pressure on the opponent's offense. However, the unit has also shown inconsistency. Last weekend, Indianapolis gave up 28 points to Denver, exposing multiple flaws in coverage and run support. The Colts will need a bigger push from the defense in bigger games, as up front, they have not been stout enough. Nick Cross, however, has notably put together a good start to the season as he leads the team in tackles with 20, with Joe Bachie just behind him at 18. If Indianapolis can put forth a stable defense, they will likely be able to maintain success throughout the year.

The boys from Indy will still be underdogs for the presumable future due to their lack of success in former years; however, they have put the league on notice. Steichen and ownership in Charlie Irsay-Gordon have this team in a great spot, with a growing winning culture and a renewed organizational vision. Indianapolis appears to be laying the foundation to not only compete in the present but for also years to come in the Hoosier state.



The Indianapolis Colts player 28, Jonathon Taylor, playing against the Tennessee Titans. Taylor has been playing for the Colts since being drafted in the second round of the 2020 NFL draft. PHOTO COURTESY OF @COLTS ON INSTAGRAM



The Indianapolis Colts players celebrating in the locker room after a big win. The team seems to be making a comeback and currently holds one of their best records in the past 10 years. PHOTO COURTESY OF @COLTS ON INSTAGRAM



## Sports

## Photo of the Day | Football

The University of Connecticut football team defeats Ball State at Rentschler field on Sept. 20, 2025. The Huskies defend a late attack from the Cardinals with a final score of 31-25.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/ THE DAILY CAMPUS



## MENS SOCCER: HUSKIES PREPARE FOR TUESDAY NIGHT HOMESTAND AGAINST NO. 17 BRYANT

by Tyler Lato

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The undefeated UConn men's soccer team (6-0-3) looks to record their second straight victory over a top-25 opponent in a Tuesday night matchup with the No. 17 Bryant Bulldogs (7-0-1), who, like the Huskies, remain unbeaten. This is a tall order for UConn, as the Bulldogs have allowed only three goals in their eight games played.

The Huskies are fresh off an upset road victory over Big East Conference foe, tenth-ranked Akron on Friday. After suffering a 0-1 deficit early, the Huskies' offense exploded for three unanswered goals to cruise to a 3-1 victory over the talented Zips squad. UConn's Preston Alessio, Balthazar Saunders, and Sabri Hanni all found the back of the net in the triumph.

Senior forward and San Diego State transfer Austin Brummett is leading UConn in nearly every offensive statistical category, including points (13), goals

(six), and game-winning goals (three). Saunders, Brummett's battery mate, is also having a fantastic 2025 campaign, highlighted by his team-high four assists.

Alessio (Beacon Falls, Conn.) has made an almost instant impact on an already talented UConn squad. Though his minutes played vary from game to game, the freshman makes the most of his time on the field, evident in his stellar performance against Akron.

As noted earlier, No. 17 Bryant cannot be underestimated, despite competing in the weakly regarded America East Conference. The Bulldogs recently dominated Stonehill on Saturday with a 3-0 shutout, their fifth shutout of the season.

Goalkeepers Ramon Camejo and Enzo Carvahlo anchor Bryant's stout defensive effort. The two have combined for 17 saves and are nothing short of brick walls during opponents' attacks.

In order to win, the Huskies need to have their high beams on Madrid, Spain native and

sophomore Jaime Amaro. The Spanish sensation leads the undefeated Bulldogs with eight points, including four goals, terrorizing opposing defenses

and making a name for himself within the America East Conference.

The game will take place on Tuesday night under the lights

at Joseph J. Morrone Stadium (Storrs, Conn.). Kickoff is slated for 6:00 p.m.



UConn mens soccer team at the UConn vs Harvard Game. The Huskies will play against the Bryant Bulldogs on Tuesday Sept. 23rd 2025 at Joseph J. Morrone Stadium. PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## Kayleigh Heckel – You Always Find Your Way Back Home

by Avery Becker

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Just a short five months ago, Kayleigh Heckel was in a red and gold jersey playing for the University of Southern California Trojans against UConn in the Elite 8.

Now, Heckel, a 5-foot-9 guard, is sporting a white and blue uniform, playing for the Connecticut Huskies for her sophomore campaign.

Originally from Port Chester, N.Y., Heckel grew up near Connecticut, watching the Huskies.

"I mean, I always watched UConn when I was young and it's a lot of people's dream school, dream place to be; I mean, it's the Basketball Capital of the World." Heckel said in a media availability in June.

When collegiate athletes enter the transfer portal, it's not often that they end up at a school they are against in queue matchups, but Heckel fits into the squad like the perfect puzzle piece.

"I think at the beginning I

was kinda like 'Oh wow, I always dreamed of being at a place as great as this,'" Heckel said, "I'm just super excited to get to work here and to be able to contribute to what they already created here."

Heckel played in 37 games as a Trojan last season, averaging 6.1 points, 1.9 assists and 1.3 steals per game.

Over the summer, she also won a gold medal at the 2025 FIBA U19 World Cup, finding herself in the starting lineup in every matchup. In addition, she was selected to participate in Kelsey Plum's Dawg Class, alongside her future UConn teammate, KK Arnold.

"Kayleigh [Heckel] has a passion for the game. She plays at a quick pace and can impact both ends of the court," Head coach of the Huskies, Geno Auriemma, said. "She's a great teammate and someone who wants to grow on and off the court. We're excited to have her at Connecticut."

This past weekend, the program hosted an open practice at Sacred Heart University in

Fairfield, Conn. Heckel was immediately noticeable in the backcourt.

She was pushing herself alongside her other teammates in transition, a trait her fellow guards on the squad, Arnold and Ashlynn Shade also possess.

With the grittiness that Arnold and Shade bring every time they step out on the court, Heckel is the perfect addition to make probably the most lethal point guard trio in women's college basketball.

During the media availability in June, Heckel described the hardest transition for her has been the intensity, but she feels that will push her to be an even better player in the long run, on her way to help the Huskies win another championship.

"It's the place I need to be and it's the place I can become the best version of myself." Heckel said.

If Heckel is any indication, it proves that yes, the women's college basketball world is ever changing, but you will always find your way back home.



UConn Women's Basketball Kayleigh Heckel media day photoshoot. Heckel began her college career playing for the University of Southern California's Trojans. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNWBB ON INSTAGRAM

# THE METS ROTATION WAS SET UP TO FAIL

by **Thaddeus Sawyer**  
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Mets fans everywhere have begun to panic, as New York currently sits on the outside looking in of the playoff picture. Dating back to the beginning of September, the Mets have lost five out of their last seven series and, as of Monday, have a record over that span of 7-12. A lackluster trade deadline, in which the Mets acquired multiple big-name players who have been negative contributors, hasn't helped. However, the biggest factor in their late season collapse has been poor performance from their starting rotation.

An ERA of 5.41 in August and 5.42 in September have demonstrated cracks that were not properly addressed during the offseason and that should have been obvious as early as spring training.

The Mets came into 2025 with a projected rotation of Clay Holmes, Sean Manaea, Frankie Montas, David Peterson and Kodai Senga. Griffin Canning was signed to a one-year deal after getting non-tendered by the Atlanta Braves. He joined Tylor Megill and Paul Blackburn as experienced depth at the major league level. From the get-go, this set up should have waved red flags for many.

Holmes, who came over from the New York Yankees on a three-year, \$38 million agreement, hadn't started a major league game since 2018 before joining the Mets rotation. Montas was gifted a two-year, \$34 million contract after accumulating less than one win above replacement in 2024 between the Cincinnati Reds and Milwaukee Brewers. Montas had

pitched just once in 2023 after undergoing surgery on his right shoulder. Manaea reunited with the Mets after opting out of his contract following 2024 and rejecting a qualifying offer, reupping on a three-year, \$75 million deal.

Gone were Luis Severino and Jose Quintana, who had each made 31 starts for the Mets in 2024. With those two holes plugged, the Mets looked to hit the ground running in spring training after a \$1 billion offseason.

The rotation began to fall apart almost as quickly as it was put together. Montas went down in mid-February with a lat strain. A week later, the team announced that Manaea would begin the season on the IL with an oblique strain.

Holmes was named the opening day starter after an encouraging spring. Megill and Canning were immediately thrust into rotation roles. The rotation had an ERA of 2.13 in April and 3.60 in May. Canning was in the midst of a breakout campaign with an April ERA of 2.49. Megill and Senga each had a sub-1.00 ERA in April and Peterson also pitched well. Unfortunately, all five would regress in the coming months.

Canning and Megill both had June ERAs of over 5.00, with Megill hitting that mark in May as well. Megill hit the injured list midway through the month with an elbow injury and Canning followed soon after with a ruptured Achilles.

Holmes had a 3.31 ERA prior to the All-Star break, a number that has increased over a point in the time since. He is less than five innings from topping his 2024 innings total by 100.

Kodai Senga's 3.02 ERA over 22 starts is good on the surface, but a below average walk rate

combined with average strike out rates led to a steady regression that led to a demotion to Triple-A. Even that hasn't seemed to solve the problem, as he has continued to struggle and has seemingly had issues with confidence.

Peterson was an All-Star after a great first half, but he too has regressed with a 5.47 ERA over his last 15 starts. He has walked half a batter per inning over his last seven.

Montas struggled upon his return, being demoted to the bullpen before being ruled out for the season with a UCL injury. Manaea has also struggled despite elite strike out numbers.

The Mets have been forced to call upon rookies to not only supplement but sustain their staff. Top prospects Jonah Tong and Brandon Sproat both debuted, with the former struggling and the latter holding his own. Nolan McLean had been dominant since being called up with a 1.27 ERA. Still, it is faulty reasoning to rely on any rookie in the playoffs, especially one with less than 10 career starts.

In an offseason with options such as Max Fried, Corbin Burnes, Blake Snell and Nathan Eovaldi available, Mets President of Baseball Operations David Stearns opted to dole out of collection of smaller contracts instead of going big-game hunting at the top of the market. On the surface, this approach was defensible, considering the team also committed to giving Juan Soto \$51 million a year for at least five seasons. Still, the approach is flawed when you consider that the combined average annual values of the contracts given to Canning, Holmes, Manaea and Montas amounted to about \$59 million.

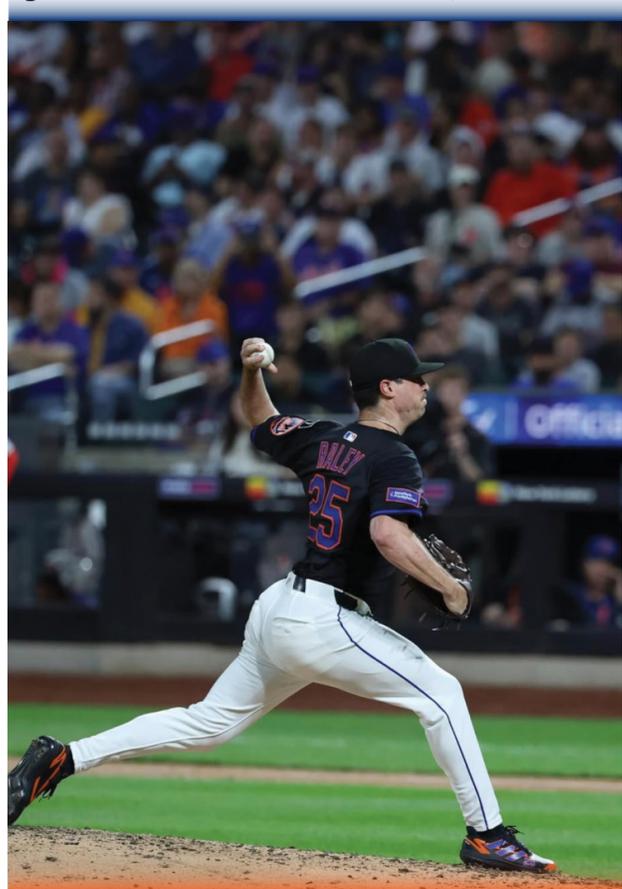
Fried agreed to a \$27.25 million AAV deal with the Yankees.

Snell is receiving a little over \$28 million a season with the Dodgers. While both of those deals were five years or longer, Nathan Eovaldi only signed a three-year deal with a yearly value of \$25 million. Pitchers such as Garrett Crochet and Jesus Luzardo were also available on the trade market with the Mets having the prospect capital needed to make a move.

Instead, Stearns put together a patchwork rotation consisting of question marks. The Mets opening day rotation consisted

of a career reliever, a pitcher with only one full season coming off a mostly lost year, a guy with a career ERA over 4.00, a non-tender recipient and David Peterson. Peterson should have been a complimentary mid-rotation piece. Instead, he is now behind a rookie who has made seven career starts. For a Mets team that had World Series expectations coming into 2025, their rotation was not set up for success at any point and it has shown in the results.

**Brooks Raley pitching during a Mets game. Raley has been playing for the Mets since Dec. 2022.** PHOTO COURTESY OF @METS ON INSTAGRAM



# BRAYDEN'S BREAKDOWN: WHAT TO MAKE OF TOM BRADY'S RETURN TO ORGANIZED FOOTBALL

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The greatest football player of all time has been in the news a lot recently. The play-by-play analyst and minority owner of the Las Vegas Raiders has stirred controversy by being in the coaches' box for the Raiders despite meeting with opposing teams for his FOX position.

However, the real shocker came when Brady announced last Sunday that he would be joining a flag football tournament in Saudi Arabia in March of 2026. Brady is not traveling alone to this tournament, he will be joined by his old teammate Rob Gronkowski. Among the other big names are Odell Beckham Jr., Saquon Barkley, Christian McCaffery, Myles Garrett and Tyreek Hill along with a few others.

Confirmed coaches for the teams are Pete Carroll of the Raiders, Sean Payton of the Broncos and Kyle Shanahan of the 49ers.

Brady and longtime collaborator Fanatics have partnered with Turki Al-Sheikh of Saudi Arabia to get this deal done. Al-Sheikh is a sports promoter for General Entertainment Authority, a department in Saudi Arabia's government. Al-Sheikh and other promoters of Saudi Arabia have been heavily involved with the UFC and WWE with some involvement in NBA preseason games as well.

With all of that being said, how does this look for Brady? The seven-time Super Bowl champion earned over \$300 million in his career and inked a 10-year, \$375 million contract with FOX upon his retirement. Despite some recent scandals off the field, Brady is most likely well off with his career earnings.

Brady's competitiveness cannot be questioned based off his recent events with the Raiders.

He also famously unretired in the 2022 offseason to play one last season with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

When you look at the greats of other sports and how their post playing career turned out, you see some interesting similarities and differences to Brady.

Tiger Woods was offered somewhere between \$700 and 800 million dollars to leave the PGA Tour and sign with the Saudi Arabian backed LIV Golf. Woods turned down the offer to show his staunch support for the PGA Tour. Woods continues to golf for the PGA Tour to this day.

Michael Jordan is one of the undisputed two best basketball players of all time. He famously had many different retirements including coming out of retirement for a second time to play for the Washington Wizards for two seasons. Jordan then bought the Charlotte Bobcats in 2010 before he helped rebrand them back to the Hornets. He sold the team in 2023 after over a decade of mediocrity and zero playoff series victories.

The success of Jordan's "Jumpman" forever changed the landscape of business and sneakers. Brady has his "TB12" and his deal with the clothing company No Bull, hoping to find some of the success Jordan had.

Derek Jeter and Alex Rodriguez had two of the best baseball careers of the past quarter century. Both are a part of the FOX family alongside Brady and have many business deals outside of their sport. Jeter also took the Brady and Jordan route, becoming the CEO of the Miami Marlins from 2017-2022.

So, what's in it for Brady besides a ton of money? A chance to show people that he can still sling the football around with the best of the best. A chance to reignite the competitive juices that players openly speak about having post playing career. Most importantly, it can provide

future business opportunities between the country of Saudi Arabia and Brady.

Is it worth it to "sell out" to the money instead of sticking to your morals like Woods? That can be debated but a paycheck is a paycheck, and Brady cannot be faulted for wanting a quick

check for himself and his family.

Brady's flag football games will certainly attract viewers, but the success of the event will be crucial for Brady and his future, along with the future possibility of football in Saudi Arabia.



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



**Tom Brady Shaking hands with Turki Alalshikh. Brady will be participating in a flag football tournament in Saudi Arabia in March of 2026.** PHOTO COURTESY OF @TOMBRADY ON INSTAGRAM



# Sports

## HUSKIES IN THE PROS: BREAKING DOWN THE HUSKIES' ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND DEFEATS

by **Tyler Pruneau**  
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**Napheesa Collier:**  
The Minnesota Lynx eliminated the Golden State Valkyries 75-74 in Game 2 of the WNBA postseason on Wednesday. Throughout the series, Napheesa Collier led the team in points scored, with 22. Now, the franchise faces the Phoenix Mercury in the semi-finals. In Game 1, the squad defeated the Mercury 82-69. The former Husky contributed 18 points, two assists and topped the team with nine rebounds. The 28-year-old drained six of 10 (60%) shots from within the perimeter and knocked down two of six (33%) attempts from deep. So far in the postseason, the forward leads the Lynx, averaging nearly 21 points and just over seven boards per match.

Recently, the Missouri native became the first WNBA player to average 20-plus points with a 50% field goal, 40% three-point percentage and 90% free throw percentage. As Collier's dominating 2025 run continues, her MVP campaign ends, as the Las Vegas Aces' center A'ja Wilson won the award on Sunday. Collier received 18 first-place votes and 42 second-place votes, per the WNBA. The Lynx hosts the Mercury for Game 2 of the WNBA playoffs on Tuesday, with tipoff scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on ESPN.

**Paige Bueckers:**  
On Tuesday, the WNBA officially announced that Paige Bueckers has won the 2025 Kia WNBA Rookie of the Year. The 23-year-old secured 70 of 72 media votes, with Sonia Citron earning the remaining two votes, according to Yahoo Sports. This marks UConn as the first University to produce both NBA and WNBA Rookie of the Year winners in the same

year. Bueckers finished the 2025 stretch, accumulating slightly over 19 points, nearly four rebounds, about five and a half assists and a little over one and a half steals per clash.

**Gabby Williams:**  
The Seattle Storm fell to the Aces 74-73 on Thursday, eliminating them from the postseason. In the three-game series, Gabby Williams racked up almost 10 points, a little over three boards and two assists per meeting. The former Huskies' strongest performance came in Game 1, recording 16 points, three rebounds and two assists. The 29-year-old cashed in eight of 13 (61.5%) two-pointers but missed a pair of shots from downtown.

**Breanna Stewart:**  
The Mercury spoiled the New York Liberty's back-to-back championship dreams, after defeating them 79-73 on Friday in Game 3 of the WNBA playoffs. In the tiebreaker, Breanna Stewart topped the team with 30 points and nine boards. The veteran buried six of 11 (54.5%) tries from the field and nailed one of three (33.3%) attempts from beyond the arc. Additionally, the former Husky committed five personal fouls. Stewart concluded the 2025 regular season, registering just over 18 points, 6.5 rebounds and 3.5 assists per contest. Now, the 31-year-old heads into the offseason as an unrestricted free agent.

**Kaitlyn Chen:**  
The Lynx defeated the Valkyries 75-74 in Game 2 on Wednesday, ending the franchise's remarkable first year in the WNBA. Between the two battles, Kaitlyn Chen saw four and a half minutes and posted two points, one board and one assist. The rookie ended the year notching two points, just under one rebound and one assist per match. Now, Chen turns her attention to the Winter, where she'll play for AU Pro Basketball.

**TOP: Napheesa Collier shooting a basketball in a game against the Golden State Valkyries. Collier played for the UConn Huskies from 2015 to 2019.** PHOTO COURTESY OF @NAPHEESA24 ON INSTAGRAM

**BOTTOM: Gabby Williams warming up prior to a game against The Aces. The Seattle Storm lost to The Aces on Thursday** PHOTO COURTESY OF @SEATTLESTORM ON INSTAGRAM



## WILKER'S WEEKLY: PATRIOTS WEEK 3 OVERVIEW AND WEEK 4 OUTLOOK

by **Graham Wilker**  
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The Patriots fell to 1-2 after a dismal display on Sunday against their conference rivals, the Pittsburgh Steelers. The Patriots had surprisingly never lost to the black and yellow since Tom Brady's departure, winning with both Mac Jones and Bailey Zappe at the helm. With Drake Maye at the helm though, things were a different story. Maye wasn't bad on Sunday as far as his stat line is concerned but he no doubt was a bit disappointing. He turned the ball over twice, once in the endzone on an interception at the end of the first half and the other through a strip sack. Given that the ball was tipped on the interception, he'll get some grace, but a pair of early would-have-been interceptions to safety Chuck Clark were both dropped. In the end, he finished

with over 300 total yards, but he has some things to clean up.

The story of the game, more broadly than Maye, was the turnovers. The Patriots managed one defensively, with former Steeler Robert Spillane intercepting Aaron Rodgers and returning it inside the opposing 10-yard line. Aside from Maye's pair of turnovers, the Patriots fumbled an additional three times, twice via Rhymondre Stevenson, who led the NFL in fumbles with seven last year. In three games in 2025, he has three fumbles. Antonio Gibson also fumbled the ball. Despite all this, the Patriots miraculously were still in the game deep into the fourth quarter thanks to Hunter Henry, whose eight-catch performance garnered 90 yards and a pair of touchdowns. On a fourth down to decide the game, Maye threw a short pass to Pop Douglas, and while it appeared he would have had the first down to continue the game should he

had leaned forward, he opted for a juke back only to be tackled short of the sticks, ending their offensive effort with just 14 points.

Defensively, the team looked solid in the front but weaker as we moved to the defensive backfield. Milton Williams is looking like the star free agent he was promised to be, and Harold Landry is playing at a Pro Bowl level. Aside from the Spillane interception, the unit forced an additional pair of fumbles, though neither were recovered. Christian Elliss looked lost throughout the game, and PFF's grading seconded that feeling, rewarding him with a horrific 38.2 overall grade. Cornerback Alex Austin has played more than expected with Christian Gonzalez's injury and the release of Jabrill Peppers a few weeks ago, and he's been disappointing. Another week from him meant another handful of flags and a sub-30 PFF grade. Former third-round pick Marte

Mapu also ended with a 33.7 PFF grade.

While the Patriots played one of their worst games in recent memory on Sunday, it was so dismal there's no way it could be repeated, at least to that level. They'll face the 1-2 Panthers on Sunday, and as bad as they have been over the past few seasons, they shut out the Falcons this past week. Despite also being 1-2, the Falcons are a team with talent and playoff aspirations who lost 30-0 against Carolina. The Panthers defense nabbed two interceptions off Michael Penix.

The Patriots' success on Sunday will largely rely on two factors: Bryce Young and Chuba Hubbard. Young has been very streaky, having some performances that make him look like a premier young quarterback, and others that show he's very much still developing. Dave Canales' offense relies heavily on the run game, and historically, the better Hubbard carries

the ball, the more effective their offense is. In the first two weeks, he ran for under four per carry, and the offense coincidentally struggled. This past week, his 17 carries for 73 yards landed him at 4.3 yards per carry and the team dominated. Young's below par 121-yard performance was numbed by the defense and running game, whereas he helped lead an unsuccessful come back in Week 2, when he threw for over 300 yards and three touchdowns via 55 attempts.

If the Patriots can continue to have a stifling defensive front and Christian Gonzalez returns from his hamstring injury for Week 3, they shouldn't have much of an issue controlling the Panthers' offense. Offensively, they must limit turnovers now and until the end of the year, and return to their form against Miami, when they scored 33 points. If they want to save their season, breaking even at .500 is a must.