

The Daily Campus

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT SINCE 1896 • VOLUME CXXIX, NO. 2

Wednesday, September 3, 2025

INVOLVEMENT FAIR TODAY

by **Ariana Mohamed**

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The Involvement fair will take place today on Fairfield Way from 2 to 6 p.m.

This year's fair will be the largest since Covid-19, hosting 570 student clubs and organizations according to Sarah Bernhardt, the coordinator for Student Organization Support & Leadership.

The fair is free and will have a number of different organizations and clubs that range from academic to special interest, according to the student activities website.

Bernhardt said that research shows that students who get involved on campus are more likely to stay in college because they have a sense of belonging.

Lucas Ranicar, a sophomore psychology major and involvement ambassador for the student organization Leaders Intentional Development, shared his experience planning the fair.

Ranicar said different clubs and organizations must send applications through UConnctact, a university platform, to get approval to take part in the fair. Ranicar said he will then look through the club

application to determine if it will be approved.

"When you're walking down Fairfield Way and you see all those tables and all those people, it's really just interesting to see all the different kinds of interests that people have and different ways people want to come together," Ranicar said.

Bernhardt said that the fair is also a way for students to learn about other opportunities such as the leadership certificate series or get involved in Student Health and Wellness.

"It's an opportunity for students to find clubs and organizations to get involved with, but also university departments and programs that either support them or can offer student employment while they're here," Bernhardt said.

Bernhardt said the Involvement Fair is a wonderful way for students to find out what involvement looks like here at the University of Connecticut.

"I think I'm most looking forward to interacting with people that I maybe wouldn't on a daily basis," Ranicar said.

Bernhardt said the goal of the Involvement Fair for students is to find community and a sense of



UConn Storrs Fairfield Way on Wednesday Sept. 4, 2024. The involvement fair is where UConn's many clubs can show up, recruit students and show them what their club is all about.

PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

belonging.

"It's an opportunity for our student organization leaders to promote their organizations, to recruit new members, to be able to speak more about the mission and values of their organization,"

Bernhardt said.

When Ranicar attended the event last year he said he was only looking at things he was interested in, but working as an involvement ambassador he can look at other clubs that may have not

piqued his interest immediately.

"I think that it gives students another unique opportunity to see all of the niche groups that we have on campus and to realize things that they didn't know we had," Bernhardt said.

Construction takes over UConn this school year

by **Patrick Boots**

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Numerous renovation and construction activities will be occurring on the Storrs and regional campuses of the University of Connecticut this fall semester. Updates to academic buildings, campus infrastructure improvements and road closures are among the changes students can expect to see.

Headlining this year's construction plans are a renovation to the Gant Math-Science Complex, the construction of a new School of Nursing building and major expansions to the Harry A. Gampel Pavilion and the Greer Field House to build the Bailey Student-Athlete Success Center, the University Planning, Design and Construction office said in their quarterly report released in June.

The renovations to Gant, which entered its third and final phase this summer, will see interior and exterior renovations to the north wing of the building, load zones and outdoor courtyard areas. The northwest entrance to the building, located at the corner of North Eagleville and Auditorium Roads, will be closed for the duration of the project.

"Most demolition and abatement work will be completed

by the end of February 2026," UPDC said.

The current plan is to renovate the four existing floors to house classrooms and lab spaces and construct a new floor dedicated to research. Some spaces on the new ground floor will also be dedicated to advising services offered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The north wing, which formerly hosted the Institute of Material Sciences offices until the opening of the Science One building, remains vacant. Phases of reconstruction for the south and west wings of the complex finished in 2019 and 2021, respectively.

"Phase 3 construction is anticipated to be complete in December 2027," the UPDC report states, with planned usage for the Spring 2028 semester.

Both the Science One and Gant renovation projects, among others, were funded by the Next Generation Connecticut initiative as part of UConn's goal of creating a "STEM-focused quad."

New fencing and temporary signage have been installed alongside Hillside Road, as projects relating to the renovation and expansion of athletic buildings begin. Gampel Pavilion and the Greer Field House will see the most work this year as part of the largest renovation the facilities have seen since 1990.

"The goal is to upgrade Harry A. Gampel Pavilion to enhance the daily experience for student athletes and visitors by instilling a sense of Huskies pride by offering first-class facilities that support player development and recruitment," the project description states.

Highlights of the interior renovations include new lower bowl seating, improved safety and building and structure and communications upgrades—including installing new Wi-Fi access points. Designs also include new "premium clubs and concession options" for fans. Gampel hosts home games for the men's and women's basketball teams, certain volleyball and golf contests and special events like job fairs and the annual commencement ceremonies.

The total price for Gampel renovations is estimated to cost \$100 million, according to Athletic Director David Benedict, with some contributions already in from the State of Connecticut. Certain improvements, like the installation of larger video scoreboards and roof repairs were completed before the 2024-25 basketball season.

The attached Greer Field House, which has been open since 1950, will be seeing a major expansion as part of the new Bailey Student-Athlete Success Center. Ground broke on the expansion in April, which will see a full overhaul of the Guyer Gymnasium space and the construction of the Nayden Center for Academic Excellence.

"At the core of this transformative project, the 12,000 square foot academic center will become the home for holistic development, academic accomplishment, and well-being for every student-athlete at UConn," UConn Today said in April.

The complex, named after former UConn student-athlete and UConn Foundation board member Trisha Bailey, is thanks to her largest-yet cash contribution to the Athletics Department.

Plans also include new locker rooms for various teams and changes to outdoor access in connection with the adjacent Sherman Field area.

Major construction is also ongoing in South Campus, where a new 90,000 sq. foot building to be dedicated to the School of Nursing is being designed alongside active infrastructure changes. The new building area, which lies behind the Fine Arts Complex on Bolton Road, was formerly home to Parking Lot S.

"Parking spaces displaced from Lot S will be redistributed across other existing surface lots that have capacity," the project webpage states.

Most of the project thus far has concerned the installation of geothermal heating and cooling systems and related utilities attached to the South Campus Chiller Plant and Connecticut Hall, which opened in 2024.

UPDC expects construction to be substantially complete by Fall 2026, but their report says that "long lead time(s)" in material procurement and environmental assessments related to soil disposal may delay the project.

The new building project is being funded in part by a \$50 million donation to the School of Nursing - which marks the largest single donation in the history of UConn. The program currently occupies the historic Storrs Hall.

Pedestrians and motorists will also find road closures in South Campus, including the closure of Whitney Road and adjacent areas due to continuing steam projects behind Arjona Hall and the Bousfield Psychology building. Gilbert Road will be available during the closure for through traffic to the center of campus.

"In Fall 2023 a leak was found in the existing steam piping," a UPDC statement said. "The best course of action [was] to remove and replace...the vaults and associated piping."

The June report specifies that

the Whitney Road steam project is only 35% complete.

Other construction initiatives include significant improvements to Mirror Lake after years of deferred maintenance to the man-made landmark, including dredging and water quality improvements, as well as the re-assessment of the nearby Whitney House site alongside Storrs Road following the partial demolition of the colonial home after a fire in 2023. Foundational construction has also begun for a new indoor tennis facility, to be located next to the current outdoor tennis courts at the corner of North Hillside Road and Discovery Drive.

Construction at UConn's regional campuses continues: A new small dining location is nearing completion in the Hartford Times Building, which will feature grab-and-go style amenities alongside a limited cafeteria-style service. The café was originally expected to be open for the start of the fall semester, but a revised grand opening is anticipated in the next two weeks. Also in Hartford, a multimillion dollar renovation project at the Huskies' second basketball and hockey home, the Peoples Bank Arena (formerly known as the XL Center), is ongoing, bringing numerous amenity additions within the coliseum, concourse and seating areas alongside the construction of UConn educational space in the center's exhibition hall. The arena is owned by the City of Hartford but is operated by the Oak View Group and the Capital Region Development Authority.

In Stamford, UConn is remediating properties affected by the demolition of an adjacent parking garage on Washington Boulevard, UPDC said.

Students can see a map of ongoing campus construction projects on the University Planning, Design and Construction webpage at updc.uconn.edu. For more information, visit uconn.edu/construction.



Construction on the UConn Storrs campus on Sept. 1, 2025. Some projects happening on campus in fall 2025 include renovations to Gant Math-Science Complex and Harry A. Gampel Pavilion.

PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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'Big Fat Meatballs' by the Costco Guys



ART FROM ARTIST | PAGE 7

When and how do you separate them?



KNICKS ROSTER | PAGE 12

Mike Brown head of 2025-2026 season

WE ARE NOT THE
DAILY DIGEST

Workers Over Billionaires” protest comes to Connecticut capital

by Jenna Outcalt
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People gathered outside the capital in Hartford, Conn. yesterday to participate in a “Workers Over Billionaires” rally for Labor Day.

The rally started at noon and featured speeches from activists and government officials, including Sen. Richard Blumenthal and Connecticut Attorney General William Tong. Participants in the rally held signs supporting unions and immigrants along with ones denouncing President Donald Trump, billionaires and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Blumenthal spoke about fighting to protect the people of Connecticut and the system of democracy in America. He said the history of the U.S. is about advancing liberty and making working people better off.

“For the first time in our history, the president of the United States wants to roll it back, and we are not going to let him take our democracy away from working people,” Blumenthal said.

Among a generally positive reception, some people in the crowd accused Blumenthal of supporting genocide in Palestine or not doing enough to resist the Trump administration.

Tong spoke about his office’s successes and goals in stopping

the Trump administration, as well as the people’s responsibility to organize and vote.

“We are pushing back on not just the billionaire enablers, but the enablers in this building, in neighborhoods across the state, in towns and cities, that are on the ballot this fall,” Tong said. “Elections are coming.”

Tong emphasized that people who could not speak out against cuts to Medicaid, ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection in Washington would not see support in the upcoming elections. He also said the people at the rally gave him hope.

“Remember who we are. We are the sovereign state of Connecticut, one of the original 13. We stood up to a tyrant then, and we beat him. We sent 50,000, more than 50,000 to preserve the Union in the 1860s, and we won that battle. We sent more than 300,000 American soldiers to Europe, to the Pacific, to preserve the world and freedom for all of us,” Tong said. “So Donald Trump, let me be clear: If you are going to try to deploy American military, soldiers with guns, on the streets of Connecticut, you will have to come through me, and all of us.”

Many of the speeches reminded attendees of the importance of voting. Some, including Connecticut Rep. Anne Hughes, called for a special legislative

session to draft laws against the Trump administration’s actions.

Seth Freeman, president of the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges, also emphasized working class solidarity and called for a special legislative session to “raise revenue on the ultra-wealthy” in Connecticut and protect immigrants.

“So how do we stop these attacks and protect our students and protect our community?” he asked. “We organize and we fight back.”

One participant, Amy Plapp, said it was great to be at a demonstration in Hartford to give Connecticut’s state government a push.

“I think the governor failed to band together with other Democratic governors on a recent statement about the militarization in American cities, and our state attorney general is backing off from defending free speech in Connecticut with the arrest of protesters,” Plapp said. “And so we’re here to remind the state government that the people of Connecticut are not happy with that kind of thing, that democracy is important to us.”

Governor Ned Lamont was one of four Democratic governors who did not put their name on a letter from the Democratic Governors Association calling for an end to Trump’s deployment of the National Guard in American cities.



The Connecticut Capital building as it stands today in Hartford. The building was the site of protests this weekend. PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR

Tom Ward, another participant, said he made the trip to Hartford to show support for the middle and working class.

“We’ve been to protests down closer to where we live, but we thought being Labor Day, and the importance of the middle class and the working class in our country, that we would come up and show our support for them, and do anything we can to make it clear that we’re against the current administration,” Ward said.

Ward also expressed concern about militarization in American cities such as the increased ICE presence in Chicago, another city that held Labor Day protests.

Support for immigrants was palpable throughout the speeches people gave at the rally. Tong included a story in his speech about his immigrant parents and how he started out working in

their restaurant.

“In one generation, I went from that hot Chinese restaurant kitchen to be the attorney general in the state of Connecticut,” Tong said. “That is who we are. Remember, that is who we are. And there are kids right now in Hartford, and East Hartford, and Simsbury, and Farmington, and across America who are living that dream right now. They are children of immigrants, and they will make it if we fight for them.”

Jessica McMullin, who attended the rally, expressed appreciation for Tong’s story and the presence of legislators.

“It’s just really inspiring to see such a great turnout, and all the people with all the different signs covering so many different topics,” McMullin said. “It’s just really encouraging to see everybody on the same page.”

CT train prices increase, Mansfield addresses off-campus parties

by Pierce Colfer
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MTA ticket prices increase by 5% across Connecticut

The price of train tickets across Connecticut were raised by 5% on Sept. 1, according to a CT Insider article. The price hike comes following the Metropolitan Transportation Authority board approving a 10% increase in ticket prices that will be administered through two 5% increases. The next price increase will occur on July 1, 2026.

According to the CT Insider article, the state Department of Transportation’s rail operations budget was cut by \$11 million in the most recent two-year budget that was passed in June. This price increase will be used to help offset the budget decrease and maintain the existing rail services.

MTA officials cited increased ridership as the reason behind the increase according to the article, with ridership between Stamford and New York rising by 14.1% between 2023 and 2024 and New Haven ridership increasing by 11.8% in the same period.

One-way peak fares from New Haven to Grand Central will increase from \$24.50 to \$26, while peak fares from Stamford to

Grand Central will increase from \$16 to \$17.

Mansfield addresses “large, disruptive” off-campus parties in official statement

Mansfield released a statement on Aug. 22 titled “Welcome Back [University of Connecticut] Students for Fall 2025,” which urged commuter students at UConn to be respectful with off-campus parties.

The statement said that the Town-University Relations Committee had discussed the “large, disruptive gatherings” that occur while UConn is in session with Mansfield residents.

“Sergeant Stephen King of the Mansfield Resident State Troopers office and John Armstrong, Associate Dean of Students are proactively engaging with identified addresses where these gatherings often occur,” the statement said. “With personal visits and direct communication with student renters and landlords, they are working to establish expectations early, and address any nuisance behavior, blight, and neighbor-related complaints.”

According to the statement, citations will be “written as needed” and behavioral referrals are arrests will be addressed through an “Off Campus Party Referral

Form” and a “Community Standards Referral Form.”

The statement gave advice for residents on how to report an “unsafe or disruptive” situation.

“If you experience a situation that is unsafe or disruptive in your neighborhood, please contact the Resident State Troopers office by calling (860)896-3200 day or night,” the statement said. “Associate Dean John Armstrong also invites residents to call or email him directly with any concerns about student behavior at john.armstrong@uconn.edu or (860) 486-3426.”

Bridgeport councilman arrested for mishandling ballots during Bridgeport Democratic primary

According to a CT Mirror article, Bridgeport City Councilman Alfredo Castillo was arrested and charged with mishandling absentee ballots during the 2023 Bridgeport Democratic primary elections on Aug. 29.

Castillo faces four counts of “Possession of Ballots and Envelopes Restricted,” four counts of “Failure to Sign as Assister on an Absentee Ballot” and two counts of “Misrepresenting Eligibility Requirements for Voting by Absentee Ballot,” according to a press release from the Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice.



Train sitting in West Haven Metro North Station. Ticket prices set to increase. PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR

This is the third time Castillo has been arrested for allegedly mishandling ballots during those elections, having also been accused of harvesting ballots during the 2019 Bridgeport Democratic primary.

Castillo is one of 11 who have been charged with “defrauding the absentee voting system in Bridgeport,” according to the CT Mirror article. Wanda Geter-Pataky, the vice chairwoman of Bridgeport’s Democratic Party, was also arrested after being caught on video allegedly depositing absentee ballots into drop boxes in advance of

the 2023 election.

This arrest is part of a larger investigation by the Chief State’s Attorney’s office into ballot mishandling during the 2023 Bridgeport Democratic primary election, according to the CT Mirror article. Both Castillo and Geter-Pataky were campaigning in support of Bridgeport Mayor Joe Ganim, who won the primary.

As a result of the investigation, the primary results were overturned and a new primary was held. Ganim won the new primary in January and won the general mayoral election in February.

The Daily Campus

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Tuesday, September 2, 2025

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- ACROSS
- 1

Fireplace residue
- 4

Laundry basket
- 10

Spice made from the husk of a nutmeg
- 14

Indian beach destination
- 15

Moon mission program
- 16

Subject of a chemistry diagram
- 17

Stat boosted by a home run
- 18

*Extracts dirt from the carpet, maybe
- 20

Countesses' counterparts
- 22

Adds fuel to
- 23

Old Ford flops
- 25

Resolved out of court
- 29

Ensnare
- 31

Bullfighting figure
- 32

Vegetarian frozen-food brand
- 34

Wells Fargo competitor
- 37

Feel a sense of belonging
- 38

8 pts. or 4 qts.
- 39

Leading, or, when parsed differently, what can lead into the starts of the answers to the starred clues
- 41

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- 42

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- 44

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- 45

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- 46

Overlook
- 48

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- 50

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- 52

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- 55

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- 58

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- 59

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- 63

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- 64

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- 65

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- 66

Beast of burden
- 67

"Quick, before we're late!"
- 68

Classroom unit
- 69

Parakeet or rabbit

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14				15							16			
17				18						19				
20				21			22							
23					24			25				26	27	28
			29				30			31				
32	33				34		35	36		37				
38				39					40			41		
42				43			44					45		
46					47			48		49				
50						51			52				53	54
				55				56	57		58			
59	60	61							62			63		
64						65						66		
67						68						69		

By Michael Torch

9/3/25

- DOWN
- 1

Shake hands (on)
- 2

"Just awful!"
- 3

*Vidal Sassoon's expertise
- 4

Pain in the neck
- 5

Perfectly suitable
- 6

"The Simpsons" bar
- 7

Community developer's map
- 8

Ticklish toys that caused a frenzy at Christmas in 1996
- 9

"Guardians of the Galaxy" raccoon
- 10

Opera conductors
- 11

___ loss for words
- 12

Swindle
- 13

CPR crew
- 19

Excuse from work
- 21

Luau loops
- 24

"I did no ___ thing!"
- 26

*Low-carb sandwich
- 27

Native Pennsylvanians
- 28

"Death, be not proud" poet John
- 30

Fruit-filled desserts
- 32

Another time

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

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

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9/3/25

- 33

Unkempt
- 35

Eastern philosophical path
- 36

Pop sensation
- 39

Use a SodaStream
- 40

Big name in elevators
- 43

Lick, as an envelope
- 45

Like peacocks
- 47

Nail polish, e.g.

49

Decrease

51

Govt. investment option

53

Stop

54

Romantic rendezvous

56

Middles: Abbr.

57

Greek vowels

59

Cul-de-___

60

"Beetlejuice" director Burton

61

Big commotion

62

Prefix with meter

Level

1

2

3

4

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

Solution to Tuesday's puzzle

9/3/25

3	6	8	7	2	9	1	5	4
7	5	1	4	3	8	6	9	2
9	2	4	1	6	5	8	7	3
6	9	3	8	5	4	2	1	7
1	4	2	6	9	7	3	8	5
8	7	5	2	1	3	4	6	9
4	1	6	9	7	2	5	3	8
5	8	7	3	4	1	9	2	6
2	3	9	5	8	6	7	4	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](https://www.sudoku.org.uk).

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OVERLÖDED ABROAD: BRINGING THE SOUNDS OF STORRS TO ASIA

by Dan Stark
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When Aiden Bonilla first started listening to punk rock in 2020, it was the sounds of Japanese groups like Going Steady and Four Tomorrow that made him fall in love with the genre.

Five years later, Bonilla is now the frontman of Storrs-based indie punk band Overlödéd and recently returned from studying abroad at Sophia University in Tokyo, where he played a series of shows in East Asia.

The first show he booked came after a group of fans messaged him on TikTok about potentially coming to South Korea to play a show. Bonilla made them a deal: if they could find a venue and get ten people to show up, he would play the show.

This online interaction led to Bonilla performing a solo acoustic show on May 24 at Studio Sanbo in Seoul. Though there were only a dozen people there, those who showed up knew all the

words and had a clear appreciation for the music.

In Tokyo, Bonilla played a series of shows with Sentimental Okada, who had previously collaborated with him on Overlödéd songs like “No Music No Life” from 2022’s “Love and Youth.” The two started jamming together when Bonilla got to Japan, during which Okada offered to have Bonilla join him during solo shows he had booked, an opportunity that Bonilla jumped at.

The two played five shows together in Tokyo, playing sets mainly featuring Overlödéd songs. Bonilla noted that he enjoyed taking his songs — many of which are electric guitar-dominated and fast-paced — and adapting them to stripped-down arrangements with piano and acoustic guitar.

Among the songs that worked best in this format was “Let’s Commit Insurance Fraud Together” from the group’s 2025 album “Miss President.” Okada recorded a piano part for the

track as a background part for the song’s slower middle section that took on a new role live.

“When we made that song originally, I really wanted piano on it,” said Bonilla. “I just gave him the song and recorded it with this awesome, sprawling piano arrangement on it. And when it just just guitar and piano, that took the main focus and completely changed the song.”

Though he enjoyed the acoustic shows, the highlight of his time studying abroad came when he did two shows with a full band. The first of these shows came about when he messaged Kerosene, a friend of his from the Philippines, about doing an acoustic show there. To his surprise, she suggested doing a full band show and organized a drummer, bassist and guitarist to create a one-night-only lineup.

On July 6, Bonilla flew to the Philippines, rehearsed with the group quickly and then took the stage at Mow’s

Bar in Manila. The lineup was a seamless fit, with Bonilla calling them “some of the most talented musicians I’ve ever played with.”

The show was a hit, with the quartet delivering an energetic performance to a crowd that rivals those Bonilla has played at stateside.

“Surprisingly, more people at that show knew the words to Overlödéd songs than any show I’ve ever played at, even in Connecticut,” he said. “And it’s a super validating feeling that all these people who really care about the music came all this way to see it.”

After the success of the first show, Bonilla played two full band shows in Tokyo with another lineup. At this point, he had been travelling with the band Four Tomorrow after he was invited to join them at a show he saw. This led to the band inviting Bonilla and the Tokyo lineup to join them on the bill on Aug. 2, which was the last show Bonilla played

before heading home. He called this show “the culmination of everything that had happened over the summer, all the people that I met and everything I wanted to do.”

Now that he’s back in Connecticut and getting ready for Overlödéd’s fall schedule, Bonilla said he hopes to incorporate some new elements into the band’s set such as quick song transitions and gang vocals, which he noticed Japanese bands did very successfully.

Reflecting on his time abroad, Bonilla expressed his gratitude that he got to play shows there, completing an arc that goes back to 2020.

“I got into punk rock with Japanese punk, I had never really listened to punk until discovering Going Steady in 2020,” he said. “So, five years later, going to the city that the band came from and seeing the music scene that inspired me to play punk music of my own was really



Aiden Bonilla performing in Manila with a one-night-only Overlödéd lineup.
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF NOISY & STANDING

ROUNDTABLE: THE 2025 SONG OF THE SUMMER

The “song of the summer” is an annual debate about what song best represented summer for music listeners. Every year, there are multiple songs that could be given this title for their cultural impact and how many people listened to them. Today, we asked members of The Daily Campus Life section: What is the 2025 song of the summer?

by Dan Stark,
LIFE EDITOR

There are a few songs that I could easily pick here, but I’m going to take an unorthodox route by picking a band that has surged back into the zeitgeist this summer: Oasis.

With the Gallagher brothers seemingly burying the hatchet to embark on the group’s first tour since 2009, Oasis experienced a surge in popularity this summer, with droves of new fans exploring the band’s music.

Picking one song is a difficult task. Hits like “Don’t Look Back in Anger,” “Wonderwall” and “Live Forever” soared back into the charts, but deeper cuts like “Slide Away” and “Acquiesce” have received more attention this summer.

by Samantha Brody
ASSOCIATE LIFE EDITOR

In our TikTok-infused modern day, the elusive title of “song of the summer” has become a holy grail for the world’s most hopeful musicians. The song of the summer is going to define the year for many, so it needs to be infused with enough summery energy to infect the public for the next half a decade, while having the popularity to match.

Although Alex Warren’s “Ordinary” topped charts for most of the summer, he doesn’t get my vote. In my opinion, it’s a bland song that makes itself out to be almost too palatable. And admittedly, Benson Boone got everyone’s ears with “Mystical Magical,” but I wouldn’t call that attention favorable.

Instead, I want to point out “Manchild” by Sabrina Carpenter. It came out right at the very start of the summer, so it’s perfectly timed, but it also has that special sauce that Warren is missing. There’s also a layer of poeticism that comes with gifting the “song of summer” to a pop queen. It’s complicated, it’s challenging, it’s popular and it’s Sabrina. What’s not to like?

by Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab
STAFF WRITER

This probably flew under your radar, but I personally believe the 2025 “song of the summer” to be drum and bass, alternative R&B and emo rap artist Levi Ryan’s song “eyes wide shut.”

There’s tons to enjoy in Ryan’s work whether it’s his guitar playing, singing or production chops. This song is no different but still finds a way to experiment even further with the current sound he has going on — now with blatant industrial influences mixed in.

Levi Ryan doesn’t know how to miss in either his lyrics or production. It comforts the disturbed.

by Patrick Boots
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

The “song of the summer” this year was “Manchild,” recorded and co-written by Sabrina Carpenter. Carpenter tells listeners about her foolish ex-boyfriend, wrapped up in a synth-y country-inspired pop melody which almost certainly gets stuck in your head.

Sabrina’s a good pop artist and has done a great job of becoming musically independent. She has a significant following too, so it’s no wonder she sold out the XL Center on her “Short ‘n Sweet” tour — I’d kill for that kind of attention (and revenue!)

I’m a radio guy, so maybe because “Manchild” was playing on mostly every station all summer - probably today, too - it

by Thaddeus Sawyer,
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

I’ll be going on a nostalgia trip for my pick. After living on through reruns for the better part of a decade, Big Time Rush burst back onto the scene this summer with their “In Real Life Worldwide Tour.”

Seemingly every time I opened TikTok in the past few months, there was a video from a BTR concert. Sometimes it was Stephen Kramer Glickman (Gustavo Rocque in the show) singing Chapell Roan’s “Pink Pony Club.” Other times, it was someone complaining about not being chosen as a “Worldwide Girl.”

Regardless of the video’s focus, the cultural revival was a reminder that BTR put out three albums of genuinely catchy pop music that is now reaching a generation

that never even watched the show. While not their best (“No Idea”), I’ll go with “Boyfriend” as it may be their most well-known. Bonus points for having a version featuring verses from Snoop Dogg.

by Ayyan Tamjeed
STAFF WRITER

I’ll take this time to extoll the brilliance of Joey Valence & Brae’s “HYPERYOUTH/LIVE RIGHT.”

These are two different songs, but I can’t see one without the other, they’re both so infectious in their vibe. You have “HYPERYOUTH” where the production fills your eardrums with the most pulsating drum and bass. The song starts off with these hypnotic chants of “Dance, Bounce” which serve as a great appetizer for the verses, but also as a transition for the second song, “LIVE RIGHT.”

If “HYPERYOUTH” is the track you play at the club, “LIVE RIGHT” is the one you would play looking back on those days. It has some of the most emotional lyrics these two have written, all about their fears of growing up and their love for creating good memories with friends. The production perfectly fits the feelings of melancholy and nostalgia that are imbued within this song.



Big Time Rush “In Real Life World Wide Tour” in Chicago.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @BIGTIMERUSH ON INSTAGRAM

POINT COUNTERPOINT: IS KPOP DEMON HUNTERS WORTH THE HYPE?

Sony Animations released their newest original movie, “KPop Demon Hunters,” on June 20 this year, having since secured a spot as Netflix’s all-time most watched film. As with any piece of popular media, “KPop Demon Hunters” has found both a devoted fan base and a committed group of haters.

The movie follows the fictional K-pop girl group “HUNTR/X” — pronounced “Huntrix” — who have been tasked with defending the world from demons. Unfortunately, a demon boy band known as the “Saja Boys” has formed to rival the girls, with a demon named Jinu as their leader and frontman. HUNTR/X, with members Mira, Zoey and half-demon Rumi, must defeat the Saja Boys while using their musical talent to power the fictional Honmoon, which shields the human world from demons. But is it worth the hype? Today, two Life section writers tackle this question.

SPOILERS AHEAD.
by Samantha Brody

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I’ve found myself planted firmly in the first camp, and I will defend this movie until my last breath.

Let’s start with the music, which has arguably had the most influence on the public out of anything from this movie. We’ve experienced a real-life battle between HUNTR/X and the Saja Boys, with songs from both groups duking it out in the charts. HUNTR/X’s “Golden” currently sits in first place of the Billboard Hot 100, with the Saja Boys’ “Your Idol” and “Soda Pop” in the fourth and fifth slot, respectively.

The music of “KPop Demon Hunters” is ultimately K-pop with some American influences. It’s pop in every sense of the word, with the punchy “How It’s Done” setting the tone when the movie begins. Although this over-the-top K-pop aesthetic isn’t for everyone, it’s undeniably high quality and top-of-the-

line, serving as a gateway drug into the world of K-pop.

The animation is also top-of-the-line in every sense of the word. The characters are fluid, dynamic and cartoonish when the scene needs it. The animation especially shines during performances, with my favorite being HUNTR/X’s opener, “How It’s Done.”

As for the plot, while I do have my gripes, I think it stands above the rest in terms of action, excitement, emotional depth and complexity.

Rumi and Jinu’s story is heart-wrenching, especially when the movie dives into their shared shame. Rumi is ashamed of her demon side, and Jinu is ashamed of his evil actions when he was once human. They both want to escape.

Unfortunately, not every character is built equally. The viewer is given no backstory on Rumi’s parents, whose love story is mirrored in their daughter, and we know nothing about the Saja Boys outside of Jinu.

The battle between the Saja Boys and HUNTR/X is also surprisingly meta. The two groups are a satire of K-pop culture and idol worship, with the good and bad competing against one another. HUNTR/X represents a perfect world in which K-pop idols are free from grueling hours, unrealistic body standards and toxic fan dynamics. Conversely, the Saja Boys represent the dark side of K-pop, with each member standing in for harmful behavior.

The two groups’ most popular songs represent this dynamic. “Golden” is about the members of HUNTR/X finding the authentic version of themselves that they want to be, whereas the Saja Boys spend “Your Idol” encouraging a parasocial form of fan worship.

“Your Idol” itself is also a standout song for the film. It is the only song that we see fully performed in a stadium. Apart from the Saja Boys’ teleportation and flight abilities, it’s just

like a real K-pop performance.

The inherent cheesiness of “KPop Demon Hunters” is its greatest strength — its over-the-top nature is what makes it such a compelling movie, and its commitment to authenticity, while appearing cringe at first, is what makes it feel so grounded and emotionally impactful.

by Ayyan Tamjeed

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While Sam here is one of the many fans who love this movie, as seen by its record streaming numbers on Netflix, I’m still on the fence about calling this a good movie. Before I go deeper into what I think are flaws in this movie, I want to state that there are parts of this movie that deserve praise.

All the songs here are some of the best pop music released this year, especially “Golden,” purely because of how much Rumi sells that chorus with her glass-shattering vocals. “What It Sounds Like,” is another bright spot on the soundtrack. The buildup from Rumi singing quietly to herself to that final chorus where everyone in the stadium joined in? A moment of total catharsis.

The animation and design of this whole Honmoon world deserves its props as well. Some of the expressions Rumi, Mira and Zoey pull off add to the whole fantasy aspect of Honmoon. The “Into the Spider-Verse”-inspired animation creates some beautiful action scenes that are incredibly fast and fluid. The main K-Pop groups being exaggerated versions of the KPop girl groups and boy bands is a nice aspect as well. It provides some meta-commentary on K-pop stereotypes — apart from Jinu, the rest of the “Saja Boys” are one-note stereotypes.

Now, my gripes with this movie; why is the first scene a damn exposition dump on the whole premise and the three HUNTR/X singers? It just looks terribly lazy to me and broadcasts the message that Netflix

believes their audience wouldn’t be able to pick up on information unless it’s told to them. There are also moments that felt like characters announce what is happening/happened in the story, or just listing a character’s traits if the audience hasn’t picked up on it yet. There was an interview by filmmaker Justine Bateman where she said Netflix executives would give notes detailing that a show wasn’t “second screen enough,” which could explain these odd writing decisions.

The other big issue is pacing, although little can be done about that since it is an animated movie. I don’t know much about animation, but I do know that it takes more time and money to create 90 minutes of animation than live content. The team be-

hind this project needed more time to cook. Though the climax was incredible, reaching it felt rushed. I think there needed to be one or two more scenes to highlight Rumi’s fall from grace and her subsequent coming to terms with her identity to make the arc more believable. Another issue with the pacing is that the supporting cast isn’t as fleshed out.

Even if the first scene may be a lazy exposition dump, the next scene engrosses you in HUNTR/X effortlessly killing some baddies and singing “Done, Done, Done” for a sea of screaming, adoring fans. While there are aspects of this film that irk me; I can’t bring myself to hate something called “KPop Demon Hunters.”



Overthrow an egomaniacal billionaire in “Rogue Labyrinth”

by Colbi Loranger

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After being in development for over three years, “Rogue Labyrinth,” the debut title from Tea Witch Games, released earlier this week on Monday, Sept. 1. The indie game studio based in Seattle is run by two developers known as John Bond and Shala, with “Rogue Labyrinth” being created by a team of only four people. This pixel-art action roguelite — a genre based on progressing through procedurally generated floors that restart after each player death — is currently available for PC on Steam, with a free demo available as well with a controller recommended for play.

As stated on the game’s website, Tea Witch Games is “focused on making fun games with strong narratives inspired by their roots.” “Rogue Labyrinth” immediately honors that mission by starting off with a bang of satirical political commentary about colonization and the different perspectives that come with it. Upon beginning the game, players meet the original character Echelon,

a billionaire, and discover that he’s taken over the entire country of Lantanas and turned it into a fiercely competitive gameshow. Once someone has reached the end of the labyrinth, they’re crowned the Monarch of Lantanas.

You play as Iris, a dauntless native of Lantanas returning home to speak with the Great Tree Narenga, the cornerstone of Lantanian culture, and reclaim the country. The tree gives off a highly sought-after material called Resin, which can be monopolized by the winner of the competition. The co-host of the gameshow quickly explains that you, like everyone else who enters, must conquer the labyrinth to speak with the tree.

Narenga isn’t just a part of the plot; it’s integral to the gameplay. The core of “Rogue Labyrinth,” in classic roguelite fashion, is strategically choosing buffs and upgrades to get stronger and progress through chaotic rooms of combat. As you defeat waves of enemies in procedurally generated floors, a branch of the tree grants you a Resin blessing to enhance your combat, magic or defense.

Along with waves of enemies, there are rooms containing mini games, special buffs called Artifacts and rest areas where you can heal up and obtain more bonuses. As someone who has never played a roguelite before, I found the system to be easy to learn, and it had me wanting to jump right back in after being defeated.

One of the most interesting features of the game is the unique characteristic of almost everything in combat rooms being a weapon, including trees, rocks and defeated enemies. Once you hit them enough with your bat, they begin to bounce around the room, smashing into enemies. This can be really helpful when you’re low on health and don’t want to risk getting attacked, with the only drawback being that it can be difficult to see what’s going on when there are tons of objects bouncing around your screen.

Another important aspect of the gameplay is relationships. Iris starts off knowing a few characters in the main lobby area before challenging the labyrinth, but you gain more by fighting them in ri-

val matches or coming across them in rest areas. You can choose to befriend these characters for unique buffs and unlock over 1,000 conversations with them.

How you progress is also influenced by your performance, dictating how popular you are with the virtual audience watching your fight for your country. The faster you clear rooms, the more Hype and Fame you gain, which increases your chances of getting audience donations that you can use to get even stronger.

“Rogue Labyrinth” is full of charm with its vibrant pixel-art characters, enemies and environments. Everything from the interactable characters to the NPC audience watching you fight your way through room after room has been carefully thought out. As you go up into new floors of the labyrinth, you explore new environments and fight unique enemies with different abilities, keeping the game feel-

ing fresh even after many runs. This dystopian-fantasy world is vast and complex with tons of lore to uncover — ; it’s hard to believe that it was developed by only four people.

Any roguelite game can feel intimidating at first, but it’s easy to fall into a rhythm when playing “Rogue Labyrinth” and I found the ever-changing gameplay loop to be addicting. If you’ve never played a roguelite, I would recommend this as a beginner-friendly introduction to the genre, especially at its price. The game is listed at \$14.99, but is currently on sale for the first two weeks of release.



Artist:
Colbi Loranger



Life

From Disney to Disco-Pop: “Man’s Best Friend” raises eyebrows

by Maanya Pande
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Sabrina Carpenter’s seventh album, “Man’s Best Friend” was released on Friday, Aug. 29th on all major streaming platforms. Following her Disney career, the artist consistently released music to relative success until her fifth album, “Emails I Can’t Send” gained traction. This built the groundwork for her album “Short n’ Sweet” to break records and win Carpenter her first Grammy. Now, just one year and six days later, she has released another album, showcasing the evolution of her music.

The album begins with “Manchild,” a three-month-old single that brewed anticipation for the album. The song stomps out in full country pop swing, with lyrics as biting as the title suggests. The lead single sets the tone for the rest of the album’s bold lyricism and sonic confidence, preparing listeners for a record that discusses complicated love and situationships.

In comparison to her previ-

ous record-breaking album, “Short N’ Sweet,” “Man’s Best Friend” starts off very similar with country pop inspirations. However, throughout the album, she begins to draw more inspiration disco-pop with influences from ‘80s synth-pop. She transitions from a Dolly Parton inspired sound to using tracks that align with ABBA. The lyricism is also more dramatized than “Short N’ Sweet” and has more provocative innuendos throughout the songs.

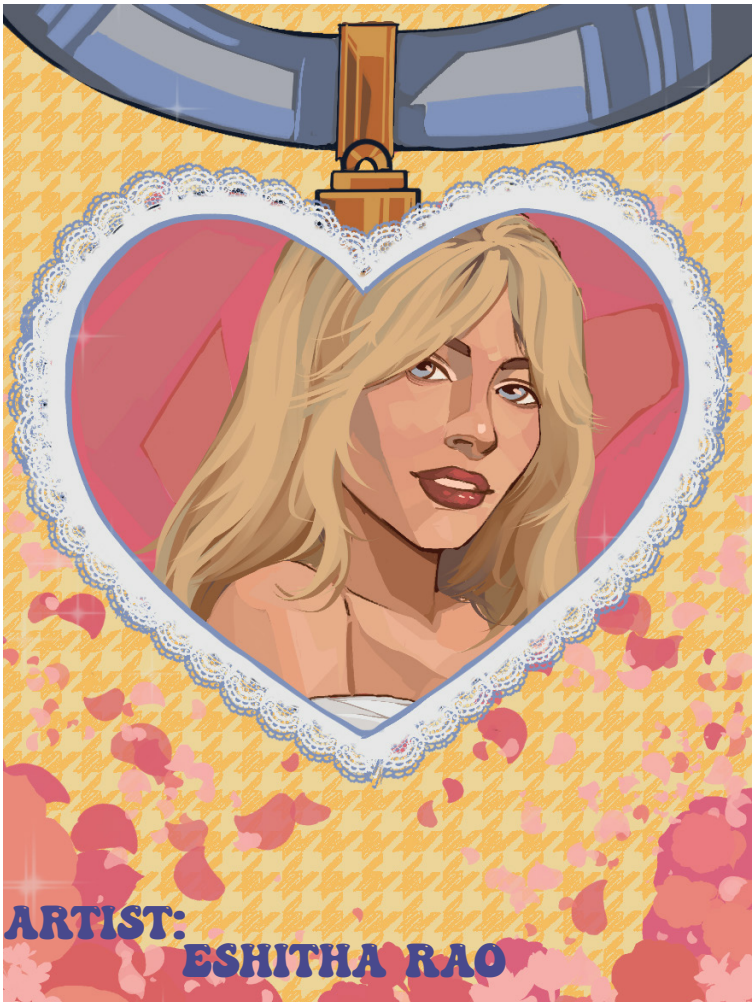
The album had already received criticism before its release due to the provocative nature of the album cover. The cover features Carpenter on her knees in an assumed sexual manner, sparking debate over whether her position was empowering or degrading. Critics argued that Carpenter debasing herself and that choosing that image for the cover was inherently problematic and catering to the male gaze.

On the flip side, her supporters maintained that she was reclaiming the position and finding power in the sexual nature of the photo. Sexuality is an aspect

of her music that has evolved, especially considering her roots as a strictly family-friendly artist. This shift shocked her fans at first but has helped establish Carpenter as a different artist from her Disney days.

The entire record leans more into the raunchy, sex-positive lyrics that sparked attention in the last two albums. This album utilizes provocative language throughout the songs, no matter the tempo. From the slower “We Almost Broke Up Again Last Night,” to the faster paced “Tears” and “Gogo Juice,” she does not shy away from the reality of sex in modern-day relationships.

The last two songs of the album stay on-brand, while exploring new depths of lyricism. “House Tour,” is an auditory house tour where Carpenter cheekily invites the listener into her home, filled with double-entendres. It’s witty, theatrical, and perfectly on brand. Then comes “Goodbye,” which signs off with a multilingual kiss: mixing bitterness and comedy in her closing song.



LIFE ROUNDTABLE REVIEW: “BIG FAT MEATBALLS” BY THE COSTCO GUYS

Costco Guys promoting their song “Big Fat Meatballs.” Their latest song came out on Aug. 22, 2025. Photo courtesy of AJ and Big Justice on Youtube

PHOTO COURTESY OF @AJBEFUMO ON X & AJ AND BIG JUSTICE ON YOUTUBE

In the Life section, we have many traditions and running gags. One of them is doing roundtable reviews of one of our favorites (or least favorite, depending on who you ask) TikTokers and musical sensations, the Costco Guys. And it just so happens that right as we came back to campus, the Big Boom Boys dropped their latest song, “Big Fat Meatballs.” In keeping with tradition, we asked our writers to share their thoughts, and man, they had a lot to say.

by Dan Stark,
LIFE EDITOR

I’ve been a steadfast defender of the Costco Guys since they shot to fame last year. I’ve stood by songs like “LeBron’s a BOOM!” and “Break the BOOM! Meter” and supported all of their endeavors. They’ve built a truly wonderful brand that I’ve always enjoyed.

But they’ve officially jumped the shark with “Big Fat Meatballs.”

The backing track sounds like an AI-generated rip-off of “T.N.T.” by AC/DC, but I’ve come to expect that from their music at this point. The lyrics are by far the cringiest and forced of any song they’ve ever done – and that’s including the disaster that was “Jingle BOOM!” Other than A.J. yelling “BOOM!” at the end, there’s not a single reference to the word that they’ve built their career on. They’ve lost the plot.

The biggest crime of “Big Fat Meatballs” is that even though they used The Rizzler – the Shirley Temple of Gen Z – in the song’s music video, he doesn’t sing a single lyric. Unacceptable.

The 15 minutes of fame are gone. Go back to Boca Raton.

This gets 5 Big Dooms.

by Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab
STAFF WRITER

Do you remember the Cartoon Network kids show “Steven Universe?” I imagine the worst-case timeline scenario for the titular Steven and his father, Greg Universe, to be the Costco Guys.

Big Justice genuinely sounds like Steven at the beginning of the show, and I can’t unhear it. He also acknowledges The Rizzler, which could be jarring to any enthusiasts out there.

What cannot be excused is the non-inclusive food choice of giant meatballs with “pork, beef and veal.” The meatballs have flesh forbidden to eat in at least three different religions, and yet they’re “for everyone.”

The Christian atmosphere of the song is truly American. You can tell that they’re American with how they push their meatballs onto you and the lyric “for our daughter and son,” forgetting about other gender identities that don’t conform to the binary.

Mid/5

You can’t escape the boom. The boom will find you.

by Sebastian Munera
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

Just in time for the fall semester, A.J. and Big Justice, known online as the Costco Guys, continue their venture in music and artistry with “Big Fat Meatballs.” Now, if you have not been following A.J. and Big Justice over their musical career, you might not be aware that this track actually marks an ambitious step forward for them, as it’s their first song to not be BOOM™ -centric. Does this big, bold step pay off? Well...

Being free of the restrictive BOOM™ theming, they take full advantage to show off their storytelling skills. The lyrics are so tightly focused

on themes of family, community, pride, unity and how big fat meatballs can provide all these things. However, I will not deny that the vague theming of the BOOM™ provided a sense of magic in their past songs (e.g. “Believe in the Boom” and “Still Bringin’ It”) that is not as present here.

Medium Hefty Meatball/5

by Maleena Muzio
STAFF WRITER

Oh, Costco Guys, how I have missed you... or so I thought.

“Big Fat Meatballs,” the group’s latest single, is here. To be honest, the song is actually not that bad, but I do not think it is the Italian American anthem that the Costco Guys may have thought they were releasing.

I think what really threw me off were the visuals in the music video. I should have come away with a burning hunger for fat juicy meatballs, but instead, I could not stop replaying the image of The Rizzler mewing in my mind. The message seemed a little inauthentic, too. I am not sure if I believe that A.J. makes those meatballs for his wife and kids like he claims in the lyrics. Next time, I would like a tutorial (or some action shots).

1/5 booms

(prove to me those meatballs were not purchased at Costco and I will add 2 booms)

by Thaddeus Sawyer,
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

Forget the lyrics for a second: “Big Fat Meatballs” has the worst instrumental track I’ve heard in a long time. The same digitally sequenced drums that have become a staple of the Costco Guys’ sound are just as present and

as void of reverb as ever. The guitars leave much to be desired, as the intro sounds as if they took “Rock You Like a Hurricane” by Scorpions and decided to downgrade the hurricane from a category five storm to a gentle breeze.

Beyond that, I honestly have nothing else to say about “Big Fat Meatballs.” Every bit of lyrical content leaves my head within 10 seconds of Big AJ’s spoken word outro previewing his weekend dinner plans. I’ve listened to the song so much trying to review it, that I wouldn’t be surprised if it shows up on my “On Repeat” playlist on Spotify. If their goal was to create a song with replay value, the Costco Guys succeeded.

1 mystery meat meatball/5

by Ayyan Tamjeed
STAFF WRITER

I’m afraid they’re losing the fastball, guys.

As the autumn leaves are starting to fall and the sky gets just that little bit bleaker, the Costco Guys have triumphantly returned with “Big Fat Meatballs” to lift everyone’s moods ahead of the winter season! Or so I thought.

The guys do bring a good amount of energy to this song, but they never change it up. A.J. and Big Justice just sing in this same droll, monotone tone – they’re sleepwalking throughout this whole song. The music behind is also taking a good, hearty nap as well, which sucks because in the FaZe Rug remix, there was some oomph with those blaring guitars and booming kick drums. Now they’re buried in the mix, for what? A.J. is droning on about how the meatballs are made with pork, beef, and veal? If I could actually hear the music, I would rate this more highly. I expected better from you, Costco Guys.

1 big fat meatball/5

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COMIC BY CONNOR SZREJNA, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Separating the Art From the Artist:

WHEN AND HOW?

by Sam Garifalos
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In today’s political environment, with far-right influences creeping their way into nearly every facet of society, it’s becoming increasingly difficult to make decisions on when and how to enjoy media, food, technology and seemingly every other aspect of our daily lives. It seems like every day there’s a new scandal regarding some well-liked product or service. In such an age, the phrase “no ethical consumption under capitalism” comes to mind, but the phrase can carry dual meanings. On one hand, it can be interpreted to absolve us of any responsibility for how we engage with the myriad problematic elements of our society. After all, if there’s no way to be a truly ethical consumer, then one can’t be expected to make those impossible concessions. On the other hand, it can also be seen to further charge us with the burden of our choices. This dilemma doesn’t just extend to our buying habits — it includes almost all parts of our lives. It concerns our passions, interests, social interactions and everything else about the way we move through our day. Just last week, I was struck with this exact question when deciding whether to watch the launch of an experimental Starship rocket by SpaceX, a company owned by infamous far-right billionaire Elon Musk. I’ve been a fan of spaceflight, and by extension SpaceX, for as long as I can remember, but since Musk’s hard right turn into conspiracy theories and right-wing talking points starting in 2020, it’s become increasingly difficult to reconcile my passion for spaceflight with his public actions. To do so, I needed to ask myself the question: When and how can we separate the art from the artist? In the process, I’ve come up with a few criteria to consider.

Direct Impact:

The first thing to ask

when deciding whether to engage with something potentially problematic is: “Does my participation make the problems with this thing worse?” This direct impact can come in the form of the money you spend on a product or service going towards a harmful or unethical cause. For example, if you were to buy a drink from the Coca Cola company, part of the money from that purchase might go towards Israel’s genocide in Gaza and illegal occupation of the West Bank. This is because Coca Cola has a distribution and bottling plant in occupied Palestine and they pay tax revenue to the Israeli government, which means they are both directly and indirectly reinforcing the settlement and displacement of Palestinians. Another way this impact can manifest is through credibility. When you participate in online trends or interact with problematic figures, you could be lending credibility to them, which can be used to legitimize harmful practices.

Mitigation:

The next thing to consider when making your decision is what you can do to mitigate any negative effects of your actions. This can be as simple as donating time or money to an organization seeking to counteract the harm done by whatever activity or product you engage with. Alternatively, in cases where money from your purchase of certain media or services may be going to bad causes, obtaining them from alternative sources could be a good way of avoiding this harm. A good example of this might be J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter franchise. The author, infamous for her transphobic and bigoted political stances, is known to demand royalties from any product officially licensing her work. By obtaining Harry Potter media through other sources,

avoid that money contributing to her problematic political influence.

Possible Alternatives:

A third thing to consider in this process is whether or not there are any alternatives to your desired product or activity. Are there any other companies that sell a similar product with more ethical practices? Are there other artists who produce similar work? In many cases, there exist excellent alternatives to problematic items that you could turn to. Unfortunately, however, there are also plenty of examples of alternative products that are either significantly more expensive to the point of unaffordability or of drastically lower quality compared to their problematic counterparts. Anyone who’s had to pay \$20 for two-week shipping from a more ethical source will know the allure of the cheaper and faster Amazon Prime’s next day delivery. In these cases, deciding on whether to turn to an alternative source comes down to weighing the needs and tolerances of your specific situation.

Conclusion:

The criteria listed above are just a brief overview of the considerations that can go into deciding how we go about our lives in this political environment and I hope to have provided a basic framework for how to proceed with these decisions. Ultimately, it all comes down to personal calculus. Impact, mitigation and possible alternatives are unquantifiable. Frustratingly, there’s no handy equation you can plug them all into to get the magic answer. It’s up to you to make the final choice on everything. I hope, through collective effort, we can build a better world where the average person is no longer faced with the enormous moral weight of their every action; where instead, the institutions and corporations that make up the framework of our daily lives are held accountable for their practices, rendering the decision structure outlined above superfluous.

Corporations are not your ally

by Filip Dukovski
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Following the election of President Donald Trump in November of 2024, many American liberals were in shock or dismay at large companies rolling back on their socially progressive agendas and their DEI initiatives, which were put in place during the 2010s during the time of Obama-era liberalism and social progressivism. It had seemed that overnight, all of the backing of social progressive movements and acceptance that came from massive corporations were all gone in the blink of an eye. While I am not surprised by this sudden shift from these companies, it seems as though there is a genuine feeling of betrayal coming from American liberals. Large companies such as Target, Steak ‘n Shake, Bud Light, Coca Cola and many more either backed down from their usual pandering towards marginalized groups such as the LGBT community or have pivoted completely to endorsing or being openly friendly to Trump, something that would have been unheard of in any other year. Whether these decisions were made based on simply marketing towards this new base, out of fear of retaliation from Trump, or simply to get favors from the administration and their base, the message from the capital class seems to be clear — the era of “wokeness” is over.

Back in 2018, Nike released an advertisement of Colin Kaepernick with the text “Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything.” This ad campaign created waves and led to an intense conservative backlash. Kaepernick took a knee during the national anthem at a football game a year earlier, making him an enemy to the American right. Many conservatives saw this as an endorsement of Kaepernick from Nike and they started burning their Nike items in retaliation. The company gained favors from liberals who retaliated against the conservative backlash. This meant liberals eventually started viewing Nike favorably and bought items from them, or people heard about Nike in general and the Nike brand name would be stuck in peoples’ heads. This was a major success for Nike based on the profits and sales boom they gained from this controversy and major conversation oriented around Nike. As the phrase goes, all publicity is good publicity, and Nike put their brand in the outrage machine and got incredible returns.

Two months ago, American Eagle released an ad campaign starring actress Sydney Sweeney, and the tagline of the ad was “Sydney Sweeney has great jeans.” While that sounds innocent enough, when you factor in the rise of far-right ideology with the fact Sydney Sweeney is a blonde, white girl with blue eyes, who is consistently praised by the American right using jeans as an analogy for genetics. The ad ends with the phrase “my jeans are blue,” which many

on the American left saw as far-right dog whistling. Contrast this with the “Future Together” ad campaign from 2021 which had the diverse cast of Jenna Ortega, Addison Rae, Caleb McLaughlin, Chase Stokes and Madison Bailey, and you can see a stark difference with how American Eagle is advertising. When the Sydney Sweeney ad released, American Eagle gained a mixture of praise from the right and backlash from the left. The right viewed this ad as a return to form, with their side winning after a decade of what they felt was an over-abundance of “woke culture” and the culture of America finally healing and going back to the nostalgic view of the 1950s. The left saw this as a sign of the culture heading towards one of increased oppression, one where the oppressive hierarchies are more pronounced and reactionary conservatism is winning. During this controversy, traffic towards American Eagle’s website soared 60% and their stock price went sky up. However, their sales did not increase and remained stagnant compared to Nike after the Kaepernick controversy, and their foot traffic has been going down. That, however, has been the case since before the ad was released, so I would not chalk it up to the ad doing damage to their traffic, even if it did damage to their brand.

Why does this matter? Well, the way that companies advertise their products or their brand is important because it is a sign of where people are culturally. As someone who has a lean to the left, I was not really surprised at the way that all of these corporations would switch their tune when it came to how they would advertise or the types of stunts they would pull, mostly because I knew that a lot of the progressive gesturing that they would do was just that — gesturing. At the end of the day, the main goals for large corporations as entities are to sell their products, make their profits and please their shareholders. When it comes to marketing to achieve these goals, the marketers will change their messages and who they pander to based on which group it is the best to do so culturally. Whether you are a liberal seeing Xbox putting a pride logo on their social media account, or a conservative seeing Steak ‘n Shake announcing they will be switching their frying machines to using beef tallow fat, at the end of the day they are corporate entities and they are not your allies. The culture war and outrage machines are used by these companies as a tool or stepping stone to reaching their goals — greater sales and profit. They input their brand into the outrage machine and hope that something comes out of it. If you are reading this and you are on the right and you are glad that culture is shifting the way that it is, just remember that in the same way that these corporations were gesturing towards the left, they are doing the same thing to you.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS AND @JK_ROWLING ON X



Student studying on the Student Union Mall on the UConn Storrs Campus. Students have been enjoying the nice weather during the first week of classes.

PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

[adult swim]’s stop-motion show ‘Moral Orel’ was unjustly canceled

by **Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab**
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“Moral Orel” was a show on the late night [adult swim] programming block lauded for its style of edgy comedy surrounding a naïve and optimistic, but well-meaning God-fearing boy named Orel. As the show shifted tone from morbid comedy to depressing psychological drama, it would result in it being canceled because the groundbreaking narrative pushed boundaries: primarily, the depiction of processing sexual trauma from assault.

There are a ton of different themes covered in this show that would be too numerous to list, but some of the main themes surround the usage of Christianity as a justification for one’s actions rather than a cause someone genuinely feels connected to. It doesn’t poke fun at the religion and its practices but rather points out the hypocrisies that people fall into by not fully understanding why Jesus acted the way he did. This leads to characters in the show using religion as a method to abuse children and force them to conform instead of questioning why they’re treated horribly. There are also themes of neglect, misogyny, homophobia, ableism and sexual assault combined into a single courageous story that sheds light on touchy themes rarely represented in media, especially TV shows in the 2000s.

The best example of this serious interaction with these subjects comes in the form of Orel’s dad, Clay Puppington. In the first two seasons, the common structure of the show revolved around reasons he would beat Orel. At first, it felt awkward to laugh at Orel’s misguided goodwill somehow always going wrong and resulting in a beating, but after season three it was hard not to cry, not only for his suffering but a good portion of other people’s lives too. This is the exemplification



PHOTO COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS

of the transformation the show went through.

Some of the best scenes of the show are due to Clay’s depicted self-destructive misery. He’s a terrible human being but a well-written character. His struggle is one rooted in generational trauma, but at the end of the show Orel is shown as a father without a belt on his waist to indicate that he would never want to inflict the same pain his father did to him.

There’s an infamous episode of “Moral Orel” named “Alone” from season three. It follows three of the women in the show and their coping mechanisms within their different rooms in the same apartment complex. In this episode was the scene dubbed “too dark for [adult swim]” involving the teacher at Orel’s school checking all of the locks on her door and then turning on the radio to hear that the man who raped her took his own life in prison during a sermon by the local reverend about how all children shouldn’t get aborted. This made the show not get renewed for a fourth season.

Many people who have experienced sexual assault could find the episode to be extremely comforting as well as fear-inducing at times, as they view a victim-survivor’s processing of this trauma. If shows on [adult swim] like “Xavier: Renegade Angel” can get away with off-hand sexual assault jokes but you draw the line at a victim-survivor processing their trauma, there’s a certain sense of hypocrisy that’s in bad taste at best and sickening at worst.

But what if the show gets renewed after all this time for some reason? It’s possible they won’t capture that same spark if they brought the show back today. I simply wish the team could have fully and authentically told their story at the time of creating it after putting so much work into it, only for the show to not be renewed.

I am so incredibly grateful that the team of “Moral Orel” chose to stick to their authentic storytelling despite setbacks. The result is a story with so much love put into it that it will stand the test of time and comfort the disturbed after the clay melts.

Academic publishers don’t grant access to information, they gatekeep it

by **Sawyer Amelia Ray**
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In most industries, those who generate value are compensated for their work. But in some industries, it isn’t so straightforward. In academia, you freely give your work away for the prestige of being included in a journal. Publishers benefit from what the Deutsche Bank called a “bizarre... triple-pay” system where “the state funds most research, pays the salaries of most of those checking the quality of research, and then buys most of the published product.” Academic publishers exist solely as middlemen, leeching off the work of our brightest minds.

This model is supposedly justified because the publisher can offer certain services to the academic. Ostensibly, dissemination, but this has become decreasingly true as time goes on. Before, when published in a journal, your work would be included in a hard copy issue sent out to all subscribers to the journal — bundled next to the work of your peers and work in different subfields. This meant that anyone thumbing through their own issue or looking for an article in their library’s collection had the opportunity to spontaneously stumble upon your work. Nowadays, since most people no longer read physically printed journals, it’s much rarer that someone will find an article by chance as opposed to specific online search. This has made most new published works highly unlikely to be discovered by anyone outside that specific field of study. In the humanities, your odds of never being cited could be higher than 80%. So much for dissemination.

Plus, in the online world, publishers continue to limit the spread of information primarily through paywalls. According to the NIH, over 50% of published articles are paywalled, oftentimes as exorbitant prices. In an interview, Emily Gardiner, a reference librarian at Otis Library in Norwich, discussed how even though her library is well-funded for a town library, they’ve never seriously considered providing access to any major journals purely due to cost. The best they have to offer is access to a few minor databases and access to ResearchIT CT, a bundle of databases provided to state libraries through Conn. State Library.

So, it’s not as though there is a lack of interest in gaining access to this material, but that it’s simply out of reach for so many. Publishers are actively getting in the way of dissemination of academic work, their only alleged purpose. Academics

don’t wake up every morning and say to themselves in the mirror: “All I truly hope for is that my work never sees the light of day.” Who does this system benefit?

The publisher is the only one. The publisher directly benefits from this limitation of access to academia. In fact, in an online world, their business model depends on it. We need publishers because they sit on so much work and act as arbiters of what is considered “worthy” research. Because we need publishers, though, they can charge outrageous subscription costs and charge \$40 for access to individual articles. On top of this, they no longer need to print so many issues, reducing their overhead. They don’t need robust editing teams because of uncompensated peer reviewers. Even just getting attention for an article is left as a responsibility of the academic. This all comes together so that their profit margins can be almost 40%. That’s higher than Apple’s. The publisher provides no value, but this oligopoly extracts every bit of value it can. They are the landlords of intellectual property. The only way out of this system might be collective squatting.

There is a real push among academics for open access to their work. To allow free access to the articles and research they have produced so that their work gets cited and the public may access it. It’s funded with public money, why shouldn’t it be public? To accommodate these demands, publishers have crafted a new scheme: transformative agreements. Transformative agreements are contracts between publishers and institutions that combine subscription access with open access publishing, marketed as a step toward full open access. Some paywall models allow complete open access of published work, but charge article processing charges of thousands of dollars for publication in the journal. This allows you to keep copyright but perpetuates the idea that access to knowledge must always flow through the big publishers. This is not a real step towards sustainable alternatives to the major journals.

Real reform means tearing down the gatekeeping apparatus. The transition to open access should exclude them entirely, they’ve proven unwilling to cede their power in the slightest. Universities need to stop pouring millions into subscription contracts and instead fund scholar-run platforms. Tenure committees need to stop rewarding papers for sitting behind paywalls. Knowledge doesn’t need landlords. It’s past time to stop paying rent on our own ideas and take back the commons of human thought.

THE MARCH TO APRIL: A VERY — VERY — PRELIMINARY COLLEGE BASKETBALL TOP 25

by Jake McCreven

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Welcome to “The March To April” inaugural column: my newest, weekly conceptual college basketball article breaking down the biggest stories, names and games in college basketball.

It’ll serve as the “ying” to The Bucket List’s “yang,” the other weekly column I built on an analytical bedrock last spring – which will continue to be published every Friday.

“The March To April” will be much more discussion-based than its Friday counterpart. I want to engage you all with mailbag editions, leaving the comments open for feedback, questions or debate depending on the topic.

For the column’s pilot edition: a top 25 list with a brief explanation for each squad. Simple, straightforward and to the point — and sure to not stir any controversy.

ALL transfer portal and recruiting data uses On3/Rivals ratings

The Top 25

1. Purdue Boilermakers

The Boilermakers bring back their top five scorers from last year, including the excellent inside-out duo of Braden Smith (15.8) and Trey Kaufman-Renn (20.8). Matt Painter used the transfer portal to snag All-Summit League Oscar Cluff to round out the lineup.

2. Houston Cougars

Milos Uzan, Emmanuel Sharp and Joseph Tugler

all return after starting the bulk of last season. They’ll be supplemented by the nation’s No. 2 recruiting class (On3), which includes blue-chippers Chris Cenac and Isaiah Harwell.

3. Florida Gators

Todd Golden rebuilt his backcourt with two highly coveted transfers in Xaivian Lee (Princeton) and Boogie Fland (Arkansas). They’ll pair alongside a frontcourt that returns Thomas Haugh, Alex Condon, Rueben Chinyelu and a now-healthy Micah Handlogten.

4. St. John’s Red Storm

Rick Pitino’s transfer haul was the most talked-about topic on the east coast this off season. He’ll welcome seven new faces to Queens, headed by former Providence forward Bryce Hopkins and North Carolina guard Ian Jackson. Zuby Ejiofor returns down low.

5. Michigan Wolverines

Dusty Maye replaced Danny Wolf and Vlad Golden with Yaxel Lendeborg (UAB), Morez Johnson Jr. (Illinois) and Aday Mara (UCLA) – a combined 31.1 points and 22.1 rebounds per game. He’ll have the pass-first Elliot Cadeau running the offense from the point.

6. Kentucky Wildcats

The nation’s No. 2 transfer portal class and No. 17 freshman class gives the Wildcats a bevy of talent at every spot on the court. The frontcourt will also see an extreme defensive upgrade when Jayden Quaintance returns to full strength.

7. Duke Blue Devils

Jon Scheyer brought three freshmen starters within seconds of the national championship game last season. He’ll stick to his guns, bringing in the nation’s No. 1 recruiting class. Is the talent level of this group on par with last year’s? To be determined.

8. Connecticut Huskies

See Sam Calhoun’s work on The Daily Campus website for exclusive coverage of UConn men’s basketball!

9. BYU Cougars

The Cougars signed top-recruit AJ Dybansta and coveted transfer guard Robert Wright III (Baylor) on top of returning four players who saw meaningful minutes last season. It’ll be one of the most experienced squads in the country, with eight players having at least three years of experience at the collegiate level.

10. Auburn Tigers

Four transfers are slated to start alongside Tahaad Pettiford, who jumped out of the NBA Draft in the 11 hour. Keyshawn Hall and KeShawn Murphy will anchor the front-court scoring, with depth being provided by the nation’s No. 28 freshmen class.

11. Arkansas Razorbacks

It’ll be a question of depth for the Razorbacks. Its starting lineup comprises three returning starters from last year, including DJ Wagner and Karter Knox, a true freshman five star point guard and Florida State transfer center Malique Ewin. Its bench needs to produce — early and often.

12. Louisville Cardinals

The Cardinal backcourt is

brimming with NBA talent after it was rebuilt this off season. Louisville should be an elite three-point shooting team with Mikel Brown Jr., Ryan Conwell, Isaac McKeely and Adrian Wooley all sharing minutes at the one and two, respectively.

13. Iowa State Cyclones

The return of Tamin Lipsey, Joshua Jefferson and Milan Momcilovic gives the Cyclones one of the country’s sturdiest foundations. TJ Otzelberger bolstered his depth with a top 25 portal class and top 40 recruiting class.

14. Illinois Fighting Illini

Freshly extended Brad Underwood retooled his roster after the loss of several impact players to the NBA Draft. Alongside returners Kylan Boswell and Tomislav Ivisic, transfers Andrej Stojakovic (Cal) and Zvonimir Ivisic (Arkansas) look to shoulder the bulk of the team’s scoring.

15. Michigan State Spartans

Despite the loss of top-rated transfer Kaleb Glenn (FAU), the Spartans remain a formidable threat in a deepening Big 10. Trey Fort (Samford), Jeremy Fears Jr., Jaxon Kohler and Coen Carr form an excellent starting nucleus, but can the Spartans find depth?

The rest of the list (in order): Texas Tech Red Raiders (16), Creighton Blue Jays (17), Arizona Wildcats (18), Oklahoma Sooners (19), Tennessee Volunteers (20), Southern California Trojans (21), Wisconsin Badgers (22), UCLA Bruins (23), Oregon Ducks (24), North Carolina Tar Heels (25).

SPORTS SPECTRUM: YANKEES, IT’S YOUR HOME STRETCH!

by Seth Wallen

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There’s one month before the MLB post season and the Yankees have looked better than fans would have you believe. Despite glaring issues, they have won six of their last seven games before September started. However, those games were against the Washington Nationals and Chicago White Sox, non-heavyweight teams, which does not ease the minds of Yankees fans. To understand our current position, we need to look back.

This really starts post-2023 season, so here’s a quick refresher. The Yankees came dangerously close to finishing below .500, with an 82-80 record, missing the postseason for the first time since 2016. Hal Steinbrenner, owner of the Yankees, described the season as a disaster because the “[Yankees] didn’t win a division, [nor make] the playoffs.” Brian Cashman, GM of the Yankees, described the team as “pretty [expletive] good,” and in the eyes of many fans, contradicting what he said back in August of the same year. This disconnect with the front office and manager Aaron Boone compared to what fans see on the field, is central to understanding the stress that Yankees fans have thrown themselves into.

The Juan Soto acquisition was necessary because after that, it felt like they were ready to improve and take the next step — and for a majority of the 2024 season it felt that way, save for the 13 losses that sting badly. They win the division and the pennant, get to the World Series after 15 years, and blow their chance. FOX Sports’ Kevin Burkhardt described it as “one of the ugliest innings you’ll see in baseball history.” Even Aaron Rodriguez, who was on the team that got reverse-swept by the Red Sox in 2004, said that that was “the worst collapse” he had seen in 40 years.

So, what does the team do from here? Well, they do a lot—and the good parts are pretty.

The Yankees signed Paul Goldschmidt to a one-year, \$12.5 million deal to replace Anthony Rizzo at first base. Although he had a solid start with a .278/.328/.420 batting line throughout the season so far, his performance has declined significantly since June, raising questions about his future with the team. They also acquired Cody Bellinger from the Cubs, who has excelled as a defensive outfielder and is contributing offensively with a .279/.333/.504 slash line. His recent hot streak has been a welcome boost and while it’s uncertain if he’ll stay long-term, his addition is appreciated.

And, of course, we have the Captain of the Yankees, Aaron Judge. Getting off to a very hot start — hotter than last year — he was the driver of the offense, with a near .400 batting average until a brief stint on the IL. Save for voter fatigue, he’s poised to win the AL MVP award again, but there is some contention regarding Cal Raleigh.

Through the good, though, there has been some worry, most notably with how unlucky Ben Rice has gotten at the plate recently and the cold period Austin Wells has been going through. Jazz Chisholm Jr. has had his ups and downs as a hitter, but he has recently been more consistent and productive offensively.

Pitching has always been a hot-button concern for the Yankees, especially when ace Gerrit Cole had Tommy John surgery and will therefore miss the entirety of the 2025 season — and it came back to haunt them. Max Fried, a key free agent signing, started strong, but his ERA rose from 1.92 to 5.81 since July 1. He developed a blister on his finger during a July 12 game against the Cubs, partly explaining his high ERA—pitching with an injury is not ideal. On the other hand, Carlos Rodon, acquired in 2023 — initially sour but improved over 2024 — has had a rollercoaster season with control issues. Over seven games, he issued five walks three times, boosting his ERA from 2.95 to 4.78 in those starts.

For more of the story visit [DAILYCAMPUS.COM](https://dailycampus.com)

ALEX’S MOTORSPORTS RECAP: THE LAST TRIPLE HEADER OF THE YEAR

by Alex Klancko

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Oscar Piastrri won at Zandvoort, Josef Newgarden won at Nashville and Chase Briscoe won at Darlington to wrap up the final IndyCar, NASCAR and Formula 1 triple header of the year.

Sunday’s racing started early with the 71-lap Formula 1 Dutch Grand Prix taking place at 9 a.m. with Championship leader and McLaren driver Piastrri on pole position, followed by teammate Lando Norris in second, Red Bull driver Max Verstappen in third, Racing Bulls rookie driver Isack Hadjar in fourth and Mercedes driver George Russell in fifth.

Norris ceded a place to Verstappen to mark a challenging start for the British driver as Piastrri was able to keep his lead through lap one.

On lap 23, seven-time champion and Ferrari driver Lewis Hamilton crashed into the barriers after losing control of the car, causing the first safety car of the day to come out. During the safety car, the leaders were able to pit without losing any time.

Green flag racing resumed on lap 27, but Carlos Sainz and Liam Lawson made contact. Lawson lost his back right tire while Sainz suffered a front

right tire puncture and front wing damage. Both drivers pit to get new components. Sainz received a 10-second penalty for the incident.

The next incident came on lap 53. Mercedes rookie driver Kimi Antonelli attacked the inside of Charles Leclerc in turns two and three then understeered into Leclerc at the top of the corner. Leclerc did not finish the race, and the safety car came out until lap 58.

The final incident took place on lap 65 when Norris’ McLaren car started smoking. He retried that lap due to engine failure.

Piastrri finished in first place and stretched his championship lead to 34 points with nine races to go. To round out the podium, Verstappen finished second and Hadjar finished third for his first podium in Formula 1.

IndyCar hosted their final race of the season, the Music City Grand Prix in Nashville, Tenn. Arrow McLaren driver Pato O’Ward took pole position by two-tenths of a second. The rest of the top five were A.J. Foyt driver David Malukas in second, Arrow McLaren teammate Christian Lundgaard in third and Chip Ganassi teammates Alex Palou and Scott Dixon in fourth and fifth.

On lap one of 225, Ed Car-

penter Racing driver Christian Rasmussen, who started 27, made up four places before losing the back end of the car, causing him to hit the wall and end his day before it even got started. Rasmussen left the care center with no issues.

Following that crash, the caution flag came out and Meyer Shank Racing driver Felix Rosenqvist was sent to the back of the field for jumping the race’s start.

On lap 83, second-place Malukas hit the wall after trying to overtake Louis Foster in 18 place. Foster received a drive-through penalty for the incident.

On lap 122 Lundgaard’s car suffered a mechanical issue and his race ended prematurely. On lap 127, race leader O’Ward crashed into the wall, ending his day after leading 116 laps.

On the final lap, Newgarden took the checkered flag for his first win of the season. Palou finished second and Scott McLaughlin edged out Kiffin Simpson for third place.

Finally, the NASCAR Cup Series held their first playoff race at Darlington Raceway. On lap one, Wood Brothers Racing playoff driver Josh Berry crashed into the wall after having contact with fellow playoff and 23XI driver Tyler Reddick. Richard Childress Racing driver Kyle Busch also

spun during the lap one incident.

Berry made it back down pit road, but the car went to the garage for repairs and he was out of the race until lap 123.

RFK co-owner and driver Brad Keselowski was penalized on lap 47 for service outside the box when he pulled into another pit stall to tighten his front left tire.

Stage one ended on lap 116 with Briscoe in the lead, taking 10 points for his playoff total along with eight other playoff drivers taking points as well.

The racing started back up on lap 123 and Berry returned to the field 119 laps down in 38 place. Berry finished the race 128 laps off the lead.

Stage two would end on lap 231 with only one caution with Cody Ware and Ryan Preece making contact. Briscoe won stage two in convincing fashion and was also first off of pit road.

On lap 313, NY Racing Team driver Derek Kraus’s car caught fire, ending his race for the day. Briscoe and Reddick exited the pit lane first and second for the win.

Briscoe crossed the checkered flag for the win with Reddick four-tenths behind him. Briscoe finished leading 309 out of the 367 laps and he is guaranteed a spot in the round of 12 in two weeks.

Photo of the Day | Football



Teammates on the UConn football team celebrate a touchdown. The game took place on Aug. 30, 2025.
PHOTOGRAPH BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

POINT/COUNTERPOINT: WHO IS MORE DESERVING OF THE AL CY YOUNG AWARD?

by **Sam Calhoun**
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September baseball is here. Rosters expanded to 28 players on Tuesday as teams look to make a final push towards a division title or squeeze into a wild card spot. Teams in contention will hope the two spots can provide juice to their bench or pitching staff down the stretch. Such is the case with the Boston Red Sox, who called up pitcher Zack Kelly and re-acquired catcher Ali Sanchez from the Mets. Despite the call ups, there are players left in Boston’s minor league system who are able if not likely to help them on their run to October baseball.

Here are three minor league players who could contribute for Boston in September:

Kyle Harrison
A substantial piece of Boston’s return in the controversial Rafael Devers trade in June,

Harrison was immediately optioned to Triple-A Worcester upon his arrival. While many fans were disappointed by the demotion, mostly due to the circumstances he was acquired under, it seems the decision could turn out fruitful for Harrison’s future. Part of getting back on track for Harrison has been making adjustments to his arsenal.

Harrison’s best pitch has long been his fastball, which has received grades between 60-70 from major prospect publications since at least 2021. The righty relied on that pitch during his first extended look in the majors in 2024, throwing the pitch 57.6 percent of the time. That usage skyrocketed over eight MLB games in 2025, as he threw the pitch 65.2 percent of the time. While there was an uptick in velocity on the pitch — almost three miles per hour on average compared to 2024 — Harrison essentially turned into a one pitch pitcher as opposing batters crushed his slurve and changeup for averages of .381 and .286, respectively. Since arriving in

Worcester, Boston has completely revamped the former top 100 prospect’s pitch usage. Harrison barely used his slider, which has long graded as his second-best pitch, at the MLB level in 2024 and not at all in 2025. With Worcester, the 6-foot-2 starter is now throwing a slider 18.3 percent of the time while reducing his fastball usage to 50.9 percent. If the California native can utilize that pitch mix to generate higher strikeouts rates, as he did in the past in San Francisco’s organization, he could still turn out to be a two or three starter in the MLB. Harrison was passed up for a major league promotion due to the unexpected emergence of pitcher Payton Tolle. Still, the 24-year-old has time to make good on his potential and should be the next pitcher up if Boston needs a starter in September.

Chris Murphy
Murphy has already shown that he can be productive on a big-league mound and be valuable to a contending bullpen. Murphy began 2025 on the injured list recovering from April



LOGO BY HALIEGH SCHMIDT, POSITION/THE DAILY CAMPUS

2024 Tommy John surgery. Following a month-long rehab assignment, he joined the Red Sox bullpen immediately upon his activation. The lefty made 14 appearances, giving Boston 20.2 innings of work to a 3.05 ERA and striking out almost a batter per inning. The multi-inning option allowed an earned run in only four of his 14 games and gave the team six appearances of over one inning. Despite that success, Murphy was optioned to Worcester in mid-July to allow the Red Sox to select a fresh arm in Jovani Morán. In 12 games for Worcester, including two starts, the 27-year-old has maintained his strong strikeout numbers while posting a 1.69 ERA for the month of August.

Despite being passed over for Kelly in Boston’s initial September call ups, Murphy seems likely to get back to Boston before the end of the season as they look to keep their bullpen fresh down the stretch.
pre-debut contract extension with two additional club options prior to the 2024 season, according to Jeff Passan. The Georgia Tech alum made the Red Sox Opening Day roster and started as Boston’s second baseman. Campbell became the first member of the “Big Three” to make his debut, and that decision was paying off for Boston in the season’s first month.

For more of the story visit DAILYCAMPUS.COM

SAM’S SECTION: OHIO STATE TOPS COLLEGE FOOTBALL TOP 25 AFTER WEEK 1

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Labor Day weekend came and went with three top-10 matchups that shook up the preseason college football rankings.

With college football officially underway, there is no better time to shake up the rankings from the preseason Associated Press (AP) Poll.

Ohio State (1-0)
Thanks to defensive coordinator Matt Patricia’s defense, the Buckeyes limited Texas quarterback Arch Manning’s production. Props to defensive back Caleb Downs for sealing the win on the final drive.
Next game: vs. Grambling (Saturday, 3:30 p.m. ET, Big Ten Network)

LSU (1-0)
Despite Clemson’s defense keeping them in it, LSU’s stifling defense reigned supreme. That was especially true on the ground, with Clemson only having 31 yards on 20 carries.
Next game: vs. Louisiana Tech (Saturday, 7:30 p.m. ET, ESPN+/SEC Network+)

Penn State (1-0)
Nevada was no match for Penn State, with the running back tandem of Nicolas Singleton and Kaytron Allen leading the Nittany Lions to a 46-11 opening win on Saturday.
Next game: vs. Florida International (Saturday, noon ET, Big Ten Network)

Miami (Fla.) (1-0)
Miami defeated a top-10 team for the first time in nearly eight years. Quarterback Carson Beck looked like his 2023 self in the 27-24 win,

throwing for 205 yards and two touchdowns in his first game since transferring from Georgia.

Next game: vs. Bethune-Cookman (Saturday, 7 p.m. ET, ESPN+/ACC Extra)

Georgia (1-0)
Quarterback Gunnar Stockton showed off his dual-threat ability, with two passing touchdowns and two rushing touchdowns. The competition was no match for the Bulldogs, with a 45-7 rout over Marshall on Saturday.
Next game: vs. Austin Peay (Saturday, 3:30 p.m. ET, ESPN+/SEC Network+)

Oregon (1-0)
Despite Montana State being a formidable team in the FCS division, they are no match for the defending Big Ten champions. With a new quarterback in Dante Moore, the Ducks stomped the Bobcats, 59-13. Moore passed for three touchdowns.
Next game: vs. Oklahoma State (Saturday, 3:30 p.m. ET, CBS/Paramount+)

Texas (0-1)
The Longhorns need Manning to step up, as his performance on Saturday will not fly with their gauntlet of a schedule.
Next game: vs. San José State (Saturday, noon ET, ABC)

Arizona State (1-0)
There are two potential All-Americans on offense for Arizona State. Quarterback Sam Leavitt picked up where he left off with two passing touchdowns and two rushing touchdowns. Wide receiver Jordyn Tyson started the season hot with 12 receptions for 141 yards and two touchdowns.
Next game: at Mississippi State (Saturday, 7:30 p.m. ET, ESPN2)

Clemson (0-1)
Clemson has a strong defensive line, but their offense could not help the front seven out as quarterback Cade Klubnik passed for 230 yards and one interception. The Tigers only had one touchdown on Saturday night, with running back Adam Randall punching in for a 1-yard touchdown.
Next game: vs. Troy (Saturday, 3:30 p.m. ET, ACC Network)

South Carolina (1-0)
LaNorris Sellers was spectacular to begin his second season as the leader of the Gamecocks. He had two touchdowns, one by air and one by ground. Props to head coach Shane Beamer for beating his alma mater on Sunday afternoon.
Next game: vs. South Carolina State (Saturday, 7 p.m. ET, ESPN+/SEC Network+)

Illinois (1-0)
Quarterback Luke Altmyer made his position look easy in a 52-3 rout over Western Illinois.
Next game: at Duke (Saturday, noon ET, ESPN)

Michigan (1-0)
Michigan’s offense looked like it flowed better than last year’s, with freshman quarterback Bryce Underwood leading the way.
Next game: at No. 20 Oklahoma (Saturday, 7:30 p.m. ET, ABC)

Florida State (1-0)
Florida State, led by quarterback Tommy Castellanos, gave Lee Corso a great retirement present, defeating the Crimson Tide on Saturday afternoon.
Next game: vs. East Texas A&M (Saturday, noon ET, ACC Network)

Notre Dame (0-1)
It will take some time for the CJ Carr-led offense to develop. Fantas-

tic job by Miami for containing star running back Jeremiah Love.
Next game: vs. No. 22 Texas A&M (Sept. 13, 7:30 p.m. ET, NBC/Peacock)

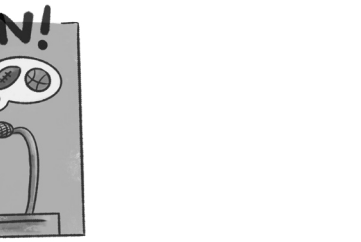
Iowa State (2-0)
Rocco Becht and the Cyclones are off to a great start, including a Farmageddon win over Kansas State in Dublin.
Next game: vs. Iowa (Saturday, noon ET, FOX)

Alabama (0-1)
Quarterback Ty Simpson needs to gain the trust of the Crimson Tide’s fanbase. Completing 23 of your 43 passes will not cut it.
Next game: vs. UL Monroe (Saturday, 7:45 p.m. ET, SEC Network)

Florida (1-0)
They destroyed LIU, but quarterback DJ Lagway looked wonderful in the limited time he played.
Next game: vs. No. 25 South Florida (Saturday, 4:15 p.m. ET, SEC Network)

SMU (1-0)
Next week will decide whether SMU is for real or not.
Next game: vs. Baylor (Saturday, noon ET, The CW)

Tennessee (1-0)
Great win over Syracuse, who the UConn football team plays on Saturday.
Next game: vs. East Tennessee State (Saturday, 3:30 p.m. ET, ESPN+/SEC Network+)



CARTOON BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Oklahoma (1-0)
John Mateer had one of the top quarterback performances of the week.
Next game: vs. No. 12 Michigan (Saturday, 7:30 p.m. ET, ABC)

Ole Miss (1-0)
It is only a matter of time before we find out just how good Austin Simmons is.
Next game: at Kentucky (Saturday, 3:30 p.m. ET, ABC)

Texas A&M (1-0)
Career-high four passing touchdowns for Aggie quarterback Marcel Reed.
Next game: vs. Utah State (Saturday, 12:45 p.m. ET, SEC Network)

Indiana (1-0)
Not a fan of how the Hoosiers performed, but they got the job done against Old Dominion.
Next game: vs. Kennesaw State (Saturday, noon ET, FSI)

Texas Tech (1-0)
Despite the four passing touchdowns, there are questions about quarterback Behren Morton’s health moving forward.
Next game: vs. Kent State (Saturday, noon ET, TNT/truTV/HBO Max)

South Florida (1-0)
The drought for South Florida is over as they earn their first win over a ranked team since 2016.
Next game: at No. 17 Florida (Saturday, 4:15 p.m. ET, SEC Network)

WILL THE SUN RISE AGAIN? SALE AT CROSSROADS WITH WNBA

by Patrick Boots
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The plot is thickening in the saga of the Connecticut Sun's potential future. With a record-breaking figure in the balance, news reports suggest the Sun's ownership group is looking at their options to recover a sale of the team.

Sun owners, Mohegan Gaming and Entertainment, who relocated the franchise from Orlando in 2003, intend to present multiple proposals to the WNBA as a means of "seeking clarity on the league's desired path forward for the organization," a source told ESPN.

The confusion follows the league's apparent refusal to support a bid to move the team to Boston led by former Celtics co-owner Stephen Pagliuca. His PagsGroup bid \$325 million, plus a \$100 million commitment to build a new team practice facility in Boston.

"Relocation decisions are made by the WNBA Board of Governors and not by individual teams," the league said in a statement following the news of Pagliuca's bid.

They also suggested that only cities previously involved in its expansion process could receive a new team. "Nine additional cities also applied for WNBA teams and... currently have priority over Boston," their statement conveyed.

Another source says the Mohegan Tribe accepted the PagsGroup deal — but WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert reportedly never brought it to the league's board of governors. This allowed a period of exclusivity expire, Front Office Sports reports. This also opened up the possibility for different offers, like a match from former Milwaukee Bucks co-owner Marc Lasry, who is looking to keep the Sun here - with crucial support from the State of Connecticut.

ESPN reports that the tribe will likely present the options of a full franchise sale to either Pagliuca's or Lasry's group to the league, in addition to selling minority stakes in the team. Their

source also said that the league themselves offered to purchase the team for just \$250 million - equivalent to the newest expansion fee, before Pagliuca's offer was made public.

The other option, ESPN's source said, would be for the league to purchase the Sun, but they'd have to exceed the going rate of \$325 million.

"The tribe is frustrated and feels the league is presenting a one-path option: relocation of the team to a market of its choosing at a value of its choosing," ESPN's Ramona Shelburne and Alexa Philippou wrote in their report.

After the Mohegan Tribe hired investment bank Allen and Company in May, to facilitate "exploring all options to strategically invest in the team," the league reportedly asked them to allow the Cleveland Cavaliers ownership group a first chance to buy the team - but at a price lower than the \$250 million figure. It's then, ESPN said, the league "became antagonistic toward the sale," when the tribe declined Cleveland's bid and sought other offers.

Their sources said that the WNBA sent two letters stating that the tribe "does not have the right...to change the playing site of the Team's home games from Mohegan Sun Arena or to conduct any Team operations outside of the Team Member's Territory (which is defined as the 75-mile area surrounding Montville, Connecticut)."

Traditionally, sports territories align with market boundaries used for broadcast media - but Connecticut has always been a unique case. Unlike larger states, most of Connecticut exists in just one media market - save for Fairfield County, which is nominally part of the New York City area.

If the report's definition of the Sun's territory is correct, a 75-mile radius out from the Mohegan Sun Casino and Resort includes nearly all of Connecticut (except the most western towns of Fairfield and Litchfield counties), the whole of Rhode Island, and a good portion of Massachusetts including the greater Springfield area and the South Coast region. Notably, this dis-

tance doesn't include Boston but does overlap most of the "Metro West" part of the Boston market including Worcester, and as close as Brookline, Mass.

The territory also includes significant overlap with the New York Liberty, if calculated the same way. From a bird's eye view, the Sun also claims most of Long Island, which is usually associated with the New York City market.

Lasry's bid, which would keep the team inside their current territory by playing their home games at Peoples Bank Arena in downtown Hartford, is also reportedly on thin ice. Another source for the CT Insider revealed that the WNBA told the Sun that the Hartford bid is a "waste of time," since they'd prefer to move the team to a more lucrative city.

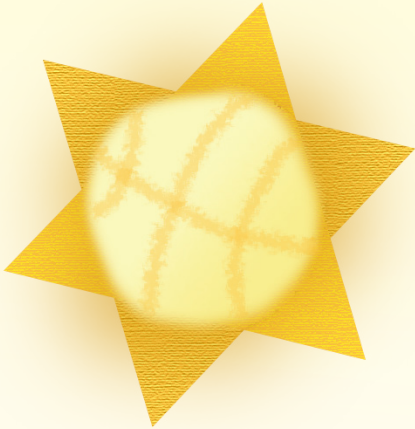
"If the team moves an inch for any portion of the season, it's out of Connecticut," their source said, referencing the league's hardball attitude.

CT Insider also reports that the Mohegan Tribe would now rather sell to Lasry's group, as long as the purchase price is the same or greater, since that bid's based in Connecticut.

The league recently awarded expansion teams to Cleveland, Ohio; Detroit, Mich; and Philadelphia, PA. following the 2024 announcements of a new team for Toronto, Ontario and a revival in Portland, Ore. - but Houston, Texas "would be up next for sure," Cathy Engelbert said in June.

The city is currently host to the NBA's Rockets and MLB and NFL teams. Houston previously also had a WNBA team, the Comets, from the league's founding in 1997 until 2008 - but it shut down due to financial issues and ownership shifts. That club won the first four WNBA championship titles - in a row.

The current owners of the Rockets submitted a bid for a new WNBA team as part of the recent expansion process, but it reportedly fell short of that \$250 million expansion fee. Houston would be one of those cities "with priority," but it's muddy when the league considers expansion and relocation equally - especially since they didn't in



the past.

Reports also suggest the league is eager to assert their plans and cash in with a similar relocation fee, since money from a team sale would just go to the team's owners. When the league offered to buy the Sun, they'd waive that relocation fee to sell to a group of its choosing, the ESPN report said.

"I think it's a bad idea for the league to try to take this team out of Connecticut to some other area," Hartford Mayor Arunan Arulampalam told reporters before these developments. "I think it would be great for the league to continue to expand... but we would ask that they not intentionally try to steer a team out of Connecticut, which is a place that has supported the women's basketball game for decades."

Throughout history, many sports teams have moved - even in the WNBA's short timeline. Arulampalam previously likened the Sun's situation to when the City of Cleveland, Ohio and fans sued the NFL in the '90s over a potential Browns move - an ordeal that ended in compromise. Others remember the Raiders' successful antitrust suit in the '80s, which allowed that team to move from a California suburb to Los Angeles.

Could the same happen here? Even without the notion of legal action, the Mohegan Tribe could keep a majority stake in the team and sell a partial interest - say, to Lasry's group. The Sun could then play some of their home games at Mohegan Sun and the rest in Hartford. If the league is looking for "bigger and better," the Peoples Bank Arena's multimillion dollar renovation should satisfy - already seating more than other WNBA teams' arenas. Perhaps the Sun could even play some games at Amica Mutual Pavilion in Providence, R.I. (affectionately known to Big East fans as "The Dunk") or the Mass Mutual Center in Springfield, Mass. — both located inside their territory. It is unclear about what aspects of such an

arrangement could go against the league's current rules.

Multiple WNBA teams have moved venues or split time within their market, like the New York Liberty, Chicago Sky, and Seattle Storm. Not to mention special games, exhibitions and one-time events in other venues, not unlike the Sun's contests in Boston or the NBA hosting the Celtics vs. Knicks over the years in Uncasville and Hartford.

All the same, the Mohegan Tribe could choose not to sell after all and return to the status quo, but it looks like any prospective team owner looking to sell could face the same trials.

With questions still unanswered, the Sun could end up being a casualty of the WNBA's business-first decisions — poised to slight not just current fans but the whole of New England if the team is forced out from its Nutmeg home. For folks in the "Basketball Capital of the World," supporters of women's basketball before it was cool — the thought is dispiriting, but at least the Sun will continue to play in Connecticut through the 2026 season.

"I know there's still uncertainty about the future, but our loyal fans, they're excited to be able to watch this team grow," team president (and UConn great) Jennifer Rizzotti said at a press conference after news of the Boston bid broke. "If it ends up being our last year here, we're going to make sure we blow it out."

Thousands of social media posts and calls to public officials have been made to keep the Sun in our state, WFSB Channel 3 reports. Before these developments, Governor Lamont told reporters that "[The State of Connecticut] will do what it takes to keep the Sun in Connecticut."

For more information about the Connecticut Sun and the WNBA, visit sun.wnba.com.



FOOTBALL: UCONN OPENS 2025 SEASON WITH 59-13 ROUT OVER CENTRAL CONNECTICUT

by Sam Calhoun
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The UConn football team (1-0) is off to a blazing hot start after stomping in-state FCS foe Central Connecticut (0-1) on the final Saturday in August at the Pratt & Whitney Stadium at Rentschler Field in East Hartford, Conn.

UConn started on offense after Central Connecticut won the coin toss and deferred to the second half.

The game looked ugly to begin with, as UConn could not move the chains other than a 15-yard penalty on CCSU defensive tackle Wayne Coleman.

However, matters got worse as the Connecticut long snapper Zach Christinat airmailed his snap over punter Connor Stutz, forcing the former Sacramento State punter to dive for the ball at the Huskies' 5-yard line.

"What I didn't like was the way we started the game," UConn head coach Jim Mora said at the postgame press conference. "It's not characteristic of what we want to be."

It did not take long for the Blue Devils to get on the board after that, with running back Elijah Howard going unscathed up the middle for the game's first touchdown. UConn safety Malachi McLean would go down on the play and had to be

helped off the field.

"Malachi [McLean] is in the UConn Health system," Mora revealed. "So, we know he's in really great hands, but we are concerned about him. It's nothing that's life-threatening."

On the kickoff, Mel Brown bolted out to the Blue Devils' 46-yard line, but the return would come back due to a holding penalty. Wide receiver Terrence Smith took his only carry of the game to the house on what would have been an 81-yard touchdown, but that also came back for a holding penalty.

UConn star wide receiver Skyler Bell proved early in the game why he was getting Biletnikoff Award hype. The former Wisconsin Badger tight-roped on the bottom sideline for an 80-yard touchdown to tie the game at seven points. Although his first touchdown was looked at, the touchdown was upheld.

"He's got a big play mentality," Mora said. "You know he's a guy that Joe [Fagnano] has a tremendous amount of trust in."

On the following offensive drive, Brown made up for the holding call on his 51-yard return with a 49-yard run to the 12-yard line that set up another touchdown for Bell, giving Connecticut a 14-7 lead.

After the first quarter, the Huskies were all over the Blue Devils on the stat sheet. Their offense was far too powerful to contain in comparison to what

Central Connecticut could offer. UConn had a 156-50 advantage in total yards on offense. The most polarizing stat came in the receiving category, as Bell finished the first quarter with two catches for 92 yards and two touchdowns.

Central Connecticut started the second quarter with the ball but turned it over on downs at UConn's 27-yard line.

On the very next play, running back Cam Edwards rushed to the left and broke out for a 73-yard touchdown to give the Huskies a 21-7 lead.

On the next drive for UConn's offense, Bell continued his spectacular game with a 26-yard one-handed grab on the right sideline to set up 1st & goal. That set up a read option touchdown for quarterback Joe Fagnano, who took matters into his own hands up the middle to make it 28-7.

On the following drive, Howard was helped off the field following an incomplete pass that sidelined him for the rest of the game. He went into the locker room and later appeared on crutches in the second half. Howard is coming off a season where he won the Northeast Conference (NEC) Offensive Player of the Year honor.

On 3rd & goal from Connecticut's 3-yard line, CCSU quarterback Brady Olson's pass to wide receiver Donovan Wadley was broken up by UConn safety

D'Mon Brinson, which ended any hopes of a comeback for the Blue Devils.

Central Connecticut kicker Jack Hennessey knocked down the field goal to cut the Blue Devils' deficit to 28-10, but the damage had already been done in the first half.

UConn went on to do even more damage, marching from midfield to find Arizona transfer Reymello Murphy for his first touchdown since scoring three touchdowns at Old Dominion during the 2023 season. It showed that Central Connecticut could not afford to settle for field goals as the Huskies were now up 35-10.

By halftime, UConn had dominated in every stat category. The Huskies held a 329-160 advantage in total yards. Fagnano completed 14 of 20 passes for 201 yards and four total touchdowns. Bell brought in four of his five targets for 135 yards and touchdowns.

Victor Rosa saw some time on the field despite not being listed on the Huskies' depth chart. He used that for motivation, breaking out for a 20-yard touchdown on the first red zone play of the third quarter, which was a free play. With another extra point for kicker Chris Freeman, UConn was now up 42-10.

UConn did not slow down on offense the rest of the way, with touchdowns coming from wide receiver Jackson Harper (the

first in his career) and Eastern Illinois transfer MJ Flowers.

The Huskies will look ahead to their first road matchup of the year, against former Big East rival Syracuse (0-1) on Saturday.



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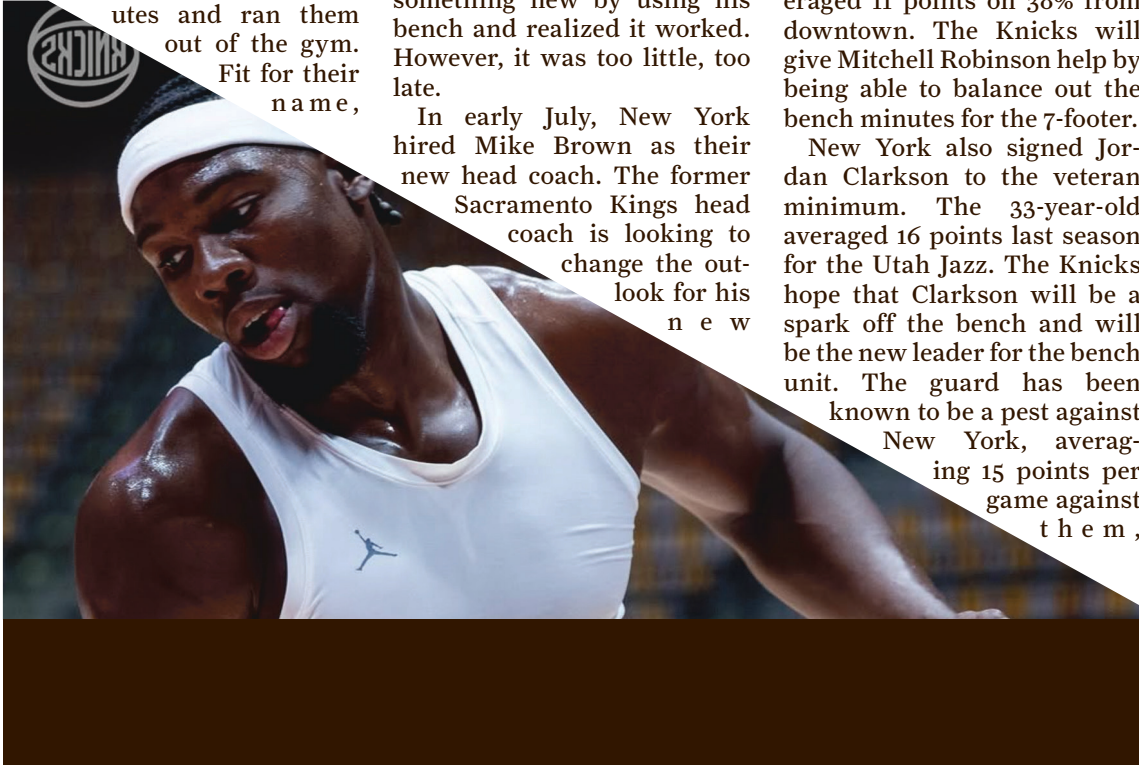


Sports

KNICKS RESHAPE ROSTER, HIRE MIKE BROWN HEAD OF 2025-2026 SEASON

by James Badeau
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The NBA offseason is just about wrapped up with pre-season starting in one month. The New York Knicks made a handful of moves — the highlight was firing Head Coach Tom Thibodeau. Many are conflicted about whether this was a good decision. Thibodeau's key mistake in the 2025 playoffs was trusting his starting five. The lineup of Jalen Brunson, Josh Hart, Mikal Bridges, OG Anunoby and Karl-Anthony Towns looks great on paper, but opponents caught onto their schemes rather quickly. The Indiana Pacers took advantage of the starting five's heavy minutes and ran them out of the gym. Fit for their name,



the Pacers dominated the Knicks in fastbreak points in all six games of the Eastern Conference Finals. When the Knicks were put in a 2-0 hole after statistically one of the worst losses in NBA history, Thibodeau finally made the change and decided to play a nine-man rotation. Thibodeau is known for small rotations, so seeing this in a do-or-die situation was very surprising. Delon Wright and Landry Shamet lived on the bench for the entire season in New York, but when their number was called, they delivered. The veterans combined for a +14 in Game three, helping the Knicks steal game three on the road. Thibodeau waited over 90 games to try something new by using his bench and realized it worked. However, it was too little, too late. In early July, New York hired Mike Brown as their new head coach. The former Sacramento Kings head coach is looking to change the outlook for his new team.

James' Knicks Column, The New York Knicks sharing updates with their training for the upcoming season, Aug. 27, 2025

PHOTO COURTESY OF @NYKNICKS ON INSTAGRAM



team. The two-time coach of the year started his welcome introduction with a bold statement: "Our goal is to build a sustainable, winning culture that leads to championships."

The Knicks made a few moves in free agency. Gerschon Yabusele, the French star in the 2024 Olympics, signed a two-year, \$12 million deal with New York. The former Philadelphia 76er averaged 11 points on 38% from downtown. The Knicks will give Mitchell Robinson help by being able to balance out the bench minutes for the 7-footer.

New York also signed Jordan Clarkson to the veteran minimum. The 33-year-old averaged 16 points last season for the Utah Jazz. The Knicks hope that Clarkson will be a spark off the bench and will be the new leader for the bench unit. The guard has been known to be a pest against New York, averaging 15 points per game against them,

posting a 25-point game in their last matchup in January.

Lastly, Mikal Bridges signed a four-year, \$150 million contract extension with the Knicks. After an incredible postseason, the Knicks locked up Bridges. After a long season of fans ridiculing the Knicks for trading five first-round picks for someone who averaged under 20 points the season prior, it did not help Bridges' case that he averaged even fewer points in his first year in the Big Apple.

In the playoffs, he proved to the people he is worth every penny. In games one and two of the Eastern Conference Semifinals, Bridges' enormous defensive efforts against Boston Celtics' stars Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum helped the Knicks upset the defending NBA champions. In game one, Bridges snatched the ball out of Brown's hands, not letting him get a shot off to tie the game in overtime. In game two, Bridges deflected Tatum's

kick-out pass to win the game. These two plays alone helped the Knicks make their first conference finals since 2000. Bridges must pick it up on the offensive side this season if he wants to prove the doubters wrong.

New York is tied for the third-best odds at winning the 2026 NBA Finals and is tied with the Cleveland Cavaliers for the best odds to make it out of the Eastern Conference. ESPN has the Knicks going 54-28 as the second seed in the East behind a 59-win Cavaliers team. The Knicks tip off their season against the Cavs and will also host them on Christmas Day.

The Knicks open the NBA preseason on Oct. 2 in Abu Dhabi against the Philadelphia 76ers.

REVIEWING RED SOX DEPTH OPTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER STRETCH RUN

by Thaddeus Sawyer
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September baseball is here. Rosters expanded to 28 players on Tuesday as teams look to make a final push towards a division title or squeeze into a wild card spot. Teams in contention will hope the two spots can provide juice to their bench or pitching staff down the stretch. Such is the case with the Boston Red Sox, who called up pitcher Zack Kelly and reacquired catcher Ali Sanchez from the Mets. Despite the call ups, there are players left in Boston's minor league system who are able if not likely to help them on their run to October baseball.

Here are three minor league players who could contribute for Boston in September:

Kyle Harrison

A substantial piece of Boston's return in the controversial Rafael Devers trade in June, Harrison was immediately optioned to Triple-A Worcester upon his arrival. While many fans were disappointed by the demotion, mostly due to the circumstances he was acquired under, it seems the decision could turn out fruitful for Harrison's future. Part of getting back on track for Harrison has been making adjustments to his arsenal.

Harrison's best pitch has long been his fastball, which has received grades between 60-70 from major prospect publications since at least 2021. The righty relied on that pitch during his first extended look in the majors in 2024, throwing the pitch 57.6 percent of the time. That usage skyrocketed over eight MLB games

in 2025, as he threw the pitch 65.2 percent of the time. While there was an uptick in velocity on the pitch — almost three miles per hour on average compared to 2024 — Harrison essentially turned into a one pitch pitcher as opposing batters crushed his slurve and changeup for averages of .381 and .286, respectively. Since arriving in Worcester, Boston has completely revamped the former top 100 prospect's pitch usage. Harrison barely used his slider, which has long graded as his second-best pitch, at the MLB level in 2024 and not at all in 2025. With Worcester, the 6-foot-2 starter is now throwing a slider 18.3 percent of the time while reducing his fastball usage to 50.9 percent. If the California native can utilize that pitch mix to generate higher strikeouts rates, as he did in the past in San Francisco's organization, he could still turn out to be a two or three starter in the MLB. Harrison was passed up for a major league promotion due to the unexpected emergence of pitcher Payton Tolle. Still, the 24-year-old has time to make good on his potential and should be the next pitcher up if Boston needs a starter in September.

Chris Murphy

Murphy has already shown that he can be productive on a big-league mound and be valuable to a contending bullpen. Murphy began 2025 on the injured list recovering from April 2024 Tommy John surgery. Following a month-long rehab assignment, he joined the Red Sox bullpen immediately upon his activation. The lefty made 14 appearances, giving Boston 20.2 innings of work to a 3.05 ERA and striking out almost

a batter per inning. The multi-inning option allowed an earned run in only four of his 14 games and gave the team six appearances of over one inning. Despite that success, Murphy was optioned to Worcester in mid-July to allow the Red Sox to select a fresh arm in Jovani Morán. In 12 games for Worcester, including two starts, the 27-year-old has maintained his strong strikeout numbers while posting a 1.69 ERA for the month of August. Despite being passed over for Kelly in Boston's initial September call ups, Murphy seems likely to get back to Boston before the end of the season as they look to keep their bullpen fresh down the stretch.

Kristian Campbell

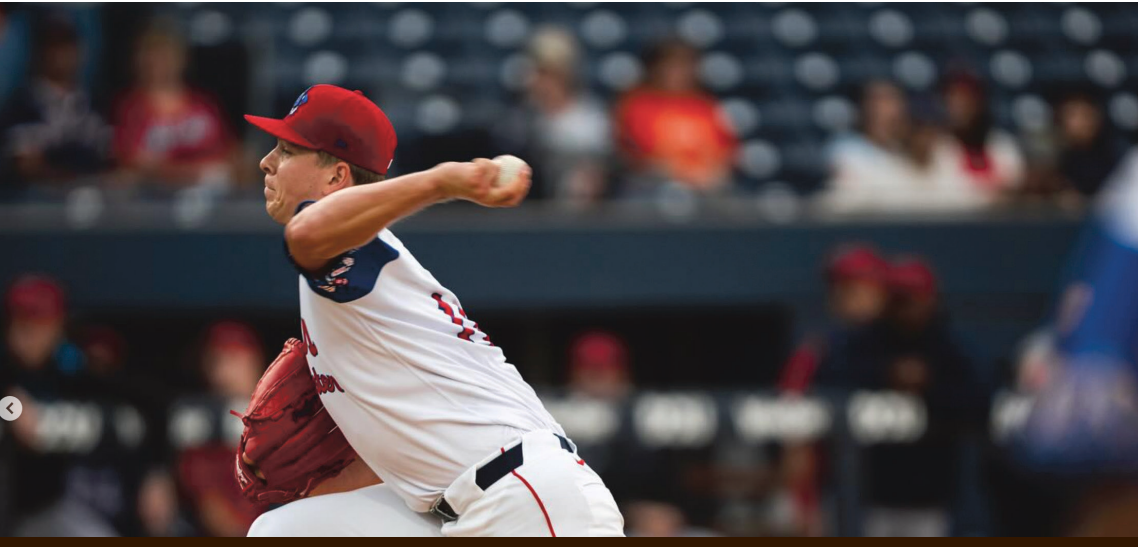
Campbell is a name that Boston fans are likely familiar with. A member of Boston's "Big Three" prospects (also including outfielder Roman Anthony and infielder Marcelo Mayer), Campbell signed an eight-year, \$60 million dollar pre-debut contract extension with two additional club options prior to the 2024 season, according to Jeff Passan. The Georgia Tech alum made the Red Sox Opening Day roster and started as Boston's second baseman. Campbell became the first member of the "Big Three" to make his debut, and that decision was paying off for Boston in the season's first month.

After putting up an .848 OPS in the month of April and winning AL Rookie of the Month, the 23-year-old's numbers took a nosedive in May and June. Questions about Campbell's defense at second base also came up as he committed seven errors in just 59 games. The struggles even led to Campbell taking reps at first base amidst the Rafael Devers saga. Campbell was optioned to Triple A on June 20.

Anthony and Mayer have both

debuted, leaving Campbell as the only member of the "Big Three" left in Triple A. With Worcester, Campbell has righted the ship offensively. The right-handed-hitter hasn't reached the peaks he showed last year or even early in 2024, but he has been a consistent offensive contributor for over two months with the Woo Sox. Defensively, Campbell has turned into something of a utilityman with Worcester. A plus athlete, he has seen time in both left and center field in addition to first and second base.

Given his extension, it's unlikely that the Red Sox will give up on Campbell any time soon. While the rookie has been jumped by multiple, less-heralded players for call ups to Boston, he remains Boston's highest upside depth option and seems likely to eventually be given a second chance at the major league level before September is up.



Kyle Harrison on the Worcester Red Sox. The photo was taken on Aug. 19, 2025.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @GWOOSOX AND @K.CAMP2 ON INSTAGRAM