

The Daily Campus



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Thursday, February 5, 2026

Connecticut's legislative session opens

by Jenna Outcalt
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Connecticut opened its 2026 legislative session yesterday. This year, the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) has a short session, as it is an election year for legislators. The session will continue until midnight on May 6.

The opening day began with a prayer by Reverend Erica Thompson, the chaplain of the House of Representatives in Connecticut.

"In a season marked by deep complexity, competing priorities and strong convictions, this chamber remains a place where the common good is sought through dialogue, discernment and decision," Thompson said. "As you begin today's session, I invite you to take a moment to breathe, to center yourself and to remember the trust that has been placed in you by your constituents, by your state and by generations yet to come."

The chamber also welcomed two new representatives from special elections: Representative Iris Sanchez of New Britain and Representative Larry Pemberton Jr. of Ledyard, Montville and Norwich.

When the session officially began, Gov. Ned Lamont gave his opening day address to the Senate and House of Representatives. He said that despite the hardships facing the country, he felt "fortunate to live in Connecticut."

"We were the birthplace of freedom, for signers of the Declaration of Independence, penning the words that we live by: all men and women are created equal. These words should still be our North Star 250 years later," he said. "I live by these words as I think about our values and our budget. And unlike many other states, which are facing federal cuts or deficits of their own, Connecticut is stepping up to protect our most vulnerable."

Lamont brought up state food healthcare assistance programs as examples of the state's successes in handling federal cuts. He thanked the CGA for funding these initiatives and requested that they extend the funding through the end of the fiscal year.

Lamont also said that the state could not keep making up for federal support forever and expressed hope for a better partnership between the state and federal government. However, he said he was "not so optimistic."

"The chaos in Washington, D.C. is the opposite of what we're trying to do here in Connecticut together," he said.

Lamont proposed an energy rebate at \$200 per person or \$400 per family to help Connecticut residents with high energy bills, garnering applause from the CGA's Democratic majority. He also emphasized programs to assist parents with childcare and legislate the usage of phones in schools, earning him more applause and a standing ova-



The state Capitol in Hartford welcomes Connecticut lawmakers on Wednesday, Feb. 4, kicking off three months of policy debate. The chamber welcomed Representative Iris Sanchez and Representative Larry Pemberton Jr., two new representatives from special elections. PHOTO COURTESY OF @CTPUBLIC ON INSTAGRAM

tion.

Towards the end of his speech, Lamont criticized the Trump administration's immigration policy, especially the actions of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

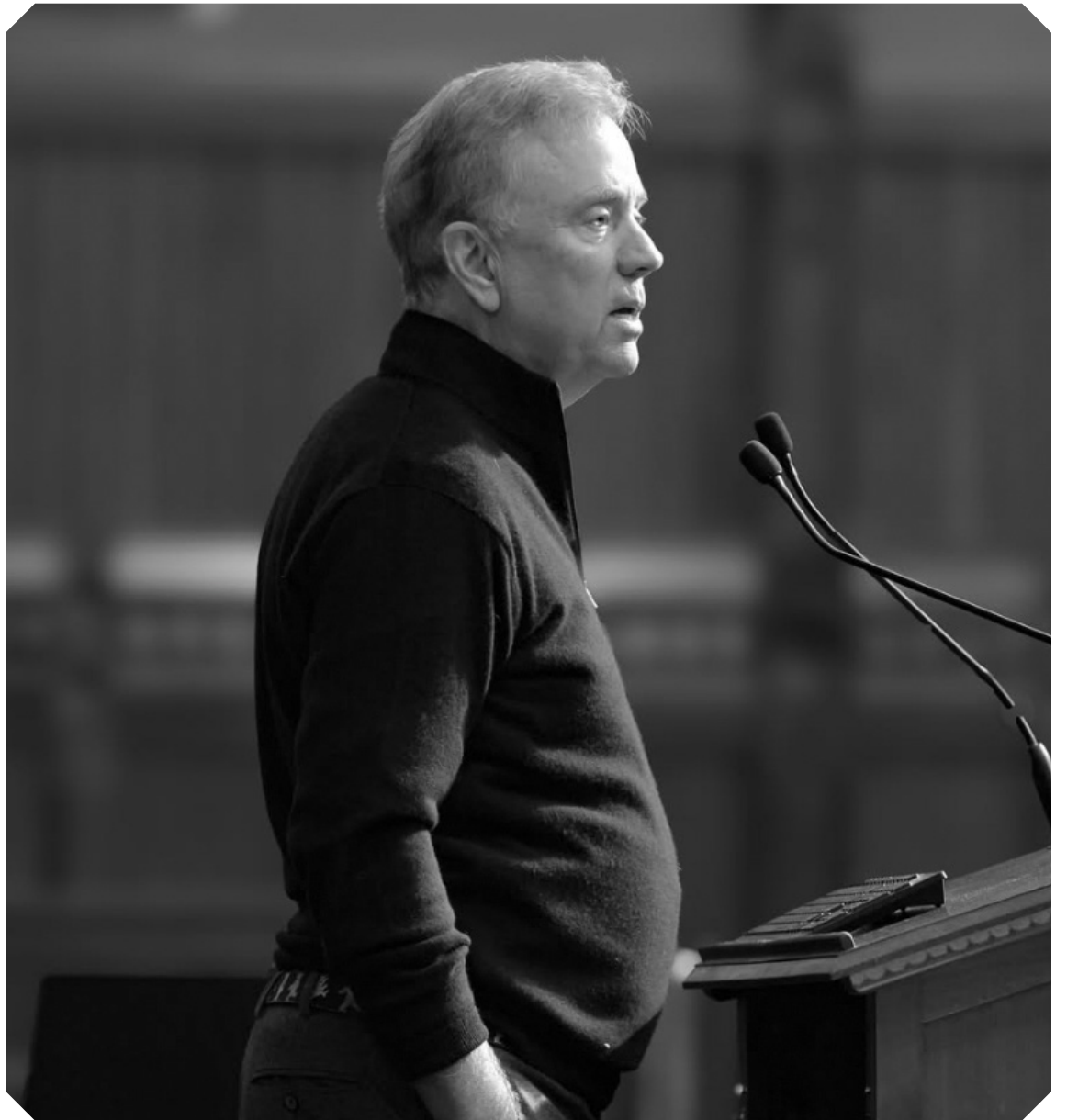
"ICE, everywhere you go uninvited, violence follows," he said. "Go home. We're keeping our Connecticut safe without you."

He ended his speech by appreciating the diversity of Connecticut, praising Pemberton as the first Native American legislator in the CGA and Norwich Mayor Swarnjit Singh as the first Sikh mayor in Connecticut.

"That's the Connecticut I love. That's the America we fight for," he said. "God bless America and the great state of Connecticut."

The Connecticut Senate began with a debate over a bill to extend the emergency spending fund controlled by Lamont. The bill is generally opposed by Republicans, who expressed concern about letting the governor unilaterally decide how the money should be spent. Democrats currently hold a strong majority in the CGA.

Continued updates for the CGA can be found on its website, which includes bill information, session schedules and information about legislators.



Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont preparing for State of the State address on Wednesday, Feb. 4. Lamont addressed the state's response to federal funding cuts and criticized the actions of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. PHOTO COURTESY OF @NEDLAMONT ON INSTAGRAM

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WE ARE NOT THE
DAILY DIGEST

News

Stafford receives federal grant to expand senior medical transportation

by Patrick Boots
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Stafford has received a federal transportation grant that will fund the purchase of a new paratransit vehicle, expanding medical transportation options for seniors and residents with mobility limitations.

The funding was awarded through the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program, commonly referred to as Section 5310, a program overseen by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and administered in Connecticut by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT).

The program provides financial assistance for projects that improve transportation access for older adults and individuals with disabilities, particularly in areas where traditional public transit does not adequately meet their needs.

“Section 5310 funds are apportioned among the states and designated recipients by a formula which is based on the number of older adults and people with disabilities in each state according to the latest available U.S. Census data,” the FTA’s webpage states.

According to the FTA, Section 5310 funding can be used for capital expenses such as accessible vans, mobility management projects and other transportation services designed to enhance independence and access to essential destinations. In Stafford’s case, the funds will be used to purchase a paratransit van as part of the town’s senior services.

The Stafford Senior and Community Center currently offers transportation services for residents age 60 and older and for individuals with disabilities. As outlined on the town’s website, these services include curb-to-curb transportation for medical appointments, errands and essential

services within Stafford and surrounding communities, including Willington, Tolland, Somers, Enfield and Vernon. Transportation is typically provided on a scheduled basis and is subject to vehicle availability.

Town materials indicate that the addition of a new paratransit vehicle will increase capacity for medical trips, which remain one of the most frequent and critical uses of senior transportation services. Medical transportation is especially important in rural and small-town areas, where limited fixed-route transit and longer travel distances can pose barriers to accessing health care.

Groups like the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, a coalition administered in cooperation with the FTA, promote the availability and accessibility of transportation options for older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers. It’s due in part to resources and training programs that support 5310 programs in states like Connecticut.

“Section 5310 grantees have flexibility in how they use funds to support the older adults and individuals with disabilities in their communities,” the group states on its webpage. “However, all funded projects must be included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan... This ensures that services are responsive to local needs and priorities.”

The Section 5310 program was created to address these types of transportation gaps. The FTA identifies access to health care, employment and community services as core goals of the program, particularly for populations that may no longer be able to drive or use conventional transit systems. Funds are distributed through state agencies, which evaluate local applications based on demonstrated need and program eligibility.



A close-up of a ramp used by paratransit vehicles in order to make them wheelchair accessible. Paratransit vehicles are often used for medical transport, especially in rural areas with limited public transportation. PHOTO BY @FIELD55895 ON PINTEREST

Nearby communities, including the Town of Willington, also provide senior services that may include transportation assistance for medical appointments and essential trips. Willington’s Senior Services program, as described on the town’s website, works to support older residents through coordination of services and referrals, including transportation resources where available.

“CT DOT conducts a competitive selection process for the Section 5310 grant program. Each year, application

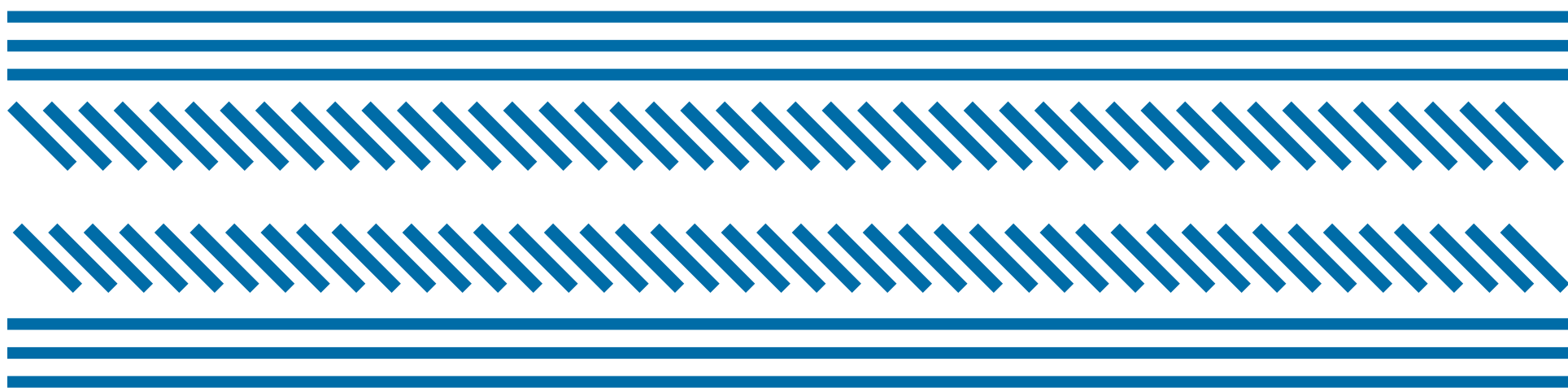
materials are made available to eligible recipients, which are reviewed and prioritized for award by CT DOT and the Regional Councils of Governments,” their 5310 application states.

Northeastern Connecticut’s participation in the Section 5310 program reflects a broader statewide approach to improving mobility for aging populations. The state continues to administer federal transit funds to municipalities and service providers that offer specialized transportation, particularly in areas without

extensive public transit networks.

Stafford’s new paratransit van is expected to become part of the town’s transportation fleet once procurement and delivery are complete.

As Connecticut’s population continues to age, programs like Section 5310 play a growing role in supporting local transportation infrastructure. For Stafford residents who rely on town-provided transportation, the additional vehicle is expected to improve scheduling flexibility and access to essential medical care.



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THE DAILY CAMPUS CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

ACROSS

- 1 Title said with a hat tip, perhaps
- 5 Daddy
- 9 "___ out!"
- 14 Photographer Geddes
- 15 Wasn't colorfast
- 16 Complete
- 17 Sign gas
- 18 "Aquaman" star
- 20 Out of order
- 22 "Hey, Soul Sister" rock band
- 23 Cocktail that may be made with Bombay Sapphire
- 26 PC pioneer
- 29 Chow down
- 30 Small battery, or an org. that may help with a car battery
- 31 Iditarod racer
- 33 Suomi speakers
- 35 Ages and ages
- 36 Band with the hit "In the Navy"
- 41 Gyro bread
- 42 Give a bit more
- 43 Accounts with round numbers?
- 47 Spy-fi novelist Deighton
- 48 Visitor in a knock-knock joke that ends, "It's nothing to cry about!"
- 51 Tricky
- 52 Microsoft Azure competitor
- 55 Herb in caprese salad
- 56 Upper crust
- 57 Children's show whose title character leaves paw-print hints, and what 18-, 23-, 36-, and 52-Across have in common
- 62 "Sad to say ..."
- 63 Goodyear products
- 64 Legendary rebuke
- 65 Memory units, for short
- 66 Branch of Islam
- 67 Leader whose address ends with .edu
- 68 Bailiwick

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63							64			65		
66							67			68		

By Rich Katz

2/5/26

DOWN

- 1 Run
- 2 Condition often treated with iron supplements
- 3 Tap, as one's successor
- 4 High-IQ society
- 5 Many a school sammie
- 6 In the style of
- 7 55-Across sauce
- 8 Decorates
- 9 Pedicure stone
- 10 Harry and William's alma mater
- 11 Convenience in a cash-only venue
- 12 Corp. leader
- 13 Shaded section of a timeline
- 19 Execute perfectly
- 21 Slug kin
- 24 Comedian Carvey
- 25 Punchy flavor
- 26 Pop sensation
- 27 Barbecue discard
- 28 Booker T.'s band
- 32 "Nosferatu" actress Lily-Rose
- 33 No longer fizzy
- 34 Game, ___, match

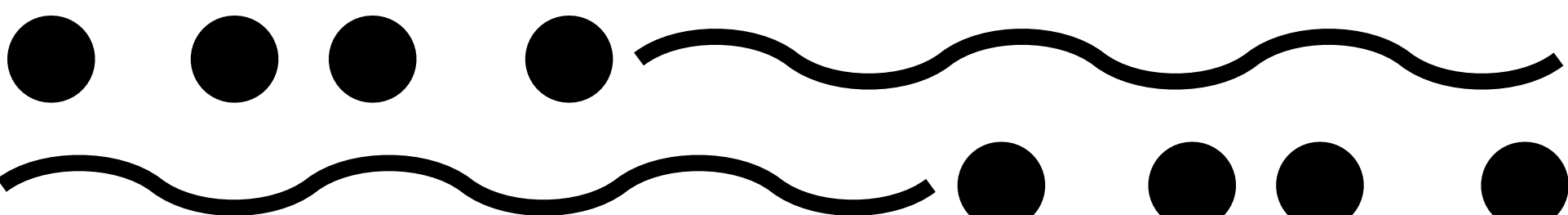
Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

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2/5/26

- 36 Lab container
- 37 "It was nothing"
- 38 Exit ___
- 39 Fencing blade
- 40 Light weight
- 41 "Nova" network
- 44 Tennis star Andre
- 45 Anjou alternative
- 46 Dirtied
- 48 Tank in a basement
- 49 Service interruption
- 50 Black Sea port
- 53 Posterior muscle, informally
- 54 Many a denizen of Machu Picchu
- 55 "It's ___ a minute!"
- 57 "Mic Drop" K-pop septet
- 58 Actor Simu
- 59 Samovar
- 60 Due-in hr.
- 61 Phoenix NBAer



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Solution to Tuesday's puzzle

2/4/26

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

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.

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TRENDSETTER: AWARD SEASON BRINGS FORTH POLITICS AND CULTURE

by **Maleena Muzio**

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Active celebrity trends are beginning to catch up with the world around them as the award season has begun. Some of the most popular award shows in the world took place during the last month, including the Golden Globes on Sunday, Jan. 11 and the Grammy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 1. These shows presented themes of political participation and culture sharing — two things that the public and college students do regularly.

Hello and welcome back to my column, “Trendsetter,” where I discuss and dissect current trends. Today’s issue will dive into recent award shows, specifically the Grammys, regarding themes of speeches as well as fashion choices.

The overall theme of the Grammys this year was boldness, with the exception of a few attendees. From Chappell Roan’s topless nipple-ring dress to Teyana Taylor’s asymmetric cut-out dress, celebrities were on full display on the red carpet. Although maybe the showy-ness of several outfits were taken to extremes we have not seen before, these outfits were reminiscent of the “naked-dress” trend, which was popularized in the 2010s by stars like Rihanna, Kendall Jenner and Jennifer Lopez.

These daring choices were on brand with the 2016 revival that I discussed in my last two issues, and were a juxtaposition to the rise of conservative fashion that took the media by storm in the 2020s after Sofia Richie, the Kardashian-Jenners and others seemingly changed aesthetics and opted for more concealing attire.

On a more serious note, many celebrities also took to the red carpet and stage to share their thoughts and opinions on the current state of U.S. politics. At the



Bad Bunny holds the three Grammys he won during the award ceremony on Sunday, Feb. 1. He is the first artist to win Album of the Year with a primarily Spanish-language album.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @GETTYENTERTAINMENT ON INSTAGRAM

Golden Globes, pins that read “ICE OUT” or “BE

GOOD” were worn by celebrities such as Mark Ruffalo, Wanda Sykes, Natasha

Lyonne and Ariana Grande. Ruffalo also spoke on the red carpet to share his negative opinions on ICE. At the Grammys, Justin and Hailey Bieber, Joni Mitchell, Billie Eilish and Bad Bunny wore the same pins.

Eilish and Bad Bunny also used their acceptance speeches to speak on ICE and anti-immigrant rhetoric. “Before I say thanks to God, I’m going to say ICE out,” Bad Bunny said. “We’re not savages, we’re not animals, we’re not aliens — we’re humans.”

Bad Bunny has become quite the trend himself, too. The artist became the talk of the nation after he was announced to headline the Superbowl LX halftime show on Sunday, Feb. 8, and he gained media attention after taking home three Grammys Sunday night. His halftime performance will make history, set to be entirely in Spanish, according to an article by the AP News published on Feb. 4. Bad Bunny’s Album of the Year Grammy win also made history as the first Spanish-language album to do so. He and other Latin artists are sharing their culture with wide audiences during a time of ethnic and political tension.

But politically-charged acceptance speeches are nothing new. I would like

to flash back in time to revisit a moment in 1973 that became a prominent predecessor to the kinds of speeches we still see today.

Marlon Brando was set to win Best Actor at the 1973 Oscars for his role in “The Godfather.” However, viewers and attendees were shocked when a woman, named Sacheen Littlefeather, who was an Indigenous actress and Native American civil rights activist, went on stage instead. Brando refused his award in protest of the mistreatment and misrepresentation of Indigenous people in the film industry. You can view Littlefeather’s speech on the official Oscars YouTube channel.

Political speech and culture sharing are extremely common and relevant today, but there was a time not long ago when they weren’t (and not as accepted, either). Littlefeather herself was blacklisted from the Academy Awards, until they released a formal apology just months before her death in October of 2022.

While today’s issue may have explored heavier topics than usual, these events are aspects of pop culture nonetheless and have even more room to be explored. Tune in next time to examine trends that have emerged or cycled back into view as February begins to close!



Billie Eilish and FINNEAS give an acceptance speech at the 2026 Grammys after winning Song of the Year for their song “WILDFLOWER.” This marks Eilish’s 10th Grammy win.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @GETTYENTERTAINMENT ON INSTAGRAM

The Muppet Show is back for the first time since 1981

by Alex Klancko
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The iconic 70s puppet show, The Muppet Show, dropped a special episode featuring Sabrina Carpenter on Disney+ yesterday, for their first appearance since 1981.

The show originally ran from Sept. 5, 1976, to March 15, 1981, across five seasons and 120 episodes.

The Muppet Show, known for its many iconic characters such as Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy, Gonzo, Beaker, the Swedish Chef and Statler and Waldorf. In the past, the show has also brought on many famous celebrities like Johnny Cash, Roger Moore, Diana Ross, Mark Hamill, Christopher Reeve and Elton John.

Carpenter is an actress and singer/songwriter, having formerly starred in "Girl Meets World" on Disney Channel, but is best known for her

music, including the songs "Espresso" and "Manchild."

The new special connects to the roots of The Muppet Show with its iconic theme song and opening dance with all the characters before introducing Carpenter.

Also, Kermit hinted that the show could be coming back depending on how the show does.

The production value seems a lot better than the original series with more sets than the previous iteration of the show. It makes the show look a lot cleaner compared to the 70s, and the live audience makes it seem very cozy.

The bits in the show are adjacent to the original as well,

especially with Kermit and Miss Piggy's banter and Gonzo's stunts.

There are ads every 10 minutes, which is a little annoying, especially since this is on Disney+, a streaming service. In total, there are six minutes of ads, which for the show being 30 minutes, is quite bad. But overall, the content of the special makes up for the abundance of ads.

One of the best jokes in the special is the constant references to "budget cuts." Fozzie telling Seth Rogan that he is being cut from the show is hilarious, especially when he says he is a producer.

The musical number by the rats to "Blinding Lights" by The Weeknd was funny to watch, specifically when the

performance goes bad and the electricity goes out.

The show even included a bit by Saturday Night Live star Maya Rudolph, which included her talking to a blue Muppet and getting an eyeball from Beaker in her mouth, "dying" and then "coming back to life."

Beaker and Dr. Benson Honeydew also make an appearance with Beaker once again being the butt of an experiment. Beaker and Honeydew's segments are some of the best on The Muppet Show, and this one is no different, with Beaker's eyeballs multiplying and flying around the theatre after the experiment went awry.

The special ends with an amazing musical number of "Don't Stop Me Now" by the entire Mup-

pets cast. It was a fitting end to hopefully the first of many new episodes of The Muppet Show.

Carpenter worked very well with the Muppets cast, often butting heads with Miss Piggy, yet still having the glitz and glamour to keep up with her. She mixed well with Kermit, being kind and sweet to him. It was also a fun touch that Carpenter kept saying she looked up to Miss Piggy and Miss Piggy would respond by saying she was going to sue Carpenter.

Overall, the special was very good. It brought some of the nostalgia from the original series with a mixture of up-to-date and more recent fun. It had a great mixture of musical numbers, bits from iconic cast members and in-between moments. I just wish the Swedish Chef was in this episode.

Rating: 5/5



Sabrina Carpenter takes a picture with the cast of The Muppet Show. They recently collaborated to release a new episode of the show, making a return after many years.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @THEDIS ON PINTEREST



ILLUSTRATION BY RAYFORD BROMELY, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Life

'IS IT CAKE? Valentines' HAS LOVE IN THE AIR AND IN THE BAKING

by Jaylyn Davis | CONTRIBUTOR | SHE/HER/HERS | iue25001@uconn.edu

On Feb. 4, an episode of “Is it Cake? Valentines,” titled “Baked With Love” was released on Netflix. Filled with a mixture of competition, romance and comedy, the episode is an exhilarating source of Valentine’s Day entertainment.

The episode begins with Mikey Day, whose first quote sets the stage for the bulk of the episode. “Cake loves me. Cake loves me not,” he declares.

After making his grand entrance, he sets up a game for the show’s viewers. In the game, two Cupid statues are shown, and viewers have 15 seconds to guess which statue is cake. After the 15 seconds are up, it gets determined that the second Cupid statue is cake.

Moving on from the game, Day presents the episode’s main challenge to the three couples who are participating in it, with those couples being Amanda and Alex, Jason and Tyler and Kimberly and Taurus. The challenge that each couple must complete is to bake a cake that resembles an artifact of their love stories. The couples have eight hours to complete the challenge, and while baking their cakes, they’ll be given decoys that mimic the cake

they’re making.

When the eight hours are up, each couple’s cake will be placed with the decoys on a platter, and a group of judges will try to identify the cake within the platter. If the cake is identified, then the couple will be eliminated from the challenge. If the cake isn’t identified, then the couple will be up for the prize of \$5,000 and a honeymoon.

When the eight hours begin, the couples fan out to make their cakes, each one being distinct. Amanda and Alex’s cake is a genie lamp on a pillow, which resembles their engagement moment when Alex surprised Amanda with a genie lamp that has a ring inside it. Meanwhile, Jason and Tyler make a Greek statue to symbolize where they spent their honeymoon, and Kimberly and Tau-



Netflix releases a special titled “Is it Cake? Valentines” in celebration of the upcoming holiday. In this version, couples take on the task of creating a deceptive cake.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @THE_PREMIERE_POST ON INSTAGRAM

rus design a drum, which represents the moment Kimberly first met Taurus at a concert.

As the couples make their cakes, they work diligently, outlining every detail along the way. When the eight hours are up, each couple’s cake and decoys transition to the judging process by being put side-by-side on their individual platters in front of a heart-shaped wall. Concurrently, two sets of judges, who are also couples, attempt to determine which platter is cake. The process is repeated three times, one for each couple. Of the three couples, only Kimberly and Taurus successfully fool the judges, who do not find their cake on their first try. By fooling the judges, Kimberly and Taurus win the \$5000 cash prize. They also get the opportunity to

complete another challenge for a free honeymoon cruise.

The “Is it Cake? Valentines” episode “Baked With Love” was overall a splendid watch. The Valentine’s Day theme was prevalent throughout the episode, especially in the set. Trees with pink flowers were scattered around the space, and each baking station was pink and labeled with the names of the corresponding couple.

In addition to the love-themed set, romantic music played throughout the episode, and lots of love notes and remarks were shared, making this an epic romantic episode. And not only was the episode romantic, but it was remarkably comical. Mikey Day’s jokes and uplifting humor create many moments of laughter, and by including games for viewers to take part in, the audience can stay connected to the episode, making it fun to watch. Baking shows are great, but “Is it Cake? Valentines” takes the cake. It’s a charming show to watch, and I highly recommend it for this upcoming Valentine’s Day!

Rating: 5/5

Spring 2026 Involvement Fair gives clubs a chance to connect

by Thaddeus Sawyer
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Clubs filled the court and concourses at Gampel Pavilion at the University of Connecticut as Student Activities hosted its Spring 2026 Involvement Fair on Wednesday, Feb. 4.

Hundreds of clubs and organizations were given the opportunity to pitch themselves to UConn students from 1 to 6 p.m. to spread awareness and grow participation.

“The fairs like this give us a chance to really meet a larger variety of people than we normally would,” said Blake Susman, a fourth-semester student and a member of the UConn Costume Club.

Susman brought a B-01 tactical helmet from “Helldivers 2” that he created at the UConn Makerspace as part of the club, while Club President Sebastian Coello brought a prop chainsaw that he built.

As the second involvement fair of the year, the spring semester event also offers the opportunity to students coming to UConn for the first time during the second semester with an initial up-close look at many of UConn’s extracurricular activities.

“Our club, we have the first involvement fair and then it’s hard to do outreach, but these events, especially the one the second semester, let us interact with the transfer students who might have missed that first involvement fair,” said Ryan Le Vine, a fifth-semester student and a member of the UConn Outing Club.

The Outing Club’s table was active throughout the fair, as was the Club Sports section located close by.

“Water polo is not the first

sport that comes up on Google when you look up ‘sports,’” said Marko Katra, a fourth-semester student and a member of the club water polo team. “It’s definitely great to reach out to people and see if they’re interested in something that’s often really new for them.”

Katra and his teammates passed around a ball, sometimes over the crowd, while both the men’s and women’s club rugby teams did the same.

The floor of Gampel was packed tightly between the rows of tables by attendees, causing backups and offering an additional challenge to clubs presenting their pitch.

“I think it’s a lot harder to interact with people because

we’re all kind of punched in together and people are trying to get here and not get bumped behind them,” said Riley D’Amuto, an eighth-semester student and a member of mental health club Active Minds. “I think it makes us be quicker in our approach because we don’t want to just get caught and cause like a roadblock.”

Sarah Bernhardt, the coordinator for student organization support for UConn Student Activities, says that being inside has both its pros and cons.

“I think some challenges here, being inside, it’s a fixed space, so we are quite limited on the amount of tables we can provide in here,” Bernhardt said. “We had to have a

wait list this year because we had so many applicants, but not enough places to put them. Especially with the Gampel renovations too, that did cut us down a little bit on the amount of tables we were able to provide. In the end, it all worked out, so I’m grateful for that.”

Bernhardt also mentioned having to have security for Gampel events and the increased line to get inside as limitations.

Despite these drawbacks, Bernhardt said that she finds the flow of the event to be an improvement when compared to the fall semester fair, describing it as “a nice snake-like flow.” She also said hopes students find it

cool to be inside Gampel for a reason other than sports.

“The fact that they get to see the space [as] multipurpose and get to see it in another light, I think is cool,” Bernhardt said. “The fact that it can transform from a fair like this and within this weekend can be an arena for a game I think is really cool.”

Bernhardt also mentioned that being able to use the video boards added to Gampel prior to the 2024 basketball season is a plus. The event also serves as a way for Student Activities to be present in the minds of students.

“I think it helps it definitely helps increase our visibility,” Bernhardt said.



Students crowd Gampel Pavilion for the Spring Involvement Fair. Many different clubs tabled to spread awareness of their organization.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MADISON HENDRICKS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Opinion

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Editorial:

In the event of ICE on campus: Communicate effectively and know your rights

Reports of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE)'s presence on the University of Connecticut's Storrs campus circulated over the weekend. The truth of these reports has not yet been confirmed. Regardless, it's important to spread awareness of the proper ways to report ICE sightings. A well-meaning tip, when reported incorrectly, can do more harm than good. The Editorial Board strongly encourages UConn students and staff to familiarize themselves with their rights and the most effective methods of communicating ICE sightings, using the following tips:

SALUTE

If you observe ICE presence and you're unsure what to say, follow the SALUTE acronym: size/strength, actions/activity, location, uniform/clothes, time/date and equipment. Specific details let your community members know what to look for and expect, as opposed to a vague message like "ICE is on campus." An example report using the SALUTE acronym might look something like the following (paraphrased from the New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice):

"There are 5-7 officers. They were stopping people on the street and are now inside the supermarket in Newark, at the corner of 10th and Prospect. One of them is in plain clothes and the others are in HSI uniforms. They arrived around 9AM today, January 12th, and are still on the street as of 11AM."

The above example works because it's specific. It tells people exactly where ICE is, what to look for, and whether the situation is still ongoing.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

In addition to knowing how to report ICE, it's crucial to know your rights. You may already be aware that ICE agents cannot enter your home without a warrant signed by a judge, but how does that translate to life on a college campus?

Even though UConn has an open campus — meaning that common spaces like the Student Union are open to the public — ICE officers do not have access to non-public spaces within the campus without criminal arrest warrants or search warrants. The administrative warrants typically carried by ICE agents do not grant them entry to non-public spaces, as they are not signed by a judge. Non-public spaces are areas that limit access through university-issued ID cards and/or locked doors. Residence halls and in-session classes are two examples of non-public spaces. Without consent or a warrant signed by a judge, ICE agents do not have access to these spaces.

Regardless of the truth of the speculations about ICE's recent presence on campus, the Editorial Board believes it is a situation everyone should be prepared for. Know your rights and know the facts to help your communities.



UConn students observe a computer screen in a laboratory in the Department of Pathology. Pre-health programs emphasize coursework and extracurricular activities meant to prepare students for work in the healthcare field.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNHEALTH ON INSTAGRAM

PRE-HEALTH DOESN'T MAKE DOCTORS, IT MAKES APPLICANTS

by **Hannah McClellan**

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Compassion, selflessness, empathy and humanity have always been at the heart of healthcare. Long before resumes, prerequisites or application cycles, patients relied on healthcare professionals for understanding and reassurance in times of vulnerability. These qualities are exactly what make healthcare a human-centered position. And yet, within pre-health education and training environments, particularly the competitive undergraduate pipelines and admission-driven system, the culture shaping future doctors increasingly prioritizes credentials over these foundational traits.

"Pre-health" refers to students preparing for careers in medicine, dentistry and other healthcare fields. It is not a major, but rather a collection of expectations built around prerequisite coursework, exams and extracurricular involvement. In theory, this rigorous structure is meant to prepare students for the realities of healthcare. More importantly, its high difficulty is designed to ensure that future professionals are motivated by a genuine passion to help others. Over time, however, these expectations have become less about passion and more about pressure to check boxes. As a result, this pre-health culture produces good résumés, not good doctors.

One of the hallmarks of this toxic culture is comparison. Students are subjected to a constant state of stressing if what they are doing is "enough," or even meeting the perceived benchmarks of success in pre-health early enough in their undergraduate careers. This manifests in constant casual conversations about GPA, shadowing hours or application cycles. These are not just social or informational; they function to gauge whether one's own choices align with what is perceived as "correct." Yet, this is contradictory, as there is no singular known path to success in pre-health. This uncertainty is not entirely self-created. It is reinforced by institutional structures that offer little to no guidance, leaving nepotism and prestige to be quietly rewarded.

This constant comparison leads to a culture of competition in a space that is supposed to foster collaboration. It teaches students to view

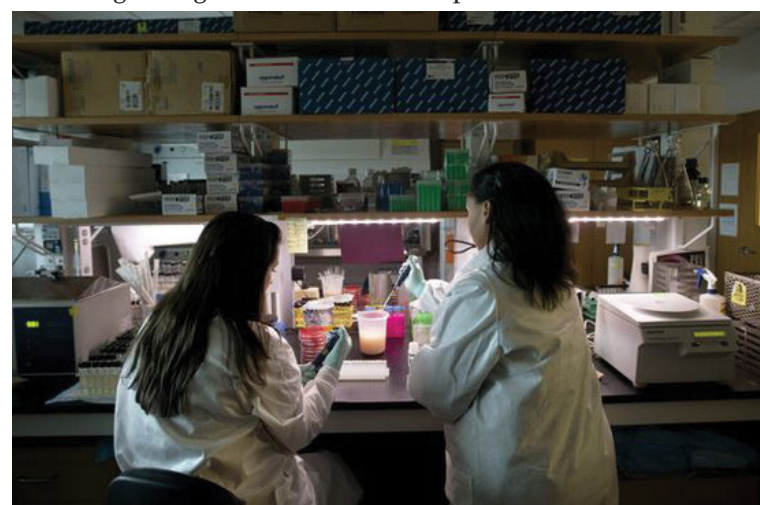
another's success as their own failure. In these spaces where shared learning should be encouraged, students are instead given the incentive to withhold notes, rely on artificial intelligence in place of learning or even distribute intentionally false materials in an effort to "stay ahead of the curve." What emerges is not better doctors, but rather a resentment among classmates. Medicine is supposed to be collaborative. Progress in healthcare is built from collective problem-solving and teamwork. Teaching doctors to compete before they learn to care completely risks the very foundation on which healthcare depends.

Beyond comparison and competition, performance is another pillar of what makes pre-health culture so toxic. The "performative pre-health" student is a term that is commonly used to describe students who prioritize appearing dedicated. This performance can be seen on our own campus. From filling large whiteboards for the sake of optics rather than understanding to holding leadership positions to "look good" rather than actually caring about the cause, students are prioritizing appearance. This mindset is further reinforced by a corner of TikTok termed "studytok," a space that glamorizes aesthetic notes, GPA and unrealistic productivity. While framed as motivation, this content often promotes a shallow and misleading version of success, where being seen working matters more than actually learning.

Now this article hits very close to home for me, due to the fact that I am a pre-health student. While I would like to believe that I do not fully contribute to this culture, I would be a dishonest writer if I did not admit that I often find myself comparing my progress to others, feeling as though I am falling behind or not doing enough. These feel-

ings do not stem from a lack of passion for healthcare, but instead from a culture built on checking boxes. Although I have never felt the urge to sabotage my peers by intentionally sharing incorrect biology notes (yes, this happens more than you would think), I have seen how misplaced motives can distort behavior. I also tutor biology, a common prerequisite for pre-health students; through this I have seen many younger students arrive driven by anxiety and competition, focused entirely on getting ahead of their peers.

Over time, however, these expectations have shifted from expressions of genuine interest to mechanisms of performance. As medical school admissions have grown increasingly competitive, pre-health students are implicitly taught that success depends not on who they are, but on how well they can document achievement. This uncertainty fuels constant comparison: students measure themselves against peers' GPAs, research roles and clinical hours to approximate an idealized applicant profile. In this environment, checking boxes becomes a strategy for security, prestige and validation rather than growth or service. Competition rewards visibility over reflection, performative achievement over humility rooted in care. The result is a pipeline that selects endurance, efficiency and self-promotion, traits that may impress admissions committees, but do little to ensure that future physicians are equipped with empathy, patience, and a deep commitment to others. So, as this polluted culture continues to produce good résumés, I offer a reminder that in an increasingly isolated and uncertain world, the future of healthcare depends not on who looks the best on paper, but on who can show up with compassion and care.



Pre-med students conducting research in a laboratory. Research experience is considered one of the possible ways to boost one's medical school application.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @ANNTELMA ON PINTEREST

Opinion

Photo of the Day | Join clubs!



Students visit tables during the Spring Club Involvement Fair at Gampel Pavilion. The event was held to give students the opportunity to learn about student organizations and campus involvement. PHOTO BY OLIVIA DICKSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Patrick's Politics:

America's newest concentration camps are against American ideals

by Patrick Minnerly | ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR | HE/HIM/HIS | patrick.minnerly@uconn.edu

Eighty-three winters ago, a young girl sat in the confines of a cramped annex and wrote the following words: "Terrible things are happening outside. At any time of night and day, poor helpless people are being dragged out of their homes... families are torn apart; men, women and children are separated. Children come home from school to find that their parents have disappeared." If the scenes sound familiar, they should. Anne Frank ascribed to the Nazis what we should recognize today in the Trump administration and their repressive immigration policy. Those helpless people were taken to concentration camps; now, federal agents send those they arrest to "detention centers." Sometimes, however, a spade must be called a spade. The government's web of imprisonment is a system of concentration camps. This system is not the first in America's history, but if we are to fight this hideously unethical practice, we must draw on the foundational rights we all share.

The term "concentration camp" is a highly charged expression, yet it is an apt one. The mind inevitably jumps to thoughts of the Nazis, of the six million Jews led to their deaths in the Holocaust. A mass murder and genocide of that scale might seem as if it can never be truly compared to anything else. Many historians consider locations such as Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen to have been death camps – the end goal, or the "Final Solution", was to kill as many people as possible. But the concentration camps of Nazi Germany did not start out as places explicitly made for killing. The first, Dachau, was originally designed to hold political prisoners. The Nazis had a very similar euphemism to current America: Dachau was a place for "preventive detention." Concentration camps are simply areas where groups of people are imprisoned together, usually for much less than a criminal conviction.

Trump's immigration deten-

tion system bears significant hallmarks of concentration camps. People are snatched off the street and from their homes, often for little reason but racial profiling. Then, they are quickly sent to be processed and detained in prisons, often many miles from home. More and more immigrants have been arrested, and the government has had to make room by building new places to keep them. 70,000 immigrants are currently held in 212 federal facilities across the country; both of those numbers have nearly doubled since Trump took office. The administration doesn't

distinguish between those with criminal records and those who don't have one. According to the American Immigration Council, the amount of people arrested by Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) who have no criminal record has ballooned to 41% of all those incarcerated.

The inhumanity of these concentration camps has been well documented. Humanitarian concerns about immigration detention have swirled for some time, but the Trump administration has ratcheted up the cruelty. In 2025, 32 people were killed in ICE facilities. In just over a month, 2026 has seen

three more people die in custody. These are just the worst-case scenarios. Last November, seven immigrants detained by ICE sued the Trump administration, alleging inhumane conditions, inadequate medical care, and no right to legal counsel.

Perhaps the most important lesson American students are taught lies in learning the Declaration of Independence. That hallowed document tells us that all people have certain unalienable rights and "that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Contained within the Declaration is the sum of our ideals – that the

government should work with the people to defend those unalienable rights. You might think that Donald Trump, supposedly holding an America First worldview, would love to uphold those distinctly American ideological tenets. Instead, his administration has embraced the tactics of brutal repression and hate.

It's important to note that ICE and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are not the first to bring the evil of concentration camps to America. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. decided that anyone Japanese living in the country was dangerous. As a result, tens of thousands of Japanese Americans, many of them U.S. citizens, were sent to "relocation centers" while the war went on. They endured overcrowding and harsh conditions in remote locations. Francis Biddle, attorney general at the time, called these centers for what they were: concentration camps.

To say America has continually failed to live up to its lofty ideals would be an understatement. Yet ideals are what we must cling to. Our founding documents are revolutionary not just because they helped form an entirely new country, but because they outline the hope for democracy that enabled us to fight against the evil of the Nazis, even as we repressed many of our own people at home.

The Trump administration is betting that the American people aren't paying attention. In the age of social media, however, the ICE concentration camps and the conditions inside have been well documented. After World War II, German citizens could at least claim they had no way of knowing what went on in the camps. We have no such luxury. People are dying in custody. They are dying on the streets. They are being dragged into prison with prejudice and without due process. We know this is happening. The question is whether we believe in what America should stand for enough to stop it.



Biggest takeaways from new head coach introductory press conferences

by **Thaddeus Sawyer**
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Following Klint Kubiak's reported hiring by the Las Vegas Raiders, all 10 open NFL head coaching positions have been filled.

As the new coaches are introduced to fans and media, here are four of the biggest takeaways from initial press conferences from this head coaching cycle.

Saleh switches up play calling approach

The lessons new Titans head coach Robert Saleh learned from his failed stint as New York Jets head coach are becoming clear from the start in Tennessee.

"I didn't call plays in New York and I just kind of gave it all to the coordinators," Saleh said in his press conference on Jan. 29.

The second-time head coach went 20-36 in his first head coaching stint with the New York Jets from 2021 to 2024. Current Atlanta Falcons Defensive Coordinator Jeff Ulbrich called plays for his entire tenure.

"I joke with [General Manager Mike Borgonzi], on game day when I didn't call plays, I felt like I was just the time out and red flag guy," Saleh said, adding that he had the greatest seat in the house for a fan.

Following his ouster from the Jets, Saleh returned to San Francisco under HC Kyle Shanahan for a second run as 49ers DC. The 49ers were a middle of the pack defense by measure of yards allowed in 2025 but were without defensive linchpins Nick Bosa and Fred Warner for much of the season.

The Titans, who were bottom five in points allowed, bring in a well-respected play caller in Saleh who will help run the defense with help from the new DC, veteran Gus Bradley.

"To be able to call plays and maintain that connection, maintain that feel for what the players are going through, I think is very very important in my seat," Saleh said.

Potential McCarthy-Rodgers reunion

One of the first questions asked to new Steelers Head Coach Mike McCarthy during his introductory press conference on Jan. 27 pertained to the status of future Hall of Fame quarterback Aaron Rodgers.

"Definitely, I mean I don't see why you wouldn't," McCarthy said when asked if he wanted Rodgers to return in his personal best-case scenario.

While McCarthy has garnered a reputation for developing young QBs, the only such option on Pittsburgh's current roster would be former sixth rounder Wil Howard.

McCarthy oversaw Rodgers' development with the Green Bay Packers, winning a Superbowl and coaching Rodgers to two Most Valuable

Players awards. The 13-year-partnership seemingly ended with McCarthy's firing following the 2018 season, but the possibility of a reunion may have been one of the reasons McCarthy landed a third head coaching gig.

"I watched most of the Pittsburgh games on TV, and I thought he was a great asset for the team," McCarthy said.

After throwing for 3322 yards and 24 touchdowns in 2025, Rodgers had interest in returning to the Steelers under former HC Mike Tomlin before his resignation, according to Ian Rapoport of NFL Network.

The team has reportedly given Rodgers a one-month deadline on making the decision to return, according to Jeff Hathorn of 93.7 The Fan. However, McCarthy understands Rodgers' need for patience on deciding.

"When guys are up at that stage of their career, they need to step away and decompress," McCarthy said. "I think that's very important. The game is so emotional."

DC dispute in Cleveland

Former Baltimore Ravens OC Todd Monken won out in the Browns HC search, leaving a sour taste in the mouth of incumbent DC and fellow finalist Jim Schwartz.

Schwartz reportedly wants out of his contract with the Browns, according to NFL Network's Ian Rapoport. Monken was asked multiple questions regarding Schwartz's status during his press introduction on Feb. 3., and while the first-time head coach said that he's spoken to Schwartz, he did little to point

towards a return for Schwartz. "I didn't take the job because of Jim Schwartz," Monken said. "I have a lot of respect for Jim Schwartz as I would hope he has for me. But I took it because of the players that are here, the ownership, [GM] Andrew Berry and the ability to build this roster from the ground up on the offensive side."

Monken repeatedly emphasized the players, noting that the scheme will remain the same regardless of who is calling plays.

"When I was preparing for the Cleveland Browns, I wasn't trying to chip Jim Schwartz," Monken said. "I was chipping Myles Garrett."

Current Browns defenders, such as superstar Garrett and five-time Probowler Denzel Ward, have called for Schwartz to be retained.

The Browns defense allowed the fourth-least yards in 2025, with Garrett breaking the single-season sack record.

Should Schwartz be allowed to explore other opportunities, options may be limited save for a demotion. The Raiders own the lone DC vacancy remaining.

Retroactive New York OC search indicator

John Harbaugh credited football figures ranging from his father, Jack, to Ravens ownership in his opening press conference on Jan. 20.

Amongst those names was Andy Reid, whom Harbaugh coached under with the Philadelphia Eagles from 1998 through 2007.

"Andy's a man of few words, and his

words to me were 'change can be good,'" Harbaugh said.

While that comment signaled nothing more at the time than an appreciation of a former mentor who had previously walked a similar path, it stands out more following the hiring of former Chiefs Offensive Coordinator Matt Nagy as Giants OC on Tuesday.

Following his firing as Chicago Bears head coach, Nagy spent the four seasons with the Chiefs in his second stretch under Reid, serving three as OC.

The Chiefs let Nagy walk in favor of bringing back another old friend in Eric Bieniemy for his second run as OC. Despite the parting of ways, it seems Reid and Nagy remain on good terms.

"Matt and I have a great relationship," Reid said in a press conference on Jan. 26 following Bieniemy's hire. "Before the season even started here, I knew that he wanted an opportunity to have his own show."

Nagy will receive that opportunity with the Giants, along with a chance to spearhead the development of second-year QB Jaxson Dart.

Considering the ties between Harbaugh and Reid, along with Reid's campaigning for Nagy, it wouldn't be a surprise if Reid was in Harbaugh's ear about Nagy during the Giants' OC search.

LATO'S LENS:

The best uniform combinations of the 2025 college football season

by **Tyler Lato**
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Many people agree that college football is more than a game. It's pageantry, it's tradition, it's everything for thousands of Americans. But when I think of college football, one of the first things that comes to mind is the swagger aspect — or, in Gen Z slang — "the drip."

Someone once said, "look good, feel good, play good," and that's exactly what brands like Nike, Adidas and Under Armour have done this past season. Collectively, they've put together hundreds of different uniform combinations, painting the screens of viewers like Picasso every Saturday.

So this week, Lato's Lens is taking a different route. Instead of being stats-centric, here are some of my favorite uniform combinations from the 2025 college football season (in no specific order, of course).

Ole Miss: Home Powder Blue-on-White with Blue Helmets

You can never go wrong with powder blue. We've seen it with the Philadelphia Phillies in their iconic jerseys dating back to 1972 — you just cannot quite go wrong with powder blue. Combine Nike powder blue jerseys, white pants, powder blue helmets and the script "Ole Miss" decal, and you have a look that's almost too sharp and clean.

Oregon: Eggshell

Due to the school's proximity to Nike's headquarters in Eugene, Ore., the University of Oregon football team churns out a different uniform combination every week.

One of their best, in my opinion, came in their Week Five

matchup against Penn State, where they went on the road and took down the No. 3 Nitany Lions in overtime. The Ducks marched onto the field in grey jerseys covered with black speckles to replicate a duck eggshell. They were complemented by matte-black helmets with silver wing decals and black pants, creating the ultimate alternate uniform combination for a highly anticipated matchup.

Indiana: Home Crimson-on-White

It didn't dawn on me that the Indiana Hoosiers had good-looking uniforms until their national championship matchup against Miami.

Though I'm not a huge fan of Adidas uniforms, their home crimson jerseys combined with white pants created a very clean silhouette. I also liked their matte-crimson helmets with two white stripes running down the middle, adding to the simple yet effective aesthetic.

LSU: Home White-on-Yellow

The LSU Tigers are a unique team. Instead of wearing a traditional home color for their games, they opt to wear only their classic white jerseys, yellow helmets and yellow pants for SEC home matchups in Death Valley. Not only is this another very simple silhouette, but it also makes it instantly recognizable to viewers: if you see their yellow helmets and white jerseys flying around on TV, you know LSU is playing on an SEC Saturday.

Florida: Home Blue-on-Orange

Though artists might not think it's true, blue and orange complement each other incredibly well on a college football field — especially for the Flor-

ida Gators. Manufactured by Jordan, their home royal blue jerseys are among the best in college football. The team normally flips between blue, orange, and white pants, but I think their orange pants with a blue-white-blue triple stripe running down the side look the sharpest. Not to mention, the script 'Gators' decal on their helmets ties the vibrant look together.

Notre Dame: Home Navy Blue-on-Gold

Notre Dame is another example of a symbolic team wearing symbolic uniforms. Their gold helmets are unique, staying the same for each of their games with no decal whatsoever. Additionally, their Under Armour jerseys and pants mark the epitome of consistency, looking especially flashy when they wear their navy blues with golden pants in South Bend.

Army: 2025 Army-Navy Game Uniforms

The battle between the United States Military Academy and Naval Academy is one of, if not the, most historical football games in America. The matchup commemorates a tradition of service and rivalry, combining for over a century of tradition.

Each academy wears a different uniform for the game every year, each with special significance. This year, the Army commemorated its 250th anniversary with an all-white uniform combination with silver helmets. The backs of their jerseys read "United States Army" in a constitution-like font, with purple lining the outside of their numbers, signifying the sacrifice made by soldiers who have earned a Purple Heart. Not only do these uniforms carry much honor and signifi-

cance, but they also look fantastic.

Nebraska: Black-on-Black

Nobody looked better on Nov. 1 than the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Normally wearing their traditional red jerseys with white pants at home, they decided to change things up by

wearing black jerseys, black pants and white helmets in their Big Ten matchup against USC. Their jerseys and pants were lined with white stripes on the shoulders and pants, finishing the alternate uniform look.



Quinshon Judkins of the Ole Miss Rebels celebrates during his game. The football team's uniform features a vibrant powder blue with blue helmets to match.
 PHOTO COURTESY OF @TOMBSTONEKATE ON PINTEREST.

Sports

Photo of the Day | Women's Basketball



The UConn women's basketball team faces the Tennessee Volunteers on Feb. 1, 2026. The Huskies took the win with a final score of 96-66.
PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: NO. 1 UCONN STEAMROLLS DEPAUL 86-40 IN CHICAGO



The UConn women's basketball team faces the Tennessee Volunteers on Feb. 1, 2026. The Huskies took the win with a final score of 96-66.
PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Jake McCreven
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Sunday's 30-point bludgeoning of bitter rival Tennessee was UConn women's basketball's 39th consecutive victory since Feb. 6, 2025 (ironically a loss on Rocky Top to the Lady Vols).

Since that fateful day in Knoxville, the Huskies have added a national championship banner to the Gampel Pavilion rafters, emphatically stomping three No. 1 seeds on the way, and just recently finished rectifying all three losses from last season.

So why even play these games — an 8 p.m. Wednesday tip against lowly DePaul — if Connecticut knows its destined for much greater?

Because, as Geno Auriemma would say, every game the Huskies play, regardless of competition, is an opportunity to sharpen their claws. There are a lot of problems with this undefeated, top-ranked wagon after all, according to Auriemma.

Those problems didn't show Wednesday in Wintrust Arena, however; the Huskies (24-0, 13-0), catalyzed by Azzi Fudd's 25-point, 10-field goal night, detonated the Blue Demons (5-20, 2-12) 86-40 for their 19th consecutive win by 25-plus points.

"The thing about Azzi," Auriemma quipped after Sunday's win over Tennessee, "she makes way more shots when she's doing the other things — rebounding the ball, trying to strip guys, bring the ball up. When she's doing all those things, the shots go in."

Fudd outscored the Blue Demons in the in the first

quarter, notching the game's first points on a lay-in under the rim before rattling off eight in a row, including a pair of 3-pointers that barely grazed the rim on their way to the bottom of the net later in the period, to widen the Huskies' lead to 16 points. She also nabbed a trey of steals and dished two assists in the first period — the "other things" that Auriemma alluded to.

Strong, newly minted on the cover of SLAM Magazine, was in double figures by the early second quarter herself, hitting on four of her first five attempts from the field to pair with five first half rebounds, four assists and two steals.

The sophomore forward finished with 14 points on 6-of-9 shooting, six rebounds, five assists and two steals in 20 minutes.

Fudd and Strong combined for 39 points after a 53-point showing against Tennessee on Sunday, nearly outscoring the Blue Demons on their home court.

Freshman forward Blanca Quiñonez, the team's third leading scorer remained out with a shoulder injury that's kept her sidelined since Jan. 28. Tertiary scoring came from the hardy efforts of KK Arnold (12 points on 6-of-7 shooting), and Allie Ziebell (9 on 4-of-6 from the field).

Connecticut led by 25 after 10 minutes, getting 13 from Fudd, six from Arnold and five from Strong. UConn's 13 made field goals in the first quarter wouldn't be matched by the Blue Demons until the 7:22 mark of the fourth quarter.

The Huskies kept its 20-plus point lead steady throughout the second quar-

ter but were limited to just 13 points on 6-of-14 shooting, turning the ball over four times while trying to work the ball into Serah Williams in the low post.

"I think we had five turnovers trying to throw the ball into the post," Auriemma told truTV at the half. "I don't get it. We need to clean that up... I get bothered by the turnovers that seem mindless."

Strong and Fudd certainly heard the echoes of their head coach from the tunnel coming out of the half. By the third quarter media timeout, the Huskies' lead swelled to 31 points, thanks in part to Fudd's fourth triple and Strong's sixth field goal of the night.

By the end of the third period, Connecticut had begun emptying its bench, growing its lead to 35 after Arnold hit her fourth field goal before the buzzer. Both Strong and Fudd, as well as Williams, were off the floor by the end of the period as Auriemma favored a small-ball lineup of Arnold, Kayleigh Heckel, Allie Ziebell, Ashlynn Shade and Jana El Alfy.

It gave the Huskies' second unit more than a quarter on the court together; experience that will prove vital come NCAA Tournament time. All 10 players who checked into the game scored, including Kelis Fisher and Ayanna Patterson, who had only six and five minutes, respectively, to do so.

UConn, now on a 40-game win streak, will head back to Hartford for a Saturday showdown against Butler at PeoplesBank Arena. Tip-off is scheduled for noon, with streaming available via FS1.

THE BIG APPLE:

Deadline rumors swirl as Knicks keep rolling

by James Badeau
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Trade deadline season means constant glances to your phone, nonstop refreshing your timeline and buying into every rumor you hear.

The New York Knicks are typically active around this time of year, adding the finishing pieces to their roster as they prepare for the playoffs.

However, this season I don't see New York making any major moves. The Knicks are 32-18, sitting in second place in the Eastern Conference as of print.

Why blow it up when you are 14 games above .500 after one of the worst stretches in recent memory?

Yes, I understand that Giannis Antetokounmpo, a generational talent, is a target for the Knicks. It isn't the first time that New York has been the center of attention when it comes to rumors of stars making their way to the Big Apple.

With the 2019 offseason in mind, Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving chose New York but signed with Brooklyn instead of the Knicks.

Other than Antetokounmpo, the biggest news from the Knicks is Frenchman Guerschon Yabusele potentially making his way to play for a team in Israel. Yabusele, a 2025 free agent signing, has been in and out of the Knicks' rotation, struggling to make his mark.

"I (am not) closing any door on (anything). I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know what tomorrow's going to be," Yabusele said. "So right now, I can tell you nothing has been discussed or signed or anything like that. I'm a Knicks player at the end of the day."

The 30-year-old made his way back into the NBA after his dominance in the 2024 Olympics for Team France. In his first season back after spending the last five playing in France, he averaged 11 points in 27 minutes per game. This season, he is averaging under three points in nine minutes per contest.

New York is on a seven-game win streak going into Wednesday night at home vs Denver. The Knicks have a big stretch ahead of them, as they head to Detroit on Friday and then ship up to Boston on Super Bowl Sunday. After that, they will take on Indi-

ana and Philadelphia before a rematch with the Pistons on Feb. 19.

These games come at a great time for New York.

Ever since the players' only meeting held by captain Jalen Brunson, the offense has been clicking and the defense has been even better. They held opponents to 101 points or fewer in six of their last seven games, including a 54-point win over Brooklyn, the largest margin in franchise history.

What does this mean for the Knicks?

They found their identity, score at will, and have a strong presence on defense.

In their 2-9 streak in January, opponents were two steps faster, beating the Knicks back door, getting to the rim at ease.

It was a wake-up call.

Once the win streak began, you noticed the hustle plays, bench guys stepping up, and nobody being selfish on the offensive end. Players like Tyler Kolek and Mohamed Diawara, guys who don't know when their name will be called, were ready for the moment once it came to them.

After the deadline, don't be surprised if the Knicks catch Detroit for the top seed in the East.



Landry Shamet of the New York Knicks is seen with two of his teammates, Ogunbayi Jr. and Mohamed Diawara, during a game. The Knicks are currently second place in the Eastern Conference. PHOTO COURTESY OF @MSGNETWORKS ON INSTAGRAM.

SPORTS SPECTRUM:

Clippers got a shaky outlook

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The Clippers have performed well, securing 17 wins in their last 22 games. They rank second in offensive rating (120) and fourth in net rating (7.7). While this achievement is notable, particularly with star Kawhi Leonard playing alongside James Harden, certain issues have cast a shadow over the team this year. Apart from the early-season challenges, the Clippers as an organization have been somewhat disorganized.

Before the season started, NBA veteran Chris Paul talked about how this season might be his last in the league. After this was confirmed, many paid tribute to his career, highlighting his roles on several teams such as the Charlotte Hornets, Oklahoma City Thunder, Phoenix Suns and most notably the Clippers. Considered the greatest trio in franchise history, next to Blake Griffin and DeAndre Jordan, the trio was the core of the Lob City era of Clippers basketball.

So, it was a shock to wake up on Dec. 3 to find that a little before 3 a.m., Paul posted that he had been sent home by the team.

At first glance, it seemed weird. Why send him home when he wanted to go on his retirement tour?

Despite Clippers President of Basketball Operations Lawrence Frank's statement that, "No one is blaming Chris for our underperformance," it's

reasonable to assume that something happened to prompt Frank to fly from Los Angeles to Atlanta to tell Paul he was essentially being sent home.

In further reports, it was revealed that weeks prior to the decision, he had wanted to meet with Clippers head coach Tyron Lue about allegations of being a bad teammate, but Lue refused to meet with him. The two were not on speaking terms, and the team had felt that his leadership style had become disruptive, as sources told Shams Charania of ESPN. In essence, he was sent home for wanting to hold the people on his team accountable.

An ESPN article by Ramona Shelbourne corroborates this point. When he provided suggestions, challenged players on or off the court or told them how to run a play, he was "warned not to undermine the staff" alongside "complaints from players and coaches that he was abrasive."

This eventually culminated in tense moments with the assistant coaching staff, particularly after their game on Nov. 29 against the Mavericks, when Paul suggested defensive coverage switches to better assist players. Jeff Van Gundy, an assistant coach, said to Paul, via Chris Hanes: "Listen, you might have had leeway in other places to be able to change up defensive coverages, but you don't have that leeway here."

That was seemingly the conversation that broke the camel's back.

Paul is not the first player Los Angeles has done this to. The same

thing happened when Griffin was traded to Detroit six months after signing a new contract with them. They've got a track record that has led many fans to take the situation in bad faith.

Recently, Harden was traded to the Cavaliers in exchange for Darius Garland and a second-round pick. In terms of immediate impact, this move benefits the Cavaliers more than the Clippers, as Harden now serves as a secondary scoring option behind Donovan Mitchell.

It happened unexpectedly and was a surprise at the recent trade deadline. After the Clippers firmly declined to offer Harden a contract beyond the 2026-27 season, he quickly requested a trade. Consistent with their stance, only starting center Ivica Zubac remains under contract for 2026-27.

This is a sign that they are ready to move on from the struggling Leonard era of Clippers basketball, which has often been a source of memes and frustration instead of consistent victories.

As for now, the Clippers need to keep hoping they can stay solid and not keep sliding further into the draft lottery. To remind you of the trade that ironically won the Thunder a championship, their pick for this year goes straight to the Thunder. If they don't keep up this hot streak, they risk giving the Thunder a lottery pick — a nightmare for a team as strong as they are, especially with a talented draft class led by AJ Dybansta of BYU and Darryn Peterson of Kansas.

Brayden's Breakdown:

RELIVING THE SUPER BOWL 49 MATCHUP BETWEEN THE PATRIOTS AND SEAHAWKS



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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It has been 11 years since the opponents of Super Bowl 60 last faced off on the grandest stage of them all. With a whole new cast of characters leading the way for both teams this year, it makes the previous bitterness of Seattle and the celebrations of New England virtually meaningless to the players, but the game is still etched deep in hearts and minds of both fanbases.

Here is a recap of what happened the last time these two teams clashed in the Super Bowl.

Both teams had a quick punt before the ball returned to Tom Brady's hand. The veteran was slinging the ball around, accompanied by a steady rushing attack from LeGarrette Blount. New England found themselves in the red zone with the first quarter nearing an end.

On 3rd and 6, Brady danced in the pocket before firing a pass into the end zone. There was not a white Patriot jersey in sight and the pass was picked off by Jeremy Lane. The first interception of Lane's career came with a cost. The sixth-round pick exited the game with a cast on his wrist, but not before he made his impact for the Legion of Boom.

A Julian Edelman 23-yard scamper put the Pats back in the red zone. Two plays later, Brady faked a handoff to Blount and zipped an 11-yard touchdown pass to Brandon LaFell, putting the Patriots up 7-0 early in the second quarter.

Russell Wilson and the Seahawks would not go quietly into the night. Seattle got inside the 20 with a Wilson bomb to Chris Matthews, who the world was introduced to in the biggest game of the season. Moments later, Wilson handed it off to Marshawn Lynch and Beastmode did the rest.

The game was tied and the fireworks were just beginning as Brady and company got the ball back.

Brady orchestrated a beautiful eight play 80-yard drive capped off by a 22-yard touchdown pass to Rob Gronkowski, putting the Patriots up 14-7 with just 31 seconds remaining in the first half.

What followed was one of the greatest drives in the history of football.

Expecting Seattle to run the clock down, the Patriots let their guard down as backup running back Robert Turpin broke off a 19-yard run, leading the Seahawks to call their first timeout. Wilson then broke a tackle on a run-pass option and the Seahawks were already past midfield. On the next play, Wilson hit Ricardo Lockette for a big gain which was even bigger when the referees tacked on extra yardage with a facemask call.

With only six seconds left in the half, head coach Pete Carroll made one of his many controversial decisions in the Super Bowl. Wilson took the snap with the time ticking and found Matthews in the corner of the endzone with two seconds remaining in the half.

Both teams had their ups and downs, but the score was tied after 30 minutes.

After Katy Perry rode an

animatronic lion at halftime, it was back to football for the two squads.

Another bomb from Wilson to Matthews put the undrafted receiver at 100 yards on the day and immediately set up Seattle to start the third quarter. In a decision you would never see today, Carroll decided to kick a field goal on 4th and 1 from inside the 10-yard line. The Seahawks went up three early in the second half.

Trying to respond, Brady fired one over the middle looking for Gronkowski. The pass was intercepted by Bobby Wagner and Seattle got the ball back.

Capitalizing off the turnover, Wilson found a wide-open Doug Baldwin in the endzone to make the lead double-digits for Seattle.

It was do or die for New England, who had lost their past two Super Bowls in heartbreaking fashion.

Despite a few quick punts, the Patriots' defense made some big stops and the Pats were inside the 5-yard line once again. On second and goal, Brady hit Danny Amendola in the back of the endzone to cut the deficit to a field goal halfway through the final quarter.

A quick three and out for Seattle and it was Brady time once again. The quarterback picked apart the defense in a 10 play 64-yard drive culminating in an Edelman touchdown on a beautiful route that the quarterback and wide receiver could not connect on the previous drive.

Wilson trotted out onto the field with 2:02 remaining. Little did he know, it would be a drive that would live in infamy.

Sitting around midfield, Wilson dropped back and floated a pass intended for Jermaine Kearse. The pass was initially batted in the air by rookie cornerback Malcolm Butler, however it miraculously ended up in the hands of Kearse. Butler shoved him out of bounds, but the Seahawks were inside the 5-yard line with less than a minute to play.

The ghosts of the Patriots' past seemed to be rearing their ugly heads as their Super Bowl hopes were dwindling.

The play was obvious, right? Just hand the ball to Lynch who went over 100 rushing yards on 1st and goal. On that very play, Beastmode was tripped up by Dont'a Hightower at the 1-yard line in one of the most underrated plays in Super Bowl history.

The next play is something that has been and will be talked about forever. In a defensive masterclass, the Patriots staff sent in Butler on a play they had been scouting for all week. Wilson took the snap with 25 seconds left and fired a pass toward Lockette. Butler jumped in front of the pass, and the rest was history.

The Patriots claimed their fourth Super Bowl Championship while the Seahawks core crumbled following injuries and the controversial play call. New England would win two more Super Bowls in the 2010s, while Seattle finds themselves in the big game for the first time since the ball left Wilson's hand.

Will the Patriots find the same magic that they did 11 years ago? Or will the Seahawks slay their past demons en route to their second Super Bowl ever?



Sports

WILKER'S WEEKLY:

PATRIOTS SUPER BOWL PREVIEW

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As unbelievable as it sounds, the New England Patriots are set to make their 12th Super Bowl appearance on Sunday. Their matchup against the Seattle Seahawks will give New England the opportunity to claim their first ever ring post-Bill Belichick and Tom Brady, with Drake Maye and Mike Vrabel each looking to claim the first of their careers.

New England is staring down the barrel at an impressive Seahawks squad. Beginning with their offense, Sam Darnold hasn't seen ghosts this season. The former Jets quarterback had 25 total touchdowns to 15 turnovers during the regular season: respectable, no doubt, but not elite. He didn't have to do much in Seattle's dominant win over the 49ers in the divisional round, but his performance against the Rams should infuse the 12th man with plenty of confidence. Darnold finished with nearly 350 passing yards and three touchdowns with a 69.4% completion rate. His passing yard total was his highest all season.

It shouldn't come as a surprise that Jaxon Smith-Njigba stepped up when it mattered most. The likely OPOY caught 10 of his 12 targets for 153 yards and a touchdown. Across three games against the Rams this season, he averaged 118 yards. He's been Seattle's best player by far. In the nine games that he did not get in the end zone during the regular season, the Seattle offense averaged 23.1 points per game. Across the other eight matchups, they averaged 34.4 points per game and never scored less than 20 points.

Aside from Smith-Njigba, Rashid Shaheed's Pro-Bowl season as a return man shouldn't overshadow his offensive role. His ability as a deep threat should be noted, and with Christian Gonzalez potentially following Smith-Njigba, Carlton Davis's lack of long speed could be taken advantage of. Cooper Kupp nabbed a touchdown in the NFC Championship, so don't be surprised if they go back to that well. It was just four seasons ago that Kupp caught the game winning touchdown in a Super Bowl MVP perfor-

mance. There's no doubt he has the experience.

While the running game has been contained since Zach Charbonnet's injury (Kenneth Walker 3.3 YPC), both Walker and George Holani, Ashton Jeanty's Boise State predecessor, were active in the pass game. The pair combined for seven catches for 76 yards in the last game.

Defensively, the Seahawks are the league's best unit by points per game. The defensive line leads the charge, with Leonard Williams and Byron Murphy being one of the league's best interior duos. Pressure off the edge is by committee, led by Demarcus Lawrence and Uchenna Nwosu, while Boye Mafe and Derrick Hall are rotational pieces.

At the second level, Ernest Jones IV and Drake Thomas each had 95+ tackles this season. Thomas was injured last week, but it seems he won't have much trouble playing on Sunday.

The defensive backfield is the team's crown jewel. Devon Witherspoon is among the league's best cornerbacks, while Riq Woolen and Josh Jobe man the other two posts. Nick Emano, a competitor for DROY, has played linebacker, slot corner and safety as a versatile chess piece for Mike McDaniels' defense. The deep part of the field is manned by Coby Bryant and Julian Love. The unit doesn't have many weaknesses, and as a whole, the defense allowed only 17.2 PPG. Other than the Buccaneers in Week 5 and the Rams in Week 16, no team has scored 30+ against them.

As it stands, New England is a 4.5-point underdog. Despite the teams sharing a 14-3 record, there's little doubt Seattle has played superior competition. For the Patriots to mount an upset, they'll need an offensive performance infinitely better than what they've shown over the last three playoff games. They've scored just 15.7 offensive PPG this postseason; a total Seattle has eclipsed in 17 of their 19 games. Both times they did not were against the 49ers, who they went on to beat by 35 last month in their third matchup of the year.

The key player to look out for is Maye. While a boring selection, the MVP candidate will need to post a legendary Super Bowl performance to make up

for the offense's lack of difference makers. Stefon Diggs has largely been a non-factor in the postseason: while he nabbed a touchdown against Houston, he has 73 yards through three games. The Patriots are 5-0 and average 32.4 PPG this season when Diggs hits the century mark, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that eliminating Maye's most talented receiver is the gameplan.

While Maye will need to pick up the slack on Sunday, he'll need help from the supporting cast. Hunter Henry had 17 yards in the last three games after catching the only touchdown scored by either team in the wildcard round. In the backfield, TreVeyon Henderson has played second fiddle to Rhamondre Stevenson, and for good

reason. The former OSU Buckeye has taken 24 carries for 57 yards this post season, less than 2.4 YPC. The Patriots average 33.2 PPG when he has a rushing touchdown this season, so seeing the rookie make the most of his touches will be key to a New England victory.

Defensively, Christian Gonzalez and the defensive backfield's coverage on Smith-Njigba will be the game changer. If the defense can force Darnold to other targets, the Seahawks won't have the horses light up the scoreboard as they have over the last two weeks. It's easier said than done but containing Smith-Njigba will be the key in this matchup.

Often ignored, the special teams eliminating Shaheed from the game as a return man

will be key to New England's success. Seattle mounted an impressive 16-point comeback win over the Rams following a Shaheed punt return touchdown, and the opening kickoff against the Niners went for six as well, the same game in which Seattle won by 35. Brenden Schooler, Marte Mapu and ST coordinator Jeremy Springer will have to be at their best to keep him contained.

All signs point to a Seattle win, but I'm a believer in Vrabel and company. It won't be a high scoring game should New England come out on top, but I think they could do just that. In a multiple-turnover performance from Darnold, the Patriots win a 16-14 slugfest to come out on top, winning the franchise's seventh Super Bowl.



Drake Maye, quarterback for the New England Patriots, stands in front of the crowd at Gillette Stadium. Maye has shown outstanding skill during his second season in the league, looking to win his first championship ring this weekend at Super Bowl LX. PHOTO COURTESY OF @DELICATETREES ON PINTEREST.

LOMBARDI LINEUP:

WHY SUPERSTARS ARE MISSING THE WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC

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The finalized 2026 World Baseball Classic rosters are set to be announced tonight at 7 p.m. on MLB Network, after months of speculation of how each country will stack up. However, many fans will be disappointed to see many of their favorite players will be missing out on the highly anticipated event.

The WBC exists to celebrate the international reach that baseball has developed over the years, where the biggest stars suit up for their own countries in place of spring training. Since its creation in 2006, the tournament has produced some of the most iconic and highest rated baseball games of all time, showcasing the national pride that comes with the sport, especially outside the US. But this year, one of the biggest storylines may not be who's playing in the event, but who can't.

New insurance requirements exclude players

In the past, the main contro-

versy over the WBC was the risk of injury to players. Edwin Diaz and Jose Altuve are prime examples of this from the 2023 event, with both missing significant time for their respective MLB teams.

These concerns have sparked changes to salary insurance, which is now required for any major leaguer participating in the event. This policy is intended to protect a player's salary if they sustain an injury and must miss regular season games. However, this year, insurance has become far more difficult to obtain.

The tournament's official insurer, National Finance Partners, has taken a stricter stance on who is eligible for insurance during this WBC. Players with recent injuries, procedures or even those of advanced age have been deemed too risky to insure. As a result, numerous marquee players are being denied coverage and will be excluded from the event.

Who won't be there, and why?

Among the biggest absences from the tournament are

Houston Astros stars Altuve and Carlos Correa. Altuve has already faced a WBC-related injury in the past, and after an injury-riddled 2025 season, is considered too risky to insure. Correa's situation stems from a series of past injuries which have forced him to miss significant time for the past few seasons, which led to him also being denied coverage. Both were denied insurance and will miss the chance to represent their countries, Venezuela and Puerto Rico, because of their questionable injury history and large contracts on the line.

Another compelling case is Dodgers infielder Miguel Rojas, who, going into his final major league season, hoped to represent Venezuela for the first time. Approaching age 37, he was denied coverage because the insurer chose not to cover players over a certain age threshold, eliminating his chance to represent his flag as his career nears its end.

The list of players is not limited to just these examples, with many other players feeling the impact. Ely De La Cruz (Do-

minican Republic) and Marcelo Mayer (Mexico), have faced similar troubles, leaving roster spots unfilled and increased uncertainty as the tournament nears.

Puerto Rico's roster woes

Arguably, the biggest victim of this development is Team Puerto Rico. Initially seen as the early favorites in Pool A, the team has seen over seven of its top players become ineligible over insurance issues. This includes would-be captain Francisco Lindor, whose offseason elbow procedure led to his insurance denial, offering a massive blow to the team. José Berrios, Victor Caratini, and a few others must also miss the event for similar reasons.

The situation has become so severe that Puerto Rico has even considered withdrawing from the tournament entirely if they cannot field a competitive team. This would be a major disappointment for a team that was set to host first-round games in San Juan, and a passionate baseball culture within the country eager to cheer on their stars.

As Puerto Rico must face difficult decisions in the coming

days, it has become clear that these insurance troubles are damaging the WBC and effectively destroying a perennial powerhouse for off-the-field reasons.

Looking ahead

Despite the setbacks, the World Baseball Classic is still expected to deliver intense and memorable moments this March. But many are left to wonder what this event could look like if teams could actually field the best rosters possible. Much still needs to change for the WBC to truly be taken seriously alongside the likes of the World Cup, and not just as an exhibition as many executives currently see it.

These insurance debacles are undoubtedly holding a tournament with so much potential back, and fans across the world deserve a tournament driven purely by national pride, not actuarial calculations. The moment that we become willing to accept the risks of a tournament like the WBC, the event may skyrocket into one of the biggest international sporting events in the world.